

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:32:00AM EEST

Job Number: 223498633

Documents (100)

1. [*Thousands of Iraqis march for Shiite militia in Lebanon*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

2. [*Rice's words fall on deaf ears*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

3. [*Annan's Double Standard On Laying the Blame*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

4. [*Israeli air strike kills 27 sleeping children*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

5. [*Israeli air strike kills 27 sleeping children*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

6. [Letters](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

7. [New Middle East ceasefire hopes](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

8. [Family torn apart by war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

9. [Middle East crisis: British Jews: Beleaguered community torn by a distant war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

10. [READERS WRITE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

11. [BEIRUT'S NEIGHBORHOODS GROW EVEN MORE DIVIDED BY SECT](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

12. [LETTERS](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

13. [INSIDE](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

14. [CEASEFIRE After missile attack that killed 37 children, Israel halts aerial bombardment for 48 hours](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

15. [Top Islamic body sacks Hilali and scraps title](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

16. [*Comment & Debate: Curb this deadly trade: Those who oppose the proposed UN arms treaty could derail a chance to save millions of lives*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

17. [*Hilali charity probe widens*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

18. [*'Two million' protesters on streets of Beirut*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

19. [*Guardian Weekly: The dead of Qana: 'They found them huddled together': Israeli bombing of Lebanese village kills 54 civilians, including 34 children*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

20. [*PLAN B...TANKS ROLLING ACROSS THE BORDER*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

21. [One Last Thing | Democracy, of itself, not solution to all problems](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

22. [Israel begins its search for a scapegoat](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

23. [Israel strike kills dozens in Lebanon 20 children among dead Rice cancels Beirut trip](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

24. [Letters](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

25. [LOVE, NOT WAR Fifty Israeli couples wed at mass ceremony in Tel Aviv](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

26. [From a safe room in Israel , a mother fears for her sons.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

27. [Bush: Cease-fire not enough President maintains stance as Israel strikes Lebanon , cutting short 48-hour suspension](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

28. [San Jose State U. area discusses Lebanon - Israel conflict](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

29. [Middle East Crisis - Warplanes attack despite 48-hour halt](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

30. [An eyewitness view of the new world war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

31. [Two wrongs don't make a leftist](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

32. [LETTERS FROM READERS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

33. [And Now, Islamism Trumps Arabism](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

34. [Rice sent packing after Israeli missiles kill 60 in shelter](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

35. [Crisis in the Middle East](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

36. [Lost in no man's land, the elderly and frail with nowhere left to go](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

37. [Israeli strike kills dozens of children 50 civilians die in the deadliest attack of the onslaught on southern Lebanon](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

38. [A trip into Lebanon 's destruction](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

39. [As News Spreads of Deaths in South, Anger Boils Over Into Demonstrations in Beirut](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

40. [Middle East Crisis - UN in ceasefire call as women and children die in Israeli raid](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

41. [The Road to Justice in Argentina Leads to Iran](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

42. [Olmert vows to fight on despite air-strike truce](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

43. [Rights group accuses Israel of war crimes: Deaths of Canadian civilians, UN observer used to illustrate charge](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

44. [ISRAEL SUSPENDING LEBANON AIR RAIDS AFTER DOZENS DIE](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

45. [Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

46. [Olmert graft inquiry adds to scandal list](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to



Apr 15, 2007

47. [*Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

48. [*The Dunkirk option*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

49. [*Israeli president questioned over sex claims*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

50. [*As Cease-Fire Holds, Lebanese Dig for the War's Victims in the Rubble of Many Towns*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

51. [*Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel : Town is terror 'hotbed'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to

Apr 15, 2007

52. [After Israel - Lebanon War, Anti-Semitism on the Rise in Britain](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

53. [Funeral for Lebanese politician becomes rally against Syria](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

54. [International Briefs](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

55. [MUSLIM WORLD: RICH IN EVERYTHING, WEAK IN ALL RESPECTS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

56. [WILL THIS BE THE TIPPING POINT?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

57. [LETTERS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

58. [Focus: Even when guns fall silent, peace will be elusive](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

59. [International: Pressure mounts on Olmert to quit: Israeli leader under attack for Lebanon war failings](#)
[Leading politicians face scandal accusations](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

60. [Israel says no to a ceasefire](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

61. [Jews have reason to fight](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

62. [Beirut turns funeral into act of defiance](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

63. [INTERNATIONAL: Show of force for Minister's funeral](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

64. [THERE ARE SO MANY DEAD CHILDREN... WE JUST KEEP FINDING THEM 34 KIDS AMONG 56 CIVILIANS KILLED AS LEBANON SINKS DEEPER INTO HELL RESCUER SOBS AT AIR STRIKE CARNAGE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

65. [CHILDREN ARE EVERYWHERE.. WE'RE PULLING OUT MORE AND MORE BODIES 34 KIDS KILLED AS SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS ESCALATES IN LEBANON 56 DIE IN ISRAELI AIR STRIKE CARNAGE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

66. [Waiting for the Hurricane Of Anti- Israel Racism To Blow Over](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

67. [*From the rubble, Lebanese recover their dead Hundreds estimated to lie beneath ruins*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

68. [*No-one is right when it comes to loss of life*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

69. [*Inside a death house*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

70. [*LETTERS & OPINION: Would Britain have sent missiles into Belfast?*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

71. [*In the World*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

72. [*Entire nation being punished*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

73. [*Defiant Israel 's 48 hour ceasefire that lasted just half a day*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

74. [*Lessons on freedom*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

75. [*For a Village, Paying Respects Required Making 3 Stops*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

76. [*Air truce after 54 die in Israeli strike*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

77. [*World Digest*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

78. [*Lebanese leaders meet over crisis*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

79. [*Town's rich history is lost among the ruins*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

80. [*Bloody Shia festival marking death of imam divides Muslims*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

81. [*Former Israeli justice minister found guilty of sex crime*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

82. [*Hilali can't say where aid for Lebanon war victims went*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

83. [Orchard better equipped to broker peace accord](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

84. [The NDP is irrelevant](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

85. [Blair 'feels betrayed by Bush on Lebanon' As Foreign Affairs Committee calls emergency session on Middle East war. . .](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

86. [Pope calls for immediate ceasefire](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

87. [We did not know about civilians, Israel says MIDDLE EAST CRISIS, Reaction](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to

Apr 15, 2007

88. [Israeli regrets at civilian deaths ring hollow: The war on Lebanon will strengthen fundamentalists and hurt Jewish state](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

89. [Captured Israeli 'in Egypt for swap'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

90. [Bravo to pro-war monks](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

91. [PERSPECTIVE: Rogue nation: Read the truth about Israel Yesterday, Israeli Liz Berg described the realities of being in the firing line of Hezbollah. Today, Jamal Tadmory, argues Lebanon is the victim of an illegal occupation and cowardly war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

92. [Why the West must exit now LEADER Bringing troops home will save lives and ease Middle East tensions](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

93. [Lebanese pay respects to Christian leader Supporters prepare for major Beirut funeral rally today](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

94. [To the gods of war, a sacrifice MORE THAN 60 KILLED AS ISRAELI MISSILES RAIN DOWN ON THE VILLAGE WHERE JESUS TURNED WATER INTO WINE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

95. [Reaction is as affronting as the meltdown](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

96. [Prince and the Middle East revolution MUSIC](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

97. [Israeli official convicted of indecent assault: Ex-justice minister found guilty of kissing female soldier](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

98. [*Refugees get billionaire's boost*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

99. [*World datelines*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

100. [*The kidnap of this woman's husband sparked the latest war in the Middle East*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

Thousands of Iraqis march for Shiite militia in Lebanon

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

August 5, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 490 words

Byline: Louise Roug, Los Angeles Times

Dateline: BAGHDAD

Body

BAGHDAD | With yellow Hezbollah banners above their heads and U.S. and Israeli flags beneath their feet, tens of thousands of Iraqis marched in Baghdad after Friday prayers in support of the Shiite militia in Lebanon.

While gunmen and bombings killed at least 30 people around the country in Iraq's own violence, protesters burned effigies of President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Wearing white funeral shrouds to suggest they are willing to become martyrs, many said they are ready to die for Hezbollah. The maverick Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who controls the powerful al-Mahdi army militia, had called for the demonstration. It was the largest of its kind in Iraq since the conflict began in Lebanon three weeks ago.

"We are his soldiers," chanted protesters. "The Mahdi Army and Hezbollah will be victorious."

Armed and black-clad al-Mahdi army militiamen mingled among the protesters as they walked through the streets.

"I wish from the bottom of my heart that there is a way to go and fight in Lebanon," said Hassanain Taher, a 36-year-old mechanic. "I will go directly from here, without saying goodbye to my family."

While organizers said half a million people participated in the march, American military officials, eager to play down support for Hezbollah, put the figure at only 14,000. An Iraqi contributor working for the Los Angeles Times estimated there were at least 100,000 demonstrators.

Some demonstrators carried coffins with signs saying "women and children of Lebanon." Local families offered the marchers soft drinks and water in the 110-degree heat.

Despite vicious sectarian fighting, Iraqis are uniting against what they view as a larger threat. Their sentiments might complicate matters for the U.S.-backed government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

In northern Iraq, where 19 people were killed by mortars and bombs in or around Mosul, Sunni preachers joined in the condemnation of Israel's military campaign in Lebanon.

"What the Israeli-Zionist forces are doing is a clear proof that the current war is a religious one aimed at destroying Islam," said Sheik Ibrahim Hasan. He called on worshippers to be "like one united body so as to be able to fight the enemies of Allah."

Thousands of Iraqis march for Shiite militia in Lebanon

Iraqi security forces struggled to quell the violence in Mosul. Local authorities announced a daylong curfew for Saturday.

The U.S. military confirmed that two soldiers assigned to 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division were killed in Anbar Province on Friday. According to Iraqi officials, four roadside bombs killed seven people and injured five in separate attacks in Baghdad.

In the predominately Shiite cities of Najaf and Samawa, angry young men also demonstrated in support of **Hezbollah**.

Iraqi police and officials associated with al-Sadr said gunmen attacked a convoy of al-Sadr followers, killing three and injuring 10 others in southern Baghdad as they traveled back to the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala after the rally.

Load-Date: August 5, 2006

End of Document

Rice's words fall on deaf ears

Australian Financial Review

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; International News; Pg. 13

Length: 746 words

Byline: Tony Walker JERUSALEM

Body

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has cut short a Middle East peace mission to return to Washington to work on what she describes as a "sustainable ceasefire".

But Dr Rice's ineffectual performance as a peacemaker, undermined at home by a US refusal to back an immediate ceasefire, has further diminished American credibility in the region.

Perceptions of the US as an honest broker in Middle East peacemaking have hardly been shakier in light of Washington's pronounced tilt towards Israel, barely restrained by the terrible events in Qana, southern Lebanon, in which an Israeli bomb destroyed a building killing more than 50 people, including at least 34 children.

Dr Rice's credibility has also taken a battering because it has been clear she is far from mistress of her own destiny in her faltering efforts to broker an end to hostilities that have been tearing Lebanon apart.

At a Jerusalem press conference after the first images of the Qana bombing of women and children were being televised around the world, she was obviously shaken.

"I will continue to work and work and work, that is what we can do," she said.

"If there is a way humanly to accelerate our efforts, I would do it."

But even as Dr Rice was speaking, US officials in Washington and New York, where the United Nations Security Council was preparing to meet in an emergency session, were manoeuvring to ensure there would be no call for an immediate ceasefire and no censure of Israel over its unrestrained attacks on civilian areas.

At the UN, US ambassador John Bolton objected to what he described as "conclusionary language" that would complicate a political solution.

"This is a very delicate matter that requires careful discussion so that rather than jump to conclusions about a ceasefire and other matters, we thought it was important to let that play out and do what was important to do, which was to address the tragic loss of civilian life," Mr Bolton, a leading administration hawk, said.

Earlier, UN secretary-general Kofi Annan had asked the council to "condemn in the strongest possible terms" the killings at Qana but in the end it settled on a non-binding declaration that expressed "extreme shock and distress" over the carnage.

Rice's words fall on deaf ears

Security Council members also urged an "end to the violence" and cited the "urgency of securing a lasting, permanent and sustainable ceasefire".

Dr Rice is due to travel to New York on Thursday to discuss a more comprehensive council resolution that would lay the foundation for an end to hostilities.

It would include demands for implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559 that provides for the disarming of Lebanese militias, an end to **Hezbollah**'s provocations across Israel's border, a return of Israeli prisoners captured on July 12 and the establishment of an international stabilisation force under UN auspices.

But in Jerusalem Dr Rice was told by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that his country's military forces needed 10 to 14 more days to complete their military campaign against **Hezbollah**.

It is not clear whether Dr Rice acquiesced, but US news reports suggest she elicited an agreement from the Israeli leadership to ease up on its bombing campaign in and around Beirut.

In an address to Israel's cabinet on Sunday, Mr Olmert said: "We will not blink in front of **Hezbollah** and we will not stop the offensive in spite of the difficult circumstances.

"Israel is in no rush to reach a ceasefire before we get to that point where we could say that we reached the main objectives we had set forth. This includes the ripening of the diplomatic process and preparing the multinational force," he said.

US diplomacy has, from the beginning, been aimed at providing sufficient leeway for Israel to press its attacks against **Hezbollah**, which is regarded in Washington as a proxy for Syria and Iran.

But the American approach has come under severe pressure because of the Israeli army's inability to deliver a "quick kill" against **Hezbollah**, and there is no sign after more than two weeks of relentless air attacks that it is any closer to achieving its aim of severely disabling the militia organisation.

Israel, meanwhile, has suspended its aerial campaign for 48 hours to enable humanitarian relief to be moved into southern Lebanon and for its residents to leave, pending a resumption of a heavy air assault and the possibility of a larger ground offensive to push **Hezbollah** guerillas beyond the Litani River, 25 kilometres from Israel's northern frontier.

Graphic

PHOTO: **Hezbollah** supporters erect a banner depicting US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice with the message: 'The massacre of children in Qana 2 is the gift of Rice.' Photo: AFP

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

Annan's Double Standard On Laying the Blame

New York Sun (Archive)

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: ISRAEL AT WAR; Pg. 6

Length: 804 words

Byline: Benny Avni

Body

Even the most just wars are a messy business in which the innocent are hurt alongside combatants. This is especially true when the combatants deliberately use civilians as a shield or a political tool.

Back in April, blue-helmeted U.N. troops, attempting to promote the first legitimate election in Congo in four decades, participated in a "massacre" of 30 Ituri men, women, and children, the British journalist Aidan Hartley reported in the Op-Ed section of the New York Times on Friday.

Secretary-General Annan said he was unaware of the allegations of atrocities committed by troops under his command. "I will look into these issues," he promised reporters on Friday.

Meanwhile, at the Security Council, where Congo is one of 15 members, Mr. Annan yesterday called for an immediate condemnation of Israel's actions at Kfar Qana in southern Lebanon, again urging an end to all "hostilities" prior to the disarming of Hezbollah.

Israel's argument - that its army's moral code, not to mention its political interest in extending its anti-terror military campaign, would preclude deliberate targeting of defenseless civilians - remained unheard. It was forced to declare a temporary suspension of its aerial activities. For the next couple of days, civilians will be allowed to leave southern Lebanon, with no way to verify whether non-uniformed Hezbollah fighters are among them.

Mr. Annan issued his rebuke just before the release of a video depiction of a Hezbollah missile launch from a spot adjacent to the Qana building where dozens of civilians found refuge. An air force briefer, Brigadier General Amir Eshel, later added that the only Israeli missile was shot at the building seven hours prior to the first report from the ground of its collapse, which killed at least 57 civilians.

Aiming to assume the role of white knight, Mr. Annan is weighing a trip to Damascus, Tehran, or both, Turtle Bay sources tell me. Desperate for a final, term-defining diplomatic achievement, they say, he is angling to position himself, or an envoy on his behalf, as a negotiator with the bad guys.

Hezbollah and its supporters, however, are no fans of the United Nations, or of Mr. Annan, who yesterday lauded Lebanon's parliament speaker, Nabih Berri, the main Shiite representative and Hezbollah supporter in Beirut, for his "statesmanlike appeals for calm" during attacks on a U.N. post in Beirut. (Mr. Annan spoke before a Palestinian Arab mob similarly stormed the United Nations' offices in Gaza.)

No Jerusalem politician was thus congratulated last week by Mr. Annan; instead, he accused Israel of deliberately targeting four unarmed U.N. troops in Khyam, in the heart of Hezbollah-land.

Annan's Double Standard On Laying the Blame

Mr. Annan was so quick to denounce Israel that yesterday he warned the council of two potential atrocities that have yet to take place. Israel had asked U.N. observers to help evacuate civilians from the Lebanese villages of Ramyah and Ayta ash-Shab, Mr. Annan said. The United Nations will not assume responsibility for those civilians once Israel attacks, he volunteered.

In contrast to his promise to investigate his own troops' actions in Congo, Mr. Annan repeatedly issues immediate guilty verdicts against Israel's army and then calls for investigations. This brand of justice helps to inflame passions, which yesterday manifested themselves in the attacks against U.N. offices in Gaza and Beirut.

Last week, Mr. Annan expended so much energy in trying to substantiate his assertion that Israel deliberately attacked the U.N. troops that he had no time to think of how to protect the lives of the badly defended troops under his

command. The United Nations' Lebanon contingent was left inside a dangerous war zone, performing meaningless tasks, which a former U.N. commander in Bosnia, the Canadian General Stephen MacKenzie, described as "counting artillery shells."

Israel aims to diminish Hezbollah's military capabilities significantly prior to the deployment of a French-led military force that would, one hopes, prevent its rearming. It needs two more weeks to achieve that goal, Prime Minister Olmert said yesterday. But events like Qana and Khiyam take their toll, accelerating the push for premature cease-fire.

Mr. Annan is not alone. According to British press reports London's foreign office is in near open rebellion over Prime Minister Blair's refusal to join the call for an immediate cease-fire.

Israel cannot rely on the kind of patience the Allies in World War II displayed to the razing, in the service of a just cause, of whole cities like Dresden. It also cannot block television cameras as it fights in Lebanon, as Russia does in Chechnya or China in Tibet. Unlike Congo, Israel's war efforts are extensively documented and their validity constantly second-guessed. On that, regrettably, Mr. Annan is firmly on the bandwagon.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Israeli air strike kills 27 sleeping children

Western Daily Press

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: Pg. 11

Length: 569 words

Byline: Ruth Wood Chief Reporter

Body

There were horrific scenes in Lebanon yesterday as Israeli bombs flattened houses on top of sleeping villagers, killing at least 27 children and two dozen other civilians.

The air strike on the southern Lebanese village of Qana at 1am was the deadliest since Israel and Hezbollah began fighting 20 days ago.

"We want this to stop," shouted distraught villager Mohammed Ismail. "May God have mercy on the children. They came here to escape the fighting."

Villagers helped civil defence workers by digging frantically with their hands to free survivors and pull bodies from the rubble.

A three-storey building in the village had taken a direct hit, killing old people, women and children from four families who had reportedly slept on the ground floor because they felt safer there from the bombardment.

The Israeli army defended the attack, saying rockets had been repeatedly launched on Israel from Qana.

Spokesman Captain Jacob Dallal said the aim of the strike was to destroy missile launchers in the village, and that the army had dropped leaflets several days ago telling civilians to leave the area.

"Had we known there were civilians, we obviously wouldn't have done it," he insisted.

Other Israeli officials expressed regret for the attack. "We deeply regret the loss of any civilian life and especially when you talk about children who are innocent. This is not the code of conduct of the Israeli army," said Gideon Meir, a senior Foreign Ministry official.

"But one must understand, the Hezbollah are using their own civilian population as human shields."

It is believed some 650 people - about a third of them children - have been killed by Israeli action in Lebanon over the past three weeks. A total of 51 Israelis, including at least 18 civilians, have been killed in the conflict, sparked by Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid earlier in July.

Yesterday's attack brought a swift response from Hezbollah - with a vow to retaliate. "The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered," a spokesman said.

Israeli air strike kills 27 sleeping children

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said she was "deeply saddened by the terrible loss of innocent life" but did not call for an immediate ceasefire.

She has now been forced to postpone her visit to Lebanon after Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said he would be unwilling to discuss anything other than an "immediate and unconditional ceasefire." Instead she will stay in Israel, where she intends to press for a settlement that addresses enduring issues between Lebanon and Israel and disables the Hezbollah - not the quick truce favoured by most world leaders.

In line with the US, Tony Blair has notably shied away from criticising Israel's actions, or calling for an immediate ceasefire.

But on Saturday night, a member of his own Cabinet publicly condemned Israel for the first time.

Former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, now Leader of the House, said he believed Tel Aviv's role in the hostilities was "disproportionate".

"Disproportionate action only escalates an already dangerous situation," he said.

"One of many serious concerns I have is that the continuation of such tactics by the Israelis could further destabilise the already fragile Lebanese nation."

He defended the right of the Israelis to defend themselves from terrorist attack, and expressed sympathy for the Israeli victims of the conflict, but also for the "ten times as many" Lebanese civilians killed or injured.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Israeli air strike kills 27 sleeping children

Western Daily Press

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: Pg. 11

Length: 569 words

Byline: Ruth Wood Chief Reporter

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Load-Date: October 29, 2006

Letters

Christian Science Monitor
August 2, 2006, Wednesday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 8

Length: 629 words

Body

Real culprit in the Lebanon situation is Israel, not Iran

In his July 28 Opinion piece, "Lebanon: A pawn in Iran's power play," Daniel Schorr has appeased the warmongering Israeli regime by leveling false accusations of Iran meddling in Lebanon's internal affairs.

Mr. Schorr conveniently conflates Iran's moral and political support for the people of Lebanon with an unjustified "power play." He overlooks Iran's role in the region as a bastion of peace and stability, as vividly demonstrated by Iran's good neighborly relations with the new governments in Afghanistan and Iraq, and he misinterprets Iran's role as subversive.

Instead of scapegoating Iran for the new conflict in the Middle East caused by Israel's militarism and total disregard for the rights of Palestinians and its Arab neighbors (some of whose lands it has been occupying for decades), Schorr should focus his criticisms on the Israeli regime's atrocities - condemned by the whole world community except the US government.

Contrary to his assertion, Iran has no need for nuclear weapons and Iran's leaders have repeatedly denounced the proliferation of nuclear weapons as amoral and not in Iran's interests. Schorr might have mentioned that unlike the Israeli regime, which has amassed nuclear weapons and refuses to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Iran has no nuclear weapons program and has permitted more than 2,000 IAEA inspector days over the past few years.

M.A. Mohammadi

Press secretary,

Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UN

New York

Israel is not the aggressor

Regarding Alan Dershowitz's July 27 Opinion piece, Hizbullah's real intent regarding Israel is to make Israelis appear as the aggressors. Hizbullah achieves this by hiding behind women and children with their rockets, using these women and children to prevent attack on these cowardly men.

When the attack occurs, which it did, these cowardly terrorists cry and moan, hoping to create the impression that they themselves were innocent victims.

Letters

As for Iran, let the world not forget that its president is also a terrorist. One should not negotiate with terrorists.

Donna Cretan

Columbia, Calif.

Direct energy toward New Orleans

I write in response to the July 13 article, "Lunar homes: Tiny rooms, but they repel dust and solar storms."

Isn't it obscene to spend even five minutes of the time of skilled architects and engineers "exploring the designs for living and working on the moon" before we consider ways to enable thousands of American citizens to return to their homes in New Orleans?

Dorothea Buck

Davenport, Iowa

Police only part of solution to violence

Your July 20 editorial, "Bring back community policing," commendably urges police cooperation with schools, churches, and other institutions in well-designed programs in crime prevention.

As you stated, this is the way to "get to kids early," lest they fall in with gangs and get "comfortable with guns."

However, the wider problem is the one posed by the easy accessibility of guns and ammunition by individuals lacking the crucial credentials for responsible possession of such weapons.

Kids aren't the only ones who should be kept from getting criminally involved with guns.

David J. Steinberg

Alexandria, Va.

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Load-Date: August 1, 2006

New Middle East ceasefire hopes

Wales on Sunday
August 6, 2006, Sunday
North Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 496 words

Byline: Jon Harry Wales on Sunday

Body

Tony Blair last night held out the prospect of a halt in fighting in the Middle East 'within a couple of days' following the agreement of a draft resolution on a ceasefire at the United Nations.

As the UN's 15-member Security Council met late to discuss the text thrashed out in intense negotiations between the US and France, the Prime Minister said that violence should stop as soon as the resolution is adopted.

The draft calls for a 'full cessation' of hostilities between Israel and guerrillas of the militant Hezbollah group in Lebanon, but allows Israel the right to defend itself if attacked.

The wording is a victory for the US and Israel, which had resisted demands from France and other nations for an unconditional halt to the fighting - something the Israelis believed would leave them vulnerable to Hezbollah rocket attacks.

Mr Blair hailed the agreement as 'an absolutely vital first step in bringing this tragic crisis to an end'.

The priority now was to get the resolution adopted as quickly as possible, he added.

Speaking at 10 Downing Street, Mr Blair said: 'It should mean that, on the adoption of the resolution by the full Security Council, there is then a full cessation of hostilities at that point on both sides.

'What is then necessary is that we put in place the international force that allows us to deal with the underlying issue and put the Government of Lebanon fully and properly in control of the whole of the Lebanon, so that Lebanon can get back on its feet and Israel can be secure.'

Mr Blair stressed the need to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian dispute which he said lay at the root of the current crisis. He pledged to work 'tirelessly' to revive the Middle East peace process and the Road Map to a two-state solution for the area.

'This is a first step,' he said. 'There's still much to be done.

'But there is no reason why this resolution should not be adopted now and we have the cessation of hostilities literally within the next couple of days.'

New Middle East ceasefire hopes

Since announcing the postponement of his planned holiday, Mr Blair has been engaged in a round of telephone diplomacy to try to assist the agreement of a draft text.

He has spoken to the prime ministers of both Israel and Lebanon, as well as French President Jacques Chirac, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and the premiers of Italy, Sweden and Spain.

The breakthrough at the UN came as fighting continued in Lebanon, with Israeli commandos battling Hezbollah guerrillas in the southern port city of Tyre while warplanes attacked capital Beirut.

Across the country, at least eight Lebanese and one Israeli soldier were killed, while a volley of Hezbollah rockets killed three women in Israel.

It was not immediately apparent how ready the warring sides were to comply with any UN resolution. Israel has previously suggested it would not withdraw from southern Lebanon until the new peacekeeping force is deployed, while Hezbollah has said it will cease fire only when Israeli forces have left the country.

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

End of Document

Family torn apart by war

The Toronto Star
August 28, 2006 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A06

Length: 2122 words

Body

The young men clambered down into the grave that held the corpses of five fallen fighters while Hezbollah's marching band peeled off a drum roll in the distance.

Hundreds of men crowded around the hole, watching in silence as a dagger passed among the chosen 10. Each took his turn, slicing his thumb with the knife-edge until a few beads of blood appeared, then reaching down and marking one of the caskets with his thumbprint.

As much as this was a funeral for the five Hezbollah "martyrs" from Aitaroun, Lebanon, it was also an initiation ceremony. By leaving their thumbprints in blood, these 10 men from Aitaroun solemnly promised to exact revenge on Israel by filling the vacant spot left in Hezbollah's ranks by their dead brothers and cousins; two new guerrillas for every slain one.

Family traditions die hard here in the broad valley that sits just over the hill from the Israeli frontier, which Israeli troops have invaded six times in nearly 30 years. And for one family in particular, most young men have grown up to do one of two things: become a Hezbollah foot soldier in the ongoing battle with Israel or escape all this for Canada.

That is the story of the al-Akhras family of Aitaroun and Montreal.

Moussa al-Akhras, 60, stood beside the grave smoking Marlboros and watching his son and nephew embrace. They had just pledged to replace his other son, Akil, a 30-year-old guerrilla who was killed Aug. 4 by fire from an Israeli Apache helicopter.

"I have five more boys and I'm ready to give them all to Hezbollah," Moussa later said. "Because what Israel is doing is not a human thing. They are barbarians. They are animals."

In the early evening of July 16, two weeks before they killed Moussa's son, Israeli aircraft bombed a house at the centre of the village. The shockwave reached all the way to Canada.

That house sheltered Moussa's two Canadian cousins, Ali and Ahmed, along with Ahmed's wife, son Ali, daughter-in-law Amira and four grandchildren.

Years before, Ahmed and Ali left the hills and valleys of south Lebanon for Montreal. This summer holiday was meant to introduce the next generation to the land the al-Akhrases have farmed for centuries. But the blast turned the house to dust and rubble, killing all the Canadians inside except for Ahmed.

Family torn apart by war

July 16 was a stifling summer day in the Montreal neighbourhood of Outremont. News of the Aitaroun attack had reached Canada and another group of relatives - the clan numbers more than 100 people in Montreal - gathered to grieve in the house owned by real estate developer Hussein Al-Akhras.

Dozens of family members were bemoaning their loss, venting at the Conservative government and railing against the Israel Defence Forces.

Hussein Al-Akhras, brother of Ahmed and Ali, first cousin of Moussa, was too shaken to speak to a visiting reporter.

But the parade of friends and relatives who entered the house - it's thought that as many as 2,000 people in Montreal can trace their roots directly to Aitaroun - swiftly jumped in.

"Where's our government in this? Who's going to make the bombing stop? These are children and old people dying. We feel like second-class citizens," grumbled Tufic Taksh, whose family also hails from Aitaroun.

Of the 1,300 or so mostly civilians Israel killed during its 34-day offensive in Lebanon, none prompted the kind of confused responses in Jerusalem and Ottawa than the death of the eight al-Akhrases from Montreal.

That night, a senior Israeli official telephoned Canada's ambassador in Tel Aviv to express his "profound sorrow and regret at the death of the Canadian nationals in Lebanon."

Yet at the same time, Israel's military unapologetically maintained its bombers were justified in attacking the al-Akhras home.

"The village of Aitaroun serves as a launching ground for missiles fired at Israel. Residents of the village were warned of the danger of being in the proximity of missile launch sites. The IDF regrets civilian casualties. Responsibility for endangering civilian population rests on the Hezbollah terror organization, which operates and launches missiles at Israel from populated civilian areas," a statement from the Israel Defence Force read.

But everyone in Aitaroun seems to insist that Hezbollah never launched a single rocket from the village. In fact, residents reported that for the 34-day conflict they didn't even glimpse the fighters who live amongst them in peacetime, working regular civilian jobs and raising their families.

"This village. It's only civilians," said Zeinab al-Akhras, 28, another al-Akhras cousin. She lives across the street from a heap of mangled grey concrete and 15-metre crater, all that remains of the house Israel attacked.

"For weeks, we didn't see any of the Hezbollah fighters when we went out," she said.

It wasn't until Akil was reported dead that anybody knew where he had been fighting. And that news only seemed to reach some members of the al-Akhras family in Aitaroun when relatives in Canada spotted it on a Hezbollah website and telephoned with the news, Zeinab said.

What's more, nobody in Aitaroun knows why Israel would specifically target the al-Akhras house and leave other nearby homes alone. Sure, Hezbollah flags flew from the house, neighbours said, but that's the case for most houses here in Hezbollah's heartland of support.

While Canadian officials in Ottawa and Beirut scrambled to evacuate Canadian citizens from the treacherous fighting, Prime Minister Stephen Harper strongly supported Israel in the conflict with Hezbollah.

"I am sure that deep inside, he knows the truth," said Moussa, after learning of Harper's stance. "He knows what has gone on here. But he is obliged to follow the Zionists, because if he didn't support them, he would never have become prime minister of Canada."

As he stood in Montreal's Trudeau International Airport last week waiting for his badly injured sister to return from Beirut, via Cyprus, Hussein al-Akhras finally began to discuss his family's defining tragedy.

Sporting a salt-and-pepper beard, Hussein wore the strain of weeks of sleeplessness.

Family torn apart by war

"It's still very difficult, I still have a brother and several sisters who can't leave Lebanon, there's still a great sadness and we all feel a bit helpless," he said as his 57-year-old sister Fatima and 23-year-old nephew Mohammed walked into the international arrivals area, exhausted and relieved to finally arrive home. Not a Canadian citizen, Ottawa gave Fatima special dispensation to come to Canada after being badly injured in the July 16 blast.

Hussein's brother Ahmed, 64, who was evacuated from Lebanon via Cyprus on Aug. 13, has been recovering in the downtown Hotel-Dieu Hospital. He has burns on his arms and legs, and has several shrapnel wounds, including one near his heart. Coincidentally, his cardiologist there originally comes from Aitaroun.

Though Ahmed is making steady progress, the worst part of his recovery lies ahead. No one in the family has yet told him that his wife, son, daughter-in-law, grandchildren and brother are dead.

"In the state he was in, it would probably have killed him," said Hussein, who was expecting to have to break the terrible news to his older brother. "We want to make sure his health has come back. It's going to be very hard."

But at the airport last week, tears flowed down Hussein's cheeks, and he started shaking as he embraced his sister; the moment was almost too much to bear for the man who was the first member of his sprawling family to leave Aitaroun for Canada in 1974.

Thanks to his business successes, Hussein was able to sponsor four of his brothers and five of his nephews for Canadian citizenship. Though Hussein came to Canada to find his fortune, the flood of relatives who would eventually follow mostly emigrated to flee Israel's occupation of south Lebanon and Lebanon's 15-year civil war.

Hussein's older brother Ahmed arrived in 1979 with his wife and two children. His eldest brother, Ali, would arrive in 1991 along with his own sizable brood.

"I was able to help a lot to come over. We're a close-knit family. I just wish I could sponsor more people now," said Hussein.

In many ways, the family is the epitome of the immigrant success story, starting out on the modest South Shore of Montreal and fanning out into the city's more prosperous neighbourhoods.

Ahmed was a greengrocer and father of five, including his oldest son, also named Ali, a 35-year-old pharmacist.

Ali owned a Jean Coutu drugstore franchise on the main strip of Cote-des-Neiges, perhaps the city's most multicultural district.

It's the kind of place where a Muslim Arab shop owner wouldn't think twice about offering a summer job to the daughter of a prominent B'nai Brith executive.

"I knew Ali pretty well. I didn't know much about his family, but we used to exchange greetings in Arabic," Aaron Remer, a Montreal businessman and the Canadian chair of B'nai Brith's Institute for International Affairs, said in a recent interview.

When it came time for Remer's 17-year-old daughter to look for summer work, she knocked on the doors of several businesses.

"The one that seemed really eager about hiring her was Ali's," he said.

In the end the job didn't pan out, and while Remer is an unflinching supporter of Israel's stand against Hezbollah, he said he felt the depth of the tragedy, glumly adding: "Israel has earned another enemy. They've lost an entire family, and I don't blame them."

In the days following the bombing that decimated Ali's family, the focal point of the grieving shifted to Montreal's Lebanese Islamic Centre, one of the city's main Shiite mosques. Ahmed once sat on the board of directors at the mosque, and Ali was also active in the congregation, as were several cousins and friends.

Family torn apart by war

At an emotional news conference after the bombings Ali Al-Akhras's sister Mayssoun - who lived next door to her brother and is also a pharmacist - raised eyebrows by insisting that Hezbollah "is our protector. No one is standing up for us but Hezbollah."

Those sentiments extended through Montreal's Arab community in the raw aftermath of the July 16 attack, and family members suggested they were less a profession of allegiance than an expression of fury.

As Mahmoud Al-Akhras, a Montreal shopkeeper, pointed out, the family is large to the point where it includes Christians, Sunnis, Shiites and Druze - it would be unfair to pigeonhole the clan as Islamic fundamentalists.

When asked if they knew Akil Al-Akhras, and if they were aware he had a "martyr's funeral," several members of the family offered variations on the same response.

"Sure, anything's possible," Mahmoud Al-Akhras shrugged. "But it's a very big family, I didn't know him, he didn't come from our side."

Back at the cemetery in Aitaroun, the marching band started playing the Lebanese national anthem as tearful men embraced each other.

"Israel and America are the lands of the devil," a Hezbollah official shouted from a loudspeaker. "Death to them!"

Further back from the grave, hundreds of women, wrapped in traditional black abayas, gathered around Akil's widow.

Someone held up a framed photograph of Akil brandishing a Kalashnikov. At once, the women of Aitaroun began to howl, the traditional Shiite ululation for the dead.

The voice over the loudspeaker returned, interrupting the high-pitched wails: "Congratulations to you martyrs, to your mothers, to your fathers," he said. "The land where you were born will always hold your memory in a place of pride. We will always be faithful to you."

After the ceremony, the al-Akhrases of Aitaroun retreated to their home, which sits just around the corner from the site of the July 16 blast. The yellow flags of Hezbollah were flying from the roof.

The men sat beneath a wide walnut tree, smoking cigarettes while women poured thick Arabic coffee from brass pots. The men wondered if they too should have left for Canada when they had the chance.

"Of course they are lucky to be there," Moussa said of his relatives in Montreal. "Of course they were lucky that they didn't have to live through this war."

"Put yourself in my shoes. We've been raped by Israel, our family. Don't you believe we have the right to defend ourselves? We must," he said.

"If somebody invaded Canada, wouldn't people go and fight for Canada?" said his brother, Ahmad Jafaar. "It is our duty to fight for ourselves. That is why we support Hezbollah."

Suddenly, a lightening bolt fractured the sky and heavy raindrops began to fall.

"I am 60 years old and I have never seen rain in August in Lebanon," Moussa said, getting up and heading for the house.

He paused. "This rain is a sign from God," he said. "It means we are right and Israel is wrong. It will wash away all the poisons Israel has left in this land and make everything good again."

Graphic

Family torn apart by war

RYAN REMIORZ CP File Photo Maysoun al-Akhras is gripped by emotion during a Montreal news conference after hearing Ali Al-Akhras, 36, and his wife Amira, displayed centre and bottom row centre in photos on podium, and their children (top row) Saja, 8, left, Zeinab, 6, middle, and Ahmad, 4, were killed in Lebanon July 16. Also killed were an uncle Ali al-Akhras, left, and grandmother Hania, right, with Ahmed, who is recovering in Montreal.

Load-Date: August 28, 2006

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Middle East crisis: British Jews: Beleaguered community torn by a distant war

The Guardian - Final Edition

August 5, 2006 Saturday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 20

Length: 631 words

Byline: Stephen Bates, Religious affairs correspondent

Body

The Lebanese conflict has left British Jews feeling beleaguered, and torn between their desire to support Israel and their concern about the tactics it is deploying in Lebanon.

Ed Kessler, director of the Centre for Jewish Christian Relations at Cambridge, said: "There is strong support for Israel, but there is tension too over the civilian suffering. People feel Israel had to respond but raw nerves have been touched.

"Israel is surrounded by countries that don't want it to exist and had to react, but at the same time if there is another Qana, it is going to cause real disquiet. I know my kids will be talking about it tonight."

While some high-profile members of the Jewish community, such as Maureen Lipman and Lord Weidenfeld have come out publicly and strongly for Israel, several contacted yesterday by the Guardian said they would rather not comment. There have been divisions along political lines too, with figures on the left - Harold Pinter, Eric Hobsbawm, Jonathan Miller and Janet Suzman - signing a petition highly critical of Israeli government policy.

But soundings among the wider Jewish community so far indicate the large majority putting aside its usual internal divisions to support the Israeli people as *Hizbullah's* rockets rain down on northern Israel, much more so than during the occupation of Lebanon in the early 1980s.

Rabbi Danny Rich, chief executive of Liberal Judaism, said: "Most of my community are very anguished. It is possible to publicly support Israel and appreciate that Lebanese civilians are paying a very high price. If I was speaking to a Jewish audience, I would probably say that I am bothered about Jewish morals. The more times you bomb Beirut the easier it becomes. I would rather they had been more restrained, but the reality is that when you are under attack, what is being disproportionate? If it is true that one million Israelis are in bomb shelters, that's 20% of the population."

David Rowan, editor of the Jewish Chronicle, said: "There is a dominant perception that this is an existential fight for Israel's very existence and criticism of how fairly Israel's case is being represented in the broadcast media, a feeling that journalists have decided there are good guys and bad guys and are concentrating much more on the suffering of one side than the other. People are worried that the perception of the war is making it more acceptable for people on chat shows and at dinner parties to make ludicrous comparisons between Israel and the Nazis."

Middle East crisis: British Jews: Beleaguered community torn by a distant war

Rabbi Jonathan Romain of the Maidenhead Reform Synagogue said: "People are divided and upset by the high number of casualties, but there is also a feeling that much higher bloodshed in other wars elsewhere, like Darfur, is not being covered to the same degree. They think Israel is at least trying to minimise civilian casualties while Hizbullah is aiming for them, rather than military targets."

Maureen Lipman, the actor and Guardian columnist, said she was contemptuous of "self-despising" British Jews who signed a petition by the Jews for Justice for Palestinians group this summer criticising Israeli government policy.

"The death toll of women and children was terrible; in the last attack I felt ashamed . . . (but) there is a lack of understanding of Israel's situation and how there has been drip-drip terrorism . . . what exactly is a proportionate response to unprovoked attacks? A letter? A sanction? A slapped wrist?"

The actor Miriam Margolyes robustly defended the opposite perspective. "Israel must stop bombing Lebanon," she said. "It is both morally and strategically wrong . . . I am very disappointed at the response from English Jews who regard people like me as traitors when in fact they are the traitors because they are betraying the high ideals of our faith."

Load-Date: August 5, 2006

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READERS WRITE

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

August 3, 2006 Thursday

Main Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 14A

Length: 928 words

Byline: RICHARD E. MCCOWN, JEAN VEASEY, WILLIAM BILEK, JOHN HAYWARD, ANDREW W. VENDAL,
CHARLES M. DEAN JR., KENT ALEXANDER

For the Journal-Constitution

Body

Middle East: Responses to "Stop the fighting, then look long term," @issue, Aug. 1

Cease-fires haven't worked in the past

"In June 1993, Israel responded to Hezbollah rocket attacks along its northern border," writes former U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. The world, through the United States, arranged a cease-fire. "In April 1996, when Hezbollah again launched rocket attacks," and when its terrorists hid behind U.N. protection, resulting in the first Qana disaster, the United States again brokered a cease-fire, Christopher recalls.

Unmentioned by Christopher are the Palestinian terrorist attacks in 1978 and 1982, wherein Israel was also forced to defend itself, and the terrorists were again saved by U.S.-brokered cease-fires, only to come back again, and again.

Yet what does Christopher have to offer this time? Yet another cease-fire; yet another opportunity for the terrorists to rearm and attack again in two weeks or 10 years, or whatever. One would think that Christopher, and the world, would learn from past mistakes. At some point, the West, and Christopher, will have to make a stand, I hope before it is too late.

WILLIAM BILEK, Atlanta

Eliminate or neutralize terrorist groups

Warren Christopher writes of the need to "stop the fighting, then look long term." However, Christopher's own words point to the folly of his position.

READERS WRITE

The United States was instrumental in halting fighting between Israel and Hezbollah in 1993 and 1996. But these efforts merely afforded Hezbollah time to regroup, rearm and plan for its next engagement.

Any long-term strategy in the Middle East must start with the elimination or marginalization of terrorist groups. Anything less will prolong the cycle of violence and killing.

JOHN HAYWARD, Atlanta

Past mistakes shouldn't be repeated

Warren Christopher's experience as U.S. secretary of state dealing with acts of terrorism by Hezbollah is proof that Hezbollah must be disarmed before a lasting peace can be negotiated. Twice his peace without disarming Hezbollah did nothing more than give that terrorist organization time to dig in, increase its numbers, replenish and expand its weapons, and once again attack Israel. We must ensure it's done right this time or be prepared to do it again.

ANDREW W. VENDAL, Atlanta

Driving: Responses to "Elderly drivers should face restrictions, evaluations," @issue, Aug. 1

Teens gone wild a mobile menace

New Attitudes columnist Kelly Warren is right. The elderly should be tested for diminished driving ability.

However, during the past year, three young women driving SUVs and blathering on cellphones have turned in front of me; two young drivers running red lights have nearly hit me; and one young idiot tested my brakes by crossing the double line on a curve and cutting sharply in front to avoid oncoming traffic.

I have lost count of the hurried young who express displeasure by blowing horns, flashing lights and cutting in front of me. I have this odd notion that stop signs, yield signs and speed limits mean what they say.

I wonder what some of these young road experts will do when they, as I, have passed the allotted three score and 10 years.

RICHARD E. McCOWN, Lawrenceville

Just follow laws

If every driver followed the laws, and the laws were enforced, that, more than age restrictions, would cut down on accidents. Yes, elderly people have more health problems and ailments; but young people have more distractions.

I'm 73, and my husband will be 76 in a few days. The biggest problem we have on the road is trying to keep out of the way of drivers of all ages breaking laws.

JEAN VEASEY, Stockbridge

Cherokee takes the smart approach

Mike King wonders whether it's a no-growth or pro-growth year for Cherokee County and observes that our voters are the most fickle of the "metro lot" ("Primary and secondary observations," @issue, July 27). We're not fickle; we're becoming more educated and informed than the surrounding counties were as they grew.

Our present commission chairman, Mike Byrd, asked several times in the recent past, "What do you want to look like when you grow up?" and followed up with "the community should decide." The voters answered in this election that "we do not want to look like Gwinnett or any of the rest of the congested metro lot!"

READERS WRITE

It's not "no" or "pro" growth, it's "slower and smarter" growth. The "Citizen's Round Table" was formed to be a major component in this decision process.

CHARLES M. DEAN JR.

Dean, of Woodstock, is a Citizens Round Table member.

No question: Jewell deserves 'hero' status

Three cheers for Richard Jewell, and kudos to Gov. Sonny Perdue for publicly recognizing him for heroism ("Jewell praised for Olympics work," Metro, Aug. 2).

On July 27, 1996, Jewell spotted a backpack at Centennial Olympic Park. It turned out the backpack contained a shrapnel-laden bomb. Had he not worked swiftly with GBI Special Agent Tom Davis to alert other authorities, and had they not remained to help redirect the crowd away from the imminent blast, the tragic death of Alice Hawthorne could easily have been 100 instead.

I hope people recognize once and for all that Eric Rudolph, the now-convicted murderer, is the only villain who should ever be associated with this sad chapter in Olympics and Atlanta history.

Jewell is indeed a hero, as are Davis and other law enforcement officials that night who performed their duties at the highest and most selfless levels possible.

KENT ALEXANDER

Alexander, of Atlanta, served as U.S. attorney during the Olympics. He is now senior vice president and general counsel of Emory University.

Graphic

Photo: Associated Press Around 500 members of **Hezbollah** hold a rally in a suburb of Beirut in 1996 following Israeli attacks on Lebanon.

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

BEIRUT'S NEIGHBORHOODS GROW; EVEN MORE DIVIDED BY SECT

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

March 4, 2007 Sunday

TWO STAR EDITION

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Section: WORLD; Pg. A-6

Length: 958 words

Byline: Scheherezade Faramarzi, The Associated Press

Dateline: BEIRUT, Lebanon

Body

Zachariya Shaer's neighborhood of Beirut has been Sunni Muslim for generations. His family's roots here date to 1800 and he has documents to prove it.

Now the walls and lampposts are plastered with Shiite posters and graffiti, and in a city whose peace depends on a delicate sectarian balance, many fear trouble ahead.

Sunnis like the Shaers once predominated in the neighborhood named Zoqaq Blatt, or "tiled alley," after its French-colonial-era cobblestones. Shiites have been migrating here for decades from south Lebanon, escaping a region long neglected by the government. Their numbers have risen sharply in recent years, and Sunnis now find themselves in the minority.

The influx is paralleled by the dramatic rise of Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed Shiite militia, riding on the prestige it won in the Arab world for standing up to Israel in a 34-day war last summer. It also coincides with the ascent to power of the Shiite majority in Iraq and the feud with the Sunnis that has followed.

Accurate counts of the various Muslim and Christian groups in this nation of roughly 4 million are nonexistent. Lebanon hasn't had a census since 1932, because a sharp change in numbers could provoke calls for a change in the long-standing arrangement whereby the president must be a Maronite Catholic, the prime minister a Sunni and the speaker of parliament, the lesser of the three posts, a Shiite.

Shiites, though probably not a majority in Lebanon, are the largest religious group.

The tremors rolling through Lebanon began in February 2005, with the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and the demonstrations that pointed blame at Syria and forced it to withdraw its forces from the country.

Next came the Israel-Hezbollah war. And in November Hezbollah and Amal, a fellow Shiite group, quit the coalition of Prime Minister Fuad Saniora because it wanted a veto over Cabinet decisions. Since Dec. 1, the Hezbollah-led opposition has held huge rallies and a vigil in a tent city outside the government's offices in Beirut.

Many Sunnis, meanwhile, blame Hezbollah for starting a war that caused \$2.8 billion worth of Israeli-inflicted damage on Lebanon.

BEIRUT'S NEIGHBORHOODS GROW EVEN MORE DIVIDED BY SECT

On Jan. 25, scuffles between Sunni and Shiite college students in the Sunni neighborhood of Tarik Jdideh burst into clashes that evoked memories of the country's 15-year civil war. Cars were torched, snipers fired from balconies and roofs, and Shiite women accused Sunnis of trying to pull off their head scarves.

Beirut's Sunnis and Shiites are increasingly wary of each other.

"They want to impose their views just because they have guns," Mr. Shaer, 57, said of Shiite leaders. He said he resented the Hezbollah flags flying from an electricity pole above his appliance store, but feared his shop would be trashed if he removed them.

There are complaints of Shiite vigilantes stopping cars to check ID cards for Sunnis. Mr. Shaer's wife, Amal, says she has stopped shopping at Shiite-owned stores "after Shiites asking for her ID attacked my daughter's car."

In their neighborhood, the few banners and posters representing Sunnis, including the late Hariri and his son Saad, were torn down after the Sunni-Shiite street clashes.

In Tarik Jdideh, a couple of miles from Shiite neighborhoods, troops and armored cars have deployed following the death of a young Shiite man who was shot in December as he headed home from a protest.

Ahmed Khatib, a 27-year-old Sunni, said that when he sought to buy an apartment in Tarik Jdideh, the owner demanded assurances he was not a Shiite.

Hassan Chouman, a Shiite elder in Zoqaq Blatt, blamed the tensions on politics, not religion and said he was working to calm Sunni families.

"We visit them at their homes to assure them no harm will come to them," said Chouman, a Hezbollah member whose father moved here 70 years ago from southern Lebanon when he came to work at Beirut's port.

He said Shiite residents were nervous, too, and were increasingly asking him for ID cards that don't reveal their sect.

He said it was not Hezbollah but residents themselves who were hanging out the Shiite flags and banners. But it's unlikely any group short of an organized party could festoon every electricity pole.

The roots of the feud are ancient. Sunnis in Zoqaq Blatt say they take offense at Shiite flags with "Hussein" written on them. Hussein, later to be revered as a Shiite saint, was killed in a 7th century battle with the ruler Yazid, whom Shiites consider a Sunni.

"Provocation," Mr. Shaer said, throwing up his hands in frustration. "You either have to leave the neighborhood or stay quiet."

Shiites, for their part, complain that on the anniversary of Mr. Hariri's assassination, Sunnis chanted "Omar," the Prophet Muhammad's successor whom Shiites view as having usurped Islam's leadership.

But Mr. Shaer remembers when Sunnis and Shiites lived in harmony. His 19-year-old daughter, Hiba, said her best childhood friend is a Shiite.

Shiites started arriving in big numbers to Zoqaq Blatt during the 1975-90 civil war, moving into homes vacated by Christians and later Sunnis who fled the fighting.

Other newcomers were Shiite businessmen who had made money in Africa.

And 30 years of conflict with Israel have driven many more out of southern Lebanon in search of safety and jobs in the capital.

BEIRUT'S NEIGHBORHOODS GROW EVEN MORE DIVIDED BY SECT

Even some long-term Shiite residents resent the new sectarian divisions. "Damn the day we came to Beirut," said Mohammed Ftouni, 52, a Shiite whose parents migrated from the South to Zoqaq Blatt before he was born. People in the south "are kinder despite the Israeli problem," he said.

"In this neighborhood," said a Sunni elder, "the big fish swallows the small fish." He would only be identified by his first name, Sharif, lest he get into trouble with neighbors.

Graphic

PHOTO: Mahmoud Tawil/Associated Press: Lebanese walk under a billboard in French reading "We Love Life" in Beirut.

Load-Date: March 6, 2007

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LETTERS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 31, 2006 Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Letters; Pg. 8

Length: 399 words

Body

Leave extremists on the outside

Norm Neill (Letters, July 29-30) makes a good point when he says there can be no hope of peace while the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, "refuses to acknowledge any post-conflict role for Hezbollah". Unfortunately, with Hezbollah committed to the destruction of Israel, one wonders what constructive post-conflict role it would play.

The truth is that until the ordinary Israeli identifies more closely with the ordinary Lebanese (and Palestinian) than with the radical elements of his or her own side there will be no lasting peace. Likewise for the ordinary Lebanese (and Palestinian).

But every time these conflicts flare, the middle ground typically becomes polarised and flocks to the devil it knows. This most recent conflict seems to have many Israelis and Lebanese questioning support for the extremists' position. Bring on the day that the warmongers are put out in the cold.

Clem Colman Weston (ACT)

Looking at the photo of Dr Rice playing the piano (July 29-30), I kept getting images of Nero playing the fiddle. Hopefully Dr Rice will do something before Lebanon burns completely.

Ken Wallwork Beecroft

Deliberations by various nations have seen nothing but twiddling thumbs and disagreement. Since allies supplying ammunition are prolonging this war, maybe they should stop; without the firepower perhaps the aggressors will be more willing to talk.

Sue Harris Goulburn

From the Gulf War, we know the technology exists to pinpoint exactly the source of cannon fire, and to return fire to that point exactly. How can Israel be unable to target the sources of Hezbollah rockets?

David Week Camperdown

To the Lebanese people: You harbour a private army that has no respect for your neighbour's borders and that hides behind your women and children. Too many of you support the mischief that they do and now you pay the

LETTERS

price. They are not interested in the advancement of Lebanon but march to the drum of hate for the sake of a hidden agenda. Peace is a two-way process.

Doug Wormald Gloucester

We watch in horror the TV images of innocent civilian victims of **Hezbollah** and Israeli bombings. We make our judgements about the perpetrators. In doing so, we should be slow to cast stones. It was not very long ago that we Australians were involved in the bombing of Iraqi cities, killing and maiming tens of thousands of innocent civilians.

John Truman Chatswood

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

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INSIDE

The New York Times
September 5, 2006 Tuesday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 399 words

Body

U.N. Plans to Mediate On the Captured Israelis

Secretary General Kofi Annan said the United Nations would mediate talks on the release of Israeli and Hezbollah prisoners. It was unclear what form such talks would take; Israel insists it will never talk directly with Hezbollah.

There has been no confirmation from Israel that it would negotiate on the issue. The government says its soldiers should be returned unconditionally as part of the Security Council resolution that ended the recent fighting with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

But in the past, Israel has released prisoners in exchange for captives, and Hezbollah has made it clear that it is interested in a swap. PAGE A10

G.O.P. Lawmakers Shifting From Immigration to Security

As they prepare for a critical pre-election legislative stretch, Congressional Republican leaders have all but abandoned a broad overhaul of immigration laws and instead will concentrate on national security issues they believe play to their political strength. PAGE A18

Sudan's Ultimatum on Darfur

Sudan gave an ultimatum to the African Union force trying to monitor a peace deal in Darfur, telling it to extend its mandate without handing off to the United Nations, or leave by the end of the month. PAGE A8

Leaving Torn Jeans Behind

American Eagle Outfitters wants 30-year-olds to dress their age, with finer fabrics and tighter tailoring instead of baggy pants and frayed T-shirts. BUSINESS DAY, PAGE C1

The Curious Case Of Sexual Cannibalism

Across the eastern United States, a ritual that has long fascinated and confounded biologists is in full swing. The praying mantis is in courtship season. A male mantis approaches a female, foreground. Leaping on her back, he begins to mate. And quite often, she tears off his head. SCIENCE TIMES, PAGE F1

INSIDE

Woods Rolls On and On

Tiger Woods shot an eight-under-par 63 that included a pair of eagles to overtake Vijay Singh and win the Deutsche Bank Championship in Norton, Mass., capturing his fifth consecutive tournament and seventh this year.

Woods, who has won two majors this year, will take aim at Byron Nelson's record of 11 straight victories, set in 1945. SPORTSTUESDAY, PAGE D1

Thomas, We Hardly Knew Ye

California has decided that one of its statues in the United States Capitol, depicting a certain Thomas Starr King, a Civil War ally of Lincoln, will be replaced by a likeness of Ronald Reagan. PAGE A16

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos (Photo by Catherine Chalmers)

Load-Date: September 5, 2006

End of Document

CEASEFIRE; After missile attack that killed 37 children, Israel halts aerial bombardment for 48 hours

Daily Mail (London)

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: ED 3RD; Pg. 1

Length: 920 words

Byline: RICHARD PENDLEBURY; KIRSTY WALKER

Body

ISRAEL bowed to international pressure last night and held fire against Lebanon.

It agreed to suspend the aerial bombardment for 48 hours pending an investigation of its attack on the village of Qana which claimed more than 60 lives.

At least 37 children including a day-old baby were killed in the deadliest strike of the conflict so far. Such was the carnage that there were hopes it might be the tipping point which could lead to a prolonged ceasefire.

After a day of feverish diplomacy, Israel said it would also ask the United Nations to coordinate a 24-hour 'window' for families to leave Lebanon. But it reserved the right to attack targets if it learns that assaults are being prepared against Israel.

The development came after U. S.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice held extended meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni.

She urged them to use great restraint in the conflict. Miss Rice called the Qana bombing 'awful' and said she wanted 'a ceasefire as soon as possible' in the 19 days of fighting between Israel and **Hezbollah** guerillas in Lebanon.

It appeared to be her first meaningful call for a quick end to the bloodshed.

This would be the second time in a decade that an attack on Qana which went wrong brought an end to an Israeli offensive meant to stop **Hezbollah** rocket attacks. In 1996, Israel shelled a U.N. compound filled with refugees, killing at least 90. An international outcry forced Israel to curtail and then stop its offensive.

Hours before last night's announcement, Tony Blair had issued a joint statement with German Chancellor Angela Merkel saying Qana 'underlines the urgency of the need for a ceasefire as soon as possible'. The pair said work should start at the UN to establish the 'preconditions' to a ceasefire.

Government sources said the Prime Minister accepted that the Qana attack 'changed things'. But his failure to condemn Israeli tactics and call for an immediate halt to their military campaign risked fuelling what looks likely to be the most serious internal Labour rowsince the Prime Minister came to power.

CEASEFIRE After missile attack that killed 37 children, Israel halts aerial bombardment for 48 hours

Leftwing Labour MPs said they would demand an emergency recall of Parliament if a ceasefire were not agreed within 48 hours.

The victims of the Qana horror were displaced families sheltering in the basement of a three-storey house.

Israel said it regretted the incident. But Israeli deputy prime minister Shimon Peres said that the international community now had to urge Hezbollah to end the fighting.

He told reporters in New York last night: 'The pressure must be put on Hezbollah.' When asked who was responsible for the civilian deaths in Qana, Mr Peres said: 'Totally, totally it's (Hezbollah's) fault.' Lebanon's Prime Minister Fouad Siniora reacted by denouncing Israel's 'heinous crimes against civilians' and refusing to meet Condoleezza Rice for talks. His government said it could not hold negotiations until there was an immediate ceasefire.

In other developments: Mr Olmert warned he was in no hurry to end the conflict and told Miss Rice he wanted at least ten more days of bombing to smash Hezbollah.

Both Hezbollah and Hamas warned of retaliation against Israel.

The Lebanese army opened fire on Israeli helicopters trying to land near a town in the Bekaa valley the first deliberate clash between the two armies.

Hundreds of demonstrators stormed the UN headquarters in Beirut to vent their rage at the UN and the West for failing to stop the bloodshed.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan urged the UN to unite in condemnation of the raid at an emergency Security Council meeting, and said the international community must unite behind calls for an immediate ceasefire.

The Pope said: 'In the name of God, I call on all those responsible for this spiral of violence so that weapons are immediately laid down on all sides.' In signs of a Cabinet split in policy over the crisis, Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett went further than Mr Blair by describing the Qana attack as 'absolutely dreadful'. Urging Israel to review its tactics, she said: 'It's quite a p p a l l i n g.

U n d o u b t e d l y today's events will make things worse at least in the short term. We have repeatedly urged Israel to act proportionately.' The White House described the incident as 'terrible and tragic' and urged the Israeli government to exercise the 'utmost care so as to avoid any civilian casualties,' but significantly did not condemn America's Middle East ally.

The suspension of air raids was announced last night by U.S.

State Department spokesman Adam Ereli. 'The United States welcomes this decision and hopes that it will help relieve the suffering of the children and families of southern Lebanon,' he said.

Earlier, Kofi Annan had called an emergency UN meeting. He told it: 'Action is needed now before many more children, women and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control.

'I'm deeply dismayed that 'Don't play into their hands' my earlier calls for immediate cessation of hostilities were not heard, with the result that innocent lives continue to be taken.' Britain's ambassador to the UN, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, called the events in Qana 'unacceptable'.

But Israel's ambassador to the United Nations warned that Hezbollah was trying to con the world. Daniel Gillerman said: 'They want you to react the way you are. I am beseeching you not to play into their hands, not to provide them with what they are seeking whilst sacrificing their own people as human shields and as victims.' Comment Page 12

CEASEFIRE After missile attack that killed 37 children, Israel halts aerial bombardment for 48 hours

Graphic

GRIEF AND BEWILDERMENT IN HIS EYES, A RESCUE WORKER CARRIES A GIRL FROM THE RUINS OF THE VILLAGE OF QANA, SHATTERED BY ISRAELI MISSILES YESTERDAY

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Top Islamic body sacks Hilali and scraps title

Sunday Age (Melbourne, Australia)

April 8, 2007 Sunday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 292 words

Byline: Taghred Chandab

Body

CONTROVERSIAL Muslim leader Sheikh Taj al-Din al-Hilali has been sacked by the peak Islamic body and the title "Mufti of Australia" has been abolished.

The Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC), which employed Sheikh Hilali for over 15 years, has severed all ties with him. But Sheikh Hilali, who is in Turkey at a conference, has hit back by registering the title and vowed to carry on speaking on behalf of Muslims.

The move comes as Australian Federal Police widen their probe into allegations that he gave charity funds to Lebanese supporters of al-Qaeda and Hezbollah.

The Egyptian-born imam has long been plagued by controversy. During a sermon last year he likened scantily-clad women to uncovered meat, and earlier this year he said Muslims had more right to be in Australia than Anglo-Saxons.

AFIC president Ikebal Patel said that since the organisation resumed business in February it had not rehired Sheikh Hilali and that the organisation owned the title Mufti of Australia.

The decision came as the Australian National Imams Council (ANIC) decided to create a group of imams, the Australian Council of Jurisprudence and Research, to deal with community issues.

ANIC's spokesman, Dr Mohamad Abdalla, said 39 of the 50 clerics who attended its conference last month voted against reappointing Sheikh Hilali.

The AFP has been called in to examine allegations that Sheikh Hilali gave \$US10,000 (\$A12,200) of the \$US70,000 donated to the Lebanese Muslim Association for victims of last year's Israel-Hezbollah war to Lebanese supporters of al-Qaeda and Hezbollah during a visit to Lebanon last year. "The AFP has not received a referral to date," a spokesman said, adding that it was examining material to see "if an investigation is warranted".

Load-Date: July 3, 2007

Comment & Debate: Curb this deadly trade: Those who oppose the proposed UN arms treaty could derail a chance to save millions of lives

The Guardian - Final Edition
September 14, 2006 Thursday

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Section: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES ; Pg. 34

Length: 624 words

Byline: Bianca Jagger

Body

As the UN general assembly opens this week, it has its best opportunity in years to make a life-saving difference to people all over the world. An opportunity to stop human rights abuses, limit the threat of terrorism, and reduce suffering for millions. The opportunity is a draft resolution for an international arms trade treaty that would place tough controls on sales.

The treaty would make it illegal to sell weapons to human rights abusers; make it harder for weapons to end up in the hands of criminals and terrorists; and help regulate a trade that is spiralling out of control - \$900bn spent on defence versus only \$60bn on aid. Every day over 1,000 people lose their lives through armed violence.

We have seen the appalling consequences recently in the Middle East: the Israeli army flattening civilian targets with precision-guided 1,000lb "bunker-buster" bombs and forcing almost a million people to flee their homes; **Hizbullah** rockets fired into civilian areas in northern Israel, killing people and forcing others to leave. Both are war crimes, and largely perpetrated with weapons imported from other countries.

Israel's military hardware, including its deadly cluster bombs, is overwhelmingly American-made. And hi-tech British components were used in the Apache helicopters that have fired rockets at cars on crowded streets, and the F-16s that devastated southern Lebanon. For its part, **Hizbullah** doesn't manufacture the Katyushas or Khaibar-1 missiles it fired indiscriminately into Israel.

Six-year-old Abbas Yusef Shibli picked up a cluster munition while playing with friends because it looked "like a perfume bottle". When it exploded in his hand, he suffered a ruptured colon, a ruptured gall bladder, and a perforated lung.

Nicaragua, my birthplace, is still awash with weapons, the legacy of a bloody conflict - fuelled by the US arming the Contras - in which more than 40,000 civilians were killed. Nicaragua is now one of the poorest nations in the western hemisphere.

For decades, the US provided millions of dollars in military aid to oppressive governments in Latin America; many of those countries now have high levels of armed violence. As a human rights campaigner, I have advocated on behalf of countless victims of conflict, from Latin America to the Balkans to the Middle East. I can attest to the devastating effect on the civilian population, particularly on **women** and children.

Comment & Debate: Curb this deadly trade: Those who oppose the proposed UN arms treaty could derail a chance to save millions of lives

Some nations still try to block the treaty's progress - though their arguments are flawed. The resolution from Britain, Finland, Japan, Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica and Kenya, would not undermine states' sovereignty or ability to lawfully defend themselves with force. It would not hamper law enforcement to provide security for their citizens. Arms importers and exporters would simply have a clear set of rules to abide by, rather than the current hotch-potch of uneven and conflicting regulation.

The treaty would promote real security. It would help to stop armed groups that pay no heed to international law equipping themselves. An Amnesty International report last year detailed shipments of more than 240 tonnes of weapons from eastern Europe to governments in Africa's war-torn Great Lakes region, and on to militias involved in massacres, mutilation and mass rape.

More than 50 countries have voiced support for an arms trade treaty, but to make it happen we need a majority of the 192 member states. Today Britain hosts a meeting of diplomats to discuss tougher arms controls. For once the international community can act pre-emptively to prevent carnage, not be forced to mop up afterwards. It is an opportunity that the UN must seize.

Bianca Jagger is goodwill ambassador for the Council of Europe www.amnesty.org.uk/arms

Load-Date: September 14, 2006

End of Document

Hilali charity probe widens

Weekend Australian
April 7, 2007 Saturday
All-round First Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 641 words

Byline: Richard Kerbaj

Body

MATP

THE Australian Federal Police has seized documents and will question key Islamic community figures after widening its investigation into allegations Australia's mufti, Taj Din al-Hilali, gave charity funds to supporters of al-Qa'ida and Hezbollah terrorist outfits in Lebanon last year.

The Weekend Australian understands the AFP this week contacted Sheik Hilali's confidant Keysar Trad -- who is in Lebanon -- about the probe.

In recent days, police have seized documents from the Sydney-based Lebanese Muslim Association, which is linked to Sheik Hilali, and also interviewed its president, Tom Zreika.

It is believed the federal police "intelligence probe" will include the LMA's affiliate organisations that helped raise the charity donations.

The Australian revealed this week the LMA raised \$70,000 in conjunction with other Islamic bodies following the Israel-Hezbollah war in Lebanon last year.

The money was earmarked for war victims.

But LMA documents, in Sheik Hilali's handwriting, reveal he gave \$US10,000 to a political party leader and alleged supporter of the Iraqi insurgency and al-Qa'ida, Sheik Bilal Shaaban.

The LMA, which runs the nation's most powerful mosque in Lakemba, in Sydney's southwest, will also be asked by the AFP to submit paperwork detailing its financial transactions.

The Weekend Australian understands Sheik Hilali, who is overseas, and LMA employee Sheik Yihya Safi will be asked by the AFP to provide a detailed outline of how they distributed the Australian-raised funds in Lebanon, amid accusations that Sheik Hilali met the leader of Hezbollah's terrorist wing, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah.

Continued -- Page 2

From Page 1

Hilali charity probe widens

Hezbollah is an Iranian-backed group with a political arm in Lebanon and a militant arm that is proscribed in Australia.

Supporting both its political and military wings is illegal under UN counter-terrorist financing declarations.

It is understood that the AFP could potentially involve the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), which is the nation's financial intelligence unit and anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing regulator.

The Australian revealed in November that AUSTRAC was investigating two Australian citizens suspected of providing financial assistance to **Hezbollah** during its 34-day conflict with Israel.

It was revealed that AUSTRAC's specialist financial intelligence unit had linked two suspect transaction records to a name and an address and a further three suspect transaction records to another name.

The LMA's charity donations were electronically transferred by the LMA to Lebanon into the private bank account of its employee Sheik Safi, who then handed out the money with Sheik Hilali in November.

Mr Zreika said yesterday the LMA would no longer send money overseas without notifying government departments, including the Australian Taxation Office and the AFP.

"We are doing everything we possibly can to get to the bottom of this," he said.

"We won't be sending money overseas any more unless express consent is obtained from requisite authorities, including the federal police."

Mr Zreika promised this week to repay Muslim donors the \$US10,000 given by Sheik Hilali to Sheik Shaaban.

The LMA paid for Sheik Hilali's ticket to Lebanon last year after he came under fire internationally when The Australian revealed his Ramadan sermon in which he compared **women** to uncovered meat and joked about the notorious Sydney gang rapes.

But the LMA banned Sheik Hilali from delivering sermons at Lakemba Mosque after his return from Egypt in January.

And, in an embarrassing blow to the nation's 300,000 Muslims, the 66-year-old controversial cleric was given a three-month extension in his role as mufti two weeks ago by the newly formed Australian National Imams Council.

The ANIC's spokesman, Mohamad Abdalla, did not return calls yesterday.

Load-Date: April 7, 2007

'Two million' protesters on streets of Beirut

Daily Mail (London)

December 11, 2006 Monday

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Section: ED IRE; Pg. 15

Length: 441 words

Body

HUNDREDS of thousands of flag waving protesters flooded central Beirut yesterday after a call by the Hezbollah-led opposition to step up their ten- day campaign to topple Lebanon's Western-backed government.

In a huge show of force, the chanting crowds swamped two squares in the heart of the capital and rivers of men, women and children poured through surrounding streets demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora.

"Siniora out," demonstrators shouted. "Beirut is free," others yelled as possibly the biggest rally in Lebanon's history kicked off in bright sunshine. Giant loudspeakers blared out nationalist songs and drummers thudded a relentless beat.

The noise was clearly audible inside the nearby government headquarters where Siniora and most of his ministers are holed up.

Armoured vehicles, rings of razor wire and hundreds of security forces guarded the former Ottoman fortress.

Opposition activists have paralysed the city centre for 11 days in a round-the-clock protest aimed at forcing Siniora and his Sunnibacked majority to form a government of national unity.

There were no official estimates of the crowd size yesterday but one security source said it was the largest such gathering ever seen in Lebanon.

Opposition sources said the crowd was two million strong, roughly half Lebanon's population.

Speakers told the throngs that the government was in the thrall of the United States, repeating accusations that Siniora's allies had hoped Israel would crush Hezbollah in its recent war with Israel.

"I tell you that after the [Israeli] aggression ... there is no place for America in Lebanon," said Hezbollah deputy chief Sheikh Naim Kassem, speaking behind bullet proof-glass.

The crowd responded: "Death to America, death to Israel, long live a dignified Lebanon."

Siniora has accused Hezbollah of trying to stage a coup following its war and commentators have warned the worsening stand- off could degenerate into widespread violence in a country that is still trying to rebuild after the civil war that lasted from 1975-90.

'Two million' protesters on streets of Beirut

One protester has been killed and several people hurt in shooting incidents, riots and clashes between supporters of both sides since December 1.

The prime minister told a conference yesterday that the future of Lebanon was at stake, but said the country's democracy was strong enough to absorb the shock of the protests.

"This challenge covers the vision of Lebanon's future, the future of its system and its place in the region and the world."

Underlining the political passions at play, thousands of progovernment supporters staged a rally on Sunday in the Sunni city of Tripoli in northern Lebanon.

Load-Date: December 11, 2006

End of Document

Guardian Weekly: The dead of Qana: 'They found them huddled together': Israeli bombing of Lebanese village kills 54 civilians, including 34 children

Guardian Weekly

August 4, 2006 Friday

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TheGuardianWeekly

Section: Pg. 1

Length: 864 words

Byline: Ghaith Abdul-Ahad, Jonathan Steele and Clancy Chassay, Qana and Rory McCarthy

Body

It was an unremarkable three-storey building on the edge of Qana. But for two extended families, the Shalhoub and the Hashems, it was a last refuge. They could not afford the huge taxi fares to Tyre and hoped that if they all crouched together on the ground floor they would be safe.

They were wrong. At about 1am last Sunday, an Israeli bomb smashed into the house. Witnesses describe two explosions a few minutes apart, with survivors desperately moving from one side of the building to the other before being hit by the second blast. More than 54 bodies were pulled from the rubble, 34 of them children. There were eight known survivors.

As yet another body was removed from the wreckage, Naim Raqa, the head of the civil defence team searching the ruins, hung his head in grief: "When they found them, they were all huddled together at the back of the room . . . Poor things, they thought the walls would protect them."

The bombing, the bloodiest incident in Israel's recent campaign against **Hizbullah**, drew condemnation from around the world. Lebanon's prime minister, Fouad Siniora, accused Israel of committing "war crimes". Israel apologised for the loss of life but said it had been responding to rockets fired from the village.

Muhammad Qassim Shalhoub, a 38-year-old construction worker, emerged with a broken hand and minor injuries, but lost his wife, five children and 45 members of his extended family. "We heard a big explosion," he said. "I don't remember anything after that, but when I opened my eyes I was lying on the floor and my head had hit the wall. There was silence. I didn't hear anything for a while, but then heard screams."

"I said: 'I will come.' There was blood on my face. I wiped it and looked for my son but couldn't find him. I took three children out. I went outside and screamed for help and three men came and went back inside. There was shelling everywhere. We heard the planes. I was so exhausted I could not go back inside again."

Ibrahim Shalhoub said: "It was dark and there was so much smoke. Nobody could do anything till dawn." His eyes darted around nervously. "I couldn't stop crying; we couldn't help them."

Guardian Weekly: The dead of Qana: 'They found them huddled together': Israeli bombing of Lebanese village kills 54 civilians, including 34 children

Said Rabab Yousif had her son on her knee when the bomb fell. "I couldn't see anything for 10 minutes and then I saw my son sitting in my lap and covered with rubble," she recalled. "I removed the dirt and the stones . . . and handed him to the people who were inside rescuing us.

"I then started freeing myself . . . and then went with two men to rescue my husband. We pulled him from the rubble. I tried to find Zainab, my little daughter, but it was too dark and she was covered deep in rubble. I was too scared they might bomb us again so I just left her and ran outside." She was in hospital with her son and husband, who was paralysed and in a coma. There was no news of her daughter.

Rescue workers came across the smallest corpses last, many intact but with lungs crushed by the blast wave of the bombing. "God is great," a policeman muttered as the body of a young boy no older than 10 was carried away on a stretcher. The boy lay on his side, as if asleep, but for the fine dust that coated his body and the blood around his nose and ears.

Bodies were lined up on the ground - a baby, two young girls and two women. In a nearby ambulance the smallest victims were stacked one on top of the other to make space for the many to come. Family photos were scattered in the debris. Mohsen Hachem stared at the images. "They had to have known there were children in that house," he said. "The drones are always overhead, and those children - there were more than 30 - would play outside all day."

Anger at the attack erupted in Beirut, where windows in the UN building were smashed and its lobby invaded by demonstrators. After extensive coverage on Lebanese TV of corpses being taken from the remains of the building, thousands turned out in the city's main square to vent their fury.

Over the border, Israeli leaders expressed sorrow for the civilian deaths, but the military said that Qana had been targeted because Hizbullah had been using it as a base from which to launch rockets. "There was firing coming from there before the air strike. We didn't know there were civilians in the basement of that building," one Israeli defence force spokesman said.

On a hospital bed, a 13-year-old survivor, Nour Hashem, lay fiddling with her bed sheet, her eyes welling with tears. "We were all sleeping in the same room - my friend, my sister and my cousin," she said, her voice still shuddering. "I pulled the rubble off my mother and she took me to another house, then she went looking for my brothers and sisters. But my brothers and sisters didn't come and my mother didn't return."

The small village of Qana, south-east of Tyre, was a symbol of Lebanon's tragedy before last week's air strike. Ten years ago, in remarkably similar circumstances, Israeli artillery shelled a UN compound there, killing more than 100 civilians. The bombardment was part of an Israeli operation aimed (then, as now) at punishing Hizbullah and dislodging it from the border.

Comment, pages 3-6

Ceasefire move stalls, page 9

Blair and Beckett face revolt, page 12

Load-Date: August 18, 2006

PLAN B...TANKS ROLLING ACROSS THE BORDER

The Evening Standard (London)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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London **Evening Standard**

Section: A MERGE; Pg. 4

Length: 434 words

Byline: BOB GRAHAM

Body

SHORTLY before dawn the Israeli Defence Force put into action Plan B after its original strategy - using war planes to bomb its way to victory - turned into a disaster.

Over the past 24 hours the alternative plan for a ground invasion has become clear as troops and heavy armour gathered across a wide front along the border area after global condemnation of air strikes which claimed the lives of Lebanese civilians, including women and children.

Today - Day 21 of the offensive to wipe out Hezbollah strongholds - revealed the determination of Israel to achieve its objective of clearing the border area of Hezbollah.

The northern hills resounded to the noise of tanks and heavy armour crossing the border to occupy an area up to the Litani River, 18 miles into Lebanon.

The plan for a ground invasion was highlighted by the determination of a group of young soldiers - members of the 51 Golani Brigade - who had attended the funeral of a fallen colleague last night at the military cemetery in Haifa.

As one comforted the grieving mother, he told her: "I am sorry, we cannot stay, we are needed because we are returning to the front to finish the job your son helped us start."

A bus loaded with 30 soldiers from the front had been given just six hours' leave to attend the funeral.

News of the deeper incursion into Lebanon was given today by Israel Army Radio while a senior Israeli government official said ground forces would halt at the Litani river.

At the same time the government announced further army reservists would be called up, in addition to the three extra divisions, 30,000 troops, called to arms a week ago.

PLAN B...TANKS ROLLING ACROSS THE BORDER

All roads leading to the border area have become increasingly clogged with heavy armour and low loaders carrying additional tanks to the frontline.

A government spokesman claimed the offensive would last for two weeks and was aimed at clearing the area of all **Hezbollah** fighters.

The decision to change tactics was made at an emergency cabinet meeting last night.

Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, a senior Cabinet minister, said Israel wants to establish a **Hezbollah**-free zone in south Lebanon. He said: "This is the same area where we want a multinational force to be deployed."

The decision had been made at a closed door session and received unanimous approval.

Today's new offensive began with several war planes striking an area around the north-eastern border town of Jabel.

It was the signal for the tanks and infantry to advance.

Israel's prime minister Ehud Olmert said the offensive would end "when the threat over our heads is removed and when our kidnapped soldiers return to their homes."

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

End of Document

One Last Thing / Democracy, of itself, not solution to all problems

The Philadelphia Inquirer

August 6, 2006 Sunday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: CURRENTS; Pg. C01

Length: 1046 words

Byline: Jonathan Last

Body

Of the many deaths already reaped by the Hezbollah-Israeli conflict, perhaps the quietest befell the hopeful policy outlook expressed in President Bush's second inaugural address.

"It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture," the president said. "... And when the soul of a nation finally speaks, the institutions that arise may reflect customs and traditions very different from our own." This multicultural truism is no longer reassuring.

Democracy is a powerful force that often is an engine for liberalism. As Natan Sharansky argues in *The Case for Democracy*, democratic societies are mostly peaceful and, in relation to other systems of government, have a good track record in avoiding wars of belligerence.

But *pace* Bush and Sharansky, democracy is not a universal solvent. Not all democracies are created equal. The customs and traditions of a society matter as much as its mode of government. It may be true that all people yearn for freedom, but history shows that some people yearn for the freedom to go forth and kill their neighbors.

Until a few weeks ago, Lebanon was regarded as one of the successes of the Bush Doctrine. Even in June 2005, there was trouble on the horizon, when the Lebanese held their free elections: The terrorist group Hezbollah won 14 seats in the 128-member parliament. More worrisome, Hezbollah fared best where turnout was *highest*.

At the time, all that could be hoped was that democracy might reshape Hezbollah. Now it is clear that, having hijacked Lebanon's foreign policy, Hezbollah has reshaped Lebanese democracy.

In an instructive essay in a recent New Republic, Annia Ciezadlo writes, "I live in a mixed Beirut neighborhood, not heavily Shia or even exclusively Muslim." But when Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah spoke on TV announcing a Hezbollah attack on Israeli ships, she heard from all around the neighborhood "a surround-sound rustle of cheers and applause. Outside, caravans of cars rolled through the abandoned streets, and the drivers honked their horns." It will come as little surprise if Hezbollah gains strength in the next election.

One Last Thing | Democracy, of itself, not solution to all problems

Throughout the Middle East, elections have produced gains for Islamists, whose vision of democracy is at least a challenge for and perhaps antithetical to liberalism, tolerance or peace. In the Palestinian territories, the terrorist group Hamas swept to power last January. It, too, shows no signs of having been subdued by the burdens of democratic responsibility. In June 2005, 17 million Iranians cast their ballots for Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a man who has declared that "Israel must be wiped off the map."

Some Middle East elections have been less catastrophic, but no more hopeful. In February 2005, Saudi Arabia held mostly symbolic municipal elections. Nonetheless, as the Middle East Forum's Daniel Pipes observed, these "proved a boon for the Islamist candidates." In Egypt, the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood has been gaining support for decades. In Egypt's most recent (and highly imperfect) election, the brotherhood led all opposition groups, winning 88 parliamentary seats - up from 17 seats in 2000. Should Hosni Mubarak lose power, Egypt could become an Islamist state.

Even Turkey and Kuwait, two of the great hopes for Middle Eastern liberalism and toleration, have had problems. Turkish voters elected Tayyip Erdogan's religious AKP Party in 2002, which might be the beginning of a shift away from secular society. And Kuwait's Islamists have been gaining in popularity since the end of the Gulf War. Kuwait's most recent election, on June 29, was the first in which women were allowed to vote; when the ballots were tallied, the Islamist party further increased its base in the National Assembly. As Abdul Razak Shuyji, one of Kuwait's Islamic fundamentalist leaders, boasted to the Washington Post three years ago, "Whenever there is true democracy, the Islamists will prevail."

Even the Iraqi elections, which America gallantly labored to bring about, gave a 41 percent plurality to the Dawa Party and its partner, the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq. Part of their platform is that all laws must flow from Islam. This theocratic precept has proved problematic in the past.

Writing in the National Interest (and in their book *Electing to Fight*), professors Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder note that "unfettered electoral politics often gives rise to nationalism and violence at home and abroad." There is a whole list of democracies that have turned to war: In 1995, Bosnia fought Serbia after nationalist parties won elections. Peru and Ecuador, two other young democracies, went to war in the Amazon.

In other words, democracy isn't bulletproof. Instances of disastrous democracy extend back to ancient times. Athens voted to attack Syracuse in 415 B.C. It was a grinding, terrible defeat that spelled the beginning of the end for Athens in the Peloponnesian War. And, to leap to the 20th century, let's remember that the Germans voted the Nazi Party into power; we all know how that turned out. (I'm drawing no parallel between contemporary political movements and Nazism - simply giving one more instance of free popular elections', meaning democracy, getting the wrong answer.)

Surveying the problems of democracy in the Middle East, Mansfield and Snyder speculate that "although democratization in the Islamic world might contribute to peace in the very long run, Islamic public opinion in the short run is generally hostile to the United States, ambivalent about terrorism and unwilling to renounce the use of force to regain disputed territories... . Per capita incomes, literacy rates and citizen skills in most Muslim Middle Eastern states are below the levels normally needed to sustain democracy."

Certainly, the benefits of democracy should not be minimized. Witness the transformation of Eastern Europe and much of South and Central America. But after Hamas came to power, President Bush quipped that "when you give people the vote, you give people a chance to express themselves at the polls - and if they're unhappy with the status quo, they'll let you know. That's the great thing about democracy, it provides a look into society."

The experience of the last few weeks suggests that the president may be more right than he knows.

Contact Jonathan V. Last at jl@phillynews.com.

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

End of Document

Israel begins its search for a scapegoat

The Times (London)

August 15, 2006, Tuesday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 26

Length: 636 words

Byline: Ian MacKinnon and Stephen Farrell

Body

Inquiry calls are growing as Prime Minister claims success, write Ian MacKinnon and Stephen Farrell

ISRAEL'S embattled Prime Minister came out fighting yesterday hours after the start of the ceasefire, proclaiming that he took sole responsibility for the action against Hezbollah.

Ehud Olmert faced down a rowdy special session of the Knesset to answer critics who attacked his handling of the four-week war against the Lebanese militia.

Mr Olmert rounded on his attackers, hailing the UN Security Council's resolution a success that would change the face of the Middle East and end a "state within a state" in Lebanon.

But even as the guns fell silent the barrage of criticism faced by the Prime Minister failed to subside, with growing demands for an inquiry into the military and diplomatic conduct of the crisis.

In a combative speech Mr Olmert said that Israeli forces had dealt Hezbollah a heavy blow that would drive its leadership underground, though it would be unable to rest easy.

"These people will not be left alone. We will continue pursuing them anywhere, all the time, and we do not intend to apologise or ask anyone's permission," he added.

The Prime Minister said that he would personally oversee efforts to secure the release of the two Israeli soldiers whose kidnap led to the war, but urged his critics to be patient.

Binyamin Netanyahu, leader of the opposition Likud party, responded by breaking the united front displayed throughout the fighting and accused the Government of committing grave errors. "It must be said honestly, there were many failures.

Failures in identifying the threat, failures in preparing to meet the threat, failures in the management of the war, failures in the management of the home front," he said.

Earlier police loudspeakers sounded the all-clear and Israelis in the north emerged from bunkers, some after more than a month underground. Few were optimistic that the ceasefire would last, and there was much anger directed at Mr Olmert's Government for failing to deliver on promises to eradicate Hezbollah's missile threat, and for its conduct of the war.

Israel begins its search for a scapegoat

"A ceasefire is necessary because the army has not managed to defeat Hezbollah militarily, but they failed because of the Government, not the army," said Ishai Michael, 23, a computing student crowded into a shelter with fractious children, elderly women and Russian immigrants too poor to move south.

"I blame the Prime Minister and Defence Minister. Olmert doesn't know how to organise an army -in the beginning he put all his hopes on the air force, then he called up the reserves too late." Analysts believe that Mr Olmert and his Government face a rocky ride as the fighting subsides and reservist soldiers return home.

"I think politically he's in trouble," Professor Ephraim Inbar, director of the Begin- Sadat Centre for Strategic Studies, said. "The whole war was mismanaged, in setting political goals and military strategy. It's clear it was no great victory.

Hezbollah fired 4,000 rockets and were only stopped by a ceasefire."

Shlomo Brom, a senior research associate at the Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies, said that the public anger would not fade. "When people are not satisfied and frustrated they'll look for a scapegoat. They may find it in the political leadership, or the military. Both created unrealistic expectations from Day 1 and may pay the price."

Israeli commentators were equally scathing, saying that the failures on the battlefield and in diplomacy had paved the way for future conflict. "The truth must be stated: the diplomatic move completely failed," Ran Bratz wrote in Maariv.

"Olmert's giving up on a military victory turned the war in Lebanon, with its many victims, into an unnecessary and terrible failure."

Jamie Glassman, page 16 timesonline.co.uk/mideast Latest news and pictures

Load-Date: August 15, 2006

Israel strike kills dozens in Lebanon; 20 children among dead; Rice cancels Beirut trip

The International Herald Tribune

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 1161 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger and Hassan Fattah

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Hassan Fattah reported from Beirut and Helene Cooper contributed from Jerusalem.

*

An Israeli air raid on the southern Lebanese town of Qana killed at least 28 civilians, including 20 children, on Sunday, the bloodiest day of this conflict, putting enormous pressure on Israel and the United States to move rapidly toward a cease-fire.

Israel said that the Qana strike had been aimed at Hezbollah fighters firing rockets into Israel from the area, but the result was the collapse of a residential apartment building and the crushing of civilians who were spending the night in the basement, where they believed they were safe.

Accounts of the death toll differed. A New York Times reporter counted 28 bodies at local morgues. Some officials said that at least 57 civilians had been killed, including 37 children.

Whatever the final number, the deaths in Qana set off a chain reaction, with protests in Beirut against the United States, Israel, the United Nations and moderate Arab countries. Hezbollah and the Palestinian group Hamas vowed revenge. There were new calls for an immediate end to the fighting and condemnations worldwide of Israel's tactics in this war against the radical Shiite militia group, which set off the hostilities with a raid into Israel across the Lebanese border.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice canceled a planned trip to Beirut and decided to return to Washington on Monday to hammer out a speedy resolution to the conflict that could be brought before the United Nations this week.

"I will continue to work and work and work that is what we can do," said a visibly shaken Rice. "If there is a way humanly to accelerate our efforts, I would do it."

The Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, expressed sorrow for the Qana attack but told Rice that Israel needed another 10 to 14 days to complete its war aims against Hezbollah, according to a senior Israeli official.

Israel strike kills dozens in Lebanon 20 children among dead Rice cancels Beirut trip

The Lebanese prime minister, Fouad Siniora, demanded an immediate cease-fire and made it clear that Rice would not be welcome in Beirut on Sunday.

"There is no place on this sad day for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional cease-fire, as well as an international investigation into the Israeli massacres in Lebanon now," Siniora said.

For the Lebanese, Qana is synonymous with the killing of civilians. Ten years ago there, in an eerily similar attack, Israel responded to mortar fire by shelling a UN post where refugees were sheltering, killing 100 people and wounding another 100. That attack, on April 18, 1996, shocked the world and helped bring an end to that conflict with Hezbollah after an eight-day diplomatic shuttle by Warren Christopher, the secretary of state at the time.

In a speech to the diplomatic corps, Siniora accused Israel of war crimes and asked, "Why, we wonder, did they choose Qana yet again?" He asked the diplomats to work at the United Nations for a cease-fire, saying: "We cannot be expected to negotiate or discuss anything else while the ruthless, pitiless sword of the Israeli war machine continues to drip with the blood of innocent women and children."

At the United Nations, Secretary General Kofi Annan urged the Security Council, meeting Sunday in emergency session, to condemn the Qana attack and to call for an immediate cease-fire.

"I am deeply dismayed that my earlier calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities were not heeded," he told the council.

Rice said Sunday that she called Siniora to express her condolences and to cancel her planned visit to Beirut. She met with Olmert on Sunday evening.

"We are also pushing for an urgent end" to the fighting, Rice said. "But the views of the parties on how to achieve that are different." She did not call for an immediate cease-fire, arguing that a long-term resolution required a political package deal, which would include a cessation of hostilities.

"We want a cease-fire as soon as possible," she said. "I would have wanted a cease-fire yesterday if possible, but the parties have to agree to a cease-fire and there have to be certain conditions in place."

Rice decided to return to Washington to work on a Security Council resolution that would try to codify a political resolution to the conflict including the insertion of a new international peace-keeping force along the border, the resolution of a disputed border area called Shabaa Farms and the return of captured Israeli soldiers and bring an end to this war in northern Israel and Lebanon, now in its 19th day.

Israeli forces also have been fighting in Gaza since June 28 after another Israeli soldier was captured by Hamas and other Palestinian militants in a raid on June 25.

Olmert said that Israel would investigate what had happened in Qana. But he and the Israeli Army blamed Hezbollah fighters for firing hundreds of rockets from the area, which is a stronghold for the militia group.

In a statement, the Israeli Army said it had warned residents of the region and of Qana "several days in advance" to leave their homes, and said: "The responsibility for any civilian casualties rests with the Hezbollah who have turned the suburbs of Lebanon into a war front by firing missiles from within civilian areas."

The army said that it was investigating Qana, but that it was puzzled that the strike happened between midnight and 1 a.m., and hit next to the building, while the building collapsed around 7 a.m. Brigadier General Amir Eshel said it was at least possible that the explosion was caused by munitions inside the building.

"It is possible that various things were stored inside the house, things that ultimately caused an explosion," Eshel said. "Perhaps things we were unable to blow up in the strike, that could have been left behind. I say this very carefully, but at the current time I haven't got the slightest clue what could explain this time difference."

Israel strike kills dozens in Lebanon 20 children among dead Rice cancels Beirut trip

Olmert told his cabinet on Sunday: "We will not blink in front of Hezbollah and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances."

He said that "Israel is in no rush to reach a cease-fire before we get to that point where we could say that we reached the main objectives we had set forth. This includes the ripening of the diplomatic process and preparing the multinational force."

On Sunday, Hezbollah fired more than 156 rockets into northern Israel, the Israeli Army said, the highest total so far in the fighting. Eight people were slightly wounded, including a reporter for the Haaretz newspaper.

So far, nearly 1,900 rockets have fallen in Israel. Nineteen civilians have been killed and more than 400 have been wounded. Thirty-three soldiers have been killed and 88 have been wounded.

Nearly 550 Lebanese have been killed in airstrikes, with as many as 200 more missing, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. Nearly 2,000 people have been wounded, the ministry said. In addition, Israel estimated that 300 Hezbollah fighters had been killed in ground fighting with Israeli troops.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

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Letters

The Pantagraph (Bloomington, Illinois)

August 09, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. A6

Length: 1145 words

Body

U.S. must show more faith in democracy

Prior to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq - remember: we didn't go it alone; we had a "coalition of the willing" behind us - there were those who declared that "fully developed, professional and well-executed military plans" would prevent the spread of violence once the war began.

Three years after "mission accomplished," Israel is again putting this theory to the test.

Where has our faith in democracy and democratic institutions gone?

The president now says - forget all of that "mushroom cloud" rhetoric - that we are in Iraq to make it a shining example of democracy for the Muslim world.

He leads the applause as one election after another, no matter how imperfect, puts a permanent Iraqi government in power.

Then the wheels fall off.

We're unwilling to deal with Hamas because they don't purse their lips together the way we'd like.

We applaud the Lebanese government with one hand and slap them in the face for being "ineffective" with the other.

Throw this on top of our support of a failed military coup in Venezuela and our constant meddling in Latin American elections and what you have is a failed foreign policy. And the reason it fails is because we do not have faith in democracy.

To have faith in democracy you have to be willing to work with and through the duly elected representatives of a people, no matter how unsavory those characters might be.

You have to realize that democracy itself is more powerful than the positions put on the negotiating table by either side.

You have to understand that while negotiations today may not lead to everlasting peace, continuing to negotiate tells the world that democracy is better than the repeated violence that has killed tens of thousands of civilians in just the past three years.

Letters

Jorge Ovalle

Bloomington

Community helps Camp Limberlost

The Kiwanis Club of Bloomington would like to thank the community for their support of our annual Camp Limberlost program. Founded by the Pantagraph in 1931 and operated by the Kiwanis Club of Bloomington since 1940, your generous support has allowed us to send over 6,000 children ages 8-11 to camp over the years, including 124 this year alone.

We know from many former campers who come back to talk to the club that their experience at Camp Limberlost had a significant influence on them and made our community a better place to live.

The support of the community, and the many sponsors who make in-kind donations of food, financial aid and other types of support are critical to our success.

Three sponsors, CJ's, Unit 5 and the IWU women's volleyball team were inadvertently omitted from a previous thank you and we wish to ensure that their contributions are acknowledged. We could not do what we do without all of you. Our sincere appreciation for helping make Camp Limberlost a success for 75 years.

Bruce Helling

Normal

The writer is vice president, Kiwanis Club of Bloomington

Israelis are good guys in Mideast conflict

I must respectfully disagree with Scott Callan's comments ("U.S. must do more for Mideast peace," YourViews, Aug. 2), taking particular note of this moral-equivalency falsehood: "There are no good guys and bad guys in this war" Yes, there are good guys and bad guys, and the good guys are the Israelis.

First, Hezbollah instigated this conflict by entering Israel and kidnapping and killing Israeli soldiers. This was acknowledged by many Arab leaders.

Second, Hezbollah rockets target Israeli civilians - with nary an objection from the West.

Third, Hezbollah fights from among the general populace, counting on civilian casualties. In contrast, the Israelis warn the Lebanese to leave, attempting to lessen the potential for civilian casualties, while the Katyusha rockets fired by Hezbollah are packed with ball bearings to maximize death, pain and suffering of the civilian Israelis they target.

And fourth, let us not forget that Hezbollah has attacked U.S. military installations and an embassy, as well as kidnapping and murdering international civilians - among them Americans - since the 1980s.

As for the specific incident in Cana/Qana, we must mourn for the civilian casualties. But we must also place the blame squarely on the shoulders of Hezbollah who purposefully puts women and children at risk, and to a certain extent, a Lebanese government that allowed this group to operate with impunity and a United Nations that dragged its feet regarding the enforcement of Resolution 1559.

We must also blame Iran and Syria for their roles in funding, arming, and supporting a terrorist organization.

The current administration is correct in not calling for an immediate cease-fire at this time. Hezbollah must be thoroughly, no, permanently routed before any cease-fire begins. Because any "cease-fire" before that is merely an opportunity for Hezbollah and her backers to re-arm and plan yet another attack.

Letters

Mira Mihajlovich

Normal

Good job covering McLean County Fair

Thanks to all the Pantagraph reporters, photographers and editors for the excellent coverage of the McLean County Fair and the 4-H program. Thanks also for making sure hundreds of 4-H'ers' names get into the paper for winning blue ribbons. Hats off for a job well done.

Kay Shipman-Swiech

Bloomington

Are U.S., Israel really any safer?

I was surprised by Mike Lynch's "Three options left in the war on terror" (YourViews, Aug. 2) letter.

With the Republican polls in the basement, I didn't believe there was anybody left who believed their spin anymore. The recent Israeli situation is a prime example of the fallacy of his arguments.

The Israelis have been fighting the Arabs for years, occupying their land and beating up on them regularly. Even though the fighting ability of the Israeli army is many times that of the Arabs with planes, bombs, warships, tanks, artillery, electronic systems and nuclear weapons - none of which the Arabs have - the Arabs still don't obey the "rules" and give up after they are beaten.

Does all of this foolishness really make the average Israeli or us for that matter any safer?

Will the Iraqis ever obey the "rules" and surrender like gentlemen so the Republicans can be reelected. I doubt it very much.

I do believe that as long as we have a Republican left or a Muslim left there will continue to be war.

What I do know is that the few "dead-enders" as described by Rumsfeld are sure embarrassing George Bush.

Maybe when Iraqis become a democratic society they can ban stem cell research and cut estate taxes for people worth more than \$5 million over there, too.

Depend on George Bush for your safety and freedom - what a joke.

Bob Vercler

Farmer City

Load-Date: October 26, 2006

LOVE, NOT WAR; Fifty Israeli couples wed at mass ceremony in Tel Aviv

Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia)

August 15, 2006, Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Charleston Newspapers

Section: NEWS; Pg. P3A

Length: 201 words

Byline: BENJAMIN HARVEY, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

TEL AVIV, Israel - There was one rabbi, 50 couples, and the only explosions were from popping corks and breaking glasses.

The mass wedding Monday was for couples who had to cancel their nuptials over the past month as more than 4,000 Hezbollah rockets hit their northern Israeli region. By coincidence, the ceremony happened on the first day of the cease-fire.

This was added cause for celebration.

Brides danced with fathers, grooms danced with mothers. Women in body paint and dressed as flowers danced on pedestals as part of the entertainment. And it was all free, with Israeli companies donating some \$2.5 million for the ceremony at a massive nightclub in Tel Aviv's old port, organizers said.

"This is the real answer against our enemy," said one of Israel's two chief rabbis, Yonah Metzger, who presided over the ceremony at the pier. "We send him the biggest bomb that we can after 50 grooms break their glasses. This is the real answer."

After the new husbands stomped on their glasses - in accordance with Jewish marriage rituals - there was a little crying, a lot of relieved sighs and more "mazeltovs" than anyone could count.

Metzger said Hezbollah wanted to destroy Jewish homes, but these couples were building them instead.

Each couple was allowed 100 guests. But with wedding-crashers, press and other interlopers there were at least 6,000 people, organizers said. The 50 couples were chosen from more than 300 applicants after the war interrupted the busy wedding season.

"We're all saying, 'In your face, Hezbollah,' " said bride Leah Rosenberg Zeira, 26, as her new husband knelt to adjust her gown so she could dance. She said she was at first disappointed with having to cancel plans and be part of a mass wedding, but the ceremony turned out to be beautiful.

The couples' hometowns were read over a microphone - a list of Israeli cities and towns hardest hit by rockets in the past month: Tiberias, Kiryat Shemona, Safed and Haifa.

Northern Israel has been hit by nearly 200 rockets a day since fighting started against Hezbollah guerrillas who captured two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid July 12. The couples' backyards became the war's front lines.

LOVE, NOT WAR Fifty Israeli couples wed at mass ceremony in Tel Aviv

"It's nice, but it's not what I planned for," said Bella Agronov, 25, holding a small bouquet and waiting for her groom to bring her a veil. "But it's fun. And it's a long way from the Katyushas."

30

Load-Date: August 17, 2006

End of Document

From a safe room in Israel, a mother fears for her sons.

The Philadelphia Inquirer
August 9, 2006 Wednesday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer
Found on Philly.com

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A11

Length: 1434 words

Body

Diana Bletter

writes from Shavei Zion, Israel

A few years ago, I was getting my hair cut in Nahariya, a town in Israel's Western Galilee, when there was an announcement that everyone had to enter bomb shelters because of the possibility of a Hezbollah missile attack. I asked my hair cutter what I should do, and he said, "Let me finish your hair. If you're going to die, at least you should die beautiful." So, he cut my hair and I drove back to Shavei Zion, the small farming village where I live, about two miles south of Nahariya.

These days, we can no longer joke about Hezbollah's missiles. As I type these words in the protected room of our house - one we thought we'd never have to use - more than 3,000 missiles have fallen around us in the last three weeks, killing at least 49 civilians. Our pastoral way of life in the Western Galilee, where Jews, Muslims, Christians and Druze have lived in harmony for the last 50 years, is on the brink of destruction.

During a lull in the missile attacks, my husband, Jonny, and I drove through Nahariya, now a ghost town. My hair salon is boarded up; my favorite fruit store is in ruins. The streets are clean, but deserted, and even though the sprinklers are working - in the hope of holding onto a semblance of normal life - most of the city's residents have been holed up in underground bomb shelters for almost a month, held hostage by Hezbollah.

I moved here from New York in 1991, armed only with idealistic hopes for peace. My husband and I raised our six children to be open-minded and tolerant with our neighbors of all religions. As a Muslim friend told me by phone from her basement shelter, "It's too bad that Hezbollah fighters don't see the relationships that Muslims and Jews have here." One group I'm involved with, Acco Vision - a core of Jewish, Muslim, Druze and Christian women - built a Playground for Peace in the heart of the city of Acco, about six miles from Nahariya. So far, no missiles have struck the playground but dozens have landed less than a mile away. Clearly, Islamic fundamentalists cannot tolerate the peaceful coexistence of religions here in Israel.

I thought that by the time our three sons grew up, the Middle East conflict would come to an end and they would do their military service during more peaceful times. Yet all three of our sons currently serve in the Israel Defense Forces - in yet another battle for our existence. Nadav, deaf in one ear, trains special combat units in the Golani

From a safe room in Israel , a mother fears for her sons.

Brigades. Ari was injured during basic training and, after finishing physical therapy, plans to return to his service. Shlomie, a medic in the paratroopers, was recently wounded by shrapnel in heavy fighting in Aita-al-Shaab, a village in southern Lebanon.

Shlomie will survive his wounds, but dozens of his comrades were wounded and three soldiers lost their lives. Shlomie was fighting next to Michael Levin, the soldier who moved from Bucks County to serve in the Israeli army. Shlomie said that after Michael was wounded, he picked him up and carried him to a safer area. Right before Michael died in his arms, Shlomie told him, "I love you, Michael. I'm sorry."

I'm sorry, too, that the world I am passing on to our children is still so full of wars and conflicts and hatreds. Israel will survive Hezbollah's attacks, just as it has survived its other enemies. But I can no longer joke about the dangers of living here or the huge price Israelis continue to pay just to stay alive.

Contact Diana Bletter at dianabletter@yahoo.com.

Load-Date: August 9, 2006

End of Document

Bush: Cease-fire not enough; President maintains stance as Israel strikes Lebanon, cutting short 48-hour suspension

Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia)

July 31, 2006, Monday

Copyright 2006 Charleston Newspapers

Section: NEWS; Pg. P3A

Length: 605 words

Byline: DEB RIECHMANN, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

MIAMI - The Bush administration remains adamant any Mideast cease-fire arrangement be accompanied by preconditions assuring a long-lasting peace, even as Israel cut short a halt in the bombing and launched new strikes in southern Lebanon.

An earlier agreement by Israel for a 48-hour pause in the bombing had given Bush some breathing room, and the president scheduled a meeting with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at the White House this afternoon after a series of appearances in Florida. The administration already had been immersed in tough diplomacy before Sunday, with Rice flying around the world and U.S. officials conferring steadily with counterparts at the United Nations, when international outrage flared: Israel had launched an air strike that leveled a building in the village of Qana, killing at least 56 Lebanese, mostly women and children.

Israel later suspended air attacks on south Lebanon for 48 hours. But today, its air force carried out a fresh wave of air strikes near the village of Taibe. The army said the strikes were meant to protect ground forces operating in the area and were not targeting anyone or anything specific.

Hezbollah guerrillas attacked an Israeli tank in southern Lebanon, wounding three soldiers, the military said.

The attack occurred near the villages of Kila and Taibe on border, where Israeli ground forces have been fighting Hezbollah guerrillas for nearly two weeks.

State Department spokesman Adam Ereli had noted in a statement late Sunday that, in connection with the halt in bombing, "Israel, of course, has reserved the right to take action against targets preparing attack against it."

Bush on Sunday had renewed his call for a "sustainable peace" and cautioned Israel to spare civilians in its military attacks on the Hezbollah militia.

But he stopped short of calling for an immediate cease-fire, opting instead for a United Nations resolution calling for Hezbollah to lay down its arms and an international force to help the Lebanese Army keep the peace.

"It's a tragic occasion when innocent people are killed, and so our sympathies go out to those who lost their lives today, and lost their lives throughout this crisis," Bush said before a T-ball game held on the White House South Lawn just before he left for Miami.

Bush: Cease-fire not enough President maintains stance as Israel strikes Lebanon , cutting short 48-hour suspension

Bush monitored the crisis through phone calls with his top advisers as images of children's bodies in the building's ruins flashed on television screens across the world. Bush spoke three times with Rice, who cut short her diplomatic mission in the Mideast and headed back to Washington.

Before leaving Jerusalem on Monday, Rice told reporters she would seek a cease-fire agreement as well as a long-term settlement in the conflict this week through a U.N. Security Council resolution.

"I am convinced that only by achieving both will the Lebanese people be able to control their country and their future, and the people of Israel finally be able to live free of attack from terrorist groups in Lebanon," she said.

But after Rice departed, hopes the two-day halt in bombing would become a longer term cease-fire dimmed when Israel's defense minister, Amir Peretz, told parliament that Israel would "expand and strengthen" its attack on Hezbollah.

"It's forbidden to agree to an immediate cease-fire," Peretz said.

As the president flew to Florida on Sunday, the U.N. Security Council met in emergency session and passed a statement expressing "extreme shock and distress" over Israel's bombing of civilians. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan sharply criticized world leaders - implicitly Washington - for ignoring his previous calls for an immediate cease-fire.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

San Jose State U. area discusses Lebanon-Israel conflict

University Wire

September 25, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Spartan Daily via U-Wire

Length: 591 words

Byline: By Michael Geslani, Spartan Daily; **SOURCE:** San Jose State U.

Dateline: SAN JOSE, Calif.

Body

People gathered Friday night in the First Unitarian Church in downtown San Jose, Calif., in attempt to raise public awareness about the problems in Lebanon.

Zeina Zataari, founding member of the Radical Arab Women's Activist Network and the National Council of Arab Americans, presented an eyewitness account of an Israeli assault on Lebanon, followed by an activism workshop held by "Break The Siege!" representative Sami Kitmitto.

"What we will be providing is an educational opportunity for the audience coming from the area to hear about what is happening (in Lebanon)," Zataari said before the event.

Zataari presented information on Lebanon's history and spoke of issues raised from a U.S.-backed Israeli assault on Lebanon, Israel's aggressions and the origins of Hezbollah.

Lebanon is a small mountainous country in the Middle East that sits directly above Israel and beside Syria.

Most territories in Lebanon have been destroyed because of air raids and strikes by Israel, according to a handout at the seminar.

"When you get to the villages where there is a lot of destruction, there's still a lot of rubble," Zataari said. "There are people living in tents. They're starting to rebuild some of the homes that may have been partially destroyed."

Zataari also spoke on issues coming out of the United States backing the Israeli assault and the Hezbollah.

President George W. Bush has stated in a press release that Israel is a close friend and ally of the United States, and that in the event of any attack on Israel, the United States will come to Israel's aid.

"The U.S. government gives, not lends, \$5 billion a year to Israel," said audience member Aktham Jarrar about the aid Israel receives from United States.

Hezbollah emerged in Lebanon in the early 1980s and became the region's leading Islamic movement, determined to drive Israeli troops from Lebanon, according to BBC News.

This was achieved on May 24, 2000, when Israel was forced out of Lebanon, according to a handout given at the event. May 25 is now declared Day of Freedom and Victory in Lebanon.

San Jose State U. area discusses Lebanon - Israel conflict

Following Zataari's presentation, she answered questions from the audience.

Audience members had a lot of concerns about the problems Lebanon faces, which is why Jarrar said he attended.

"I'm Palestinian-American, and it really bugs the hell out of me that the policy of the United States is basically wreaking havoc around the world in places like Iraq, supporting the occupation of the Palestinian people in the West Bank with our tax money," Jarrar said.

Kitmitto held a workshop to inform the audience members on how they can take action.

Kitmitto said "Break The Siege!" is a campaign that was called upon by Palestinian activists who met early in the summer.

"What had been happening in Gaza was an Israeli disengagement plan with the military removing the Jewish settlements from Gaza, and what they did after they disengaged was had a series of bombings, sonic booms and incursions," Kitmitto said.

Over the summer, the United States brokered a cease-fire that helped end a month-long war between Israel and the Hezbollah in south Lebanon, a war sparked by the capturing of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah.

"Initially, the concept of 'Break The Siege!' was to respond to that, then it took on this great urgency, even greater when they started bombing the hell out of Lebanon, and that brought a lot of people together to really want to take action," Kitmitto said. "It was sort of an immediate reaction; now we're just looking to continue action."

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Load-Date: September 25, 2006

Middle East Crisis - Warplanes attack despite 48-hour halt

Irish News

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: Pg. 12

Length: 582 words

Body

Israeli planes hit targets in southern Lebanon yesterday after Hezbollah guerrillas blasted an Israeli tank and injured three Israeli soldiers, breaking a brief respite in 20 days of fighting.

Before the fighting resumed, pick-up trucks and cars loaded with people streamed north as thousands of civilians trapped in the war zone for three weeks took advantage of the lull to escape.

Israel had said, in announcing the halt to air strikes earlier yesterday, that it would suspend that pledge to end air strikes for 48-hours depending on "operational developments" in Lebanon.

After Hezbollah guerrillas hit the Israeli tank near Taibeh with an anti-tank missile, Israel said it carried out the air strikes to protect its ground troops.

Television footage showed two Israeli tanks side by side in southern Lebanon, with flames suddenly covering one of them. Soldiers emerged from one tank and did not appear to be badly hurt.

In a second air strike around the port city of Tyre, Israel killed a Lebanese soldier when it hit a car that it believed was carrying a senior Hezbollah official, the Israeli army said.

Lebanese security officials said the soldier was killed by a rocket strike from a pilotless drone aircraft.

The Israeli army justified the action, saying the leader believed to have been in the car was a threat to Israel. Instead, the car was carrying a Lebanese army officer and soldiers.

"They were ... not the targets and we regret the incident," the Israeli army said.

Israeli defence minister Amir Peretz said Israel plans to "expand and strengthen" its attack on Hezbollah, diminishing hopes that the 48-hour halt in air strikes could be turned into a longer term ceasefire.

Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, whose country was the first Arab state to sign a peace treaty with Israel, warned that the entire Middle East peace could collapse because of Israel's campaign.

"Egypt, which triggered the peace process, warns of the consequences of its collapse," Mr Mubarak said in a televised statement.

"The Israeli aggression undermines the opportunities to continue it and its success."

Middle East Crisis - Warplanes attack despite 48-hour halt

Fighting was heavy in the north-east corner of south Lebanon around Taibeh and other border villages. Constant Israeli artillery blasts - not covered under Israel's air halt - shook the hills.

Hezbollah guerrillas in the area fired a volley of rockets at the nearby Israeli town of Kiryat Shemona, their first since Israel's suspension began. No casualties were reported.

In many border areas, Israeli pilotless aircraft were heard - though it was not clear whether they were over Lebanese territory.

Still, the suspension of the air campaign brought relative quiet to much of southern Lebanon.

Israel called the 48-hour halt under US pressure amid worldwide outrage over its killing of at least 56 people - mostly **women** and children - in an attack on a house in the village of Qana on Sunday.

Around 520 people have been confirmed killed by Lebanon's health ministry since the fighting began.

The pause meant the first relative relief for thousands of Lebanese who have been hiding in their homes, in schools or hospitals in the mountainous south.

While many had fled already, those who remained were mostly the old, the sick and those too afraid of intense Israeli bombardment on the roads to risk the drive.

Early yesterday few had taken to the roads, likely wary over whether the halt was genuine. But by early afternoon, roads to the port city of Tyre, then from Tyre heading north along the coast, were packed.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

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An eyewitness view of the new world war

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

December 30, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Opinion; Pg. 21

Length: 1499 words

Byline: PAUL SHEEHAN Alan Ramsey is on leave.

Body

Anyone who doubts that the Cold War has quickly given way to a hot war - World War III - would have their doubts sorely tested should they pay a visit to the Israel-Lebanon border. Last week I visited border mark 105, the nondescript gully where the 2006 Lebanese war began. Only scorch marks on the ground remain from the death and violence that took place there.

The build-up took months to plan and execute. On or about July 5, a group of between 20 and 30 Hezbollah fighters infiltrated the Israeli border near the village of Aita Al-Shaab, barely 800 metres from the border fences. They set up camp on a thickly wooded slope above the Israeli patrol road. They pitched a small tent. They set up firing positions for two rocket-propelled grenade launchers. And then they waited.

It was not the first time Hezbollah had attempted to infiltrate a team into Israel this year. At least four other attempts had been thwarted. This was the first to succeed, because this section of the border was both densely wooded and in a blind spot between the Israel Defence Forces observation posts, where teams of soldiers, mostly young women on national service, monitor cameras day and night.

The site was also within range of rocket and mortar positions Hezbollah had set up around Aita Al-Shaab, part of a porcupine of minefields, gun emplacements, tunnels and bunkers it had secretly built along the border since Israel withdrew its forces from southern Lebanon in 2000. Most of this military build-up was funded by Iran.

On the morning of July 12, 2006, the infiltrators received the "go" signal. They touched the security fence at several points, triggering several Israeli patrols. Two Israeli Humvees were sent to border point 105.

At 9.05am, as the first Humvee slowed to negotiate a turn in the road just below the firing positions, it was hit by two rocket-propelled grenades.

The Humvee was destroyed. All three soldiers on board died. The second Humvee was hit, but was disabled rather than destroyed. The driver was killed but two other Israeli soldiers, believed to have been wounded based on bloodstains left at the scene, were dragged from the Humvee and carried towards the border.

The firing of the grenades was the signal for a co-ordinated response by Hezbollah along the border. Waves of rocket and mortar fire were sent across into Israel to confuse their defence and buy time for the infiltrators. When the Israelis realised where its patrol had been attacked, the Hezbollah team had already left the scene. A heavy tank was dispatched to border post 105. It crossed the border to occupy the high point and begin laying fire into the

An eyewitness view of the new world war

valley where the **Hezbollah** team was fleeing towards the nearby village. What the Israelis did not know, one of many unpleasant surprises to come, was that this response had been anticipated by **Hezbollah**.

"There was a huge mine," an Israeli major told me, pointing to the spot. "The tank only got 200 metres. Everybody was killed." Four tank crew died, along with four soldiers in the Humvees. The **Hezbollah** infiltrators escaped without casualties. The Israel Defence Forces were humiliated.

"They mined everything along the border," the Israeli major, who cannot be named, told me. "The extent of the tunnels, bunkers, mines was much greater than we had expected. One **Hezbollah** bunker was built within 15 metres of a UN observation post. What were they observing?"

The ambush and abduction, so long in the making, had been executed to perfection.

It was an act of war, yet no border disputes existed between Israel and Lebanon. (The disputed Shebaa Farms are claimed by Syria, a claim recognised by Lebanon, Israel and the United Nations.) The relationship between the governments of Jerusalem and Beirut were cordial. The Lebanese Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, was a moderate, pro-Western reformer. The Lebanese economy had been rehabilitated, Beirut rebuilt, and tourism had begun to flourish again. This was not an act of war between states but an act of jihad. It was driven by the Islamic theocracy in Iran, through its proxies in the Shiite Muslim state-within-a-state in southern Lebanon. Iran has been at war against the West for some time. It is at war with the United States in Iraq via its proxies in the Shiite militias. It is at war against Israel via **Hezbollah** in Lebanon, and via Hamas in Gaza and the West Bank.

"Iran is pushing Hamas to a more hardline position," says Walid Sadi, Jordan's former ambassador to Turkey and formerly chief editor of The Jordan Times. "The Palestinian internal disputes are increasingly resembling those between **Hezbollah** and the [moderate] camp in Lebanon. In both cases, the footprints of Iran are wide and clear and fit perfectly with Iran's designs for the region."

Those designs include nuclear weapons. This, in turn, has led the Sunni Muslim states in the region, led by Saudi Arabia, to consider a nuclear response. On December 10 the Gulf Cooperation Council, representing the six oil-rich Gulf states, met in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and issued a statement that began: "The leaders commissioned a study to set up a common program in the area of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes."

Like Iran's nuclear program is for peaceful purposes.

Long before the attack on border post 105, the military commander of Hamas, Khaled Mashaal, speaking at a mosque in Damascus, where he is based and protected, an address broadcast on Al-Jazeera television, warning not just Israel but the West of militant Islam's intent. It went far beyond the Palestinian cause: "We say this to the West, which does not act reasonably, and does not learn lessons: by Allah, you will be defeated. Tomorrow our nation [Islam] will sit on the throne of the world. This is not a figment of the imagination, but a fact. Tomorrow we will lead the world... Today, you are fighting the army of Allah. You are fighting against people for whom death for the sake of Allah, and for the sake of honour and glory, is preferable to life."

This is the language of "shahada". A "shahid" is to worship God and the Prophet Muhammad through a violent death in the cause of Islam. "A suicide bombing is not an act of desperation but a religious act," says Itamar Marcus, director of Palestinian Media Watch, during a briefing in Jerusalem. "When suicide bombers make videos they will sometimes talk about their 'weddings', referring to their suicide. Violence is put on a pedestal, even in preschool education. The videos talk about the sweetness of shahada."

During the past week the latest call to jihad and holy death has led to carnage and full-scale war between Islamic Somalia and Christian Ethiopia.

More than 1000 Islamist fighters, most of them teenagers, have died since they attacked Baidoa, the seat of the Somali provisional government, and Islamist leaders declared that Somalia was open to any Muslim around the world who wanted to wage a holy war against Ethiopia. The Ethiopians responded with invasion. Yesterday, its army had taken control of the capital, Mogadishu.

An eyewitness view of the new world war

Next week the war will flare somewhere else. The primary targets of al-Qaeda, now a virtual state within the Muslim diaspora, are the key moderate Muslim regimes in the Middle East, which are constantly being tested for weakness.

In the Jordanian capital, Amman, last weekend, I had to go through three security checks just to get back into my hotel, measures put in place since three Western hotels were bombed in a co-ordinated terrorism attack last year that killed 60 civilians.

In Sudan, genocide and mass rape have been used by Muslims to obliterate Christian and animist blacks in the south of the country around Darfur. Iraq and Afghanistan are engulfed in religious civil war and foreign occupation.

Hundreds of innocent civilians have been butchered as far afield as London, Madrid, Bali and Mumbai.

This is a hot war, fought on three continents. Its evolution has largely been funded by Saudi Arabia.

"The Saudis have spent \$US70 billion (\$93 billion) over the past 20 years funding Wahhabism," Yael Shahar told me last week. Shahar is on the faculty at the International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism in Tel Aviv, the world's leading academic institute for counter-terrorism. Given that Wahhabism is the most rigid, and most aggressive form of Islam, it means that the West's appetite for oil and motor cars has fuelled not just global warming, but global jihad.

Jihad and shahada have been the common denominators of the otherwise unrelated bloodshed in Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and the violent arc of a dozen Islamic states from Pakistan to Morocco. It is the common denominator of bloodshed in Britain, France, Spain, Holland and the United States, all the scenes of terrorist attacks, and Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Italy, where growing Muslim threats and violence are part of what is now a global confrontation between Western values and medievalism.

World War III. Every indicator we have says that we should get used to the concept.

Graphic

DRAWING: John Shakespeare

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Two wrongs don't make a leftist

University Wire

September 29, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 Columbia Daily Spectator via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 957 words

Byline: By Ethan Pack, Columbia Daily Spectator; **SOURCE:** Columbia U.

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

The presence of anti-U.S. leaders like Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran has put both the campus and the country up in arms. Pro-Israel groups spread flyers with menacing quotes by Ahmadinejad, demanding his invitation to campus be rescinded. Many insisted he be allowed to speak in the interests of free speech (including myself). In some of the debates concerning Ahmadinejad's visit, hard-core liberals even championed him and his ilk as righteous rivals of Bush. But most Americans have a difficult time seeing how leaders like him find an audience anywhere -- such as at the Non-Aligned Nations conference in Havana, where he received rave reviews.

It's assumed that anyone who plugs into their message must also hate America, baseball, freedom, etc. These leaders may be reprehensible, but they understand something that most fail to appreciate: opposing a uni-polar world order is an appealing idea. "By causing war and conflict, some are fast expanding their domination, accumulating greater wealth, while others endure poverty," Ahmadinejad pontificated to the United Nations.

In his letter to President Bush, Ahmadinejad addressed the U.S. with solid arguments: the faulty setup and reckless carnage of our Iraq invasion; our shady interventions in Latin America; our apathetic, if not abetting, posture toward Africa's stagnation; Guantanamo Bay, and other extra-legal detention (torture) centers. Up to this point, he has accurately listed incidents of America's global sins.

Why should such a country -- and its cohorts -- run the United Nations. with no one able to challenge their prerogatives? The irony, of course, is that Ahmadinejad himself proves why such a corrupt and cruel system will remain in place. After all, for all his populist rhetoric, he is neither Robin Hood nor Karl Marx.

"Those with insight can already hear the sounds of the shattering and fall of the ideology and thoughts of the liberal democratic systems," he went on to say in his letter. "We increasingly see that people around the world are flocking towards a main focal point that is the Almighty God. Undoubtedly through faith in God and the teaching of the prophets, the people will conquer their problems. My question to you is: 'Do you want to join them?'"

In 1989, Ahmadinejad's mentor, Ayatollah Khomeini, sent a similar letter to Mikhail Gorbachev declaring that communism had failed and recommending he study Islam as a fitting replacement for the USSR.

Ultra-leftist sympathizers of Ahmadinejad and proponents of violent Islamic expansion miss the above idea entirely. The left's secular bent makes them incapable of giving proper respect or fear to the religious zeal of those unlike themselves. In their dated Cold War ideology, anyone who opposes American capitalism must be an underdog, a liberal revolutionary. The fundamentalist Islamic cause is revolutionary, but it is neither liberal nor anti-colonial. The

Two wrongs don't make a leftist

extreme Islamic ideologies of Hezbollah, Hamas, al Qaeda, and their materialization in a political state -- Iran -- are antithetical to the pluralist, secular-humanist world envisioned by liberals. Iran perpetrates murderous homophobia. It oppresses its Jewish and Arab minorities, promotes Holocaust denial, and puts on fascist military parades for missiles designed to carry nuclear weapons -- perhaps to the "Zionist entity" that must be wiped off the map. Dissident students and women have been jailed and reformist parties and their press organs outlawed. But one of the most illiberal elements of the Iranian vision is its expansionism, which is spreading east to Afghanistan and west through Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon.

The war Iran ordered up in Lebanon used that country as a battleground to deflect attention from its nuclear ambitions and the role of its ally, Syria, in continuing to oppose Lebanese independence. Before the war, Iran's proxy, Hezbollah, tried to freeze the government's call for a tribunal to investigate the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Hezbollah had been a minority party in opposition to the ruling March 14 Movement-named for the rallies against Syrian occupation that followed Hariri's murder. Hezbollah's war has increased its popularity enough to seize power. Not coincidentally, posters of Ahmadinejad now hang in many Shi'a villages.

Walid Jumblat, a leader of the Druze ethnic minority and the March 14 Movement, told The New York Times, "There is an Iranian empire slowly but surely being erected." Before the war, with Syria and Israel gone, Hezbollah remained the only military force preventing the Lebanese Army from finally taking sovereignty over its own territory. By crossing the border into Israel with kidnappings and rockets and dragging that country back into the Lebanese quagmire, Hezbollah is now able to claim that it is the only one capable of defending Lebanon from "Zionist aggression."

In a similarly clever ploy, Iran did exactly what Ahmadinejad castigates America for: invested big bucks on arms. Once those weapons landed in northern Israel and the response salvo hit southern Lebanon, Iran could emerge again as the rescuer, offering millions of dollars through Hezbollah, and on its own, for reconstruction efforts -- reconstruction for a devastation they initiated.

Yet somehow, uber-leftists think that because these forces oppose Western superpowers, they share a progressive view of liberation. Actually, Iran's policy is a different version of the same Islamic extremism offered by al Qaeda and Hamas, with its visions of a reinstalled caliphate empire.

Condemning these groups is not an endorsement of Bush's flawed strategy. But critics of Western policy should be equally skeptical of Ahmadinejad's alternative.

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Load-Date: September 29, 2006

LETTERS FROM READERS

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

August 11, 2006 Friday

THIRD EDITION

Copyright 2006 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. C10

Length: 1580 words

Body

Water quality is the issue, not raunchy river boaters

The editorial "Respect our rivers" (Aug. 5) would have readers believe that rowdy crowds pose the greatest threat to Missouri's waters. While drunken boaters certainly are an annoyance and are the reason my family stopped canoeing on summer weekends many years ago, their actions are not the most serious threat to Missouri's streams. That distinction belongs to the Clean Water Commission.

The commission presides over Missouri's clean water regulations and, ironically, is the single largest impediment to clean water. The commission regularly ignores scientific methods and reasoning when setting policies for cleaning up impaired waters and establishing protections for recreational uses. Who cares about a gaggle of drunken loud mouths when the sewage treatment plant upstream is belching undisinfected effluent because the commission doesn't believe the public health risks warrant an increase in sewer bills? Why worry about a flotilla of disorderly boaters when fish throughout the state contain dangerous levels of mercury because the commission refuses to take corrective action? That real problem lies with the commission's recent drive to prevent bacterial standards from applying to hundreds of Missouri's streams and its ongoing failure to address water quality impairments, not with people in canoes and rafts.

William Reeves | Webster Groves

Rovian tactics at work

Kevin Horrigan's snickering reference to the media's laugh fest about U.S. Sen. John Kerry's windsurfing ("'Kettle black,' pot says," Aug. 6) unwittingly demonstrates why Karl Rove is successful at duping half the electorate: The unquestioning media help him. Mr. Kerry has been an avid windsurfer for years and was featured on the cover of "American Windsurfer" in 1998.

Mr. Kerry also caught heat because windsurfing isn't a NASCAR-dad sport, implying that Mr. Kerry is an elite, effete wimp. Actually, windsurfing is considered an extreme sport and is enjoyed by a cross-section of demographic groups.

The red states' macho hero, ex-cheerleader George W. Bush, can't seem to stay upright on a bike and crashed a klutz-proof Segway. Only the delusional would believe that Mr. Bush is a "rancher."

Mr. Horrigan's windsurfing comment is noteworthy because it reflects the same echo-chamber mentality that allowed Mr. Rove to get red-state respect for Mr. Bush's AWOL antics but painted American war heroes as

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cowards. Worst of all, it allows macho-postured vehemence to trump veracity, and the Republicans' special brand of Orwellian lie-speak to go unchallenged.

Rovian tactics account for only half of America's misinformation syndrome; the other half is because of the complicity of the willingly deceived and those media motor-mouths too lazy to say, "That's just not true, and here's proof."

Michael Ankelman | Webster Groves

Tackle today's issues

It seems to me that U.S. Sen. Jim Talent, R-Mo., along with his colleagues U.S. Reps. William Lacy Clay Jr., D-St. Louis; Kenny Hulshof, R-Columbia, Mo.; and Emanuel Cleaver, D-Kansas City, should be using their time, talent and resources to address and fund today's problems rather than taking on 50-year-old crimes ("Talent touts bill to solve murders," Aug. 7). To even suggest the government dedicate \$100 million over 10 years for such programs seems irresponsible.

I'd suggest that they take a look at Social Security, the minimum wage, illegal immigration, the loss of low-level jobs for American workers to foreign outsourcing, dependence on foreign oil and the inflated gas prices and special retirement plans for lawmakers at the expense of the general public, just to name a few.

Let's pressure our senators and representatives to work for us.

Tom Trog | Ballwin

Stirring the smoking police

The U.S. surgeon general really got the smoking police stirred up with his report about secondhand smoke. I wonder why no one is questioning the findings in this report. There is nothing new here. All the studies cited were old and many may be flawed. How are we living longer when most older adults grew exposed to substantially more smoke and dirty air?

The smoking police want control, and the public is helping. These do-gooders are protesting because they care about "the children and the elderly" and won't stop until they get a total ban. Then they will want to control what you do in your own home. Be careful what you ask for; you may get more than you want.

Don Nichoalds | Wildwood

Catering to the minority

Four members of the St. Louis County Council chose not to "let the people choose" on banning smoking in public places in the county. One is my representative, Michael O'Mara. I'm glad he thinks that a sign in a restaurant window will protect my health. I don't understand why the dining and entertainment choices (not to mention our health) are determined for the 75 percent of people who don't smoke by the minority who are smokers. Why businesses feel that catering to the majority is against their financial interest, I also don't understand. Let the people choose!

Kris Lokemoen | Florissant

When the church grows up

My Catholic church today reminds me of my 9-year-old brother and his friends with their "no girls allowed" tree house. A shrinking cadre of super-traditionalists claim that women can't be priests because, although Jesus had women associates and supporters, he chose no women for any of his 12 apostles. If that's the logic, then we shouldn't have any priests other than occupants of Palestine who are Orthodox Jews, because that's who Jesus selected in 30 A.D. C'mon, guys, give it up and find a better excuse.

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My brother and his buddies eventually grew up and decided there's no real reason to shut the door on half the people in the world and realized the benefits of including them. I predict our church will feel the same when it grows up.

Pat Smith | Creve Coeur

Eroding good will

I have been trying to understand the Israeli response to the cross-border raid by Hezbollah and rocket attacks from Lebanese territory. Israel's announced objective is to destroy Hezbollah's ability to attack it. In that context, I am puzzled by the bombing of the airport and closing access by sea. This puts a dent in Lebanese civil society, but it doesn't have an impact on Hezbollah's fighting capacity since weapons reach Hezbollah over land from Iran through Syria.

Much of the loss of civilian life is collateral damage, inevitable when fighters meld into the general population. Then there are the mistakes: the destruction of a building where children took refuge and the shelling and bombing of a U.N. enclave. Most mysterious is the bombing of an oil refinery and storage facility, resulting in massive oil spills into the Mediterranean and the fouling of Lebanese beaches.

As I pondered these and other events, I came up with a plausible hypothesis: The Israeli government's response is guided by a public relations objective, namely, how to erode the good will toward Israel that historically has existed in much of the West. They have succeeded brilliantly.

Danny Kohl | University City

Middle East disproportion

Israel was attacked from Lebanon by Hezbollah terrorists across a recognized international border, yet is criticized for a "disproportionate" military response. In the unprovoked incursion, eight Israeli soldiers were killed and two abducted. Historical perspective may clarify the issue:

In October 2000, shortly after Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon -- the troops were trying to prevent rockets from being fired into Israel -- to the praise of the international community, Hezbollah terrorists abducted three soldiers. Israeli troops massed at the border but did nothing, in deference to newly arrived U.N. troops who were dispatched to find and return the captives. Two years later, the corpses of the three Israelis were returned in exchange for 400 Palestinian terrorists released from Israeli prisons. Proportionality, Hezbollah-style.

Today, six years later, under the noses of U.N. "observers," Hezbollah has fired more than 3,000 missiles toward the 1 million civilian inhabitants of northern and central Israel, which Human Rights Watch said was "without a doubt, a war crime." Hezbollah demands the release of 1,000 more terrorists from Israeli prisons in exchange for the three abducted soldiers. More "proportionality?"

Israel must defend its citizens, yet Israelis despair when innocent Lebanese civilians are killed. Hezbollah purposely and cynically uses such civilians as expendable pawns of war. Peace will come when Hezbollah is crippled as a terror group and the international community is committed totally to enforcing a demilitarized zone in southern Lebanon.

Irl Solomon | St. Louis County

Privacy, please!

As much as I enjoyed voting with the new touch-screen machines, I was deeply disturbed by the lack of privacy while voting in the primary elections. Other people could view the screen while I was voting. Some type of curtain or extended panel is needed to maintain privacy for future elections.

Diann Bomkamp | Creve Coeur

LETTERS FROM READERS

A lizard's loving home

A solution for the dilemma of where to place Zane Donoho's beloved but troublesome lizard ("A lizard's fate," Aug. 8): Let's give the lizard, a 5-foot crocodile monitor, a nice home at the St. Louis Zoo and name him Zane. He'd be a popular attraction and bring some positive fame to his owner, lessening the pain of separation. And the owner's mom will sleep at night.

Rise Schnurman | St Louis County

Notes

YOUR VIEWS OPINION

Load-Date: August 11, 2006

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And Now, Islamism Trumps Arabism

The New York Times

August 20, 2006 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section 4; Column 5; Week in Review Desk; Pg. 1; THE WORLD: SHIFTING SANDS

Length: 1456 words

Byline: By MICHAEL SLACKMAN; Mona el-Naggat contributed reporting from Egypt for this article, and Souad Mekhennet from Amman, Jordan.

Dateline: CAIRO

Body

SHE grew up in Cairo with the privileges that go to the daughter of a military officer, attended a university and landed a job in marketing. He grew up in a poor village of dusty unpaved roads, where young men work long hours in a brick factory while dreaming of getting a government job that would pay \$90 a month.

But Jihan Mahmoud, 24, from the middle-class neighborhood of Heliopolis, and Madah Ali Muhammad, 23, from a village in the Nile Delta, have come to the exact same conclusion about what they and their country need: a strong Islamic political movement.

"I have more faith in Islam than in my state; I have more faith in Allah than in Hosni Mubarak," Ms. Mahmoud said, referring to the president of Egypt. "That is why I am proud to be a Muslim."

The war in Lebanon, and the widespread conviction among Arabs that **Hezbollah** won that war by bloodying Israel, has fostered and validated those kinds of feelings across Egypt and the region. In interviews on streets and in newspaper commentaries circulated around the Middle East, the prevailing view is that where Arab nations failed to stand up to Israel and the United States, an Islamic movement succeeded.

"The victory that **Hezbollah** achieved in Lebanon will have earthshaking regional consequences that will have an impact much beyond the borders of Lebanon itself," Yasser Abuhilalah of Al Ghad, a Jordanian daily, wrote in Tuesday's issue.

"The resistance celebrates the victory," read the front-page headline in Al Wafd, an opposition daily in Egypt.

Hezbollah's perceived triumph has propelled, and been propelled by, a wave already washing over the region. Political Islam was widely seen as the antidote to the failures of Arab nationalism, Communism, socialism and, most recently, what is seen as the false promise of American-style democracy. It was that wave that helped the banned but tolerated Muslim Brotherhood win 88 seats in Egypt's Parliament last December despite the government's violent efforts to stop voters from getting to the polls. It was that wave that swept Hamas into power in the Palestinian government in January, shocking Hamas itself.

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"We need an umbrella," said Mona Mahmoud, 40, Jihan's older sister. "In the 60's, Arabism was the umbrella. We had a cause. Now we lack an umbrella. We feel lost in space. We need to be affiliated to something. Usually in our part of the world, because of what religion means to us, we immediately resort to it."

The lesson learned by many Arabs from the war in Lebanon is that an Islamic movement, in this case Hezbollah, restored dignity and honor to a bruised and battered identity. People in Egypt still talk painfully about the loss to Israel in 1967, a loss that was the beginning of the end of pan-Arabism as an ideology to unite the region and define its people.

Hezbollah's perceived victory has highlighted, and to many people here validated, the rise of another unifying ideology, a kind of Arab-Islamic nationalism. On the street it has even seemed to erase divisions between Islamic sects, like Sunni and Shiite. At the moment, the Hezbollah leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, is widely viewed as a pan-Arab Islamic hero.

"The losers are going to be the Arab regimes, U.S.A. and Israel," said Dr. Fares Braizat of the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan. "The secular resistance movements are gone. Now there are the Islamists coming in. So the new nationalism is going to be religious nationalism, and one of the main reasons is dignity. People want their dignity back."

The terms Islamic nationalism and pan-Islamism have a negative connotation in the West, where they are associated with fundamentalism and terrorism. But that is increasingly not the case in Egypt. Under the dual pressures of foreign military attacks in the region and a government widely viewed as corrupt and illegitimate, Islamic groups are seen by many people as incorruptible, disciplined, efficient and caring. A victory for Hezbollah in Lebanon is by extension a victory for the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

"People will say Hezbollah achieved a very good thing, so why should we mistrust the Muslim Brotherhood," said Hassan Naffa, a professor of political science at Cairo University.

There is a wide diversity of views and agendas under the pan-Islamic-Arab umbrella. But as is often the case in politically aligned movements, those differences are easily papered over when that movement is in the opposition.

"Hezbollah is a resistance movement that has given us a solution," said Yomana Samaha, a radio talk-show host in Cairo who identified herself as secular and a supporter of separating religion and government. But when asked if she would vote for a Muslim Brotherhood candidate in Egypt, she said "Yeah, why not?"

It was an answer she seemed reluctant -- but relieved -- to state.

"If they have a solution," she repeated, "why not?"

A solution to what?

"Loss of dignity," said Mona Mahmoud, who is her friend.

Concepts of individual and collective identity are fluid here. During the British occupation of Egypt, a rise in Egyptian nationalism helped lead to independence in the early 1900's. After the revolution of 1952, Gamal Abdel Nasser led the country and the region to seek unity under the banner of Arabism. That was a theme trumpeted by leaders from Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi in Libya to Hafez al-Assad in Syria to Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

But according to many political scientists and intellectuals, the glue of pan-Arabism began to weaken in Egypt after defeat in the Arab-Israel War of 1967, a decline that quickened through the 1970's and into the 1980's.

"People think that this defeat was a punishment from God because we drifted far from the teachings of Islam," said Gamal Badawi, an Egyptian historian.

Since then there has been a steady and visible change in many Egyptians' relationship to political Islam. It is not that Egyptians are suddenly more religious, political analysts said. This has always been a religious country. It is

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that they are more apt to define themselves by their faith. On the streets, that is most evident in the number of women -- an overwhelming majority -- who cover their heads with Islamic headscarves, a sign not just of individual conviction but also of peer pressure.

"The failure of pan-Arabism, the lack of democracy, and corruption -- this drives people to an extent of despair where they start to find the solution in religion," said Gamal el-Ghitany, editor of Akhbar al-Adab, a literary magazine distributed in Egypt.

Echoing that view, Diah Rashwan, an expert in Islamic movements and analyst with the government-financed Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Cairo, said, "People have come to identify themselves more as Muslims during the last five years in response to the U.S.-led 'war on terrorism' which Egyptians frequently feel is a discriminatory campaign targeting Muslims and Islam worldwide."

But it is not just outside pressures that have pressed so many people of this nation, and this region, toward that view. The events that helped shape Mr. Muhammad's world view from his Delta village illustrate the way the government of Egypt also plays a role.

Last December Mr. Muhammad's uncle, Mustafa Abdel Salam, 61, was shot in the head and killed by the Egyptian police as he was going to pray at a mosque, according to witnesses, including Mr. Muhammad and other villagers. The killing occurred on the last day of voting in Egypt's parliamentary elections, a months-long process that was marred by police officers who were ordered to block voters from getting to the polls in many districts. The government grew concerned after candidates affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood began winning in record numbers. While the brotherhood is banned, candidates affiliated with the organization ran as independents.

The government says that the police did not fire live ammunition at citizens, but many people were killed and doctors and witnesses -- including Western diplomats -- said that the police did fire live rounds into people trying to vote. After the election was over and Mr. Abdel Salam was buried, the brotherhood-affiliated candidate visited the family to offer his condolences and help. The winning candidate, from the governing National Democratic Party, did not visit.

Mr. Muhammad said that the whole experience strengthened his conviction that "Islam is the solution" -- a phrase that is the slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood. "Our voice is not heard," said Mr. Muhammad. "It is only the authorities who have a say. The smallest thing, like we go to vote, and we get beaten. So I will hold on to my religion, and that's it."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: The New Faithful -- In Lebanon, above, Egypt and across the Arab world, support for the Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah is growing more fervent. (Photo by Wael Hamzeh/European Pressphoto Agency)(pg. 1)

Emboldened -- Demonstrators chant anti-Israel slogans in Cairo and vowed support for Hezbollah. (Photo by Shawn Baldwin for The New York Times)(pg. 3)

Load-Date: August 20, 2006

And Now, Islamism Trumps Arabism

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Rice sent packing after Israeli missiles kill 60 in shelter

Western Mail

July 31, 2006, Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 9

Length: 842 words

Body

The Lebanese government told US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice she was not welcome in Beirut yesterday, after Israeli missiles struck a village yesterday killing about scores of civilians - half of them children. Dr Rice abruptly broke off her diplomatic mission in the Middle East and returned to Washington in the wake of the attack. By last night nearly 60 bodies had been recovered, but more were still trapped under the rubble, it was reported.

Israel said it targeted Qana because Hezbollah launched rockets at Israel from there. 'The army did not get an order to strike at Lebanese civilians. In Kfar Qana, hundreds of Katyushas (rockets) are hidden,' Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said.

Gideon Meir, a senior Israeli Foreign Ministry official, 'We deeply regret the loss of any civilian life and especially when you talk about children who are innocent. This is not the code of conduct of the Israeli army. But one must understand, the Hezbollah is using their own civilian population as human shields.'

The attack brought a swift response from Hezbollah - with a vow to retaliate. 'The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered,' a spokesman said. Mohammed Shaloub, a survivor of the attack, said there were 55 people in the house and eight survived.

The bodies of at least 27 children were found, said Abu Shadi Jradi, a civil defence official at the scene. He said the army dropped leaflets several days ago telling civilians to leave Qana.

Residents said they were too afraid to take the road out of Qana, which had been attacked repeatedly by rockets and bombs. Charred wreckage and smashed buildings line the road from Tyre to Qana, roughly nine miles away.

Lebanese Defence Minister Elias Murr disputed allegations that Hezbollah was firing missiles from Qana.

'What do you expect Israel to say? Will it say that it killed 40 children and women?' he told al-Jazeera.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora telephoned UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan urging him to convene an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council and arrange for an immediate ceasefire, the government said. 'There is no place at this sad moment for any discussions other than an immediate and unconditional ceasefire as well as international investigation of the Israeli massacres in Lebanon now,' he said. As news of the attack spread, a protest swelled in central Beirut to more than 5,000 people, denouncing Israel and the US, some chanting, 'Destroy Tel Aviv, destroy Tel Aviv'. The devastating missile strike came as heavy fighting erupted along the border between Hezbollah and the Israeli army. Hezbollah's al-Manar TV channel said two Israeli soldiers were killed in clashes. Heavy artillery also rained down on the villages of Yuhmor and Arnoun, close to Taibeh, and Israeli jets

Rice sent packing after Israeli missiles kill 60 in shelter

were seen overhead.: King of Jordan accuses Israeli forces of ugly crime:Jordan's King Abdullah II voiced his strongest criticism of his Israeli peace partner yesterday as the strike on Qana sparked an outcry of anger across the Arab world. Abdullah condemned 'the ugly crime perpetrated by Israeli forces in Qana, which led to the killing of innocent civilians, including a large number of children and women.'

'He said, This criminal aggression constitutes a blatant violation of the law and all international conventions.'

The king repeated his call for an 'immediate ceasefire'.

Iran called for Israeli and American government officials to be prosecuted for what it described as war crimes in Lebanon.

'Rice's visit (to Israel) came during the crime in Qana. I think Israeli officials and some American ones should be tried for these sorts of crimes,' said Hamid Reza Asefi, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman.

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Barham Saleh, known for normally strong pro-American views, said the events would 'undoubtedly' impact upon Iraq and the region.

'Any instability in the region affects it as a whole. It has an effect on regional security.

'We can't but sympathise with the Lebanese people and (we) call for stopping these military actions and targeting of civilians.'

French president Jacques Chirac learned 'with dismay of the act of violence that cost the lives of numerous innocent victims, notably woman and children, in Qana overnight,' his office said in a statement.

'France condemns this unjustifiable action, which shows more than ever the need to move toward an immediate ceasefire, without which other such dramas can only be repeated,' it said.

The Spanish foreign ministry also issued a statement expressing 'its deepest concern and condemnation' of the bombing of the village of Qana. 'The Spanish government repeats its call for an immediate ceasefire that would end the violence and spare us from having to lament tragedies like this one in the future,' the statement said. Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice abruptly broke off her diplomatic mission in the Middle East and returned to Washington in the wake of the attack. A US official said Ms Rice would work from Washington on a UN Security Council resolution to end the crisis.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Crisis in the Middle East

The Irish Times

August 17, 2006 Thursday

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 17

Length: 1113 words

Body

Madam, - The lengthy polemic by Rory Miller and Alan Shatter defending Israel's appalling bombardment of Lebanon (Opinion & Analysis, August 15th) can essentially be summed up in the childish refrain that "we're not the only ones".

Of course Israel is not the only rogue state. Of course other states, and organisations like *Hizbullah*, are also guilty of committing atrocities. But this fact does not excuse or justify the war crimes committed by Israel against the civilian population of Lebanon, so eloquently reported by Lara Marlowe and others in this paper.

Contrary to the Miller/Shatter assertion, while thousands of Irish people have been moved to protest against Israel, many thousands have also protested against atrocities committed by other states - including Arab states - at different times. However, there are important reasons why the Israeli bombing of Lebanon is such a focus of protest. Western governments have been particularly complicit for many years in arming Israel, in ignoring the plight of the Palestinians, and over recent weeks in delaying the welcome onset of a ceasefire. Irish people may also feel particularly strongly about the destruction of Lebanon, given the long record of our UN peacekeepers there.

In short, Israel may not be the only one, but that is no reason not to protest against Israeli aggression now. - Yours, etc,

IVANA BACIK, Law School, Trinity College, Dublin 2.

Madam, - The point made by Alan Shatter and Rory Miller - that some of the other atrocities they list were not condemned in the Dáil or on the streets - is a valid one. I have always called for denunciation of all such outrages, especially on the streets, where the focus has been mainly on the war crimes of the US and Israel. But is this because both countries pretend to be democratic, free, just, and observant of international law? I hope he condemned every one of those terrible crimes when he was head of the Oireachtas Foreign Affairs Committee.

The fact that other Arab states have also behaved abominably towards Palestinians does not excuse Israel. In fact this merely underlines the folly of Israel allying itself with the US, which has armed, bribed and colluded with many of the evil regimes which Alan Shatter condemns, including Kuwait, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Congo under Mobutu, etc. He could have added Iraq under Saddam Hussein, Kazakstan, Afghanistan under the Taliban and under the warlords, Bin Laden, etc.

The simplistic point that "Israel has a right to defend itself" must always be answered. Of course all nations (and many peoples denied nationhood) have a right to defend themselves. The point is how they may defend themselves.

Crisis in the Middle East

They may not defend themselves by bombing towns and villages full of innocent people, even if terrorists hide there or even if some of their people are sympathetic to those terrorists (called freedom fighters by some). The Geneva Conventions forbid this. Israel, like its ally the US, whose rhetoric and indiscriminate bombings it now imitates, must obey international law and the Geneva Conventions.

They may not defend themselves by responding to a border incident with the illegal invasion of a sovereign state and an all-out war, knowingly killing thousands of innocent people, ruining the infrastructure, and destroying for decades (perhaps forever) beaches, marine life, fishing and livelihoods.

They may not bomb fleeing civilians, after telling them to flee. They may not bomb ambulances and hospitals. They may not prohibit ambulances, first aid, the Red Cross and other aid or relief agencies from attending to victims.

They may not deny food and water to innocent people trapped by their military. They may not use cluster bombs, which though not yet outlawed, are regarded by most decent militaries as obscene and not to be used.

Alan Shatter cannot deny any of this. - Yours, etc,

GERALDINE McDERMOTT, Moycullen, Co Galway.

Madam, - The article by Rory Miller and Alan Shatter should be compulsory reading for all appeasers of dictators and of fascists (including Islamic ones), for masters of the half-truth, for populist politicians, for the enemies of Israel and the United States and of democracy and the rule of law. And indeed for the enemies of truth itself.

Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. And it looks like it will be the only one for a very long time to come. - Is mise,

BEAIRTLE Ó CONGHAILE, Cúirt an Choláiste, Dún Dealgan, Co Lú.

Madam, - The Shatter/Miller collaborative piece was strange indeed. Let's play along and assume that all those who have written to you conveying their anger and disgust at the slaughter of innocent women and children by the Israeli army are anti-American, anti-Jewish, anti-Israeli or whatever.

Does that make the outrageous and murderous behaviour of the Israeli army and their leaders somehow acceptable? - Yours, etc,

JIM O'SULLIVAN, Rathedmond, Sligo.

Madam, - I can understand that Lara Marlowe the person is upset about the deaths and destruction in Lebanon. She has lived there for many years and is understandably sympathetic to the plight of the hapless Lebanese citizens.

However, Lara Marlowe the journalist is grossly irresponsible to launch epithets such as "mass murder", and "terrorist state" at Israel and is being simplistic in suggesting that political leaders support Israel for fear of being called "anti-Semitic." Heaven help me, I am already depressed enough at Irish knee-jerk, anti-Israeli attitudes and the pathological pre-occupation with Israeli behaviour so clearly outlined by Rory Miller and Alan Shatter.

In Ms Marlowe's world, the fact that the Israeli air force has a reputation for pin-point accuracy (unlike Hizbullah and Hamas) implies that, when they make mistakes, it must mean that, for some strange reason, they deliberately set out to murder women and children and moped riders! As for me, I wonder what would happen if the arsenals were swapped around and Hizbullah had the fire-power that the Israelis now have. God forbid! - Yours etc.

PADRAIG Ó SUILLEABHÁIN, South Circular Road, Limerick.

Madam, - The Israeli military, with the backing of the United States and Britain, engaged in a brutal war of terror against the Lebanese people, which killed more than 1,000 innocent Lebanese civilians, a third of them children and left many Lebanese towns and villages in ruins.

Crisis in the Middle East

The international community now has a moral duty to ensure that those Israelis responsible for the war crime of collective punishments against Lebanese civilians face justice, and that Israel and its backers pay full reparations to Lebanon for the deaths and damage inflicted on the country. - Yours, etc,

MAIRTIN Ó GLIOSÁIN, Athenry, Co Galway.

Load-Date: August 17, 2006

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Lost in no man's land, the elderly and frail with nowhere left to go

The Times (London)

August 7, 2006, Monday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 8

Length: 797 words

Byline: Nicholas Blanford

Body

UN convoys taking supplies to those stranded on border run a gauntlet of airstrikes, writes Nicholas Blanford

TWO women, wide-eyed with fear, ran down the path from their simple stone house, clutching small plastic bags filled with belongings. "Are you going to Tyre? Please take us with you," pleaded one, breaking into tears. "Oh God, help us," she cried.

Her terror was heightened by the sharp report of Israeli artillery rounds and the thump of exploding shells in the valleys and hills surrounding the village.

In this and other Muslim villages along Lebanon's southern border with Israel, only a few residents still remain in their homes, mainly the elderly and frail who have nowhere else to go. They have been cut off from the outside world by the fighting. They have almost no food and water. Their telephone and electricity lines have been severed, the cellular network is jammed, and there is no petrol.

The United Nations peacekeeping force, known as Unifil, attempts to dispatch daily armoured convoys to take desperately needed supplies into the battle zone east of their headquarters in the coastal village of Naqoura. But as The Times found at the weekend, it is a perilous journey.

Three white UN-marked trucks flanked by two armoured personnel carriers ground from Naqoura along the narrow border road which winds up a steep brush-covered hillside riddled with Hezbollah dugouts. Although the hillside is within full view of Israeli positions along the border, multiple airstrikes and heavy shelling have not stopped the well-entrenched Hezbollah fighters from using it to fire rockets from there into Israel. Even as the convoy was leaving, two loud bangs and accompanying smoke trails in the blue sky marked the latest rocket barrage from the hill.

The border road lies behind Israel's front line. No Israeli soldiers were to be seen, but there was ample evidence of their passing in the freshly churned earth of tank tracks meandering through small fields of green tobacco and the ripped up asphalt of the border road.

There is evidence too of fierce fighting. A burnt-out Merkava tank lay beside the road, its sleek lines blackened and charred, another victim of Hezbollah's anti-armour missiles. The twin machineguns mounted on the turret were still in place. Beside the tank were broken stretchers and a military bag stuffed with food and covered in dried blood. The shelling and airstrikes were relentless - puffs of dirty grey smoke blooming briefly among the stony hills. Some of the exploding rounds had set light to the brush, turning swaths of hillside into blackened wasteland.

Lost in no man's land, the elderly and frail with nowhere left to go

In Dibil, a hill village of old stone houses and narrow streets, about 500 residents have chosen to stay, a risky decision rooted in a stubborn attachment to their homes and a belief that, being a Christian village, it will be spared the worst of the onslaught directed against Israel's Shia Hezbollah enemy.

"There's no Hezbollah here. All we want is to live in peace," said Father Youssef Nadaf, the tired and unshaven village priest whose white dog collar hung loosely from his neck.

Most of the villagers have gathered in the centre of Dibil, instinctively drawing closer to the stone church with its bright red-tiled roof. Travelling with the Unifil convoy was Nabil Haj, the Archbishop of Tyre, who eschewed body armour for the trip, preferring to rely for protection on his priestly garments and the thick silver crucifix hanging around his neck.

The villagers clustered around the Unifil truck as French soldiers handed down boxes of military rations, enough to feed the residents for a few more days.

Several houses have been destroyed on the outskirts of Dibil and one of the two roads leading into the village has been cratered by an aerial bomb. Niveen Zeeni, 23, said: "We hear the tanks at night going past the village, but we are too scared to look."

In Jibbayn desperate villagers, aged and stooped, said three people were killed when their house was blown up and begged the Unifil soldiers to recover the bodies so that they could be buried.

With Israeli troops controlling the road at one end of Jibbayn, the only other route to Teir Harfa, the last village on the convoy's itinerary, was a steep potholed track that dropped into a deep valley. The convoy commander studied a map, but the bad roads were not the only peril in the valley.

The area is a Hezbollah stronghold and a source of Katyusha rocket fire. The commander decided against the trip. "We don't even know if there's anyone left in Teir Harfa," he said, ordering the convoy to return to base. As the convoy left Jibbayn, an old man hobbled out of his home, begging for a lift to safety. The convoy continued. The old man stopped in a cloud of dust left by the last vehicle and cried out: "But I'm the mayor!"

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

Israeli strike kills dozens of children; 50 civilians die in the deadliest attack of the onslaught on southern Lebanon

The International Herald Tribune

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 948 words

Byline: Sabrina Tavernise

Dateline: QANA, Lebanon

Body

Christine Hauser contributed reporting from New York for this article.

*

A series of Israeli airstrikes in this small mountain town killed dozens of people Sunday in the deadliest single attack in the war here so far. At least 54 people were killed, 37 of them children, news agencies reported.

Rescue workers and neighbors worked frantically to find survivors among the wreckage of a house, where two large extended families were hiding in a garage. Six small children, their mouths open and full of dirt, were brought out and laid on stretchers.

"I felt as if I was turning around and the earth was going up and I was going into the earth," said Mohamed Chaloub, a father of five who was thrown into a doorway and managed to escape.

All of his children were killed, including a 2-year-old. His wife, sister and aunt were also killed.

Neighbors said that they ran to the house after the first strike, around 1 a.m., and that they heard screams and tried to reach people trapped inside, but the attacks persisted and they could not reach them.

In the morning, rescue workers pulled the bodies of 22 people out of the rubble, but neighbors said more bodies were inside.

The death toll climbed as rescue workers retrieved more people from the collapsed building, carrying limp bodies away on stretchers and in blankets.

The strike came as thousands of people protested in Beirut and a mob of young men started breaking windows and damaging buildings. Television footage showed crowds of men attacking a UN building in the capital.

[At least 750 people have been killed, most of them civilians, and more than 2,000 have been wounded in Lebanon since Israel began its air, sea and land assault on July 12, Health Minister Mohammed Khalifeh told Agence France-Presse on Sunday.]

Israeli strike kills dozens of children 50 civilians die in the deadliest attack of the onslaught on southern Lebanon

The Israeli government said in a statement on its Foreign Ministry's Web site that the Israeli Army attacked missile launching sites in the area of Qana, from where it said hundreds of missiles were launched toward the Israeli city of Nahariya and the communities in the western Galilee.

It said that Hezbollah had "turned the suburbs of Lebanon into a war front by firing missiles from within civilian areas." It said 18 Israeli civilians had been killed and more than 400 wounded by Hezbollah rocket attacks, which have disrupted the lives of tens of thousands of Israeli citizens.

The statement said that residents in Qana and the region had been warned several days in advance to leave the village.

[The Lebanese defense minister, Elias Murr, questioned Israel's claim that Hezbollah fired rockets from the village that was hit Sunday, The Associated Press reported. "What do you expect Israel to say? Will it say that it killed 40 children and women?" he said on Al Jazeera television.

[The attack drew swift condemnation from several world leaders, The Associated Press reported. The office of President Jacques Chirac said, "France condemns this unjustifiable action, which shows more than ever the need to move toward an immediate cease-fire, without which other such dramas can only be repeated."

[King Abdullah II of Jordan condemned "the ugly crime perpetrated by Israeli forces in Qana," calling it "a blatant violation of the law and all international conventions."]

The strikes on Qana came after Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice returned to Israel on Saturday evening to press for a substantive agreement that could lead to a more rapid cease-fire and the insertion of an international force along the Lebanese border with Israel.

On her way back from Kuala Lumpur, Rice had praised the Lebanese government, which includes two Hezbollah ministers, for agreeing on the outlines of a possible cease-fire package.

But she canceled a visit to Beirut on Sunday after the Qana strikes, according to news agencies.

While there has been a sense that President George W. Bush, after his meeting in Washington with Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain, had suddenly decided to give Israel a shorter period in which to attack Hezbollah forces in southern Lebanon, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said in a statement Sunday that Israel was not "rushing in" to a cease-fire before it had achieved its goals.

Olmert said Sunday that Israel regretted the death of civilians in Qana, where he said Hezbollah had fired rockets at Kiryat Shmona and Afula in northern Israel.

Rice is working to draft a United Nations Security Council resolution that would allow for the insertion of 15,000 to 20,000 international peacekeepers along the Lebanese border with Israel and along Lebanon's border with Syria, to prevent the rearming of Hezbollah.

The force would also work with the Lebanese Army to enable it to begin patrolling the border itself.

On Monday, there will be a meeting at the United Nations to discuss which countries might contribute to such a force. American officials said they might seek a Security Council resolution authorizing the force as early as Wednesday.

The United States has been isolated in its refusal to call for an immediate cessation of hostilities between Israel and Lebanon, arguing that the conditions were not ripe for a sustainable cease-fire.

But the international cry for a halt to Israeli airstrikes in Lebanon has been growing, especially after Israel hit a United Nations post, killing four United Nations observers, last week.

Israeli strike kills dozens of children 50 civilians die in the deadliest attack of the onslaught on southern Lebanon

Israel denied the accusation by Secretary General Kofi Annan that the post was deliberately hit, but with the death toll in Lebanon reported by officials there to be at least 750 people, mostly civilians, pressure on the United States has been growing to give Olmert an earlier deadline.

Annan scheduled an emergency Security Council meeting on Sunday to discuss Lebanon.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

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A trip into Lebanon's destruction

The Toronto Star
August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A07

Length: 872 words

Byline: Andrew Mills, SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Body

The Road Beyond Qana, Lebanon The sweaty Hezbollah guerrilla's nervous eyes darted around as he shouted that we couldn't go any further along the road from Qana.

It was clear he was anxiously waiting for something and it certainly wasn't us.

"Halas, enough," he insisted, as another fighter in a bombed-out wreck of a Volvo station wagon angrily screeched up the hill from the nearby village and around a corner, stopping and revving the engine. It wasn't quite the end of the road of misery and death, but it was as far as Hezbollah would let us go, just 10 kilometres north of the Israel-Lebanon border. An unexploded Israeli shell sat on the pavement at the roadside.

Early Sunday morning, Israeli aircraft attacked a building down the road from here in the village of Qana. Members of two extended families, most of them women and children, had taken refuge there. They thought it was safe.

The Israeli attack killed more than 50 of them. It was the bloodiest attack of Israel's 20-day offensive against Lebanon.

Israel says the civilian deaths are a mistake, but drive the 20 kilometres of winding road between Qana and Yater, deep into the heart of south Lebanon's war zone, and it is clear there have been dozens of potential Qanas in the past few weeks.

None of the ancient villages along the route remains untouched. Israel has bombed and shelled dozens of sites: roads, shops, fields, houses. Dozens of people, including children, have been killed and injured along this route in the past 20 days.

Israel says it only aims to attack the Shiite militant group Hezbollah. But it wasn't until Sunday, when outrage over more than 50 people killed at once circled the globe, that Israel made a move to temper its assault. Unless it was provoked by a Hezbollah attack, Israel said it wouldn't attack Lebanon from the air until 2 a.m. tomorrow (7 p.m. today, Toronto time). Israeli officials said they wanted two days to investigate their attack at Qana.

Yesterday, a silent calm blanketed the wreckage at Qana. Three untethered donkeys and a pair of un milked cows wandered around a tidy heap of imploded concrete nestled in an olive grove. Tiny chunks of concrete and glass had been blasted hundreds of metres away.

Israel's intelligence-gathering drones still buzzed overhead, an ominous reminder the offensive was only temporarily halted.

A trip into Lebanon 's destruction

Though shelling from Israeli tanks and warships continued yesterday, relief from the air gave thousands of refugees in south Lebanon their first chance to get out alive.

Deep craters tear into the road where bombs have landed, singeing the tobacco fields that line the road. In front of blown-up buildings, blasted rubble and shattered glass cover entire swaths of pavement as the road climbs higher into the hills on its way east from Qana. Every business is closed. Nobody is outside.

The only traffic came in the opposite direction. Dilapidated cars packed full of refugees tore along the road heading into Qana and west towards the coastal city of Tyre.

Shanan Hassan Mustafa, 45, had put 10 family members into his ancient brown Toyota Corolla, leaving the village of Beit Lif.

"Nobody has come out before today. Today we just left," he said from the driver seat.

"When they announced these 48 hours, we decided we wanted to move ... Poor people are staying there because they don't have the means to go, but those who have cars just left."

Ahead of him, Yusuf Kourani's family travelled in a Mitsubishi SUV. They were escaping the village of Yater. "We had about 12 or 15 houses that have been bombed. All of them have people in them. The least one had five persons in them," he said.

Israeli bombs had blown craters in the only route into Yater, which sits at a dead end. That meant no Red Cross assistance has been able to reach the village, he said. But yesterday, when news of the temporary halt in bombardment was announced, heavy machinery was used to fix the cratered road, allowing the Kouranis to escape.

Then, Kourani warned of the situation along the roads he had just come from: "Once you go up the hill you're going to see total destruction. There is nothing. Nothing left."

And he was right. At the top of the hill sits the village of Siddiqine. Every 30 metres or so, it seems a building has been pulverized. Israeli shells, likely from tanks at the border, have left 30-centimetre-wide gouges in the pavement and punched holes in walls and roofs.

The place smells of dead bodies, rotting in the summer heat, as they lie trapped in impenetrable piles of concrete chunks.

As we travelled further into the hills, towards Yusuf Kourani's village of Yater, the **Hezbollah** guerrilla ran out onto the road yelling for the car to stop before it headed into the village.

He wouldn't say exactly why onward travel wasn't permitted, but as a second Volvo station wagon - even more bomb-damaged than the first - frantically screeched up the road, it started to become clear.

The car barrelled past and just before it drove out of sight, four or five long black cylinders in the trunk became briefly obvious. It was impossible to confirm exactly what they were, but they resembled the Katyusha rockets **Hezbollah** has been firing into Israel the past 20 days.

Andrew Mills is a Canadian freelance journalist.

Graphic

A trip into Lebanon 's destruction

HASSAN AMMAR ap Lebanese photographer Wael Ladki carries a woman found alive yesterday in the rubble of her house in the southern border town of Bint Jbeil. The town, which once housed more than 40,000 residents, is deserted because of fierce fighting between Israel and **Hezbollah**.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

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As News Spreads of Deaths in South, Anger Boils Over Into Demonstrations in Beirut

The New York Times

July 31, 2006 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10; HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: THE CROWD

Length: 582 words

Byline: By HASSAN M. FATTAH

Dateline: BEIRUT, Lebanon, July 30

Body

Roiled by weeks of fear and anger, Beirut erupted into enraged demonstrations and rioting on Sunday at the news that Israeli bombs had cut short so many lives in Qana.

As the televised images of children's bodies were played and replayed on news stations, dozens of young men crashed into the sleek United Nations building early Sunday, lashing out at an accessible symbol of international inaction. The men broke windows and ransacked some floors of the building, burning an American flag and raising a **Hezbollah** flag in its place.

Riot police officers and Lebanese Army troops soon circled the area. But soon crowds converged on the central Riad al-Solh Square, and by noon there were thousands.

"They're killing our children, and we cannot stay quiet any more!" said Karim Qubaisi, who held a sign that read "Bush Terrorist."

He joined the crowd in shouting, "We are the people of Lebanon, not of Syria or Iran!" and "Abu Hadi, our beloved leader, destroy Tel Aviv!" referring to the nickname of **Hezbollah**'s leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah.

"This is not civilization, it is terrorism," Mr. Qubaisi said of Israel's bombardment of the country. "But we all know that even if Israel wanted to stop, the Americans will say no."

Many in the crowd were refugees who had fled southern Lebanon.

"There is no U.N., no conscience in this war," said Ali Mustapha, who fled his home in the south with his family last week. As soon as he heard news of the killings, he piled his family into his car to join the demonstration.

"What the U.S. wants, it gets. And it wants to build a 'new Middle East' on the rubble of our homes and our children," he said, bitterly echoing the words of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during her visit to Beirut last week.

As the demonstration raged, Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, after a meeting with the cabinet in the Grand Saray building, the seat of Lebanon's government nearby, furiously demanded a halt to all bombardments. "We have left

As News Spreads of Deaths in South, Anger Boils Over Into Demonstrations in Beirut

no stone unturned and no venture unexplored in our sincere desire for a rapid and comprehensive cease-fire and an end to the lethal rampage and carnage carried out by the Israeli Army," he said. "Instead, the Israeli response has been yet another massacre of innocent women and children in the town of Qana."

But rather than rallying behind Mr. Siniora's anger, many singled out his government for blame, saying that officials had tried to absolve themselves of responsibility for Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers in an attack on July 12 that set off the fighting.

The crowd chased after Ahmed Fatfat, Lebanon's interior minister, after he inspected the damage done to the United Nations building and walked back toward the Saray.

"You Zionist dog!" shouted one young man as a group rushed after Mr. Fatfat and his security detail. "He's the bigger devil."

Hezbollah security officials on the scene worked with the police to calm the men down, but not before they attacked Mr. Fatfat's motorcade, breaking windows on a security car and pounding on his vehicle.

Many demonstrators went to pains to underscore their support for Lebanon, not Hezbollah, trying to speak out for Lebanese unity.

"I came to demonstrate my support for all of Lebanon," said Ahmed Hussein, 22, who gathered with his friends, increasingly agitated. "We are going to fight, we will march to Tel Aviv!"

"Are you going, Ahmed?" one of his friends said in jest. "I want to go with you!"

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: Demonstrators smashing furniture yesterday inside the United Nations offices in Beirut, Lebanon, after throwing rocks, scaling fences and smashing windows to enter the building. (Photo by Hussein Malla/Associated Press)

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Middle East Crisis - UN in ceasefire call as women and children die in Israeli raid

Irish News

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: Pg. 8

Length: 503 words

Body

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan last night called for an immediate halt to violence between Israel and Hezbollah as he condemned an Israeli air strike that killed at least 56 people in southern Lebanon yesterday.

Mr Annan told an emergency meeting of the UN in New York he was "deeply disturbed" that his previous calls for a ceasefire had gone unheeded.

Mr Annan said the UN had had a responsibility to demand an end to the violence which saw a huge loss of civilian life in the latest attack on the village of Qana.

"Action is needed now before many more children, women and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control," Mr Annan said.

More than half of those killed in yesterday's attack - the second Israeli massacre of civilians in Qana in 10 years - were children.

They were taking refuge in the basement of a building which collapsed on top of them when it was bombed by Israeli forces.

The missiles struck just after 1am, levelling the three-storey building where two extended families, the Shalhoub and Hashims, had been sheltering from heavy Israeli bombardment.

Throughout the day rescue workers were digging through the rubble, lifting out bodies dressed in colourful clothes of women and children. At one point they found a single room with 18 bodies, police said.

"Why are they killing us? What have we done?" said Khalil Shahloub, who was helping pull out the dead until he saw his brother's body taken out on a stretcher. The dead included at least 34 children and 12 adult women.

Israel said guerrillas had fired rockets from near the building into northern Israel.

In Beirut, some 5,000 protesters gathered in central Beirut, at one point attacking a UN building and burning American flags.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice returned early to Washington after Lebanese leaders told her not to come to Beirut. Lebanon's prime minister said his country would not talk to the Americans over anything but an unconditional ceasefire.

Middle East Crisis - UN in ceasefire call as women and children die in Israeli raid

Ms Rice, in Jerusalem for talks with Israeli officials, said she was "deeply saddened by the terrible loss of innocent life" but stopped short of calling for an immediate end to the hostilities.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel "is not in a hurry to have a ceasefire" before it achieves its goals of decimating **Hezbollah**.

He said Israel would need 10 to 14 more days to finish its offensive.

"We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning," Mr Olmert told his cabinet after the killings, according to a participant. "We will continue the activity and if necessary it will be broadened without hesitation."

The Lebanese government this week had been putting forward ideas on disarming **Hezbollah** and deploying an international force in the south. But after the Qana strike, prime minister Fuad Saniora said negotiations were off "until the Israeli war stops shedding the blood of innocent people".

Israel said **Hezbollah** guerrillas had fired 40 rockets into northern Israel from Qana, wounding five Israelis.

Editorial P10.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

The Road to Justice in Argentina Leads to Iran

The Forward

November 3, 2006

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Section: News; Pg. A13

Length: 1006 words

Body

In 1994 Buenos Aires bombing, a prosecutor points a finger at Tehran.

On July 18, 1994, the deadliest postwar terrorist attack against a Jewish target took place in Buenos Aires. The seven-story headquarters of the AMIA, the Argentine Jewish community's central welfare body, was destroyed. Eighty-five people, Jews and non-Jews alike, were killed; hundreds were wounded. It followed in the wake of another deadly terrorist assault in Buenos Aires two years earlier, against the Israeli Embassy.

Suspicion surrounding the 1994 attack immediately focused on Iran and Hezbollah, which presumably acted with the assistance of local accomplices, possibly drawn from

the tri-border region where Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay meet. There, a large Arab community thrives in a largely lawless region of mounting concern to Western intelligence agencies. But the ensuing official investigations went nowhere. As a result, many families of the AMIA victims and others succumbed to wellfounded cynicism about Argentina's will and capacity to pursue the inquiry.

Despite repeated promises by Argentina's leaders to get to the bottom of the attack so as to ensure justice and also to dispel the impression that Argentina was a soft target for terrorists more smoke than fire was generated. Indeed, for 12 years, a trail of incompetence, corruption and false starts was all there was to show for the official effort.

Now, at long last, there has been a major breakthrough in the case. Argentine prosecutors, led by AMIA special prosecutor Alberto Nisman, have just released a longawaited report calling for the issuance of arrest warrants for seven Iranian leaders, including former president Ali Akbar Rafsanjani, former foreign minister Ali Akbar Velayati and former intelligence chief Ali Fallahian. One of America's most wanted men, Imad Mughniyeh of Hezbollah, is also on the list. Nisman's bottom-line finding is that Hezbollah carried out the attack in the center of Argentina's capital city at the behest of the highest authorities of the government of Iran.

Though it took 12 years during which the AMIA and its partner, the American Jewish Committee, left no stone unturned in demanding justice the news comes as a bombshell. Let's be absolutely clear: The government behind the attack, Iran, is a member state of the United Nations. It ordered an attack on another U.N. member state. And, as the Nisman report makes clear, the decision was taken at the very highest level of the Iranian government. There is no room here for plausible deniability by any top Iranian official serving at the time.

Will those named in the arrest warrants be seized and extradited to Argentina? If any of them sets foot outside of Iran, that could become theoretically possible. It is up to the international community to ensure that theory becomes reality.

The Road to Justice in Argentina Leads to Iran

Needless to say, Tehran has denounced the report's findings. Care to guess who is behind the Argentine effort, according to the Iranians? Yes, an Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman revealed that the new fabrications are conducted within the framework of a Zionist plot. Why? To divert world attention from the perpetration of crimes by the Zionists against women and children in Palestine, of course.

Yes, it always comes back to the Zionists and their plots in this dark conspiratorial world, the same mindset that also churned out the bizarre theory that Israel and its sympathizers were behind 9/11 and, more recently, that they are to blame for the Sudanese genocide in Darfur. Any lie will do to get the real perpetrators off the hook.

It's high time for the world to face up to three stark realities about Iran:

First, as the 800-page Argentine report amply documents, Iran is complicit in international terrorism. Indeed, the U.S. State Department has repeatedly referred to Iran as the primary state sponsor of terrorism in the world. Iran trains, protects and supports Hezbollah, as well as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, to serve as proxies and accessories. Perhaps the Nisman report will help encourage those European nations that have resisted placing Hezbollah on the European Union terrorism list to reconsider their position.

Second, Iran's nuclear weapons program continues at full speed in violation of U.N. Security Council and International Atomic Energy Agency resolutions. Iran could one day seek to use those weapons or provide them in some form to a group like Hezbollah to project power and attack perceived enemies, whether in the Middle East, South America or elsewhere. Sound far-fetched? Given the violent messianism of Iran's current crop of top leaders, exemplified by its president, such a possibility is surely within the realm of realistic scenarios.

And third, Iran to date believes that it can have its yellow cake and eat it too. In other words, the country's leaders have concluded, erroneously I hope, that they can order terrorist attacks and simultaneously defy the world community on nuclear weapons matters and get away with it. By dint of Iran's size, energy reserves and long reach, its leadership believes today, as it did in 1994, that it can bully, intimidate and outmaneuver those who dare to consider punitive measures against it.

Argentina has now taken an important indeed principled and courageous step in standing up to Iran and Hezbollah. Yes, it came late in the day, but in this case late is far better than never. Will Argentina now stand alone while other countries uncomfortably avert their eyes from the prosecutor's report? Or will the community of nations rally around Argentina, demand the arrest of the eight named in the warrants and, once and for all, declare Iran a pariah nation that poses a clear and present danger to global harmony and prospects for peaceful conflict resolution in the Middle East? Twelve years later, justice and the preservation of the memory of the AMIA victims call for nothing less.

Graphic

IMAGE; Getty Images

Load-Date: November 6, 2006

Olmert vows to fight on despite air-strike truce

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 8

Length: 936 words

Byline: Paul McGeough Chief Herald Correspondent in Beirut

Body

ALTHOUGH forced to agree to a two-day halt in the bombing of southern Lebanon after the tragic death of as many as 60 civilians, the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, wants to keep fighting, pleading to Washington for 10 to 14 more days, in which he claims Israel can achieve its objectives.

Against a global tide of shock and anger in the aftermath of an air strike that destroyed an apartment block in Lebanese village of Qana, Israeli officials made little headway in reasserting their case for a war that is going badly for them.

There is no official toll, but locals say as many as 60 friends and relatives were sheltering in the building's basement.

Seventeen children were among the 27 bodies recovered from the rubble on Sunday by rescue teams from the United Nations and Lebanese Red Cross. There are thought to be as many as 30 children among the dead.

A rising sense that this is Washington's war against the *Hezbollah* militia - not Israel's - is fuelling anti-American resentment in the region. And there is condemnation of Arab leaders who gave an implicit nod for the Israeli attacks that have killed more than 500 civilians and displaced up to 800,000 others.

Qana resonates in Arab public opinion because of a similar Israeli attack 10 years ago, Israel mistakenly hit a United Nations post in the town, killing 100 refugees and injuring another 100. Back then it said it was targeting a *Hezbollah* mortar nest; this week it has film that it claims proves that Katyusha missiles were fired from near a house in Qana.

The Lebanese Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, accused Israel of "heinous" war crimes, asking: "Why, we wonder, did they choose Qana yet again?"

As the news from Qana consumed the airwaves, it didn't help that it was US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's office that announced the Israeli halt to bomb; or, when Mr Olmert's bid for more time was announced, that a senior Israeli official told reporters: "Do you think that, with the close relationship he has with Bush and Condi, [Mr Olmert] would go and say something like that without their consent?"

Or that after acknowledging the pain of war, the US President, George Bush, told Americans in his weekly radio address: "Yet it is also a moment of opportunity for broader change in the region."

Olmert vows to fight on despite air-strike truce

"Transforming countries that have suffered decades of tyranny and violence is difficult, and it will take time to achieve. But the consequences will be profound for our country and the world."

In the region, the first bolt of anger came from Mr Siniora who, in cancelling a Sunday meeting with Dr Rice in Beirut, said: "There is no place on this sad day for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, as well as an international investigation into the Israeli massacres in Lebanon, now."

This deadliest day of the war provoked an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council, which expressed "extreme shock and distress" at the deaths in Qana. But, after US intervention, it stopped short of condemning Israel or acceding to the demand by the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, for an immediate ceasefire.

Backed by France, Mr Annan told the session: "No one disputes Israel's right to defend itself. But by its manner of doing so, it has caused and is causing death and suffering on a wholly unacceptable scale."

Promising an investigation of the attack, Israeli officials denied responsibility for the deaths, saying they had advised civilians to flee. But many have neither funds nor vehicles to do so, and so many refugees have been bombed on the roads that many have concluded it is safer to stay in their homes.

Promising vengeance, Hezbollah stepped up its attacks throughout Sunday - lobbing more than 150 rockets into northern Israel, which Israeli officials said was the most in the three-week conflict.

Despite Qana, Mr Olmert told his cabinet: "We will not blink in front of Hezbollah and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances.

"Israel is in no rush to reach a ceasefire before we get to that point where we could say that we reached [our] main objectives. This includes the ripening of the diplomatic process and preparing the multinational force."

The attack on Qana will make it difficult to Dr Rice to hold the US line that there can be no ceasefire until there is agreement on a full package of measures to resolve the conflict, which she described as "the birth pangs of a new Middle East".

On Sunday she appeared shaken by events in Qana. As Dr Rice left Israel to return to Washington yesterday, she was confident that in the coming days she would take a draft resolution to the UN Security Council that would be in three parts - "a ceasefire, the political principles that provide for a long- term settlement and authorisation for an international force to support the Lebanese Army in keeping the peace".

Her ambitiousness is not lost on the regional media. An Arab TV reporter ladled the sarcasm as he went live from the rubble of Qana - "this is the new Middle East" was his opening line.

Analysts warned the best that might come from the Rice plan is the survival of Hezbollah, an international force that would become bogged down on Lebanon's borders and even more strained US relations with the region. The worst, they cautioned, would be an emboldened Hezbollah and Iran; more Islamic radicalism; and greater strife in Iraq.

Holding the Israeli military responsible for the Qana deaths, Kenneth Roth, head of the New York-based Human Rights Watch, said: "Just because the Israeli military warned the civilians of Qana to leave does not give it carte blanche to blindly attack."

Graphic

PHOTO: Suicide sisters . . . women in Tehran, dressed as suicide bombers, attended a protest yesterday that supported Hezbollah and denounced Israel. Photo: AP/Hasan Sarbakhshian

Olmert vows to fight on despite air-strike truce

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Rights group accuses Israel of war crimes: Deaths of Canadian civilians, UN observer used to illustrate charge

Ottawa Citizen

August 5, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A8

Length: 658 words

Byline: Juliet O'Neill, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

Two Israeli bombings in which Canadians were killed in Lebanon may constitute "war crimes," says Human Rights Watch.

In a report on the Middle Eastern conflict, released this week, the New York-based international non-governmental organization says, "directing an attack against civilians, regardless of their political sympathies, is a war crime."

The quote is from a section referring to the July 16 bombing of a home in the village of Aitaroun that killed 11 members of the al-Akhrass family, eight of them on vacation from Montreal.

Referring to the missile hit on a UN base in Khiyam, the report says, "directing attacks against peacekeepers or objects involved in a peacekeeping operation is prohibited and constitutes a war crime."

The July 25 bombing killed Maj. Paeta Hess-von Kruedener of Kingston, and three other unarmed UN observers stationed in southern Lebanon.

More than 20 Israeli attacks on civilians are examined in the 50-page report alleging a pattern of deliberate targeting and indiscriminate killing of civilians in their homes and while trying to flee in their cars.

Israeli government officials and diplomats say the high civilian casualty rate in Lebanon is the fault of **Hezbollah** fighters hiding themselves and their weapons among the civilian population.

"The government of Canada does not comment on reports of independent organizations," a Foreign Affairs spokeswoman said yesterday.

Ofir Gendelman, an Israeli diplomat in Ottawa, said Israel has promised to investigate the incident at Aitaroun, and the Canadian military attache in Tel Aviv is in close contact with the Israeli military about it. "Israel has made it very clear that it will share all the findings with the Canadian government," he said.

Israel and the UN are separately investigating the attack on the UN post.

Human Rights Watch said villagers in Aitaroun vigorously denied the Al-Akhrass family had any connection with **Hezbollah**, and said the group, which Canada and other countries have labelled a terrorist entity, was not active

Rights group accuses Israel of war crimes: Deaths of Canadian civilians, UN observer used to illustrate charge

near the house or the village at the time of the attack. In any case, the report said "the political leanings of the civilian population in a given area or village are irrelevant as far as their civilian status is concerned.

"To the extent that civilians do not participate in hostilities, that is, do not commit acts that by their nature or purpose are likely to cause harm to the personnel and equipment of the enemy, they continue to benefit from the protection afforded by their civilian status."

In none of the 153 cases of civilian deaths documented in the report, Human Rights Watch said, "is there evidence to suggest that Hezbollah was operating in or around the area during or prior to the attack."

The report alleged a pattern of failure by the Israeli military to distinguish between combatants and civilians in the current military campaign against Hezbollah.

"The pattern of attacks during the Israeli offensive in Lebanon suggests that the failures cannot be explained or dismissed as mere accidents; the extent of the pattern and the seriousness of the consequences indicate the commission of war crimes," it said.

The report quotes a woman who lived 300 metres from the Al-Akhrass home as saying that for the first two days after Hezbollah kidnapped two Israeli soldiers, villagers heard planes and bombs. On the third day, the Israelis started bombing the field around the village, located one kilometre from the Lebanese-Israeli border.

"We recovered between six and eight bodies but were told there may be more, and they were all in pieces," she said. "The sheikh buried them immediately. There were young women among them."

Civilians are supposed to be protected from indiscriminate attack and terror under international humanitarian laws, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and codes of conduct attached to it in subsequent years. And war crimes are codified in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Load-Date: August 5, 2006

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ISRAEL SUSPENDING LEBANON AIR RAIDS AFTER DOZENS DIE

The New York Times

July 31, 2006 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 6; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1; HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: TACTICS

Length: 1714 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER and HASSAN M. FATTAH; Steven Erlanger reported from Jerusalem for this article, and Hassan M. Fattah from Beirut, Lebanon. Helene Cooper contributed reporting from Jerusalem, and Sabrina Tavernise from Qana, Lebanon.

Dateline: JERUSALEM, Monday, July 31

Body

Israel agreed to suspend air attacks in southern Lebanon for 48 hours after one of its raids on the southern town of Qana left dozens of civilians, many of them children, dead on Sunday, the bloodiest day of the conflict so far.

Israel said the Qana raid was aimed at Hezbollah fighters firing rockets into Israel from the area, but the strike collapsed a residential apartment building, crushing Lebanese civilians who were taking shelter for the night in the basement.

There were different accounts of the death toll. Residents said as many as 60 people had been inside. News agencies reported that 56 had been killed, and that 34 of them were children. The Lebanese Red Cross, which conducted the rescue, counted 27 bodies, as many of 17 of them children. The youngest of the dead was 10 months old, and the oldest was 95. One was in a wheelchair.

One Israeli military official raised the possibility that the building collapsed hours after the strike and that munitions had been stored in it. American and Israeli officials said Israel would use the pause in air attacks to investigate.

Whatever the actual toll, the deaths set off a chain reaction, with protesters in Beirut ridiculing the inaction of Arab governments, ransacking the United Nations offices and burning an American flag.

There were also fresh condemnations worldwide of the Israeli tactics that have left hundreds of civilians dead as it fights Hezbollah, the Shiite militia that set off the hostilities with a raid into Israel 19 days ago. Hezbollah vowed revenge for the deaths in Qana.

After the strike, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice canceled a planned trip to Beirut and decided to return to Washington on Monday to hammer out a resolution to the conflict that could be brought before the United Nations this week.

"I will continue to work and work and work, that is what we can do," said a visibly shaken Ms. Rice. "If there is a way humanly to accelerate our efforts, I would do it."

ISRAEL SUSPENDING LEBANON AIR RAIDS AFTER DOZENS DIE

The Lebanese prime minister, Fouad Siniora, made it clear that in any case Ms. Rice would not be welcome in Beirut on Sunday and demanded an immediate cease-fire. "There is no place on this sad day for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional cease-fire, as well as an international investigation into the Israeli massacres in Lebanon now," Mr. Siniora said.

J. Adam Ereli, the deputy spokesman for the State Department, which announced the 48-hour pause in strikes, said Israel would use the suspension in bombing to coordinate with the United Nations safe passage for 24 hours for residents who wish to leave southern Lebanon.

Israeli officials said nothing publicly about the suspension early Monday, and Mr. Ereli noted that Israel reserved the right to strike at militants preparing attacks against it.

An Israeli official in the prime minister's office, who did not want to be identified, simply confirmed the State Department statement, saying, "Israel will be suspending aerial activity over southern Lebanon for 48 hours until the end of the Israeli investigation into Qana."

At midnight Sunday, Israeli aircraft hit targets in eastern Lebanon, a spokesman for the Israeli Army said Monday morning. The suspension of airstrikes went into effect two hours later, he added.

Earlier, the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, expressed sorrow for the Qana attack but told Ms. Rice that Israel needed another 10 to 14 days to complete its war aims against Hezbollah, according to a senior Israeli official.

"We will not blink in front of Hezbollah and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances," Mr. Olmert told his cabinet on Sunday.

"Israel is in no rush to reach a cease-fire before we get to that point where we could say that we reached the main objectives we had set forth," he added. "This includes the ripening of the diplomatic process and preparing the multinational force."

In Lebanon, Qana was already nearly synonymous with the killing of civilians. Ten years ago, in an eerily similar attack, Israel, responding to mortar fire, mistakenly shelled a United Nations post in Qana where refugees were taking shelter, killing 100 people and wounding another 100. The attack prompted the United States to embark on eight days of shuttle diplomacy that brought about a cease-fire.

In a speech to the diplomatic corps, Mr. Siniora accused Israel of war crimes and asked: "Why, we wonder, did they choose Qana yet again?"

He asked the diplomats to work at the United Nations for a cease-fire, saying, "We cannot be expected to negotiate or discuss anything else while the ruthless, pitiless sword of the Israeli war machine continues to drip with the blood of innocent women and children."

At the United Nations, Secretary General Kofi Annan urged the Security Council, meeting in emergency session on Sunday, to call for an immediate cease-fire, but instead it passed a resolution saying it "strongly deplores this loss of innocent lives."

On Sunday, Hezbollah fired more than 150 rockets into northern Israel, the Israeli Army said, the highest daily number so far in the fighting. Eight people were slightly wounded, including a reporter for the Haaretz newspaper. Nearly 1,900 rockets have fallen in Israel. Nineteen civilians have been killed and over 400 wounded. Thirty-three soldiers have been killed and 88 wounded.

Nearly 550 Lebanese have been killed in airstrikes, with as many as 200 missing, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. Almost 2,000 have been wounded, the ministry said. Israel estimated that 300 Hezbollah fighters had been killed in ground fighting with Israeli troops.

Mr. Olmert said Israel would investigate what had happened in Qana. But he and the Israeli Army blamed Hezbollah fighters for firing hundreds of rockets from the area, which is a stronghold for the militia.

ISRAEL SUSPENDING LEBANON AIR RAIDS AFTER DOZENS DIE

In a statement, the Israeli Army said it had warned residents of the region and of Qana "several days in advance" to leave their homes. "The responsibility for any civilian casualties rests with the Hezbollah who have turned the suburbs of Lebanon into a war front by firing missiles from within civilian areas," the statement said.

The Israeli Army said that it was puzzled that the strike occurred between midnight and 1 a.m., and hit next to the building, but that the building collapsed around 7 a.m. Brig. Gen. Amir Eshel said it was at least possible that the explosion was caused by munitions stored inside the building.

"It is possible that various things were stored inside the house, things that ultimately caused an explosion," General Eshel said. Ms. Rice said Sunday that she called Mr. Siniora to express her condolences and to cancel her planned visit to Beirut. Ms. Rice told the journalists traveling with her that "my work is here today," meaning with Israeli officials, and she met Sunday evening with Mr. Olmert.

"We are also pushing for an urgent end" to the fighting, Ms. Rice said. "But the views of the parties on how to achieve that are different." She did not call for an immediate cease-fire, arguing that a long-term resolution required a political package deal, which would include a cessation of hostilities.

"I think what it is time to do is get to a cease-fire," she said. "We actually have to put one in place. We want a cease-fire as soon as possible. I would have wanted a cease-fire yesterday if possible, but the parties have to agree to a cease-fire and there have to be certain conditions in place."

Ms. Rice decided to cut her Middle East trip short and return to Washington on Monday in order to work on a United Nations Security Council resolution that would try to codify a political resolution to the conflict.

Beyond bringing an end to hostilities, the Security Council's aims include the insertion of a new international peacekeeping force along the border, a resolution of a disputed border area called Shabaa Farms and a return of captured Israeli soldiers.

But there is ever-building pressure to end the fighting as soon as possible, especially from American allies like France and Germany. France has already drawn up a draft Security Council resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire to prepare for the deployment of an international force, in which Paris is expected to play a leading role.

There is also pressure from allied Arab nations like Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, who want to see Hezbollah diminished but who sense rising anger among their populations about the civilian death toll.

Demonstrators in Beirut on Sunday attacked a United Nations building, breaking windows and ransacking some floors. They carried signs reading: "Arabs, you chickens," and "American-made bombs, dropped by Israeli planes, with Arab cover."

The crowd chanted slogans against the Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, saying: "Zionist, oh Zionist, Hosni Mubarak is a Zionist."

Mr. Mubarak, in a statement, criticized the Israel attack as irresponsible and called again for an immediate cease-fire.

Other nations also condemned the deaths. The European Union foreign policy chief, Javier Solana, issued a statement saying that "nothing can justify" the Qana airstrike. The Europeans are "continuously working to reach an immediate cease-fire," he told Mr. Siniora.

Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain, who was traveling in the United States, was alone in echoing American concerns that the situation on the border change. "This is an absolutely tragic situation," he told reporters, "but we have got to make sure that the discussion we are having and negotiations we are conducting do lead to a genuine cessation of hostilities in a way that allows to put an end to them for good."

In Washington, the third-ranking official of the State Department, R. Nicholas Burns, said, "We are close to a political agreement between Israel and Lebanon to end this fighting."

ISRAEL SUSPENDING LEBANON AIR RAIDS AFTER DOZENS DIE

But he added, "We want to avoid a situation where we essentially put a Band-Aid on something."

On Sunday, Israeli tanks and troops moved into another section of southern Lebanon, near Metula, heading toward the Lebanese town of Khiam. The army described it as the latest incursion aimed at flushing out **Hezbollah** fighters and positions along the border.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: Bodies at a Lebanese hospital after an Israeli airstrike killed dozens of civilians, many of them children. One Israeli military official disputed the reasons for the building's collapse. (Photo by Tyler Hicks/The New York Times)(pg. A11)Map of the Mideast highlighting Beirut, and Qana: Israel said the strike in Qana was aimed at **Hezbollah** fighters. (pg. A11)

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

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Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols

Daily Mail (London)

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 15

Length: 1491 words

Byline: PETER MCKAY

Body

WHY can't there be a ceasefire in Lebanon?

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice backtracks and now says it's time to have one, but she remains vague about the details.

Our government takes the line developed by the Israelis and the Americans that it's no good having a temporary ceasefire because only a permanent one is worth having.

This sounds sensible enough until you think about it. A temporary ceasefire would have saved the lives of more than 50 Lebanese souls - half of them children - who died in an Israeli air strike over the weekend.

The 'we need a permanent solution' line is bogus. What our leaders agreed was for Israel to inflict as much death and destruction on Lebanon as it saw fit in the hope this would curb Hezbollah fighters.

I have not heard a single Israeli spokesman, military or civilian, say their onslaught on Lebanon, creating over 500,000 refugees and killing hundreds of innocent men, women and children, would finish off Hezbollah. Indeed, some Middle East experts say ten recruits replace each fallen Hezbollah militant.

Is this bloodbath really all about Hezbollah rockets fired into Israel? Or might there be other motives for destroying Lebanon?

The Israelis are able to secure the most up-to-date military equipment from the U.S. Can't they pinpoint exactly where Hezbollah rockets are coming from - even when they're fired from mobile platforms? Locating and destroying such platforms would have been a 'proportionate' response to Hezbollah attacks.

ATTACKING apartment blocks, airports, electricity stations, sewage works, schools, hospitals, TV stations, rural villages and people fleeing from Israeli jet bombers is surely 'disproportionate'.

Is the Israeli purpose to smash Lebanon so completely that its people turn upon the Hezbollah supporters who brought this wrath upon them?

If so, there are no early signs this strategy is working. On the contrary, TV and newspaper reports suggest a seething hatred of Israel and growing support for Hezbollah.

Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols

Why don't the Lebanese, generally, see Hezbollah as brutal terrorists whose ambition to destroy Israel - backed by Iran and Syria - is being paid for in innocent Lebanese lives?

Because that's not what it looks like to them. To most Lebanese, Hezbollah is fighting Israel over the latter's occupation of Palestinian territories.

Until that issue is resolved, there won't be peace.

Terry Waite pointed this out last week on Newsnight. He knows what he's talking about, having spent five years as a prisoner of Islamic militants.

But there's no enthusiasm in Bush's administration for diplomacy to create a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine. Instead, this dispute has been incorporated into Bush's 'war on terror'.

Where do we stand in all this? In the most unfortunate position of all - as the despised lapdog of America. In an attempt to offset this damage, Bush told Blair in front of reporters last week: 'You tell me what you think.'

Imagine! A Prime Minister dares to tell an American President what he thinks.

And the President admits it publicly.

Can we feel anything other than bottomless contempt for this squalid little public relations stunt?

Her Majesty's Opposition offers little more. Yesterday, Tory shadow minister Dr Liam Fox appeared on TV and was asked by Peter Sissons if it was true that the Conservatives were reluctant to criticise Israel for fear of antagonising Jewish potential donors to the party. He called this a 'really offensive idea'.

What's really offensive to most of us, I'd say, is the cowardice and idleness of our politicians at a time of maximum danger in the Middle East.

Isn't it contemptible of Blair to swan off to California in order to grease up to media tycoon Rupert Murdoch and thereafter on another freebie holiday?

A ceasefire can be delayed indefinitely, it seems, but a Prime Ministerial job-seeking trip followed by a holiday must take place now.

WHO invented the Sixties supermodel Twiggy, still doing great business for Marks & Spencer? 'He did not make me,' she says of her former manager Justin de Villeneuve, now 66. He says: 'We were a double act and the fact that she now denies this is farcical.' He is right, I'm afraid. Twiggy (pictured with de Villeneuve in 1970) is mainly responsible for her own great success, but she is foolish to deny his role in getting her started. It wouldn't hurt her to be more generous. Apparent sweetness of character was one of her great attractions in a bitchy, selfish industry.

Kicking over the Traceys

CIVIL servant Tracey Temple, 43, is on 'secondment' to a new job outside the Palace of Westminster so she won't bump into Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, who used her for sexual relief while she was his diary secretary.

Miss Temple is working in personnel at Westminster University, but her Pounds 30,000 salary is paid for by the Government. A cabinet office spokesman says: 'We often second civil servants to other organisations to gain experience.' Perhaps they'll 'second' Prescott to the House of Lords after he's run the country on behalf of holidaying Blair for the tenth successive year, then shameful Tracey can resume her career at the Palace of Westminster.

Wonderful world, isn't it?

THANKS to the Great European Heatwave, yields of some vegetable varieties are down by 20per cent. So prices will rise.

Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols

'Margins are too tight, after years of bludgeoning by supermarkets, to withstand a bad year like this,' says a spokesman for the Processed Vegetable Growers' Association.

The great Scottish economist Adam Smith said no group of businessmen ever met without the agenda being to rig prices. He might have added that no variety of weather exists that cannot be used for the same purpose.

FORMER Tony Blair flatmate Charlie Falconer - Baron Falconer, Lord Chancellor, these days, if you please - appears on TV to support the Government.

Explaining why U.S. jets carrying bombs for Israel are still refuelling in Scotland en route to the Middle East - after 'Foreign Secretary' Margaret Beckett apologised for this lapse - he calls it 'a process that has been going on for some time... this is not the time to change the rules'.

Falconer's real role is to tidy up behind the circus elephant with diarrhoea that is Her Majesty's Government. He seems happy in his work, doesn't he?

Strangers in the night

POP singer George Michael rings a TV show to justify cruising for homosexual encounters on Hampstead Heath.

Later, his case is debated sympathetically on Newsnight.

Over the weekend, Radio 4's Any Questions addressed the matter.

Having sex with strangers on Hampstead Heath or any other public place is hardly respectable.

No one enjoys a 'right' to do it.

Nor, surely, is it a fit subject for discussion on anything but the most stupid TV or radio show.

Pretending it's an appropriate issue for grownup debate is childishy perverse.

Those with out-of-the-ordinary sexual tastes used to accept that indulging them could lead to ridicule and sometimes prosecution. But they preferred taking a risk rather than campaigning for total licence.

They dared to be different and took their punishment like men.

George Michael's a cry-baby.

A RENEWED burst of publicity suggests that the divorce of Sir Paul and Lady McCartney might be nasty.

There's talk of the latter taking the former 'to the cleaners' in pursuit of a bigger share of his Pounds 800million fortune.

Let's hope not. It's only money and not worth the bitterness.

Sir Paul, in his pop lyrics, was always adept at suggesting kindly responses to human problems. If he was writing a song about a mega-rich pop singer facing the loss of millions to an ex-wife, what line would he take?

Fight her bitterly in court or settle generously with a smile? The latter, I suggest. So that, surely, is the way to go.

Will wife Gail be a 'fragrant' asset to Tommy?

TODAY, Scottish politician Thomas Sheridan, acting as his own lawyer, is due to question his wife Gail at Edinburgh's Court of Session.

Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols

Socialist Sheridan, who is suing the News of the World for libel and claiming damages of Pounds 200,000, has been presenting himself as a boring, stay-at-home type who likes Scrabble and sun beds. The News of the World alleges he enjoys cocaine, champagne and group sex.

So the evidence of Mrs Sheridan, a former air stewardess, is regarded as crucial.

I can think of no previous occasion when a politician accused of lubricious behaviour has called his wife as a witness for the defence, while acting as his own lawyer.

Mary Archer famously spoke up for Jeffrey - and was described as 'fragrant' by the judge - but the Tory MP didn't quiz her personally.

So it's standing room only to hear bonny Gail Sheridan. Will the case settle anything?

Those who like Sheridan will think he was lied about and stitched up if he loses.

Those who hate him will rejoice in the same circumstances. If he wins, friends will celebrate and enemies will seethe with anger.

The bottom line is this: no one expects others to be truthful when it comes to sex.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Olmert graft inquiry adds to scandal list

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

September 5, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 8

Length: 515 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Jerusalem

Body

THE Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, already under attack over his handling of the war in Lebanon, could face criminal charges for alleged corruption while he was trade and industry minister in the last government.

The state comptroller - the official responsible for monitoring governmental abuse - was yesterday reported to have called for a criminal investigation into the appointment of three supporters of Mr Olmert's then party, Likud, to paid government posts.

Mr Olmert, a former mayor of Jerusalem, is also being asked how he allegedly paid \$US600,000 less than the market price for his private home in the fashionable German Colony district.

The Olmert scandal is one of several to taint senior political and military figures recently. A leading Lebanon hawk, Haim Ramon, resigned as justice minister last week to face trial this month on charges he sexually harassed an 18-year-old **female** soldier.

The head of state, President Moshe Katsav, faces allegations of sexual harassment and assault from several former **female** employees. A former environment minister and present chairman of the Knesset's foreign and defence committee, Tzachi Hanegbi, is due to go on trial shortly over government hiring allegations similar to those levelled against Mr Olmert, although on a wider scale.

There was also widespread public anger last month when it emerged that the head of the Israeli Defence Force, General Dan Halutz, had sold his stock portfolio shortly before Israel began its onslaught on Lebanon in response to the July 12 **Hezbollah** border raid that sparked the 35-day war.

Mr Olmert's career has been dogged by corruption allegations, none of which has stuck. The new legal threat comes at a time when polls show a majority of Israelis want him to resign over his perceived failure to gain a victory over **Hezbollah**.

Meanwhile, the Lebanese Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, has denied that Israel has repeatedly offered meetings to discuss peace.

Israeli newspapers reported yesterday that Mr Olmert's office has placed calls to Mr Siniora's office in Beirut proposing to meet him in public or in secret.

Olmert graft inquiry adds to scandal list

The Lebanese Government, itself under threat of being toppled by a new coalition of **Hezbollah** and the Maronite Christian former general Michel Aoun, has dismissed Israel's claims as propaganda.

On Sunday Mr Olmert publicly called on Lebanon to begin peace talks, but yesterday Mr Siniora said Lebanon would be the "last Arab country that could sign a peace agreement with Israel".

A statement from the Lebanese Prime Minister's office said peace talks were not possible until Israel withdrew its troops from southern Lebanon and ended its air and sea blockade. Even then, talks would have to take place in the broader context of the dormant "Arab peace initiative", which seeks a comprehensive Middle East settlement, including an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the return of the occupied Golan Heights to Syria.

Mr Siniora angered **Hezbollah** in the early days of the war when he cast some of the blame for Lebanon's suffering on the border raid that sparked Israel's reaction.

Graphic

PHOTO: Ehud Olmert ... career dogged by corruption allegations. Photo: AP

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

Ottawa Citizen

July 31, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 2110 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, With Files From Eric Beauchesne, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from Citizen News Services; Reuters

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

BEIRUT - Israel responded late yesterday to the international outcry over an air raid that killed as many as 60 Lebanese civilians -- including 37 children -- by announcing a 48-hour suspension of its aerial bombardment of southern Lebanon.

Israel said it will also co-ordinate a 24-hour window with the United Nations to get civilians out of the area before it resumes military activity, although the suspension will not apply to other parts of Lebanon, nor diminish ground operations under way along the Israeli-Lebanese border.

U.S. State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said Israel's decision to suspend the bombardment was to allow for an investigation into the Qana attack -- the most lethal so far of the Israel-Hezbollah conflict -- but he made it clear that Israel had the right to "take action against targets preparing attacks against it," reiterating U.S. policy that Israel has the right to defend itself against attacks.

The deadly airstrike in Qana -- which Israel calls a "hotbed of Hezbollah," about 20 kilometres east of the Mediterranean Sea -- led to new calls for a swift resolution to the crisis and caused the abrupt cancellation of a peacemaking trip to the Lebanese capital by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"We scream out to the world community to stand united in the face of Israel's war criminals," Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora said in an English-language declaration that appeared to be aimed at Ms. Rice. "There is no place on this sad morning for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and an international investigation into the Israeli massacres."

Ms. Rice called the bombing "awful" and said she wanted "a ceasefire as soon as possible." It appeared to be her first real call for a quick end to the bloodshed.

Still, U.S. President George W. Bush repeated his call for a "sustainable peace" and said the United States "mourns the loss of innocent life, those tragic occasions when innocent people are killed."

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

And despite expressing "deep sorrow" for the attack, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert vowed earlier that the war with Hezbollah would go on.

"We will not blink ... and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances," Mr. Olmert was quoted by Israeli media as telling ministers during the meeting, convened shortly after the strike. "It is the right thing to do."

Earlier, Mr. Olmert told Ms. Rice that Israel would need up to two weeks to accomplish its goals.

Hezbollah countered on its Al-Manar television channel that it will retaliate, vowing, "The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered."

It hit northern Israel yesterday with 157 rockets -- the highest one-day total during the offensive -- with one Israeli moderately wounded and 12 others lightly hurt, medics said.

Last night, the UN Security Council approved a statement expressing "extreme shock and distress" over the bombing but stopped short of condemning the attack.

The presidential statement, adopted unanimously by the 15-member council in an emergency session, softened language in an earlier draft which said the council "strongly deplores this loss of innocent life and the killing of civilians in the present conflict."

The final statement called for the council to work without delay to adopt a resolution for a lasting settlement of the crisis.

"The Security Council expresses its extreme shock and distress at the shelling by the Israeli Defence Forces of a residential building in Qana, in southern Lebanon, which has caused the killing of dozens of civilians, mostly children, and injured many others," it said. The statement did not call for an immediate truce, but said the council would work "for a lasting settlement of the crisis."

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan had earlier urged the council to call for an immediate end to the fighting.

"I am deeply dismayed that my earlier calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities were not heeded," he said before the vote.

The French government, the current president of the Security Council, yesterday circulated a separate draft resolution calling for a ceasefire, the release of two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah and "the settlement of the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel."

The French proposal also endorsed putting a UN-mandated international peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon. Debate on that draft may begin as early as today.

Israel insisted that its forces were unaware of the civilians in Qana and said villagers had been repeatedly warned to flee.

"We are trying our best to prevent civilians from being located in targets hit by us, but there is no certainty here," Brig.-Gen. Amir Eshel, the deputy air force chief of staff, told reporters in Tel Aviv. "We didn't think there were civilians in this particular building."

As word of the attacks spread across Beirut, a mob of several thousand -- including some waving yellow and green Hezbollah flags and burning U.S. flags -- marched on the lightly guarded UN headquarters in the heart of the city.

Several hundred men ransacked offices while UN employees hid in the basement, before backing off as large numbers of Lebanese troops and police arrived. There was a similar, angry demonstration at UN headquarters in Gaza, where more than 100 Palestinians have died in recent fighting with Israeli forces.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

Throughout yesterday, Arab-language TV stations across the Middle East repeatedly transmitted graphic images of the carnage at Qana, attempts to recover the bodies there by using heavy machinery to remove rubble, and the riot in Beirut.

Israel countered with video apparently taken from a spy drone which it said showed rockets being launched from Qana and **Hezbollah** fighters hiding there among civilians.

Villagers said the attack lasted from midnight until a little past dawn. Shells landed on the building where 63 people were sheltered at about 1 a.m. Another shell struck between five and 15 minutes later, they said.

The village bore the signs of the assault: rubble was strewn through the street and several buildings had collapsed. The red-tiled roof of a large villa was peeled off. Wires hung from utility poles, one of them bent in half. A remnant of a weapon was tossed in front of the house. It read, "For use on MK-84, Guided Bomb BSU-37/B (ASSY) 96214-700922-6."

The Israeli military has not yet said what type of munitions were used in the attack, but according to the website globalsecurity.org, a clearinghouse of military information, an MK-84 is a 2,000-pound bomb.

Red Cross drivers said they tried to approach the village at 6:30 a.m. but turned away three times because Israeli shells were falling in streets ahead of them. Later, rescue workers in orange jumpsuits dug through the rubble, pulling out the bodies of men, **women** and children. Most of the victims were in the basement of one building, where they had gone for safety when a pair of airstrikes hit the village beginning at 1 a.m., witnesses said.

"Americans cannot think this is right," said Amalia Farhad, who attended the Beirut demonstration with her young son. "People are here now because they are motivated by what has happened. This was something against humanity."

Nadia Khouri, a Beirut high school teacher, said she felt compelled to attend the demonstration because although **Hezbollah** had committed a crime by kidnapping the Israeli soldiers, "the Israeli response is reprehensible. This has nothing to do with the kidnapping. It's simply cowboy behaviour."

President Husni Mubarak of Egypt, a close U.S. ally, swiftly condemned the bombing as "irresponsible."

King Abdullah of Jordan, another U.S. ally, called it "an ugly crime."

And President Jacques Chirac of France, who has been pushing hard for an immediate ceasefire, described it as an "unjustifiable action" that underlined the need for the shooting to stop.

The bombing occurred as Ms. Rice was in Jerusalem for meetings with Mr. Olmert to discuss ways to end the conflict, which started when **Hezbollah** took two Israeli soldiers hostage on July 12 and has claimed the lives of more than 500 Lebanese people, mainly civilians. Fifty-one Israelis have been killed.

Ms. Rice will now fly to Washington, where she will attempt to keep a slowly developing U.S. peace plan on track at the UN, despite the outrage caused by the attack on Qana.

The U.S. is seeking a resolution endorsing a package Ms. Rice has been preparing during her travels to Israel, Lebanon and Rome. A key provision would seek Lebanese government agreement to disarm **Hezbollah**.

The U.S. package also calls for creating an international force of at least 10,000 troops to deploy in Lebanon to back up the government, beef up its army, and help secure the south, its borders, airport and port to ensure **Hezbollah** is unable to rearm.

Mr. Olmert told Ms. Rice at least 10,000 combat-ready foreign troops should be stationed along the border and in southern Beirut, according to a senior Israeli official.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

In Ottawa, a foreign affairs official said Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay "reiterate" their repeated calls for "the immediate implementation of the G-8 statement on the Middle East."

That statement demanded an end to Israeli military operations in Lebanon and Gaza, as well as a halt to the shelling of Israeli territory by Hezbollah "extremists."

Meanwhile, Allan Rock, Canada's former ambassador to the UN, suggested the Harper government should support calls for an immediate ceasefire.

"That conflict could go on for an awful long time, with the deaths of a lot of innocent people, without coming to a decisive end," he warned on CTV's Question Period yesterday. "There has to be a diplomatic solution."

"I do believe that Canada should join with others seeking an end to the hostilities so we can get humanitarian workers in, so we can lay the foundation for an international force and so we can protect lives."

Text of the UN Security Council statement on yesterday's attack in Qana, Lebanon

- The Security Council expresses its extreme shock and distress at the shelling by the Israeli Defence Forces of a residential building in Qana, in southern Lebanon, which has caused the killing of dozens of civilians, mostly children, and injured many others. The Security Council sends its deepest condolences to the families of the victims and to the Lebanese people.
- The Security Council strongly deplores this loss of innocent lives and the killing of civilians in the present conflict and requests the Secretary General (Kofi Annan) to report to it within one week on the circumstances of this tragic incident.
- The Security Council expresses its concern at the threat of escalation of violence with further grave consequences for the humanitarian situation, calls for an end to violence, and underscores the urgency of securing a lasting, permanent and sustainable ceasefire.
- The Security Council expresses again its utmost concern at the Lebanese and Israeli civilian casualties and human suffering, the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, and the increased number of internally displaced persons.
- The Security Council urges all parties to grant immediate and unlimited access to humanitarian assistance.
- The Security Council deplores any action against United Nations personnel and calls for full respect for the safety and security of all United Nations personnel and premises.
- The Security Council affirms its determination to work without any further delay to adopt a resolution for a lasting settlement of the crisis, drawing on diplomatic efforts under way.
- The Security Council remains seized of the matter.

Latest Developments in the Middle East

On the 20th day of Israel's bombardment of Lebanon:

- Israel agrees to suspend aerial activities in south Lebanon for 48 hours, after a raid kills at least 54 Lebanese civilians, including 37 children, in southern village of Qana.
- Israel also to co-ordinate with the United Nations to allow a 24-hour window for residents of southern Lebanon to leave the area if they wish.
- World leaders condemn Qana attack, and Lebanon says U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice unwelcome in Beirut for talks. France, Jordan, Egypt, EU and others call for immediate ceasefire.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

- UN Security Council holds emergency session, Annan urges it to condemn attack on Qana, call for end to hostilities now.
- U.S. urges Israel to take more care to avoid civilian casualties in Lebanon, does not call for immediate ceasefire.
- Protesters smash their way into the UN headquarters in Beirut. Gunmen also storm UN compound in Gaza City.
- About 146 Hezbollah rockets hit northern Israel, wounding six people. At least three slam into the city of Haifa.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Daniel Barry, Bloomberg News; Rescuers dig for survivors in the ruins of a house in Qana, Lebanon, where civilians had gathered for shelter from air attacks. An Israeli jet dropped two bombs on the house.;

Photo: Ben Curtis, The Associated Press; Lebanese hold a candlelight vigil in Beirut in memory of as many as 60 people -- more than half of them children -- who were killed yesterday in an Israeli airstrike that crushed a building in the southern Lebanese village of Qana.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

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The Dunkirk option

Western Mail

September 14, 2006, Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 24

Length: 1087 words

Body

Five years on from 9/11, it may be that pulling all coalition forces out of the Middle East is the only long-term solution to the war on terror, argues security expert Paul Moorcraft THE West is losing its self-proclaimed and sadly self-fulfilling war on what President Bush called 'Islamic fascists'. If you measure the chaos in Iraq and Afghanistan, the economic disruption to the airlines or the alienation of Muslims in Europe, it is difficult to declare even a drawn game.

Let no one fool themselves in 'multi-cultural' Britain: If 10 passenger aircraft had been blown out of the sky, mosques would have been burning throughout the country. Such polarisation is exactly what the jihadists want.

A complete military withdrawal from all Islamic lands may well be the only solution. It is the jihadist ambition, but it would remove nearly all the friction, especially if there were also to be a solution to the Israeli/Palestinian struggle. The presence of Western troops is simply not working.

Hezbollah's perceived victory in Lebanon could escalate the war on terror to horrific proportions, not least in the US and UK, especially if chemical or biological weapons are deployed.

Israel's version of the US shock and awe failed. The current Lebanese ceasefire may well implode, not least if Israel tries to complete the unfinished US-Israeli business of wiping out **Hezbollah**. Military solutions to the chronic Israeli-Arab conflict cannot work. More war will play into the hands of jihadists everywhere.

Hezbollah has designed a new kind of war: the sophistication of a national army, but the invisibility of a guerrilla force. This deadly hybrid could soon be emulated in Afghanistan and Iraq. Despite Iran's highly irritating filibusters, the US eventually will realise that the Iranians, who taught **Hezbollah**, would deploy the same tactics in their own country, should the (unlikely) military option be taken against Tehran.

Iran will be left to acquire nuclear weapons, which may be a minor threat compared with Pakistan's bomb. Pakistan is a proven training ground for terrorists in Bombay and Burnley, let alone in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kashmir.

Hezbollah chief Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah has become a much bigger hero than Osama bin Laden, who could never unify Shia and Sunni in the way **Hezbollah** has done. Throughout the Islamic world there is a growing acceptance that the Muslim renaissance can come only through terror and war.

Consider a scenario of the US withdrawing, humiliatingly, from Iraq as the civil war causes a three-fold partition. Nato forces succumb to domestic pressure at home and the Taleban retake Kabul. The tragic history of the Middle

The Dunkirk option

East would suggest that, for the West, this pessimistic future is more likely if the war on terror continues. If so, a rapid and orderly Western military withdrawal should come sooner rather than later.

Remove the hard power - the troops - and the soft power arguments of trade might be far more effective. True, Barbary pirates might replace Nato patrols in the Med, but there may well be less chaos and killing than in today's Iraq, for example.

The Anglo-US policy of constructive destabilisation - toppling Saddam was supposed to bring democracy to the region - has failed in the sense that regimes have emerged which are not to our taste. Democracy in Lebanon didn't curb Hezbollah, nor did we much like the Hamas victory. Nor did Turkey play ball with the US over the northern invasion route into Iraq in 2003. And Iran has a democracy of sorts; maybe any freely-elected government in Tehran would be nationalistic enough to want to develop nuclear power as it sees fit.

To assume Arabs had as much right to, and facility for, Western democracy was a noble idea. Perhaps the US neo-cons were right to assume that dethroning tyrants would bring people-power, but that does not equate necessarily with a democracy which is pro-Western.

Worse, people-power is much more difficult to navigate than doing deals with generals and kings, 'our sonofabitches' during the Cold War. The West wants stability, but it is in the nature of political transformations that often long periods of instability result.

Coalition withdrawal from Iraq can hardly make matters worse, and it may be the only way the current Baghdad government can secure enough legitimacy to avoid partition.

Afghanistan was 'do-able' in 2002-3, but resources and troops were siphoned off to Iraq. Leaving the country to its own miseries after the Soviet withdrawal was a mistake which led to al-Qaeda terrorist camps. Supporting President Karzai and empowering Afghan women were also noble aims. But so long as Pakistan plays a double game, and continues to support or tolerate jihadists in Afghanistan, Kashmir and inside Pakistan, winning the war in Afghanistan, even with double the present coalition troop numbers, is mission impossible.

The elaborate US command structures in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and residual forces in Saudi Arabia then become largely redundant. US naval deployments and useful minor contributions to UN operations could continue. And Washington would continue to be ultimate guarantor of Israel, though after its troop withdrawals and the establishment of a two-state solution that may well be a far less contentious issue.

Before Western troops are driven out, a rapid withdrawal makes sense. Britain has occupied Iraq three times and failed to bring peace. In Palestine, London ordered a withdrawal in 1947 because it did not want British troops caught in the crossfire of a civil war. But that is what is happening now in Iraq.

During the Raj, Britain failed three times to subdue the Afghans. It is trying again, even though the official policy of destroying opium will turn nearly every Afghan against Nato troops. Exactly 50 years ago, the British (and French) also botched the seizure of the Suez Canal.

Bringing the legions home will save many lives, not least those of British and American troops. It will also remove one of the main grievances of the Islamic world way beyond the sands of Arabia and southern Afghanistan. Britain's retreat at Dunkirk, and General Douglas MacArthur's promise to return to the Philippines after the US disaster there, allowed both powers to go back as victors in less than five years. This time, though, Britain and America will need a generation to return in moral strength to the Middle East. And, next time, they had better leave their troops behind. Dr Paul Moorcraft is the director of the Centre for Foreign Policy Analysis, London.

Load-Date: September 14, 2006

Israeli president questioned over sex claims

The Guardian - Final Edition

August 24, 2006 Thursday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 22

Length: 262 words

Byline: Rory McCarthy, Jerusalem

Body

Police questioned the Israeli president, Moshe Katsav, for five hours yesterday over allegations of sexual harassment and corruption. It followed a late-night raid on the president's residence in Jerusalem on Monday in which police seized computers and documents.

Two women formerly employed in his office have accused the president of sexual harassment and one has claimed he took money to grant pardons.

Mr Katsav has denied the accusations and, as president, is immune from being taken to trial. He could, however, be impeached by parliament or may decide to resign if he is charged. "The president has never committed any offence. He hasn't engaged in any improper conduct," said his lawyer, Tzion Amir. Detectives will continue their questioning today.

The inquiry is the latest scandal to hit the government. Earlier this week the justice minister, Haim Ramon, resigned shortly before he was charged with sexually harassing an 18-year-old female soldier. The prime minister, Ehud Olmert, is being investigated over the purchase of an expensive apartment in Jerusalem. Another senior political figure, Tzahi Hanegbi, a member of Mr Olmert's Kadima party, has been told he will be charged with fraud, bribery and perjury, and Lieutenant General Dan Halutz, the army chief of staff, has been criticised in the press for selling off his stock portfolio just as the war with Lebanon was starting.

All involved have denied breaking the law, but the cases have heaped pressure on a government already reeling from public criticism of its conduct during the war against Hizbullah.

Load-Date: August 24, 2006

As Cease-Fire Holds, Lebanese Dig for the War's Victims in the Rubble of Many Towns

The New York Times

August 16, 2006 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9; HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: DESTRUCTION

Length: 976 words

Byline: By HASSAN M. FATTAH

Dateline: SREIFA, Lebanon, Aug. 15

Body

The reality of the war came out of the rubble in bits and pieces on Tuesday -- an army boot in one town, a gold wedding ring in another, a pair of jeans elsewhere -- all the pieces of lives lost in the destruction wrought by the monthlong conflict that came to a halt on Monday in a tenuous cease-fire.

On Tuesday, secrets buried in southern Lebanon's ruins began to emerge as Lebanese Red Cross workers, health workers and Hezbollah members set upon the heaps of stone and concrete in towns along the Israeli border, digging out bodies of men, women and children trapped there for weeks. The work will last for weeks in towns with names that have become synonymous with tragedy.

In Ainata, about three miles from the Israeli border, Red Cross workers pulled out eight decomposed bodies buried in a home that was bombed 10 days after the war began. In Bint Jbail, a few miles away, rescue workers tried to dig out at least four bodies from a house near the old market and, in Ait al Shaab, Hezbollah members reportedly removed the bodies of five of their fighters from the debris.

They were just a small portion of the estimated hundreds of bodies thought to have been lying in the wreckage, but the act of digging promised some closure for a country struggling to rebuild. Bodies wrapped in clear plastic tarpaulins were carted away in ambulances with the horns blaring, most of them ending up in the central morgue in Tyre, where the piles of dead have continued to grow.

Late Tuesday, Lebanese Army soldiers removed 31 bodies from a refrigerator truck near the morgue and buried them in a temporary mass grave adjacent to two other mass graves that were set up weeks earlier.

In Ainata, Abbas Khanafer trembled as rescue workers began digging out at least 16 people buried in a house near the town center, including 7 members of his own family who had taken shelter there. In half a day of digging, eight bodies, some of them in pieces, emerged. Among them were the remains of an elderly woman and a younger one, and workers removed a gold wedding band and jewelry in hopes of identifying them. But as Mr. Khanafer examined the bodies, he could find nothing he recognized.

As Cease-Fire Holds, Lebanese Dig for the War's Victims in the Rubble of Many Towns

Mr. Khanafer lost three other relatives in the town of Marun al Ras in another bombing, as well as his elder sister, who he said was shot by Israeli troops in their parents' home in Ainata when Israeli troops clashed with Hezbollah fighters in the vicinity.

"I did everything they told us to do, I tried to do it all right," Mr. Khanafer said, referring to Israeli warnings to civilians to evacuate southern Lebanon. He asked a friend what he should do to have his relatives buried in a temporary grave. "Now, everything I have left is in Sidon," he said.

Mr. Khanafer had fled north to Sidon with his elderly parents, his wife and children and a niece four days after the bombing in Ainata, and two weeks ago returned in hopes of digging up the bodies of his relatives when Israel called a 48-hour suspension of airstrikes. But there was not enough time to retrieve them.

On Tuesday, he came back to Ainata to try again. As the Red Cross workers continued digging, he drove with Hezbollah officials with an ambulance in tow to his parents' home overlooking the Israeli border, where his sister's body lay. The stench permeated the house and the floor crawled with maggots, as her body was wrapped in a plastic tarpaulin to be transported to a hospital in the nearby village of Tibnin.

Nowhere was the scene as stark as in Sreifa, where workmen picked through fields of rubble were the Hay el-Birki neighborhood once stood. Up to 18 buildings were pulverized when Israeli warplanes struck the neighborhood on July 19, killing dozens, said Hussein Kamaleldin, a local official.

Just days ago, Israeli warplanes pounded the town again as Hezbollah fighters moved into the area to face off with Israeli troops who landed in the hills nearby. Fierce fighting and bombing continued even into early Monday morning, until the United Nations cease-fire took hold at 8 a.m., residents said.

Muhammad Jaber looked on quietly as a crowd of men gathered around an excavator reaching deep into the rubble of what was once a three-story building here in Sreifa on Tuesday, wondering what he might have done differently to induce his son to leave.

"I told him to come with me, but he wouldn't," Mr. Jaber said, speaking of his 27-year-old son Bilal. He said he had a hunch why his son wouldn't leave, but he refused to elaborate.

"He said he wanted to stay with his friends," Mr. Jaber said. "I called him after we left, but he said he just wouldn't leave."

Within minutes, several men dove into an opening in the rubble and pulled out an army boot, then a walkie-talkie, a bulletproof vest and a machine gun. They belonged to one of Bilal's friends. The jovial workmen went silent as Hezbollah security men told photographers to stop taking pictures, and Mr. Jaber's hunch was confirmed: his son was one of the militia fighters.

Mr. Kamaleldin, the Sreifa official, estimated that up to two-thirds of the town's homes and buildings were demolished, leaving more than 43 people buried in the rubble. A majority of them were fighters belonging to Hezbollah and the allied Amal Party, residents said.

"This will now be a place of tragedy and sorrow," said Hussein Nazzal, who survived unscathed in his house, while all the buildings behind his house were destroyed. "Who could possibly deserve to die a death like this?"

Hours later, Mr. Jaber sat with his wife on the family porch grieving for his dead son, who was married with three children.

"I have seen all the wars and survived them, and three of my boys battled the Israelis in 1996," he said. "I was lucky then, because they all came home. But this time, it seems, God decided to take one away."

As Cease-Fire Holds, Lebanese Dig for the War's Victims in the Rubble of Many Towns

Graphic

Photo: Lebanese emergency workers lined up coffins for a mass burial in Tyre yesterday. The dead had been brought from around southern Lebanon. (Photo by Lynsey Addario for The New York Times)

Load-Date: August 16, 2006

End of Document

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel: Town is terror 'hotbed'

Ottawa Citizen
July 31, 2006 Monday
EARLY Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 2116 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, With Files From Eric Beauchesne, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from Citizen News Services; Reuters

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

BEIRUT - Israel responded late yesterday to the international outcry over an air raid that killed as many as 60 Lebanese civilians -- including 37 children -- by announcing a 48-hour suspension of its aerial bombardment of southern Lebanon.

Israel said it will also co-ordinate a 24-hour window with the United Nations to get civilians out of the area before it resumes military activity, although the suspension will not apply to other parts of Lebanon, nor diminish ground operations under way along the Israeli-Lebanese border.

U.S. State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said Israel's decision to suspend the bombardment was to allow for an investigation into the Qana attack -- the most lethal so far of the Israel-Hezbollah conflict -- but he made it clear that Israel had the right to "take action against targets preparing attacks against it," reiterating U.S. policy that Israel has the right to defend itself against attacks.

The deadly airstrike in Qana -- which Israel calls a "hotbed of Hezbollah," about 20 kilometres east of the Mediterranean Sea -- led to new calls for a swift resolution to the crisis and caused the abrupt cancellation of a peacemaking trip to the Lebanese capital by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"We scream out to the world community to stand united in the face of Israel's war criminals," Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora said in an English-language declaration that appeared to be aimed at Ms. Rice. "There is no place on this sad morning for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and an international investigation into the Israeli massacres."

Ms. Rice called the bombing "awful" and said she wanted "a ceasefire as soon as possible." It appeared to be her first real call for a quick end to the bloodshed.

Still, U.S. President George W. Bush repeated his call for a "sustainable peace" and said the United States "mourns the loss of innocent life, those tragic occasions when innocent people are killed."

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel : Town is terror 'hotbed'

And despite expressing "deep sorrow" for the attack, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert vowed earlier that the war with Hezbollah would go on.

"We will not blink ... and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances," Mr. Olmert was quoted by Israeli media as telling ministers during the meeting, convened shortly after the strike. "It is the right thing to do."

Earlier, Mr. Olmert told Ms. Rice that Israel would need up to two weeks to accomplish its goals.

Hezbollah countered on its Al-Manar television channel that it will retaliate, vowing, "The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered."

It hit northern Israel yesterday with 157 rockets -- the highest one-day total during the offensive -- with one Israeli moderately wounded and 12 others lightly hurt, medics said.

Last night, the UN Security Council approved a statement expressing "extreme shock and distress" over the bombing but stopped short of condemning the attack.

The presidential statement, adopted unanimously by the 15-member council in an emergency session, softened language in an earlier draft which said the council "strongly deplores this loss of innocent life and the killing of civilians in the present conflict."

The final statement called for the council to work without delay to adopt a resolution for a lasting settlement of the crisis.

"The Security Council expresses its extreme shock and distress at the shelling by the Israeli Defence Forces of a residential building in Qana, in southern Lebanon, which has caused the killing of dozens of civilians, mostly children, and injured many others," it said. The statement did not call for an immediate truce, but said the council would work "for a lasting settlement of the crisis."

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan had earlier urged the council to call for an immediate end to the fighting.

"I am deeply dismayed that my earlier calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities were not heeded," he said.

The French government, the current president of the Security Council, yesterday circulated a separate draft resolution calling for a ceasefire, the release of two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah and "the settlement of the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel."

The French proposal also endorsed putting a UN-mandated international peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon. Debate on that draft may begin as early as today.

Israel insisted that its forces were unaware of the civilians in Qana and said villagers had been repeatedly warned to flee.

"We are trying our best to prevent civilians from being located in targets hit by us, but there is no certainty here," Brig.-Gen. Amir Eshel, the deputy air force chief of staff, told reporters in Tel Aviv. "We didn't think there were civilians in this particular building."

As word of the attacks spread across Beirut, a mob of several thousand -- including some waving yellow and green Hezbollah flags and burning U.S. flags -- marched on the lightly guarded UN headquarters in the heart of the city.

Several hundred men ransacked offices while UN employees hid in the basement, before backing off as large numbers of Lebanese troops and police arrived. There was a similar, angry demonstration at UN headquarters in Gaza, where more than 100 Palestinians have died in recent fighting with Israeli forces.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel : Town is terror 'hotbed'

Throughout yesterday, Arab-language TV stations across the Middle East repeatedly transmitted graphic images of the carnage at Qana, attempts to recover the bodies there by using heavy machinery to remove rubble, and the riot in Beirut.

Israel countered with video apparently taken from a spy drone which it said showed rockets being launched from Qana and **Hezbollah** fighters hiding there among civilians.

Villagers said the attack lasted from midnight until a little past dawn. Shells landed on the building where 63 people were sheltered at about 1 a.m. Another shell struck between five and 15 minutes later, they said.

The village bore the signs of the assault: rubble was strewn through the street and several buildings had collapsed. The red-tiled roof of a large villa was peeled off. Wires hung from utility poles, one of them bent in half. A remnant of a weapon was tossed in front of the house. It read, "For use on MK-84, Guided Bomb BSU-37/B (ASSY) 96214-700922-6."

The Israeli military has not yet said what type of munitions were used in the attack, but according to the website globalsecurity.org, a clearinghouse of military information, an MK-84 is a 2,000-pound bomb.

Red Cross drivers said they tried to approach the village at 6:30 a.m. but turned away three times because Israeli shells were falling in streets ahead of them. Later, rescue workers in orange jumpsuits dug through the rubble, pulling out the bodies of men, **women** and children. Most of the victims were in the basement of one building, where they had gone for safety when a pair of airstrikes hit the village beginning at 1 a.m., witnesses said.

"Americans cannot think this is right," said Amalia Farhad, who attended the Beirut demonstration with her young son. "People are here now because they are motivated by what has happened. This was something against humanity."

Nadia Khouri, a history teacher at a Beirut high school, said she felt compelled to attend the demonstration because although **Hezbollah** had committed a crime by kidnapping the Israeli soldiers, "the Israeli response is reprehensible. This has nothing to do with the kidnapping. It's simply cowboy behaviour."

President Husni Mubarak of Egypt, a close U.S. ally, swiftly condemned the bombing as "irresponsible."

King Abdullah of Jordan, another U.S. ally, called it "an ugly crime."

And President Jacques Chirac of France, who has been pushing hard for an immediate ceasefire, described it as an "unjustifiable action" that underlined the need for the shooting to stop.

The bombing occurred as Ms. Rice was in Jerusalem for meetings with Mr. Olmert to discuss ways to end the conflict, which started when **Hezbollah** took two Israeli soldiers hostage on July 12 and has claimed the lives of more than 500 Lebanese people, mainly civilians. Fifty-one Israelis have been killed.

Ms. Rice will now fly to Washington, where she will attempt to keep a slowly developing U.S. peace plan on track at the UN, despite the outrage caused by the attack on Qana.

The U.S. is seeking a resolution endorsing a package Ms. Rice has been preparing during her travels to Israel, Lebanon and Rome. A key provision would seek Lebanese government agreement to disarm **Hezbollah**.

The U.S. package also calls for creating an international force of at least 10,000 troops to deploy in Lebanon to back up the government, beef up its army, and help secure the south, its borders, airport and port to ensure **Hezbollah** is unable to rearm.

Mr. Olmert told Ms. Rice at least 10,000 combat-ready foreign troops should be stationed along the border and in southern Beirut, according to a senior Israeli official.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel : Town is terror 'hotbed'

In Ottawa, a foreign affairs official said Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay "reiterate" their repeated calls for "the immediate implementation of the G-8 statement on the Middle East."

That statement demanded an end to Israeli military operations in Lebanon and Gaza, as well as a halt to the shelling of Israeli territory by Hezbollah "extremists."

Meanwhile, Allan Rock, Canada's former ambassador to the UN and a former Liberal cabinet minister, suggested the Harper government should support calls for an immediate ceasefire.

"That conflict could go on for an awful long time, with the deaths of a lot of innocent people, without coming to a decisive end," he warned on CTV's Question Period yesterday. "There has to be a diplomatic solution."

"I do believe that Canada should join with others seeking an end to the hostilities so we can get humanitarian workers in, so we can lay the foundation for an international force and so we can protect lives."

Text of the UN Security Council Statement on Yesterday's Attack in Qana, Lebanon

- The Security Council expresses its extreme shock and distress at the shelling by the Israeli Defence Forces of a residential building in Qana, in southern Lebanon, which has caused the killing of dozens of civilians, mostly children, and injured many others. The Security Council sends its deepest condolences to the families of the victims and to the Lebanese people.
- The Security Council strongly deplores this loss of innocent lives and the killing of civilians in the present conflict and requests the Secretary General (Kofi Annan) to report to it within one week on the circumstances of this tragic incident.
- The Security Council expresses its concern at the threat of escalation of violence with further grave consequences for the humanitarian situation, calls for an end to violence, and underscores the urgency of securing a lasting, permanent and sustainable ceasefire.
- The Security Council expresses again its utmost concern at the Lebanese and Israeli civilian casualties and human suffering, the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, and the increased number of internally displaced persons.
- The Security Council urges all parties to grant immediate and unlimited access to humanitarian assistance.
- The Security Council deplores any action against United Nations personnel and calls for full respect for the safety and security of all United Nations personnel and premises.
- The Security Council affirms its determination to work without any further delay to adopt a resolution for a lasting settlement of the crisis, drawing on diplomatic efforts under way.
- The Security Council remains seized of the matter.

Latest Developments in the Middle East

On the 20th day of Israel's bombardment of Lebanon:

- Israel agrees to suspend aerial activities in south Lebanon for 48 hours, after a raid kills at least 54 Lebanese civilians, including 37 children, in southern village of Qana.
- Israel also to co-ordinate with the United Nations to allow a 24-hour window for residents of southern Lebanon to leave the area if they wish.
- World leaders condemn Qana attack, and Lebanon says U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice unwelcome in Beirut for talks. France, Jordan, Egypt, EU and others call for immediate ceasefire.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel : Town is terror 'hotbed'

- UN Security Council holds emergency session, Annan urges it to condemn attack on Qana, call for end to hostilities now.
- U.S. urges Israel to take more care to avoid civilian casualties in Lebanon, does not call for immediate ceasefire.
- Protesters smash their way into the UN headquarters in Beirut. Gunmen also storm UN compound in Gaza City.
- About 146 Hezbollah rockets hit northern Israel, wounding six people. At least three slam into the city of Haifa.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Daniel Barry, Bloomberg News; Rescuers dig for survivors in the ruins of a house in Qana, Lebanon, where civilians had gathered for shelter from air attacks. An Israeli jet dropped two bombs on the house.;

Photo: Ben Curtis, The Associated Press; Lebanese hold a candlelight vigil in Beirut in memory of as many as 60 people -- more than half of them children -- who were killed yesterday in an Israeli airstrike that crushed a building in the southern Lebanese village of Qana.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

After Israel-Lebanon War, Anti-Semitism on the Rise in Britain

New York Sun (Archive)

September 6, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 7

Length: 555 words

Byline: MATTHEW CHAYES -, Special to the Sun

Body

Attacks against Jews in Britain have risen sharply since Israel's war against Hezbollah, a British parliamentary inquiry will report tomorrow.

The attacks range from shouted anti-Semitic slurs to swastika graffiti and vandalized Jewish graves. Last month, a 12-year-old girl was kicked unconscious by thugs who asked her whether she was Jewish, according to Community Security Trust, a London-based group set up to protect the British Jewish community.

That incident was among hundreds of similar incidents submitted to a group of 14 parliamentarians who commissioned the study in November. The official report, published tomorrow, found a spike in anti-Semitic attacks since Israel's war with Hezbollah.

"Britain remains, relatively speaking, a good place for Jews to live. We're not hiding our skullcaps," a spokesman for Community Security Trust, Mark Gardner, said yesterday. "But we do have to be very much aware of these threats, and we do have to react accordingly." The threats against British Jews have doubled in some cases, groups that track anti-Semitism have said in recent years. Mr. Gardner said the annual figure of between 200 and 300 a year has leapt to an average of between 400 and 500 every year.

"We're describing it as a significant and sustained escalation," Mr. Gardner, who has not seen the final report, said. Among the anti-Semitic incidents Mr. Gardner's group reported to the parliamentary inquiry:

- At the Brighton Progressive Synagogue, caricatures of Jews with hooked noses were scrawled on the walls. Statements like "Nuke the Jews" were daubed nearby.
- Checks intended for a charity benefiting children with learning disabilities were defaced with swastikas.
- A Jewish doctor's home in the Hampstead Garden suburb of North London was defaced with anti-Jewish graffiti, death threats, and the word "Allah."

Among the recommendations that the report will make is that British citizens need to rethink their attitude toward anti-Semitism. One of the factors contributing to the spate of anti-Semitic attacks, Jewish groups have said, is a modern version of an age-old accusation against Jews: a subtle acceptance among some in Britain that Jews exercise undue control.

After Israel - Lebanon War, Anti-Semitism on the Rise in Britain

"A narrative that has gained some acceptance in those circles is to say that Jews, in order to support Israel, have disproportionate influence in the media, finance, and government," the chief executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, Jon Benjamin, said yesterday.

The report is expected to call on British people to help counter this and other stereotypes about Jews.

France has experienced a similar measurable jump in anti-Semitic incidents, especially among second-generation immigrant youths.

While American Jews do not appear to have experienced a rise in anti-Semitic attacks since this summer's conflict between Hezbollah and Israel, a number of disturbing incidents have still occurred.

In one well-reported attack, a Muslim, Naveed Afzal Haq, opened fire on the Jewish Federation of Seattle, killing one female employee and injuring several others. Mr. Haq - who has been jailed on murder and hate-crime charges - cited his anger with the Jewish state over the conflict with Hezbollah.

"I'm tired of getting pushed around and our people getting pushed around by the situation in the Middle East," he told 911 dispatchers.

Load-Date: September 7, 2006

Funeral for Lebanese politician becomes rally against Syria

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

November 24, 2006 Friday

SECOND EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 522 words

Byline: By Scheherezade Faramarzi THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: BEIRUT, LEBANON

Body

The coffin holding Pierre Gemayel passed overhead across the crowd, handed from mourner to mourner as women showered it with rice and flowers on its way into St. Georges Cathedral. Inside, his widow wept on the shoulder of her mother-in-law.

Outside, in downtown Beirut's Martyrs Square, hundreds of thousands turned the prominent Christian politician's funeral into an expression of anger over an assassination that threatens to break open the schisms dividing this small Mediterranean country.

Amid a sea of Lebanese flags, people chanted slogans against Syria, which they accuse of killing Gemayel, and burned pictures of Syrian President Bashar Assad and his top ally in Lebanon, President Emile Lahoud.

"We want revenge - from Lahoud and Bashar," they chanted. Police estimated the crowd at 800,000, one of the largest rallies the country has seen.

The killing of Gemayel, the 34-year-old industry minister, in a bold daytime shooting Tuesday has dramatically raised the risk of turmoil in Lebanon, which the United States considers a key front in its attempt to stem Syrian and Iranian influence in the Middle East.

Many fear Lebanon's political power struggle could move into the streets, at a time when the country is the most polarized since the 1975-90 civil war - divided between anti-Syrian Christians and Sunni Muslims and pro-Syrian Shiites. Each community accounts for roughly a third of the population of 4 million.

The funeral rally energized supporters of the Lebanese government, which is dominated by anti-Syrian politicians, and the protesters vowed to oust Lahoud and seal the anti-Syrian bloc's full control of Lebanon's politics.

"The second independence uprising for change was launched today and it will not stop," Gemayel's father, Amin, told the crowd in Martyr Square, speaking from behind bulletproof glass around the podium.

"I pledge to you that we will soon take steps so your efforts will not be in vain," he added.

Funeral for Lebanese politician becomes rally against Syria

But they face the powerful **Hezbollah**, backed by Syria and Iran and by most Shiites. **Hezbollah**, which in the past has brought out crowds of hundreds of thousands, has threatened its own mass protests aimed at bringing down the government.

After Gemayel's death, **Hezbollah** put off its threatened demonstrations for now but will likely feel the need to respond with a show of strength after Thursday's funeral rally.

Business strike

Business and industry leaders announced they would go on a two-day strike beginning Friday to pressure politicians from both sides to sit down and talk to settle the political crisis.

The anger and grief Thursday was in contrast to mass anti-Syrian protests that were held in Martyrs' Square last year, sparked by the February 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Those protests were often festive and hopeful. The mass rallies, bolstered by strong international pressure, forced the April 2005 withdrawal of Syrian troops.

Clearly buoyed by the large turnout at the funeral, Prime Minister Fuad Saniora went on national television Thursday night appealing to **Hezbollah** and its allies to resume a national dialogue broken off earlier in the month.

Graphic

PHOTO

Photo - Mourners carry the coffin of Lebanese Industry Minister Pierre Gemayel during the funeral procession Thursday in Beirut. The coffin of the Christian politician is draped in the flag of the Phalange Party. The Associated Press

Load-Date: November 25, 2006

International Briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

September 1, 2006 Friday

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Section: ILLINOIS; Pg. b9

Length: 572 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

U.N. seeks control over Darfur force

UNITED NATIONS - The U.N. Security Council passed a resolution Thursday that would give the United Nations authority over peacekeepers in Darfur as soon as Sudan's government gives its consent - which it has so far refused to do.

The resolution is meant to give more power and funding to a force, now run by the African Union, that has been unable to stop the humanitarian catastrophe in Darfur. The violence has killed more than 200,000 people and continues to worsen.

The document passed 12-0, with China, Russia and Qatar abstaining.

Commandos capture Palestinian in embassy

JERUSALEM - Police commandos stormed the British Embassy in Tel Aviv late Thursday and captured a Palestinian man who had been holed up inside for eight hours, claiming to have a gun and demanding political asylum. There were no injuries.

Police said the forces seized the man after he laid down his weapon for a split second. After the arrest, authorities discovered the weapon was plastic.

In a dramatic interview on live television Thursday evening, the man said he would rather die than return to the West Bank. He said militants told him that he would only be allowed to return to Ramallah only if he attacked Israelis.

"I don't want to kill children," he said in tears.

Strike ends at world's largest copper mine

SANTIAGO, Chile - Workers at Chile's La Escondida mine - responsible for about 8 percent of world copper output - on Thursday voted to end their 25-day strike, a labor union official reported.

Francisco Aedo said 1,607 workers voted to accept a new 40-month contract offered by the company, Minera La Escondida. Another 121 voted to continue to strike and one worker voided his vote.

International Briefs

The strike at the world's largest privately owned copper mine had roiled world markets for the metal, with developments in negotiations setting off buying and selling waves.

Donors pledge nearly \$1 billion for Lebanon

STOCKHOLM, Sweden - The United States, Europe and the Gulf states pledged nearly \$1 billion Thursday to help Lebanon recover from a crippling war between Israel and Hezbollah guerrillas, doubling the amount sought by an international donors' conference.

Organizers hailed the bigger-than-expected contributions as a show of strength for nations seeking to counter the influence of Hezbollah in rebuilding roads, homes and lives after the 34-day war.

Critics said it would be difficult to sidestep Hezbollah when delivering aid to southern Lebanon.

"There is only one actor in southern Lebanon that can handle aid, and that's Hezbollah," said Middle East expert Magnus Norell, of the Swedish Defense Research Agency.

At least 22 bombs explode in Thailand

BANGKOK, Thailand - Nearly two dozen bombs exploded almost simultaneously Thursday inside commercial banks in southern Thailand, killing one person in a region bloodied by a Muslim insurgency, police said.

The homemade bombs, which were triggered by mobile phone signals, were placed in garbage bins, at newspaper stands and near seats where customers wait for service in the banks in Yala province, said Maj. Gen. Paithoon Choochaiya.

One person was killed and 27 people. Fours suspects were detained. Close-circuit video showed some of the explosives were planted by women.

Some of the apparently small devices were hidden in women's handbags or inside books carried by teenagers in school uniforms, said Lt. Gen. Ongkorn Thongprasom, the army chief in the south.

Load-Date: September 1, 2006

MUSLIM WORLD: RICH IN EVERYTHING, WEAK IN ALL RESPECTS

The Nation (AsiaNet)

August 9, 2006 Wednesday

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Length: 671 words

Body

LAHORE: Participants of a round table conference on 'Lebanon crisis -challenges to the Muslim world' have strongly condemned Israeli aggression against Lebanon and its people in blatant violation of its territorial integrity and sovereignty. The conference was organised by the Pakistan National Forum here on Wednesday.

The participants comprising parliamentarians, representatives of major political parties, jurists, academics, journalists, intellectuals, diplomats and retired civil and military officers reviewed the tragic situation in Lebanon and its implications to the Muslim world. Former Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmad Khan, PPP Punjab President Qasim Zia, General ® Arshad Qureshi, General ® Naseer Akhtar, Ikram Rabbani, Akram Chaudhry and Asif Faseih Wardag spoke on the occasion. Col ® Ikramullah performed as hoist of the conference.

In his address former foreign secretary, Shamshad Khan said that Muslim community included no less than fifty-seven countries of what we knew as the Muslim world. 'Representing one fifth of humanity, possessing seventy percent of world's energy resources and forty percent of world's raw materials, the Muslim world, instead of being a global giant is a global dwarf, economically as well as politically. Rich in everything, but weak in all respects, it represents only five percent of world's GDP, and is a non-consequential entity in today's world with no role in global decision-making or in addressing its own problems', he said.

He maintained that Israeli war machine continues to wreak havoc in Lebanon, killing innocent civilians including **women** and children. The world community is silent if not indifferent. The United Nations is paralysed as ever. The Muslim world is nervous and totally powerless while another chapter of wanton aggression is being written in blood on a part of its lifeless soul.

He was of the view that OIC has had no role in global decision-making, and is incapable of securing justice to Muslims anywhere in the world. Large-scale death and displacement of innocent people continues unabated. He was of the opinion that the pillars of Muslim strength are being dismantled brick by brick. Pakistan, the major power of the Muslim world, is being weakened methodically by keeping it engaged on multiple external as well as domestic fronts. What aggravates this dismal scenario is the inability of the Muslim world to take care of its problems or to overcome its weaknesses.

He said 'things would not change unless the Muslim world fixes its fundamentals and puts its house in order. It must take control of its own destiny through unity and cohesion within its ranks. Its wealth and resources must be used to build its own strength and for its own well-being.'

PPP Punjab President Qasim Zia while speaking on the occasion demanded ceasefire in Lebanon and return of Israeli troops from Lebanon. While criticising the role of Pakistan government over the Lebanon issue, he said that

MUSLIM WORLD: RICH IN EVERYTHING, WEAK IN ALL RESPECTS

decisions should be taken in accordance with the will of masses and there must be respect of public opinion in the country.

He stressed upon the need that every institution in the country should mind its own business and let the others to perform their own duties. General ® Naseer Akhtar said that kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hizbullah have no concern with present aggression of Israel on Lebanon rather it was a planned war aimed at disarming Hizbullah and formation of new Middle East in the region. He informed that international institutions have not drafted cease-fire and it would not be prepared as long as Israel succeeded to achieve its targets in Lebanon.

He was of the view that Kashmir should be the focus of our discussions as peace was not possible without settlement of the issue. He ruled out the possibility of Third World War. In the end of the conference, management of Pakistan National Forum presented 19 resolutions against the aggression of Israel and in favour of Lebanon, which were passed by the speakers and participants unanimously.

Load-Date: December 6, 2006

End of Document

WILL THIS BE THE TIPPING POINT?

Daily Mail (London)

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 1

Length: 911 words

Byline: RICHARD PENDLEBURY; KIRSTY WALKER

Body

GRIEF and bewilderment in his eyes, a father carries a little girl from the ruins of a shattered village.

This was one of the heartrending scenes yesterday in Qana, southern Lebanon, after Israeli missiles claimed more than 60 lives.

At least 37 children including a day-old baby were killed in the deadliest strike of the conflict so far. Despite defiant messages from Israel and Hezbollah, there were hopes that the carnage of Qana might be the tipping point that could lead to a longed-for ceasefire.

Last night, after urgent telephone discussions, Tony Blair issued a joint statement with German Chancellor Angela Merkel saying Qana 'underlines the urgency of the need for a ceasefire as soon as possible'. The pair said work should start at the UN to establish the 'preconditions' to a ceasefire.

Government sources said the Prime Minister accepted that the Qana attack 'changed things'. But his failure to condemn Israeli tactics and call for an immediate halt to their military campaign-risked fuelling what looks likely to be the most serious internal Labour row since the Prime Minister came to power.

Last night Leftwing Labour MPs said they would demand an emergency recall of Parliament if a ceasefire were not agreed within 48 hours.

The victims of the Qana horror were displaced families sheltering in the basement of a three-storey house. Lebanon's

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora reacted by denouncing Israel's 'heinous crimes against civilians' and refusing to meet U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for talks.

The diplomatic crisis deepened as events gathered pace on both sides of the Atlantic.

In a series of developments: Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned he was in no hurry to end the conflict and told Miss Rice he wanted at least ten more days of bombing to smash Hezbollah.

Both Hezbollah and Hamas warned of retaliation against Israel.

The Lebanese army opened fire on Israeli helicopters trying to land near a town in the Bekaa valley the first deliberate clash between the two armies.

WILL THIS BE THE TIPPING POINT?

Hundreds of demonstrators stormed the UN headquarters in Beirut to vent their rage at the UN and the West for failing to stop the bloodshed.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan urged the UN to unite in condemnation of the raid at an emergency Security Council meeting, and said the international community must unite behind calls for an immediate ceasefire.

The Pope said: 'In the name of God, I call on all those responsible for this spiral of violence so that weapons are immediately laid down on all sides.' Israel yesterday said it regretted the incident but added that civilians had been warned to flee the village.

In California, the Prime Minister said he had spent the day talking to world leaders including Mr Siniora and Mr Bush and urged for diplomatic efforts to be stepped up. In signs of a Cabinet split in policy over the crisis, Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett went further than Mr Blair by describing the Qana attack as 'absolutely dreadful'.

Urging Israel to review its tactics, she said: 'It's quite appalling.

Undoubtedly today's events will make things worse at least in the short term.

We have repeatedly urged Israel to act proportionately.' Miss Rice, who was in Jerusalem for talks to find a way through the crisis, said she was 'deeply saddened by the terrible loss of innocent life. We are also pushing for an urgent end to the current hostilities, but the views of the parties on how to achieve this are different.

She also denied that she had been ordered not to come to Lebanon by Mr Siniora.

She said: 'I called him and told him that I was not coming today, because I felt very strongly that my work toward a ceasefire is really here, today.'

The White House described the incident as 'terrible and tragic' and urged the Israeli government to exercise the 'utmost care so as to avoid any civilian casualties,' but significantly did not condemn America's Middle East ally or demand an immediate ceasefire.

Ehud Olmert said Israel would 'continue to act with no hesitation against Hezbollah', which has been firing rockets into Israel from southern Lebanon.

He told his Cabinet yesterday that he privately told Miss Rice that he wanted to continue attacks on Lebanon for up to two more weeks. Israeli officials also described Qana as a 'hub of Hezbollah'.

Kofi Annan yesterday called an emergency UN meeting to discuss the crisis.

He told it: 'Action is needed now before many more children, women and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control.

'I'm deeply dismayed that my earlier calls for immediate cessation of hostilities were not heard, with the result that innocent lives continue to be taken and innocent civilians continue to suffer.' Britain's ambassador to the UN, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, called the events in Qana 'unacceptable'. He added: 'It reinforces the need for the violence to end, and to end now.

'That will be achieved by a Security Council resolution embodying the immediate cessation of hostilities and the political basis for resolving the crisis on a longer-term basis.' But Israel's ambassador to the United Nations warned the meeting that Hezbollah was trying to con the world.

Daniel Gillerman said: 'They want you to react the way you are. I know these are harsh words but I believe them with all my heart and I am beseeching you not to play into their hands, not to provide them with what they are seeking whilst sacrificing their own people as human shields and as victims.' Comment Page 12

WILL THIS BE THE TIPPING POINT?

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

LETTERS

The Forward

August 11, 2006

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Section: Editorial; Pg. 8

Length: 1327 words

Body

Send Gibson on Tour Of Holocaust Museum

While Rabbi David Baron inviting Mel Gibson to speak during the Yom Kippur service at the Temple of the Arts in Beverly Hills is one step toward healing, it stops painfully short of being adequate ("Gibson's New Line: Forgive Me, Foxman, For I Have Sinned ...", August 4). Gibson doesn't deserve such a prominent place of honor - a bima on the holiest day of the Jewish calendar - unless he commits publicly to do far more with, and for, the Jewish community.

A volunteer stint at a Jewish agency, a visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, a personal conversation with a Holocaust survivor, a tutorial with a rabbi to study Jewish history, law and ethics, a trip to Israel (with a visit to Hadassah Hospital to meet maimed suicide bombing victims) - these are just a just a handful of ways that Gibson can demonstrate contrition, and a willingness to learn something about the people he so hideously maligned.

Leann Sherman

West Hartford, Conn.

I forgive Mel Gibson for Jew-bating while under the influence. Here's why.

I grew up around lots of racist talk, and wonder what would come out of my mouth if I were as drunk as he was on the night in question. Would racist vestiges of my childhood gurgle up from the slime of suppressed memory? Who knows? But who can judge?

No doubt, Gibson loves his dad. I don't want to say bad things about another man's father but, come on, Mel's dad really hates us Jews. As a serious Catholic, Gibson no doubt works hard to keep in check the impulses he grew up around. And except for that movie, he seems to do a decent job.

He got drunk. That's a problem. He drove drunk. That's the bigger problem. He could have killed someone's family and destroyed an entire world.

Here's my message to Gibson: Mel, get back with the program. Go to meetings. Get yourself a sponsor.

Regarding the Jew-hating language, I'll let it go. He grew up that way. I know there won't be a next time.

Rabbi Marc Disick

Temple Sinai

LETTERS

Stamford, Conn.

Know What Is At Stake In War With Hezbollah

Israel is fighting for its future as well as its present ("The Third Front," August 4). If Hezbollah and Iran are not deterred now, chemically armed missiles and nuclear warheads will be the wave of the future.

It is only because of Israel's military action and what many call Israel's disproportionate response that the international community is finally discussing the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559. If a multinational force with authority will be put in play - as much to stop Israel as to stop Hezbollah - together with a weakening of the terrorist group by Israel's military campaign, then deterrence will be regained.

As to the role of American Jews, we are partners with Israel, but limited, not general partners - particularly when it comes to life and death issues. Israel's life as a secure nation is being tested. American Jews, together with law enforcement, will deal with our own security problems. But let's not confuse that with Israel's struggle.

Israelis are more united than they have been for decades in this war against Hezbollah because they know what is at stake. American Jews know what is at stake as well.

In that regard, the Forward's editorial is one of the more mischievous in some time in seeking to undermine that consensus at this critical moment in Jewish history.

Abraham Foxman

National Director

Anti-Defamation League

New York, N.Y.

Human Rights Groups Use Double Standard

Kenneth Roth's August 4 opinion article is highly problematic, both for what it includes and what is absent ("Fog of War Is No Cover for Causing Civilian Deaths"). Roth's questions are straw men (or women) that strip away the moral complexity and military reality facing Israel in this war.

In lecturing Israelis about international law, he fails to mention the Syrian and Iranian role in supplying Hezbollah - a terrorist organization - with the weapons and training to fire thousands of missiles against Israeli civilians. And his dismissal of Hezbollah's use of civilian neighborhoods to store and launch its missiles, a fundamental war crime, is based on claims that are difficult to verify.

Does he expect that the Lebanese, who may or may not be members of or sympathetic to Hezbollah - there is no way of knowing - would tell Human Rights Watch researchers the truth about the presence of terrorists and weapons? Unlike most journalists and United Nations officials, did Human Rights Watch check the bunkers that are below the concrete-reinforced slabs shown in the photos? And if the deadly missiles that are killing so many Israelis are not coming from these towns and cities, what is their source?

While not everything that the Israeli military has done in responding to Hezbollah attacks should be endorsed, Roth's opinion article, and the barrage of Human Rights Watch condemnations largely targeted against Israel, have undermined the credibility of human rights rhetoric among Israelis.

The pervasive use of double standards and politicization has turned universal human rights norms, formulated in the shadow of the Holocaust, into empty slogans. And this is the real tragedy.

Gerald Steinberg

Director, Program on Conflict Management

LETTERS

Bar Ilan University

Ramat Gan, Israel

Term Not Necessarily Derogatory in Nature

Opinion writer Edward Koch, once regarded as a liberal, reminds us that Jesse Jackson referred to New York City as "hymie" town ("Will Mel Gibson Get Away With His Antisemitic Tirade?", August 4). "Hymie," though, is never used as a term of dislike.

Let me remind Forward readers that Harry Truman - who has been regarded as a hero by many Jews - referred to New York City in a letter to his wife Bess as "kike" town. "Kike" is always a term of opprobrium.

Daniel Schechter

Manchester, N.J.

Survivors Can Trace Kin Through U.S. Red Cross

The American Red Cross would like to call Forward readers' attention to the fact that Holocaust survivors can search for information on loved ones still missing after the World War II era through our Holocaust and War Victims Tracing Center ("Opening of Archive Slower Than Expected," July 28).

Although the administration of the International Tracing Service in Arolsen, Germany, is determined by government treaty, specifically the Bonn Accords, the Red Cross' Holocaust center continues to successfully access its archives on behalf of survivors and their families now living in the United States.

Since its inception in 1990, the Holocaust and War Victims Tracing Center has documented the fates of more than 12,000 victims of Nazi persecution and reunited more than 1,200 people with loved ones missing for more than 50 years. All tracing services of the American Red Cross are provided at no cost.

While government and diplomatic entities debate issues of access to the largest single repository of original Nazi documents at the International Tracing Service, it's important to know that the American Red Cross Holocaust and War Victims Tracing service can help find answers through this and other resources right now.

Linda Klein

Director Holocaust and War Victims Tracing Center

American Red Cross

Baltimore, Md.

Cruise Offers Option Of Visiting Shtetls

We were interested to read arts writer Anthony Weiss's take on our cruise project along the Dnieper River next spring, and hope others found the idea as intriguing as it first appeared to us ("Cruise Control," August 4).

One of the features that the article did not mention was the opportunity to make individual visits to old family shtetls which will be arranged during the port stops. We think that doing so from the convenience of the cruise ship would be appreciated by those who would prefer not make all the arrangements themselves, a la the adventure in Jonathan Safran Foer's novel "Everything is Illuminated."

We would also like clarify the length of the cruise, which starts in Kiev on April 29 and winds up in Odessa 12 days later.

A.C. and Marc Dolgin

LETTERS

Chelsea, Quebec

Load-Date: August 11, 2006

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Focus: Even when guns fall silent, peace will be elusive

The Scotsman

August 3, 2006, Thursday

1 Edition

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Section: Pg. 28

Length: 910 words

Byline: Allan Massie

Body

THE Prestwick protesters can claim success. No more American planes carrying bombs and other military supplies to Israel will touch down in Scotland to refuel. Big deal: the supplies will still get there, the planes refuelling at RAF airfields instead. So really nothing, except self-gratification on the part of the protesters, will have been achieved.

What motivated them? Some are no doubt sincerely against war, any war. Some are, one assumes, anti-American and anti-Israeli, and therefore hostile to any suggestion that Scotland should participate even in a tiny way in the Israeli war effort. Some may simply agree with the shadow foreign secretary, William Hague, that the Israeli response to the provocation offered by Hezbollah has been "disproportionate". (But what sort of response would have been judged proportionate?)

War is always a moral issue. It forces us to consider where we stand, and this is, or should be, difficult, because it is rare for the question of right and wrong to be clear.

Orwell, often mistaken in his immediate judgment, nevertheless faced up to this. Considering pacificism in 1944, he wrote that it was easy to say that Britain ought not to bomb Germany. But, he added, a courageous pacifist should also say "the Russians should let the Germans have the Ukraine, the Chinese should not defend themselves against Japan, the European nations should submit to the Nazis".

That would be the consistent position, because the pacifist line is that you should not respond to aggression. So today, those who think it wrong for the Israelis to try to extirpate and destroy Hezbollah by bombing Lebanon are, implicitly at least, accepting that Hezbollah should be free to continue to launch rockets into Israel. Note that I say "wrong". Those of us who think Israel's response to Hezbollah's aggression morally justified may still judge it unwise: unwise because, in the long run, unlikely to be successful.

We all tend to take sides. It is very difficult to be even-handed in time of war. It has become more difficult still since television coverage brings the reality of war - the suffering that is the inevitable consequence of military action - before our eyes. We sympathise, naturally and properly, with the victims, especially the civilian victims, and this affects our judgment. So, because we are every day made aware of the suffering of the Lebanese, of the women and children killed, of the destruction of poor people's homes, it is natural first to feel, then to think, Israel is the villain.

The BBC's coverage has, I think, sought to be even-handed. To some extent, it has succeeded, partly because in the admirably cool and lucid James Reynolds they have a reporter in Israel who has presented the Israeli case or

Focus: Even when guns fall silent, peace will be elusive

point of view fairly but also, to my mind, persuasively. On the other hand, they have more reporters based in Lebanon, among them their Middle East editor, Jeremy Bowen, and the dewy-eyed sob-brother Fergal Keane. So, the balance is insensibly tilted against Israel, and it would be surprising if the effect of the BBC coverage has not been to reinforce the image of Israel as callous and ruthlessly destructive.

Again, much attention is paid, fairly enough, to the refusal of President Bush to call for an immediate ceasefire, and to Tony Blair's support of the Bush position. Given the widespread distrust and dislike of Bush - and now, by extension, of Blair too - this is not surprising. But has anyone heard of Iran calling for a ceasefire? Yet Hezbollah is Iran's creature. The missiles it fires were made in Iran, and new supplies it is receiving come from Iran by way of Syria.

"War is hell," the American Civil War general Sherman said in his old age, and, as one of the first modern practitioners of total war in his destructive march through Georgia "from Atlanta to the sea", he was in a position to know. We almost all agree with him now, even though one of the strange things about modern war is how few people are killed. (In comparison with the effects of bombing in the Second World War, casualties in Lebanon have been remarkably light.) We may all deplore this war: those of us who are, as I confess myself to be, pro-Israeli and think Israel's response to Hezbollah understandable and justified; and those who - like the Prestwick protesters? - think Israel the villain of the piece.

If, from the pro-Israeli position, I think this war unwise, it is because I doubt whether Israel will gain more than a temporary respite, and because I fear that when a ceasefire comes, no stable peace will be established and the problem of Palestine and the Palestinians will be no nearer resolution.

The dilemma will remain as it was before the outbreak of this war. There can be no enduring peace till a Palestinian state is established; Tony Blair sees this clearly, even if George Bush may not. But this cannot happen till Israel's right to exist is accepted by the Muslim world and Israel is no longer subjected to suicide bombing and rocket attacks from Lebanon and Gaza. This should be clear to all.

What, however, Israel's critics in the West do not see, or refuse to accept, is that those states which are committed to the destruction of Israel, notably Iran, have no wish to see a Palestinian state established and co-existing with Israel in peaceful harmony. And so those most immediately concerned - the Israelis and the Palestinians - remain caught in a vicious circle; and there seems no way out.

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

International: Pressure mounts on Olmert to quit: Israeli leader under attack for Lebanon war failings Leading politicians face scandal accusations

The Guardian - Final Edition

September 15, 2006 Friday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 17

Length: 710 words

Byline: Rory McCarthy, Jerusalem

Body

Israel's former military chief launched a devastating attack on the country's leadership yesterday, calling for the prime minister and the top general to quit over failings in the Lebanon war.

The challenge from Moshe Ya'alon, who was Israel's chief of staff until June last year, comes as several senior figures, including the prime minister, the president and the justice minister, face accusations in a series of embarrassing scandals over corruption and impropriety.

In an interview in the Ha'aretz newspaper, Gen Ya'alon rounded on the government for launching a costly ground invasion of Lebanon in the final days of the conflict. "It had no substantive security-political goal, only a spin goal," he said. "It was meant to supply the missing victory picture. You don't do that." Thirty-three soldiers were killed in the ground operation alone. Public pressure has mounted over shortcomings in the military action, not least the failure to score a comprehensive victory over **Hizbullah** or to retrieve the two soldiers whose capture on July 12 triggered the 34-day conflict.

The general said the current chief of staff, Lieutenant General Dan Halutz, should have quit immediately after the war, and was only slightly less tough on the defence minister, Amir Peretz, saying he should be replaced because he lacked military experience.

Yet he reserved his strongest criticism for the prime minister, Ehud Olmert. "Going to war was scandalous, and he is directly responsible for that. The war's management was a failure and he is responsible for that," Gen Ya'alon said. "He was warned and did not heed the warnings. Therefore he must resign."

However stark the headlines, the three men believe they can cling on to their jobs in a country where politicians are adept at surviving seemingly career-ending crises.

Aside from criticism over the war, there are several other potentially damaging investigations brewing, starting from the top with President Moshe Katsav, who has been questioned five times by police in a sexual harassment case. He stepped down for a day yesterday to allow a new supreme court chief justice to be sworn in without being overshadowed by controversy. Mr Katsav denies the accusations.

Haim Ramon resigned as justice minister last month and went on trial this week accused of kissing a **female** soldier against her will. He pleaded not guilty. An MP in Mr Olmert's party, Tzachi Hanegbi, was told will be put on trial for fraud, bribery and other charges. He has also protested his innocence.

International: Pressure mounts on Olmert to quit: Israeli leader under attack for Lebanon war failings Leading politicians face scandal accusations

Even Mr Olmert himself is under investigation by the state comptroller over claims that he bought a home in Jerusalem at well below the market rate in return for political influence and that he made illegal political appointments when trade and industry minister two years ago. Mr Olmert also denies the allegations.

Only one leading figure has fallen on his sword since the end of the war with Hizbullah - General Udi Adam, the head of the military's Northern Command. After suffering weeks of criticism for his apparent hesitancy and caution during the conflict, his resignation on Wednesday won him praise for his integrity.

Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, a cabinet minister, applauded his decision and called on the chief of staff to follow suit. "I expect Chief of staff Lt Gen Dan Halutz will do the exact same thing that Adam did and announce his resignation," he said. A group of reservist generals were due to meet Gen Halutz this morning and would be calling on him to resign, Ha'aretz reported.

The next challenge will come with findings of the inquiry into the war. Mr Olmert has shunned calls to hold a high-profile state commission of inquiry. Instead there will be an investigation led by a retired judge into the handling of the conflict.

Gen Adam, furious at being sidelined during the war, could trigger a round of infighting. "This will be a generals' war. Many of his arrows will be surely aimed at Halutz," Ze'ev Schiff, Israel's most respected military analyst, wrote yesterday.

Cameron Brown, an analyst at the Interdisciplinary Centre Herzliya, said he expected Gen Halutz and Mr Olmert to fight on. But if a scandal was proven, or if the inquiry revealed high-level mistakes during the war, they might be forced out.

guardian.co.uk/israel >

Load-Date: September 15, 2006

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Israel says no to a ceasefire

Belfast News Letter (Northern Ireland)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Ulster Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 14

Length: 558 words

Body

TONY Blair was pressing on 'hell for leather' yesterday with attempts to secure a United Nations resolution for a ceasefire in the Middle East, his spokesman said.

The prime minister, on a visit to the US, had already spoken by telephone to the prime ministers of Israel and the Lebanon in a bid to help find an acceptable way forward.

As events in the Middle East lent 'even greater urgency' to the efforts, Mr Blair was also speaking to his counterparts in Turkey, Italy and Germany.

And the UK was involved in negotiations with the French and Americans at the UN in New York to draw up a resolution 'as soon as possible' that could have an immediate impact on the ground.

"We are pushing with the same urgency " in fact I would say a greater urgency " for a resolution after the events of the last few days, as we were last week,' the spokesman told reporters.

"We believe a resolution can help bring this conflict to an end and I think the sooner we have it the better. That's why we are still going hell for leather for a resolution.

"We are working flat out in London, in the UN and from here to try to reach the situation as quickly as possible where there is agreement on a text in New York.

"We hope that will then have an immediate effect on the ground.'

His words came as Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert said there would be no let-up in the offensive in the immediate future as airstrikes continued.

A 48-hour halt to hostilities " aimed at allowing civilians to leave and aid to get in " did not hold after Hezbollah continued to fire rockets at Israeli targets.

It was called under US pressure following outrage over the strike on Sunday morning that levelled a house in Qana, killing at least 56 people " mostly women and children " taking refuge there.

Asked if the prime minister was disappointed the halt had not been observed, the spokesman said: "There has been, as I understand it, action on both sides. The important point is that we negotiate to bring the action on all sides to a close.

Israel says no to a ceasefire

"That's where our focus is.'

Mr Blair's efforts have not included discussions with Syria, he conceded, despite the nation's links with Hezbollah, because of its limited influence.

"You have to concentrate your efforts on where you actually think you can influence things and that's what the prime minister is doing.'

Meanwhile, the defence minister, Amir Peretz, has said Israel plans to "expand and strengthen' its attack on Hezbollah.

Liberal Democrat defence spokesman Michael Moore said that was a "major setback' for diplomatic efforts.

And he called on Mr Blair and US president George Bush to put pressure on Israel to call an immediate ceasefire.

"There was a small glimmer of hope for diplomatic progress over the last 24 hours but this is a major setback,' Mr Moore said. The UK and US must put pressure on the Israeli government to agree to an immediate ceasefire and reverse their defence minister's position.

"Other countries in the Middle East also have a vital role in persuading Hezbollah and Hamas to lay down their arms and release the Israeli soldiers.'

The prime minister's spokesman said "exhortation' would not resolve the situation " only agreement on both sides of the way forward.

"There are two sovereign governments here. This will not proceed unless those two sovereign governments are in broad agreement with where we're going.'

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Jews have reason to fight

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

August 4, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: MAILBOX: YOUR LETTERS; Pg. 5

Length: 368 words

Byline: Erie Marty, The Citizen

Body

I would not be too hasty to come to any conclusions about what's happening in Lebanon as these wars are never all what they are depicted or reported, and that goes for both sides.

The Jewish shootings last week in Seattle are indicative of the deranged minds that the Jewish people have to deal with though. How can shooting six unarmed women, tens of thousands of miles away from the war front, justify anger, or what exactly did it accomplish?

As usual, these terrorist types are showing colours that they aren't fighting men but cowardly murderers (terrorists) with acts of innocent destruction. Reports are that the rocket launchers hide and employ their attacks from within densely-populated residential areas and even hospitals.

Isn't this exactly how Saddam Hussein operated his atrocities in an attempt to achieve sympathy, support, and deflect retaliation, in an attempt to make the other side look like what he was?

If the attacks are being launched from Lebanon residences (to Israeli's residences I might add), the war is focused on their launchings pads, and that makes the Israelis the bad guys? I don't think so.

There are reports of good source that days old bodies have been arranged in bombed sites to stage the claims of foul by the Hezbollah. The Hezbollah have been criticized and condemned by their own people as well for their actions.

What the general population doesn't like is the severity of the Jewish retaliations, but I would think that a threshold line has been crossed here as the Israelis have had the power to do this, and more, at any time of their choice for decades and have restrained themselves for the most part.

And as Popeye used to say as he opened a can of spinach, "That's all I can stands, I can't stands no more." And the Lebanon Blutos aren't a real "happy gang" now.

And demanding a war with no civilian casualties is absurd. That's why they say war is hell -- because it is.

Do I think the Israelis are completely innocent? No. Do I blame them for doing this? I don't like it, but I can certainly understand. Just imagine the Hezbollah, or the Saddam Hussein, with Israel's firepower, or worse yet, the United States'.

Jews have reason to fight

Poof, no more infidels.

-- Erie Marty

Prince George

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

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Beirut turns funeral into act of defiance

The Evening Standard (London)

November 23, 2006 Thursday

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London Evening Standard

Section: B MERGE; Pg. 22

Length: 372 words

Byline: ED HARRIS

Body

TENS of thousands of Lebanese bid farewell to assassinated Christian politician Pierre Gemayel today, as his anti-Syrian allies turned his funeral into a powerful show of force.

The coffin wrapped in the flag of his Phalange Party - white with a green cedar emblem - was brought from his home town Bikfaya, and carried through applauding crowds in central Beirut to St George's Cathedral, where the packed congregation sang hymns.

In nearby Martyrs' Square tens of thousands of men, women and children, waved red, white and green Lebanese flags. Some carried posters with pictures of Mr Gemayel, displaying the words "We want to live" and "Awaiting justice".

Mr Gemayel, 34, was killed on Tuesday as he left a church. His driver was also killed.

The United Nations Security Council has agreed to a request from Lebanon to help investigate the murder. Mr Gemayel was the sixth anti-Syrian figure killed in Lebanon in two years .

In a rare move, the head of the Maronite Church, Cardinal Nasrallah Sfeir, left his mountain headquarters to lead the funeral service.

Family mourners included Mr Gemayel's mother, Joyce, and his father Amin, a former President. Dignitaries included France's foreign minister. The Arab League secretary-general also attended, as did the country's leading Shia politician, Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a top Hezbollah ally.

The turnout was a show of defiance against opponents led by the militant Shia Muslim Hezbollah and their Syrian backers.

The rally, as expected, turned into a display of anti-Syrian feelings and many mourners burned pictures of Syria's president and Lebanon's pro-Syrian leaders.

Beirut turns funeral into act of defiance

One large banner carried pictures of Lebanon's assassinated leaders and the words: "Syria's killing regime. Enough!"

Much of the anger was directed at Lebanese President Emile Lahoud, a supporter of Syria. Lahoud was at the heavily secured presidential palace amid fears that protesters would later march there to attempt to force him to resign.

There was also anger at **Hezbollah**, which had been calling for mass protests of its own in a bid to topple the Westernbacked Prime Minister Fuad Saniora's government. After Gemayel's killing, the guerrilla group said it would not hold demonstrations for the time being.

Graphic

MOURNING: THE COFFIN OF POLITICIAN PIERRE GEMAYEL IS CARRIED THROUGH HIS HOME TOWN BIKFAYA, FOLLOWED BY HIS MOTHER JOYCE, WHO IS FLANKED BY HIS FATHER AMIN, RIGHT, AND BROTHER SAMI, LEFT

Load-Date: November 23, 2006

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INTERNATIONAL: Show of force for Minister's funeral

Birmingham Post
November 24, 2006, Friday
First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 8

Length: 523 words

Byline: Nazeer Ahmed

Body

Tens of thousands of Lebanese gathered yesterday for the funeral of assassinated minister Pierre Gemayel - as his anti-Syrian allies turned the occasion into a powerful show of force against Syrian influence.

The coffin of the young Christian politician, wrapped in the flag of his Phalange Party - white with a green cedar emblem - was brought from his hometown and carried through applauding throngs in downtown Beirut to St George's Cathedral, where the packed congregation sang hymns.

In a rare move, the head of the Maronite Church, Cardinal Nasrallah Sfeir, left his mountain headquarters to lead the funeral service, in which family and dignitaries, including France's foreign minister and the Arab League secretary general, were participating.

The country's top Shi'ite politician, Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a top **Hezbollah** ally, also attended.

Nearby Martyrs' Square was packed with tens of thousands of men, **women** and children, waving red, white and green Lebanese flags. Some carried posters with pictures of Gemayel, with the words "Awaiting justice" written on them and some burned pictures of Syria's president and Lebanon's pro-Syrian leaders.

Much of the anger was directed at President Emile Lahoud, a staunch Syria supporter, and ralliers held signs calling for his removal.

President Lahoud was at the presidential palace, where heavy security measures were taken amid fears that protesters would later march there to attempt to force the president to resign.

Mr Gemayel, 34, was killed on Tuesday when two cars blocked his vehicle at a crossroads as he left a church and assassins shot him numerous times.

He was the sixth anti-Syrian figure killed in Lebanon in two years, including former prime minister Rafik Hariri who was killed in a massive bomb blast in Beirut in 2005.

Billboards of the slain industry minister featuring a picture of his bullet-ridden car appeared on streets, and troops lined the roads in Bikfaya in the Christian heartland of north Beirut.

INTERNATIONAL: Show of force for Minister's funeral

While some supporters called for revenge against Syria and its allies, Mr Gemayel's father - a former president - and the Maronite Church quickly called for calm, hoping to avert an explosion of violence in the multi-sectarian nation of four million, already struggling with a deepening political crisis.

Before Mr Gemayel's slaying, **Hezbollah** had threatened to hold its own mass protests in an attempt to bring down the US-backed government of Prime Minister Fuad Saniora.

But **Hezbollah** officials said the group would take no action in the coming days to allow emotions to cool and accused the anti-Syrian parliamentary majority of capitalising on the murder for political ends to regroup.

"We were on the verge of taking to the streets," said Hussein Khalil, adviser to **Hezbollah** leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah. The government coalition was in an unenviable position and was in a very big impasse. They needed blood to serve for them as kind of oxygen to give them a new life."

The killing introduced new tensions into the power struggle. Shi'ites are backed by Syria and Iran, while the government and its Sunni and Christian supporters are backed by the West.

Graphic

The coffins of prominent anti-Syrian Christian politician Pierre Gemayel (bottom right) and his bodyguard (left) are carried by relatives and friends in between tens of thousands of anti-Syrian protesters, at the Martyrs square in Beirut Pictures, HUSSEIN MALLA' Patricia Gemayel, the wife of Pierre Gemayel, mourns over his coffin. Right: A Lebanese girl holds a placard where mourners are gathered in Martyrs' Square

Load-Date: November 24, 2006

**THERE ARE SO MANY DEAD CHILDREN... WE JUST KEEP FINDING THEM;
34 KIDS AMONG 56 CIVILIANS KILLED AS LEBANON SINKS DEEPER INTO
HELL RESCUER SOBS AT AIR STRIKE CARNAGE**

Daily Record

July 31, 2006, Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 1096 words

Byline: By John Clements in Beirut

Body

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Then he walked away, threw himself to the ground under a tree and began to sob.

"There are so many children," the rescue worker wept. "We just keep pulling out children and more children."

At least 34 kids were killed in the Lebanese village of Qana when a missile destroyed the house where they were hiding.

The total death toll was at least 56 - five more than Israel has lost in the entire conflict. And Lebanese officials said 11 more dead children could be buried under the rubble.

The victims all came from two extended families, the Shalhoub and the Hashims. The adults killed were mainly **women** and old men.

Many had come into Qana from the surrounding area, hoping to escape the fighting. They huddled together in one house for comfort, and were asleep in a cellar when the air raid began at 1am yesterday.

Locals said dozens of bombs blasted the village. The three storey building where the families were sheltering was flattened.

Long after dawn broke, rescuers were still recovering bodies.

A little girl's gold ear-rings glinted in the sunshine as her remains were loaded into an ambulance. Another tiny victim lay lifeless at her feet.

The corpse of a boy of 10 or 11 could be seen in the rubble nearby. He was rigid, his face disfigured.

One survivor, Mohamed Shalhoub, lost all five of his children, including a two-year-old. His wife, sister and aunt also died.

Mohamed was one of only a dozen people to get out alive. Recalling the explosion, he said: "I felt as if I was turning around, and the earth was going up and I was going into the earth."

THERE ARE SO MANY DEAD CHILDREN... WE JUST KEEP FINDING THEM 34 KIDS AMONG 56 CIVILIANS KILLED AS LEBANON SINKS DEEPER INTO HELL RESCUER SOBS AT AIR STRIKE CARN....

Another family member, Khalil Shalhoub, joined the rescue - and saw that his brother was among the dead. He threw himself on top of the body and screamed: "Why are they killing us? What have we done?"

Rescuers dug into the rubble with their hands until a bulldozer arrived in the afternoon.

The bodies were wrapped in plastic sheeting and laid out nearby. Local people placed flowers on each of them.

Recovery work continued as darkness fell. Everyone expected to find more dead.

Qana sits to the east of the city of Tyre, in the heart of the war zone.

Israel had used radio broadcasts and leaflet drops to repeatedly warn local people to flee. But at the same time, Israeli jets constantly bombed the only route to safety.

The road into Qana from Tyre is littered with bomb craters and burned-out cars. Survivors of the air raid said they were too afraid to try to escape.

Thousands of civilians are still trapped in southern Lebanon. But despite the horror of Qana, Israel remained determined to continue its onslaught against the Hezbollah militants who provoked the conflict.

Prime minister Ehud Olmert said: "I express great sorrow over the deaths of Lebanese civilians in Qana. There is nothing further from our thoughts and our interests than striking civilians.

"When we strike civilians, the world understands this is an exceptional case that does not represent how we act."

But Olmert added: "We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning. We will continue and, if necessary, it will be broadened without hesitation."

Olmert said Hezbollah were to blame for the deaths because they chose to launch rocket attacks on Israel from Lebanese villages.

Israeli officials said "hundreds of rockets" had been fired from Qana during the conflict and 40 were launched from the area immediately before the air strike.

They denied deliberately hitting the house where the children died. A government spokeswoman said: "The building was next to the rocket-launcher sites we were targeting. This was a mistake and we will have a full investigation."

Israel's words of regret did nothing to ease anger in Lebanon.

A crowd of 5000 briefly stormed the United Nations headquarters in Beirut to protest, before being driven back by the Lebanese army.

Lebanese prime minister Fuad Siniora was due to meet American secretary of state Condoleezza Rice in Beirut yesterday.

But in the wake of the Qana attack, Lebanese officials told Rice she was not welcome.

Siniora denounced Israel's "heinous crimes against civilians" and refused to hold any more talks without "an immediate and unconditional ceasefire".

George Bush and Tony Blair have refused to call for an immediate end to the fighting, or to criticise Israeli tactics.

They insist there can only be a lasting peace if, as Israel wants, Hezbollah are disarmed and driven back from the border.

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Speaking from Jerusalem, where she had talks with Olmert at the weekend, she said she was deeply saddened by "the terrible loss of innocent life" in Qana.

But she added: "We all recognise that this kind of warfare is extremely difficult.

"It unfortunately has awful consequences sometimes."

Critics of Bush and Blair have accused them of giving Israel free rein to carry on the war.

And according to one Israeli official, Olmert told Rice he needed 10 to 12 more days to finish the offensive. Olmert's office denied the report.

Bush and Blair were looking more isolated than ever last night.

At an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council, secretary general Kofi Annan urged all members to strongly condemn the Qana attack. Annan also repeated his call for an immediate ceasefire, saying: "Action is needed now, before many more children, women and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control."

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And Pope Benedict XVI called for all those responsible for the violence to "immediately put down their arms". He stressed the word "immediately".

The fighting in Lebanon began on July 12, after Hezbollah militants crossed into Israel, kidnapped two soldiers and killed eight more. Since then, a huge Israeli air bombardment has devastated large areas of the country and hundreds of Hezbollah rockets have crashed down on northern Israel.

Israeli and Hezbollah troops have also fought for control of key strong points on the ground.

The killings in Qana took the official Lebanese death toll in the fighting to 514, including at least 403 civilians. The Beirut government claims that more than 200 more bodies could still be lying undiscovered in the rubble.

Fifty-one Israelis, 33 of them soldiers, have been killed.

RECORD VIEW: Page 8

'I felt as if I was turning around and the earth was going up and I was going into the earth'

Graphic

STORMING IN: Hezbollah supporters smash their way into the UN headquarters in Beirut' DIGGING IN: Rescue workers and soldiers search for victims in Qana. Inset, bodies are lined up outside a hospital EPA/ALIHAIDE

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

**CHILDREN ARE EVERYWHERE.. WE'RE PULLING OUT MORE AND MORE
BODIES; 34 KIDS KILLED AS SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS
ESCALATES IN LEBANON 56 DIE IN ISRAELI AIR STRIKE CARNAGE**

Daily Record

July 31, 2006, Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 1080 words

Byline: By John Clements in Beirut

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Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Waiting for the Hurricane Of Anti-Israel Racism To Blow Over

The Forward

August 11, 2006

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Section: News; Pg. 1

Length: 1160 words

Byline: Oz Almog

Oz Almog, a professor of sociology at the University of Haifa, is the author of "The Sabra: The Creation of the New Jew" (University of California Press, 1997).

Body

FORWARD FORUM

Sooner or later the current war in Lebanon will come to an end. Israel will survive, lick its wounds, recharge its diminished energies and return, with revitalized enthusiasm, to its television shows and vacations.

Hezbollah probably will have suffered some damage, and Israel perhaps will have been able to buy itself a fake, temporary peace, sponsored by some international scarecrow force dressed in Bermuda shorts and opera glasses. Israel perhaps will have also succeeded in getting back its kidnapped soldiers through some sort of cynical deal that made it possible for both Israel and Hezbollah to swallow the bitter pill. Yet whatever the consequences of this endless confrontation, Israel cannot win this Lebanese war that was imposed on it.

Israel will not win because it cannot uproot Hezbollah from Lebanon, just as it cannot uproot Muslim fundamentalism from Arab countries.

Israel will not win because its enemy is an anti-democratic terrorist organization, one by no means marginal in Lebanon, that has legitimized lies and forgery as part of its cultural tradition. Hezbollah is a group whose outlook is built on wishful thinking and manipulative words, rather than on vigorous empirical methods based on a sense of criticism and integrity.

Indeed, even when Israeli tanks are standing at the doorstep of Beirut, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah will portray himself - and will be accepted by the Arab public - as a new Saladin. And even if the entire Hezbollah army falls in battle, its leadership will declare a Zionist defeat.

But above all, Israel will not win because this battle is just a prelude to the great war awaiting us: World War III, Islamic Jihad against the free world.

It is astonishing, even heartbreaking, to see how great the similarity is between 1933 and 2006. In those days, the Western world stood by and watched as some loony took over the German regime - a bizarre, almost comic character who had developed a satanic ideology with the aim of wiping democratic cultures off the face of our planet.

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By the same token, Mahmoud Ahmedinejad, the president of Iran, is perceived by many in Western countries as no more than a loud-mouthed playground bully. But like Hitler, Ahmedinejad is neither marginal nor alone. He has millions of fanatic, fundamentalist Muslims marching behind him, applauding his rabble-rousing, saber-rattling, inciting speeches. He has even managed to take the time-honored cry of "Allahu Akbar," Islam's declaration of faith in the God of Abraham, and turn it into a sort of updated "Sieg Heil."

The forgotten World War II arose out of a deep inferiority complex and sick chauvinism, and the next world war will emerge out of a deep inferiority complex, coupled with insane chauvinism - no other society in the world tramples women and rejects feminism more than the misogynist fundamentalist wing of Islamic society.

Negative feelings and a culture of chauvinism have given birth to ruthless hostility and slander, from which there has developed a well-oiled machinery of brainwashing that operates in private houses, mosques, educational institutions and much of the Arab media.

Under the leadership of Nasrallah, the Hezbollah kidnapping of Israeli soldiers from sovereign Israeli territory and the bombing of Israeli towns and cities serves neither Lebanese interests nor Palestinian rights. Hezbollah is acting on behalf of a clearly defined religious agenda, aimed largely at the destruction of Jews and the Jewish state. And again, just as in those bad old days leading up to World War II, the object of collective hatred, the generator of vicious ideology against the free world, is the stereotype of the Jew.

In the old days, it was the stereotype of the ugly and the deceiving merchant in the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," who was accused of plotting to take control of the world economy. Then there was the stereotypical Jewish Communist, accused of trying to abolish the Aryan European race and culture.

Today it is the "Jewish usurper" in the sovereign State of Israel, not just in the territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. This same Jew is tied inextricably to the American imperialist - the symbol of the free world - in a joint scam to occupy Muslim lands, to desecrate Muslim holy places and to drink the blood of Palestinian children.

The rhetoric is all too familiar. Just listen to what is being said now in Iran, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon or Gaza - in fact, throughout the Muslim world. In a recent speech, the chairman of the Iranian Parliament described Nasrallah as a holy warrior who has the blood of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini flowing in his veins. This same blood is pulsing through the arteries of thousands of fundamentalist Muslim clergymen and preachers, hammering at the temples of millions of ecstatic martyrs yearning to blow themselves up and take as many Jews as possible with them, just to fulfill the sacred commandment and to earn the glory of murdering what they refer to as the "Jewish Satan."

Meanwhile, Western politicians, media and other opinion shapers focus their eyes and cameras on the destruction caused by the Israeli military - as if it was Israel who initiated this bloody conflict, as if it is Israel who kills innocent civilians just for fun and to show off its military prowess - and accuse Israel of carrying out disproportionate retaliation.

Many of these same politicians, opinion shapers and media commentators are descendents of Europeans who did nearly nothing to save Jews from the blazing fires of the crematoria. Today, they are helping, directly and indirectly, to fashion the old Jewish stereotype into the "New Jew" - namely, the Israeli. They are in no hurry to stop the Iranians from building new military machinery that will burn 6 million "New Jews" in the nuclear furnace of the global era.

And what are the Israeli Jews doing in order to survive? Not much. Just like their grandparents before them, they deny the apocalyptic news and wait for the racist hurricane to blow over.

Israelis' democratic tolerance and inherent Jewish masochism make them accept, and often encourage, Israeli intellectuals who blacken their image, who write hypocritical articles and give interviews in the local and foreign media condemning Israel's acts of self-defense. In the name of some kind of divine moral standards, these intellectuals denounce and despise Israeli aggression and arrogance, and by doing so they help the new generation of antisemites to demonize the Jews.

Waiting for the Hurricane Of Anti- Israel Racism To Blow Over

Can the ticking clock of Muslim antisemitism be stopped from targeting the Israeli state? Perhaps this latest war in Lebanon will help to shed more light on the real motives of Islamic fundamentalism and to open more eyes in the Western world.

I am asking the civilized countries of the world not to make the same moral mistakes they made before and during the previous Holocaust of the Jews. Unless you wake up soon, there will be no Jews left to blame you.

Load-Date: August 11, 2006

End of Document

From the rubble, Lebanese recover their dead; Hundreds estimated to lie beneath ruins

The International Herald Tribune

August 17, 2006 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 5

Length: 913 words

Byline: Hassan M. Fattah

Dateline: SRIFA, Lebanon

Body

The reality of the war came out of the rubble in bits and pieces an army boot in one town, a gold wedding ring in another, a pair of jeans elsewhere all the pieces of lives lost in the destruction wrought by the monthlong conflict that has come to a halt in a tenuous cease-fire.

On Tuesday, secrets buried in southern Lebanon ruins began to emerge as Lebanese Red Cross workers, health workers and **Hezbollah** members set upon the heaps of stone and concrete in towns along the Israeli border, digging out bodies of men, **women** and children trapped there for weeks. The work will last for weeks in towns with names that have become synonymous with tragedy.

In Ainata, about five kilometers, or three miles, from the Israeli border, Red Cross workers pulled out eight decomposed bodies buried in a home that was bombed 10 days after the war began. In Bint Jbail, a few kilometers away, rescue workers tried to dig out at least four bodies from a house near the old market and, in Ait al Shaab, **Hezbollah** members reportedly removed the bodies of five of their fighters from the debris.

They were just a small portion of the estimated hundreds of bodies thought to have been lying in the wreckage, but the act of digging promised some closure for a country struggling to rebuild. Bodies wrapped in clear plastic tarpaulins were carted away in ambulances with the horns blaring, most of them ending up in the central morgue in Tyre, where the piles of dead have continued to grow.

Late Tuesday, Lebanese soldiers removed 31 bodies from a refrigerator truck near the morgue and buried them in a temporary mass grave adjacent to two other mass graves that were set up weeks earlier.

In Ainata, Abbas Khanafer trembled as rescue workers began digging out at least 16 people buried in a house near the town center, including seven members of his own family who had taken shelter there.

In half a day of digging, eight bodies, some of them in pieces, emerged. Among them were the remains of an elderly woman and a younger one, and workers removed a gold wedding band and jewelry in hopes of identifying them. But as Khanafer examined the bodies, he could find nothing he recognized.

Khanafer lost three other relatives in the town of Marun al Ras in another bombing, as well as his older sister, who was apparently shot by Israeli troops in their parents' home in Ainata when Israeli troops clashed with **Hezbollah** fighters in the vicinity.

From the rubble, Lebanese recover their dead Hundreds estimated to lie beneath ruins

"I did everything they told us to do, I tried to do it all right," Khanafer said, referring to Israeli warnings to civilians to evacuate southern Lebanon. He asked a friend what he should do to have his relatives buried in a temporary grave. "Now, everything I have left is in Sidon," he said.

Khanafer had fled north to Sidon with his elderly parents, his wife and children and a niece four days after the bombing in Ainata, and two weeks ago returned in hopes of digging up the bodies of his relatives when Israel called a 48-hour suspension of airstrikes. But there was not enough time to retrieve them.

On Tuesday, he came back to Ainata to try again. As the Red Cross workers continued digging, he drove with Hezbollah officials with an ambulance in tow to his parents' home overlooking the Israeli border, where his sister's body lay. The stench permeated the house and the floor crawled with maggots, as her body was wrapped in a plastic tarpaulin to be transported to a hospital in the nearby village of Tibnin.

Nowhere was the scene as stark as in Srifa, where workmen picked through fields of rubble where the Hay el-Birki neighborhood once stood. Up to 18 buildings were pulverized when Israeli warplanes struck the neighborhood on July 19, killing dozens, said Hussein Kamaledin, a local official.

Just days ago, Israeli warplanes pounded the town again as Hezbollah fighters moved into the area to face off with Israeli troops who landed in the hills nearby. Fierce fighting and bombing continued even into early Monday morning, until the UN cease-fire took hold at 8 a.m., residents said.

Muhammad Jaber looked on quietly as a crowd of men gathered around an excavator reaching deep into the rubble of what was once a three-story building here in Srifa on Tuesday, wondering what he might have done differently to induce his son to leave.

"I told him to come with me, but he wouldn't," Jaber said, speaking of his 27-year-old son, Bilal. He said he had a hunch why his son would not leave, but he refused to elaborate.

"He said he wanted to stay with his friends," he said. "I called him after we left, but he said he just wouldn't leave."

Within minutes, several men dived into an opening in the rubble and pulled out an army boot, then a walkie-talkie, a bulletproof vest and a machine gun. They belonged to one of Bilal's friends. The jovial workmen went silent as Hezbollah security men told photographers to stop taking pictures, and Jaber's hunch was confirmed: His son was one of the militia fighters.

"This will now be a place of tragedy and sorrow," said Hussein Nazzal, who survived unscathed in his house, while all the buildings behind his house were destroyed. "Who could possibly deserve to die a death like this?"

Hours later, Jaber sat with his wife grieving for his dead son, who was married with three children.

"I have seen all the wars and survived them, and three of my boys battled the Israelis in 1996," he said. "I was lucky then, because they all came home. But this time, it seems, God decided to take one away."

Load-Date: August 24, 2006

No-one is right when it comes to loss of life

Belfast News Letter (Northern Ireland)

September 14, 2006 Thursday

Ulster Edition

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 18

Length: 226 words

Body

REGARDING the article "Standing up to Terror" by Alex Kane (News Letter September 9).

No-one denies the Jews the right to attack the Hezbollah who were bombarding Israel with rockets. However, this does not warrant the vicious and murderous onslaught waged indiscriminately against the innocent men, women and children of Lebanon.

According to Alex Kane, Hezbollah "doesn't give a damn about the lives of men, women and children".

But the body count shows at least 10 times as many innocent Lebanese to one Israelite and the haphazard firing of rockets seems insignificant when compared to the relentless shelling and air raids from the Israeli army and air force which has left Lebanon in ruins.

Regarding the "concept of just wars" viewed as such when retaliating, there would be few ex-servicemen who would agree to a declaration against any nation that was no threat to their own national security.

However, the United States and Britain declared war on Iraq without any foundation or provocation to do so.

Could it have been due to the increasing influence of Russia and France in the Iraq oil fields?

Finally, who were the first terrorists? Were they the Crusaders or perhaps the Jews who slaughtered British soldiers on the formation of the state of Israel resulting in thousands of Palestinian refugees?

Ex-Serviceman, Belfast

(full name and address supplied)

Load-Date: September 15, 2006

Inside a death house

The Australian (Australia)

August 4, 2006 Friday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 15

Length: 1719 words

Byline: Peter Wilson

Body

MATP

Peter Wilson meets a young Muslim mother who takes comfort that her two children and parents, who were killed in the Qana bombing, died in the name of Allah

AS Fatima Hashim lay down beside her two sleeping daughters on a thin mattress, she did something many anxious young mothers do the world over.

She listened closely in the dark to make sure that her toddler, also called Fatima, 3 1/2, was breathing, then gently touched the warm chest of her 18-month-old baby, Rokaya, to find a heartbeat.

Yes, they were sleeping peacefully. She stretched out on her back beside Rokaya and tried to sleep. Outside she could hear occasional explosions from Israeli missiles but she was tired because it was 10pm, a couple of hours past her normal bedtime.

The three dozen children who were spread out on mattresses on the floor had almost all been asleep for two hours and the 30-odd adults among them were as tired as Fatima. Members of two extended families, they'd spent two weeks sheltering together in the basement of this house in a hilltop village in the middle of the conflict in southern Lebanon, and the strain had left everybody worn out.

When she did get to sleep, she rolled on to her left side, facing away from Rokaya.

Three hours later, at 1am, an Israeli missile brought the unfinished two-storey house down on top of them, turning their basement refuge into a smothering, bone-crushing trap. The two children Fatima and Rokaya choked to death, their mouths full of sand and dust, as their mother lay trapped beside them listening to them trying to breath.

The US-based rights watchdog Human Rights Watch puts the death toll at 28, including 16 children, and 13 missing under concrete and cinder blocks. Only eight in the house survived.

The deadliest incident of the war between Israel and *Hezbollah*, it brought furious condemnations of Israel from across the world, including from moderate Arab leaders already uncomfortable about siding with Israel and Washington against fellow Arabs.

Inside a death house

Something like 600 Lebanese civilians had already been killed in two weeks but the Qana tragedy on Sunday spectacularly blew away any talk of precision targeting and the supposed ability of high technology to minimise civilian deaths.

An enraged Lebanese Government called off peace talks with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who in turn pushed the Israelis into 48 hours of penance. One of Rice's aides announced the Israelis would halt most of their air strikes for two days to allow them "to investigate the tragedy".

Israeli spokesmen blamed Hezbollah, arguing that fighters from the radical Islamic group had fired Katyusha rockets from near the house, in effect using the civilians as human shields.

Unnamed Israeli officials insisted, without producing any evidence, that Hezbollah fighters had been monitored taking military equipment into the house, and other officials released video footage that they said showed rockets being launched from near the village.

Fatima, 24, says the Israelis are lying. "There is no way anybody fired a missile from near that house," she says from her hospital bed in the nearby city of Tyre.

"We would have heard it if something was fired anywhere in the village. Do you think we would have stayed near that with our children? It is just propaganda.

"Hezbollah is fighting to protect us, not to put us into danger. And there is nowhere to do it anyway: the flat land in the village is covered by houses and the rest is very steep."

Fatima is calm, even impassive, as she recounts the events leading up to the bombing that killed her children. Her fine features do not once crease with anger and her dark eyes seem blank as she speaks quickly and quietly in a slightly hoarse voice. Wearing a light veil and a dark blue dress over her thin frame, she has hardly picked at a meal of potato and pita bread that sits beside her bed.

In the room's other bed, her sister-in-law, Mona Hashim, 36, who lost all three of her sons in the disaster, wears the black veil and dress of conservative Shia Muslims. Fatima's sister, Zainab, 22, sits by Fatima's bed, all three on intravenous drips. The only time they lose composure during our lengthy conversation is when a visiting cousin hugs Fatima farewell.

The hug brings her to tears for a few seconds. We step back from this private moment but she waves our photographer, Stewart Innes, closer.

"No, no, let the world see what the Israelis have done," Fatima says. "They say they are fighting terrorist Arabs but show people that they are the terrorists."

Fatima is proud to declare her family's commitment to Hezbollah, which is southern Lebanon's most popular political party and social welfare organisation as well as a potent armed force.

"We are with whoever is right and Hezbollah is right, so we are proud to say we are with Hezbollah," she says. "Since we have been in hospital they have visited us and brought us clothes. When we were stuck in the village they brought us food, otherwise we would have starved."

The two families, low-paid farmers, had moved into the unoccupied house on the northern edge of their village because they could not afford to leave the area and they believed the house was more solid than their own small homes, she explains. Fatima's mother, Afaf Zabad, 45, had wanted them to stay in their own homes but the argument was settled by the fact the bigger house had running water, meaning they would have to make fewer trips outside. (Their own homes remained untouched by the bombing.)

Qana is only 11km from the Israeli border and with Israeli warplanes, helicopter gunships and unmanned drones constantly buzzing overhead the families did their best to stay inside. They would let the children out to play in the

Inside a death house

early evening, when there seemed to be fewer warplanes but otherwise they were cooped up all day. Zainab, a university student, gave the older children school lessons but after two weeks the boredom was growing.

"We usually feed the children early and have them asleep by about 7.30, after evening prayers," Fatima says. "We have been switching the lights off and going to bed early because of all the planes overhead. That night we were up late because [Hezbollah leader Hassan] Sheik Nasrallah was giving a speech and we wanted to hear him."

After the children were put to bed at 8pm the adults clustered around a portable radio, the volume down because its batteries were low. Supremely confident, Nasrallah promised victory against Israel and declared that the Israelis were failing to achieve any of their strategic goals on the battlefield.

"We like to hear him speak because he is very inspiring and makes us feel confident and strong," Fatima says. "Listening to him is like oxygen. He said: 'People trapped in your houses in the south, you are all part of the fight, you are all mujaheddin.'"

One of the striking features of the disaster was that the house was filled with women and children. The only men were elderly or disabled. Fatima says the other men were sheltering together and talking in a nearby house, a normal separation for conservative Muslims. They were not involved in the guerilla campaign, she says.

Her sister-in-law, Mona, does not want to discuss the men at all, refusing even to give her husband's name.

One Hezbollah militant had said in Qana a few hours earlier that "everybody here supports Hezbollah and Amal [an allied Shia group with its own militia]. We all have one mind and one voice when it comes to Israel".

Fatima says that when she went to bed, about 50 people were sleeping in one big room. "When we spread out the mattresses [they] covered the whole floor. It was hot with everybody in there so we wanted to have the door open for air. The children were worried about creepy-crawlies coming in, so we took turns to have somebody awake all night watching the door."

When the missile brought down the house, Fatima woke up under rubble, coated in sand and heavy dust.

"I screamed Allah Akhbar [God is great] over and over," she says. She was pinned down on her side, with her back facing the girls. The force of the blast had pushed Rokaya's head up against hers and both girls were whimpering.

"I could hear Rokaya moaning in my ear. It was terrible because I could not turn around to reach them but at least I knew they were alive." Her sister Zainab was the first to fight free of the rubble. "I was calling in the dark for help but there was no answer. I was calling again and again but nobody came. I didn't know why but then I realised they were all dead."

Zainab began clawing at the rubble on top of Fatima and her girls. She quickly cleared away enough to allow the young mother to twist around and grab her youngest girl.

"I pulled her out and handed her up to someone and they took her away," Fatima says. "Then I reached out to grab Fatima but people looked at her and said: 'Leave her for us, you come out and we will bring her out.' I said: 'No, I want to get her', and I handed her to Zainab.

"I still didn't realise she was dead. By then some of our other relatives had arrived and they put us under a tree so the Israelis couldn't see us moving. The bombing kept going all night, so we could not go anywhere else, and I was under the tree with Rokaya. They told me that she said: 'Baba' [Daddy], then she died. I knew under the tree that she was dead, but I thought Fatima was OK.

"We were all crying and hugging each other. I didn't know Fatima was dead until later." Also dead were Fatima and Zainab's mother; their father, Ahmed, 54; sister Awla, 25; and brothers Ali, 16, and Yusef, 7.

Zainab says she is worried how Fatima will cope with going home to her girls' clothes and toys. "We also have to deal with our parents' things and that will be hard. But," says the younger sister, with a harder look in her eye,

Inside a death house

"death for us is a habit and martyrdom is our honour from God. All we have is Allah, Sheik Nasrallah and the mujaheddin."

Fatima, who seems less assertive than her younger sister, agrees in her gentle voice. "We are sad that they died but happy that they died in the name of God and for a good cause," she says. "They are in heaven and the Israelis who did this will be in hell."

Peter Wilson, The Australian's Europe correspondent, researched this feature in Qana and Tyre in southern Lebanon.

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

End of Document

LETTERS & OPINION: Would Britain have sent missiles into Belfast?

Birmingham Post

August 21, 2006, Monday

First Edition

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 12

Length: 413 words

Byline: SUE BLACKWELL

Body

Dear Editor, Michael Fabricant MP (No One Has Monopoly on Virtue or Evil, Post, August 15) has a vivid imagination.

"Just imagine", he asks, "if a neighbouring country were harbouring terrorist militias and were lobbing missiles into Dover and Folkestone."

Let's try a more realistic analogy. Just imagine, Mr Fabricant, if back in the 1970s the IRA had captured a couple of English squaddies serving in Northern Ireland' and if, instead of negotiating for their release, the British government had responded by pounding Belfast for a month with tanks, bombs dropped from F-16 fighter planes, cluster munitions and chemical weapons, killing hundreds of innocent Irish civilians and making thousands homeless.

Would you have considered that justified? Hopefully not. Yet this is exactly what Israel has just done in Lebanon.

Mr Fabricant describes Hezbollah as a "terrorist" organisation. Of course violence targeted at civilians for political ends is terrorism. But as a matter of fact, the majority of Israelis killed by Hezbollah have been soldiers, while the vast majority of Lebanese killed by the Israeli military have been civilians. So just who are the biggest terrorists here?

Fabricant describes Israel as "a modern, fully functioning democracy". Classical Athens was a democracy too, except that women and slaves were excluded from it. Likewise the Palestinians, who have been ethnically cleansed from Israel in 1948 and 1967, have no vote in Israel. Even the so-called Arab Israelis are treated as second-class citizens, as Mr Fabricant would know if he had read Susan Nathan's book *The Other Side of Israel*.

Anyway, what sort of democracy is it that locks up its conscientious objectors even when it isn't at war?

Fabricant complains that Syria and Iran provide arms and training for Hezbollah but omits to mention that the USA and Britain have been arming Israel for years, and that US planes have been using British airports to refuel on their way to delivering weapons to Israel while the assault on Lebanon was under way.

As for Kofi Annan, he should have resigned in protest as soon as Britain and the USA launched their illegal war on Iraq in defiance of the UN. Is it any surprise that British soldiers are now losing their lives there daily?

LETTERS & OPINION: Would Britain have sent missiles into Belfast?

I look forward to the day when Israel ends its occupation of every part of Palestine and Lebanon, our soldiers are brought back from Iraq (alive), and Bush, Blair and Olmert are all prosecuted for war crimes.

SUE BLACKWELL

Moseley

Graphic

A civil defence worker carries the body of a Lebanese child recovered from the rubble of a demolished building that was struck by Israeli warplane missiles during the conflict

Load-Date: August 21, 2006

End of Document

In the World

The Philadelphia Inquirer

October 20, 2006 Friday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A10

Length: 479 words

Body

Vatican reasserts

euthanasia stance

VATICAN CITY - The Vatican's top official for health issues reiterated the Catholic Church's strong opposition to euthanasia in an interview published yesterday but said the church was in favor of allowing terminally ill patients to opt against aggressive treatment.

An Italian Senate committee has been hearing arguments over legislation to approve a living will, allowing people to decide in advance how they want to be treated if they become incapacitated in the last stages of a terminal illness.

Cardinal Javier Lozano Barragan spoke in favor of a living will, telling the Turin daily La Stampa that the Vatican opposed "those useless and disproportionate treatments before the imminent death of the patient, which have as sole consequence prolonging the agony."

He said that hydrating and feeding a terminal patient could not be considered aggressive therapeutic treatment. - **AP**

Group: **Hezbollah** used cluster bombs

BEIRUT, Lebanon - A rights group reported yesterday for the first time that **Hezbollah** fired cluster bombs at civilian areas in northern Israel during their summer conflict.

Human Rights Watch said in a report that three Israeli civilians were injured when at least two cluster munitions landed near three homes in the Galilee village of Maghar on July 25.

The New York-based group and the United Nations have accused Israel of firing as many as four million cluster munitions into Lebanon, leaving unexploded ordnance that still threatens Lebanese civilians. Since the Israel-**Hezbollah** conflict ended Aug. 14, these duds have killed 20 Lebanese civilians and wounded 120. - **AP**

British Muslim wins suit over veil

In the World

LONDON - A Muslim teaching assistant suspended after she refused to remove a veil during lessons won a victimization suit yesterday against her school.

An employment tribunal awarded Aishah Azmi \$1,870 for injury to her feelings. But the panel rejected allegations that Azmi, 24, had been subjected to direct and indirect discrimination and harassment.

Her case had become the center of a wide-ranging debate over the decision of some Muslim women to wear full veils and the participation of religious groups in British society. Reacting to the case Tuesday, Prime Minister Tony Blair called the religious dress a "mark of separation." - **AP**

Elsewhere:

A car bomb left by a person dressed in a military uniform exploded in the parking lot of a military university in Colombia's capital, Bogota, wounding at least 23, authorities said. The blast occurred at Nueva Granada as the military university hosted an event attended by the army's commander, Gen. Mario Montoya.

A mayoral candidate in a small town in Russia's Far East was gunned down yesterday when he left his campaign headquarters in what officials denounced as a blatant political murder. Dmitry Fotyanov was slain in Dalnegorsk, about 5,750 miles east of Moscow.

Load-Date: October 20, 2006

End of Document

Entire nation being punished

The Toronto Star

August 9, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: LETTER; Pg. A19

Length: 253 words

Body

Measured response or war crime?

Opinion, Aug. 7.

Neil Finkelstein's piece looks at events unfolding in the Middle East as justified responses to actions by others, but never as consequences of Israel's own actions.

First, describing kidnappings of Israeli soldiers as being the point of instigation does not appreciate that there are many Palestinian and Lebanese women and children who have been sitting in Israeli prisons long before its most recent offensive in Palestine and Lebanon. Did not the Israeli strike on a Gaza beach in early June that claimed the lives of innocent civilians count as instigation by Israel?

Second, why do many other nations including the Lebanese themselves view Hezbollah as a resistance movement composed of freedom fighters and liberators? Israel occupied Lebanon for more than 20 years after a UN declaration demanding it end its occupation. To a certain extent, this occupation continued before this latest offensive by Israel where they continued to occupy the Shebaa Farms.

Finkelstein attempts to justify the destruction of essentially an entire nation's infrastructure, economy and its ability to receive aid as necessary to isolate Hezbollah, but neglects to describe the collective punishment such a disproportionate response will have on an entire nation.

Israel in its own words has described its operations as "surgical." With so many innocent civilian casualties, can someone please tell the doctor that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure?

Ali Manji, Thornhill

Load-Date: August 9, 2006

Defiant Israel's 48 hour ceasefire that lasted just half a day

Daily Mail (London)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: ED IRE; Pg. 2

Length: 660 words

Byline: KIRSTY WALKER

Body

HOPES for an immediate ceasefire in the Middle East were shattered after Israel resumed its attacks on Lebanon less than 12 hours after announcing a 48-hour halt to its aerial bombardment.

Rejecting mounting international pressure for an end to its war with Hezbollah after its bombing of Qana, Israel launched an incursion into the south of the country, as well as fresh, if limited, air strikes.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert hammered home the message of defiance, saying: 'There is no ceasefire, there will be no ceasefire.' The crisis escalated further last night as Syrian President Bashar Assad put his army on a higher state of alert because of 'regional challenges', sparking fears of a wider conflict. The move came hours after a Syrian-made bomb was detonated next to an Israeli army patrol road in the occupied Golan Heights.

Israeli forces continued fighting in the air, from the sea and on the ground in Lebanon, said Mr Olmert, insisting the war would end when Israel brought home two soldiers captured by Hezbollah guerillas three weeks ago.

Israeli jets fired two bombs to support ground troops battling the guerillas and repeated artillery shells hit two border villages.

A Lebanese soldier died and three were wounded when another Israeli air strike destroyed their vehicle in a botched attack. In another blow to hopes of a breakthrough, Hezbollah continued to fire shells into the northern Israeli border town of Kiryat Shmona and claimed to have hit an Israeli warship off the coast of Tyre.

An Israeli security source denied the claim. Attempts to broker a peace plan appeared to be collapsing after world leaders failed to reach agreement on the nature of a peacekeeping force.

Mr Olmert yesterday conceded that it would be possible to implement a ceasefire in Lebanon immediately after an international stabilisation force is deployed but that appears to be weeks away.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice tried to be upbeat yesterday, insisting a ceasefire could still be forged at the UN later this week.

Speaking to reporters in Jerusalem, she said: 'As I head back to Washington, I take with me an emerging consensus on what is necessary for both an urgent ceasefire and lasting settlement. I am convinced we can achieve both this week.' And U.S. President Bush appeared to outline conditions for a ceasefire, spelling out a series of what he called 'clear objectives' to accompany a halt in the fighting.

Defiant Israel 's 48 hour ceasefire that lasted just half a day

'Iran must end its financial support and supply of weapons to terrorist groups like Hezbollah. Syria must end its support for terror and respect the sovereignty of Lebanon,' he said.

Mr Olmert yesterday apologised for the bombing in Qana, which killed 60 people, many of them children, saying: 'I am sorry from [the] bottom of [my] heart for all deaths of children or women in Qana. We are not fighting against the Lebanese people.

We are fighting terrorism and we will not stop the fight against them until we push them away from our borders.'

U.S. EMBASSY RALLY

HUNDREDS of protesters gathered outside the U.S.

embassy in Dublin last night to demand an end to the conflict engulfing Lebanon.

The Trocaire-organised peace rally attracted Lebanese nationals, Irish citizens, Palestinian supporters, charities and political parties, including the Labour Party and Sinn Fein.

A low-key Garda presence outside the embassy at Ballsbridge marshalled the noisy and sometimes angry but peaceful demonstration.

Many of the protesters held aloft pictures of children killed in the Israeli air strike on the village of Qana. About 50 people broke away from the main rally to demonstrate outside the Israeli embassy several hundred metres further down the road. Trocaire director Justin Kilcullen linked the U.S. to the mounting death toll though its failure to back the UN and demand an immediate ceasefire.

'To allow the violence...to continue demonstrates a cynical disregard for the hundreds of innocent civilians who are being killed,' he said.

Graphic

DANIEL O'BOYLE, 3, AT THE TR CAIRE PROTEST

Load-Date: August 2, 2006

Lessons on freedom

University Wire

September 14, 2006 Thursday

Copyright 2006 Cavalier Daily via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 869 words

Byline: By Daniel Colbert, Cavalier Daily; **SOURCE:** U. Virginia

Dateline: CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va.

Body

"DEMOCRACY is a process, not a project." Mohammed Khatami, former president of Iran, spoke these words last Thursday in a speech at the National Cathedral. He meant that democracy was not something that could be achieved through repression of anti-democratic ideas but was the very means of dealing with such ideas. Earlier that day, Khatami had given an address at the University, where he was greeted with chalkings and flyers arguing that, in the name of democracy, the University should not have allowed him to speak. It is embarrassing that the leader of a nation with a less-than-perfect human rights record would have a firmer grasp on the meaning of democracy than students at the University founded by Thomas Jefferson. The arguments offered by those who opposed his visit are both irrational and hypocritical.

The most prevalent objection to Khatami's is his support for Hezbollah, a charge Khatami did not deny in his speech. When questioned about the relationship between Iran and Hezbollah, Khatami answered, "Iran loves Hezbollah." However, Khatami spoke against terrorism in his speech and has condemned Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda on numerous occasions. The problem here is in defining terrorism. Khatami's view of Hezbollah as a defense against Israeli aggression in Lebanon, rather than as a terrorist group, is neither an uncommon nor an unjustifiable position. Khatami's relationship with Hezbollah does not make him unworthy of an invitation.

The atrocities committed by the Iranian government while Khatami was president are also cited as a reason that Khatami should not have been welcome here. "Khatami represents a fear-based regime which has executed political dissidents and minorities, stoned women and violently suppressed peaceful student protests," says Michael Wain, who organized the protest. It is true that the government over which Khatami presided was oppressive and violent, and it is disappointing that Khatami was not asked to account for such a gap between his pro-democracy rhetoric and his government's poor human rights record. Since Khatami did not hold the most powerful position in Iran, it is difficult to hold him responsible for all of his government's actions. To create a parallel example, it would be laughable to blame President Bush for the continued legality of abortion in America, although it is a policy of his government. Like Bush, Khatami has repeatedly argued against the status quo, but lacked the power to change it significantly.

Moreover, it is impossible to find a government that is not responsible for any human rights violations. Our own president recently admitted that the CIA operates secret prisons where terror suspects are interrogated using torture -- excuse me, "alternative" -- methods, which may be in violation of international law. Khatami himself made the same point in his speech in Washington. Surely the president would be invited to speak at the University were he to go on a speaking tour after the end of his term. It may seem like such an argument makes excuses for

Lessons on freedom

Khatami -- and he certainly deserves criticism for his failure to accomplish many of the reforms he promised -- but disagreements with Khatami's policies, however passionate, do not make his visit an unprofitable one.

Dialogue with reform-minded individuals in the Middle East should be welcomed at this critical point in history. Khatami's speech dealt with the need for toned-down rhetoric between the United States and Iran and for "transforming the current dialectic among cultures and civilizations to that of dialogue." In other words, Khatami encouraged exactly the sort of communication between East and West that both the Ahmadinejad and Bush administrations have, in his view, stifled in exchange for threats of violence. He also criticized Ahmadinejad for halting Iran's progress towards democracy. It does not make sense for pro-democracy students to protest against a speech that was unambiguously pro-democracy.

Further, those who wish to encourage democracy in the Middle East should rally around a figure like Khatami. Shokoufeh Dianat, an Iranian student, said she remembers her parents voting for Khatami because he was "the most liberal choice they had." Even if Khatami is far from ideal, for many Iranians he represents the best hope for democracy. Such a figure should be supported by the United States, not dismissed as just another tyrant in a turban.

The hypocrisy present in the protests is most easily seen in the flyers handed out to those leaving Newcomb Theatre after the address. They pointed out that during Khatami's reign, pro-democracy students were not allowed the freedom of speech that Khatami was enjoying at the University. To argue that because Khatami's government did not allow free speech, and so we should not, either, is hypocritical. Democracy cannot be reached by silencing anyone who may have anti-democracy views, nor does tolerance of such views represent nihilism or moral ambivalence. What it represents is an unwavering commitment to the ideal of a free society.

Daniel Colbert's column appears Thursdays in The Cavalier Daily. He can be reached at dcolbert@cavalierdaily.com.

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Load-Date: September 14, 2006

For a Village, Paying Respects Required Making 3 Stops

The New York Times

August 4, 2006 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10; HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: MOURNING

Length: 570 words

Byline: By RICHARD A. OPPEL Jr.; Steven Erlanger contributed reporting from Jerusalem for this article.

Dateline: MAALOT-TARSHIHA, Israel, Aug. 3

Body

Mourning the dead took all night in one tiny neighborhood this evening. Hundreds of people -- essentially the whole neighborhood of Hay al-Bedu -- made the same somber procession three times.

At the first stop on Thursday, the men, solemn, talked quietly as they sat in white plastic chairs and praised one another's dead sons as "martyrs" or spoke of "God's will." The women, kept separate from the men, sat together in plastic chairs arrayed in semicircles around the grieving mother.

The mourners first stopped at the home of Shanati Shanati, a 20-year-old who was to be the best man at a friend's wedding next month.

They then gathered at the home of Amir Naim, 17, who left school after the ninth grade and worked as a gardener.

Then they went to the home of Mohammed Faour, 18, whom neighbors described as quiet, modest, friendly and humble, and who never had conflict with anybody.

All three -- young Muslims and close friends -- died Thursday when one of Hezbollah's Katyusha rockets crashed down beside a large rock where they had run from their car to take cover when missiles began to strike. The foot-deep crater was about 50 feet from the two-lane road where the three friends were parking their car when the Katyushas began to descend.

One of the young men, Mr. Shanati, wasn't even supposed to be there. He had agreed at the last minute to help his two friends do some work at a family farm, said another friend, Jalal Kharma, 28, on the way to the home of Mr. Naim's parents, a few hundred feet from the Shanati home.

It was the kind of request Mr. Shanati was unlikely to have turned down, friends said. He grew up with the two other men and saw them almost every day. As young boys, they loved sleepovers at Mr. Shanati's home, and later, as they got older, they enjoyed camping together, said Ahmed Heb, another friend and neighbor, as he walked from one house to another.

The night before, the three young men had planned out their next camping trip, Mr. Heb said.

For a Village, Paying Respects Required Making 3 Stops

The young men were products of a well-kept neighborhood of Muslim, Bedouin and Christian Arabs in the western part of Tarshiha, a village of 4,000 Israeli Arabs. Tarshiha is legally attached to the Jewish city of Maalot, which contains roughly 20,000 people, half of them immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

Hezbollah missiles, which also killed five Israelis in the coastal town of Acre on Thursday, seemed to swipe the life from this tight-knit Arab neighborhood, where everyone seemed to know the three young men.

"We need patience and power to overcome this crisis," one mourner told Mr. Shanati's father, as about 70 men -- some Muslim, some Christian -- sat in a large oval on the long, tiled back porch of the Shanati home.

"We have no other choice," he said, as explosions could be heard in the distance and an Israeli helicopter flew high overhead. "The politicians are the merchants of the meat of children and innocent people."

A few minutes later, about 40 of the men rose in unison to walk to the next mourning gathering.

Outside, Mr. Shanati's younger brother, Billal, said he was working at the family farm just a few hundred feet away when the rockets began to strike on Thursday. Billal recounted how his brother had narrowly escaped another **Hezbollah** rocket in an attack on Wednesday, and he struggled to make sense of the events.

"It's what God wants," he said. "It's God's will."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: Members of a neighborhood in Maalot-Tarshiha, Israel, grieved yesterday as they learned three of their own were killed by **Hezbollah** missiles. (Photo by Rina Castelnuevo for The New York Times)

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

End of Document

Air truce after 54 die in Israeli strike

Yorkshire Post

July 31, 2006

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Length: 656 words

Body

Tel Aviv bows to pressure and agrees to 48-hour ceasefire after attack on village kills 34 children

David Hogg

ISRAEL bowed to international pressure last night and agreed to a 48-hour suspension of its aerial bombardment of southern Lebanon after an airstrike killed more than 50 civilians.

Under the conditions of the ceasefire, announced by the US administration, Tel Aviv will stop all flights in the area but will be able to hit targets if intelligence suggests that attacks imminent.

The announcement came only hours after an emergency meeting of the United Nations made fresh demands for a ceasefire.

Announcing the truce,

US State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said Israel had "reserved the right to attack targets" to pre-empt rocket strikes from the militant group **Hezbollah**.

"The US welcomes this decision and hopes that it will help relieve the suffering of the children and families of southern Lebanon," Mr Ereli told reporters who had been travelling with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Mr Ereli said Israel would co-ordinate with the United Nations to allow a 24-hour period of safe passage for all residents of south Lebanon who wanted to leave the region.

"We expect that Israel will implement these decisions so as to significantly speed and improve the flow of humanitarian aid," he added.

An Israeli government official confirmed prime minister Ehud Olmert had agreed to the 48-hour suspension.

Earlier in the day Secretary-General Kofi Annan had demanded an immediate halt to violence between Israel and **Hezbollah** as he condemned a deadly attack that left at least 54 people dead - including 34 children - as they hid in the basement of a building in the village of Qana.

At the meeting of the UN in New York Mr Annan said: "We meet at a moment of extreme gravity - first and foremost for the people of the Middle East - but also for the authority of this organisation and especially this council," he added. "Action is needed now before many more children, **women** and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control."

Air truce after 54 die in Israeli strike

A US State Department official said Ms Rice had been working on a ceasefire agreement for some time before the attack on Qana.

This was despite the fact that Lebanon's prime minister had denounced "Israeli war criminals" and cancelled talks with her as she was due to fly into Beirut in the next few days.

US President George W Bush yesterday renewed his call for a "sustainable peace" in the region while his administration urged Israel to avoid civilian casualties.

The conflict was triggered nearly three weeks ago by the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah near the Israeli-Lebanon border.

Looking pale and slightly shocked by the news from Qana, Prime Minister Tony Blair told a hastily-convened press conference in San Francisco, where he is on an official trip, there was "absolutely no basis for hostilities to continue". He said: "We have to speed this entire process up, get a resolution now, and on the passing an agreement of that resolution, then the hostilities have got to stop, and stop on all sides."

But the Prime Minister has been widely criticised for failing to oppose America's unwavering support of Israeli tactics. From within his own administration, Foreign Office minister Kim Howells has called on the Israelis to "go for Hezbollah... don't go for the whole Lebanese nation".

Former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw called the Israeli response "disproportionate" and "hard to understand". He said Israeli strikes had not been "surgical... but have instead caused death and misery amongst innocent civilians".

His successor as Foreign Secretary, Margaret Beckett, has avoided outright criticism of Israel, calling only for an "urgent" cessation of hostilities .

Anti-war protesters in Scotland claimed a victory last night after two US flights carrying suspected weapons were diverted from Prestwick Airport in Ayrshire for refuelling.

david.hogg@ypn.co.uk

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

World Digest

The Toronto Star
March 6, 2007 Tuesday

Copyright 2007 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A09

Length: 254 words

Body

Britain

'There is not a shred of evidence' of plot

to kill Diana: Coroner

A coroner overseeing the inquest into the death of Diana said yesterday she had seen no proof of a plot to kill the princess of Wales and her lover.

"There are a large number of serious allegations being made," said Dame Elizabeth Butler-Sloss, a retired judge. "At the moment, there is not a shred of evidence given to me about these allegations."

Mohamed al Fayed, whose son, Dodi Fayed, died with Diana in a Paris car crash in August 1997, has long claimed the couple were victims of a plot.

United States

841-pound woman dies after gastric surgery

An 841-pound woman thought to be the largest ever to undergo gastric bypass surgery has died of a massive heart attack at a Houston hospital.

Renee Williams, 29, had been doing well in the days after the increasingly popular solution to morbid obesity, hospital officials said. She died Sunday after suffering chest pains.

East Timor

Emergency powers invoked to quell unrest

East Timor's president, Xanana Gusmao, invoked special powers yesterday after youths blocked roads in the capital, demanding foreign troops leave.

Israel

War against Hezbollah triggers baby boom

Last summer's war against Lebanon's Hezbollah has triggered an Israeli baby boom.

World Digest

Channel 10 television, quoting statistics from Israel's biggest health maintenance organization, said yesterday the number of **women** now in their fifth, sixth or seventh month of pregnancy was 35 per cent higher than the figure a year ago.

From the Star's wire services

Load-Date: March 6, 2007

End of Document

Lebanese leaders meet over crisis

The Bismarck Tribune

March 10, 2007 Saturday

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Section: WIRE; Pg. 2A

Length: 487 words

Body

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) - Hard-liners on both sides won Northern Ireland's election, final results confirmed Friday, setting the stage for a major diplomatic push to forge a Catholic-Protestant administration of bitter enemies.

Hard-line Protestants of Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party finished first with 36 seats in the 108-member Northern Ireland Assembly, ahead of the major Catholic-backed party, Sinn Fein, which won 28 seats.

Trailing far behind were moderate Protestants and Catholics - who championed the Good Friday peace accord of 1998 and led a power-sharing administration that collapsed 4 1/2 years ago amid incessant Protestant-Sinn Fein conflict.

The British and Irish prime ministers, Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern, called on the Democratic Unionists to forge a joint administration with Sinn Fein by March 26 - even though Paisley still refuses to even talk with Sinn Fein officials.

LISBON, Portugal (AP) - Portugal's parliament voted overwhelmingly to legalize abortion up until the 10th week of pregnancy, a major step in bringing this small Roman Catholic nation in line with most of its European neighbors.

The Thursday night vote came less than a month after a popular referendum failed due to low turnout, but nonetheless showed that most voters were in favor of legalizing abortion - in line with the trend across Europe.

"Some battles are worth a lifetime," Socialist Prime Minister Jose Socrates, a supporter of abortion rights, said Friday night at his party's headquarters. "There was nothing more undignified for women than backstreet abortions."

By European standards, the new law is still on the restrictive side. Women can seek abortions up to the 24th week of pregnancy in Britain and up to the 12th week in Germany, France and Italy. In the United States, a 1973 Supreme Court ruling established the right to abortion, although individual states have passed laws with varying restrictions.

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) - In their first direct negotiations in four months, leaders of Lebanon's pro-government and opposition camps met twice in 24 hours and found some convergence of views on ending the country's political crisis.

Saad Hariri, the leader of the pro-government majority in parliament, met Thursday and Friday night with the parliamentary speaker, Nabih Berri, an opposition party leader who is aligned with Hezbollah, the official National News Agency reported.

Lebanese leaders meet over crisis

The agency gave no details of their Friday night talks, but said they lasted two hours.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said both domestic and international opinion favored a settlement. "We support the dialogue that began last night, and hope it will reach the desired results," he told a rally in southern Beirut on Friday evening.

But Nasrallah vowed to continue **Hezbollah**'s campaign against U.S.-backed Prime Minister Fuad Saniora's government until it granted the opposition a veto-wielding share of the Cabinet.

Load-Date: March 13, 2007

End of Document

Town's rich history is lost among the ruins

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 11, 2006 Friday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 10

Length: 435 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Baalbek, Lebanon

Body

BAALBEK has always been a draw for foreigners. Its name refers to an ancient oracle of the god Baal which brought pilgrims to the high Bekaa Valley, and over which the Roman Empire later built its largest ever temple complex.

Much of this complex still exists, remarkably well preserved. In the 19th century it lured the first intrepid bands of Western tourists, and a century later the temples of Bacchus and Jupiter became the stages for the month-long Baalbek festival, a magnet for the Mediterranean jet set.

Recently revived after the long hiatus of Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war, the Baalbek Festival was due to start on July 13, with shows by Deep Purple and Dizzy Gillespie and an opening-night comeback performance by legendary Lebanese diva Fairouz. Instead war came on July 12, and four weeks later the seating, stage and sound-system created for the festival still sit among the ruins.

A tourist guide, Khalil Abbas, still waits across the road at the Palmyra Hotel, its peeling plaster walls decorated with keepsakes of previous guests such as Jean Cocteau and Kaiser Wilhelm II, but the only foreign visitors these days are journalists. If you don't count the Israeli jet pilots, circling overhead.

"You see that crack up there?" says Abbas, pointing high up the wall in the Temple of Bacchus. "That wasn't there before the bombing two weeks ago. This place has survived five major earthquakes in 2000 years. Please God it will not be damaged now."

Nearby, a stone grotto which was once the ablutions room for the Roman priests of Jupiter now serves as a sleeping bunker for the museum staff who tend to the ruins. In Baalbek a lot of people have taken to living underground.

In one mainly Sunni Muslim downtown area more than 40 men, women and children are now living in a humid limestone cave, too scared to venture out.

"There are six families here," said Hassan Dandash, 42, a father of five. "Do you see the floor? It's only dirt. We don't have a bathroom here and the air is so humid it's making the children sick. They are terrified every time a plane passes over."

Town's rich history is lost among the ruins

Israel says its aerial onslaught is intended to force the Lebanese Government and people to turn against the militant **Hezbollah**.

In Baalbek, however, the Lebanese Government and most of the people have vanished, and it is **Hezbollah** whose polite, but grim officials patrol the ruins, monitoring any strangers who enter the town.

Down by the festival site one or two souvenir shops are still open, just for the hell of it, though there are now no customers. One of their most popular lines of stock, said a vendor, is **Hezbollah** T-shirts.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Bloody Shia festival marking death of imam divides Muslims

The Irish Times

January 31, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 13

Length: 762 words

Body

BEIRUT: Shias across the Muslim world yesterday marked Ashura, a day of mourning during which many believers flagellate themselves. Michael Jansen witnessed scenes in Beirut

Streets leading to the heart of the Dahiyeh, Beirut's southern suburbs, are blocked, and black-clad Hizbullah security men with mobile phones oversee the barricades.

They examine my press pass and wave us into the inner sanctum of Ashura, the Shia festival commemorating the slaying in 680AD by Sunnis of Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, at Kerbala in central Iraq.

This event and its commemorations have divided the Muslim world into orthodox Sunnis and heterodox Shias ever since.

Disagreement over who should succeed Muhammad - the Shias' blood heir or the Sunnis' righteous man - blossomed into a full-blown religious dispute which will never be resolved.

My companion, Hamzah, and I join the stream of men, women and children, walking to the Mujamma Sayyed al-Shuhada, the Centre of the Honourable Martyrs, a vast prefab hall bombed flat by Israel during its summer offensive and promptly rebuilt. The sky is grey and begins to weep cold tears. It is a perfect day for mourning. Umbrellas mushroom over the gathering throng.

Red, black and green flags hang limply from lamp-posts. A loudspeaker mounted on a tracked vehicle exhorts the faithful to embrace mourning.

Hamzah and I plunge into the throng alongside the Mujamma. We pass men sitting on the kerb weeping, their faces cupped in their hands.

A sobbing voice inside the building broadcasts the story of Hussein's martyrdom. We thread our way into the core of the crowd and halt opposite the arched gateway of the building near the barrier separating men from women. At the end of a lilting hymn, the disembodied voice cries, "Yah, Hussein, Yah Hussein!"

The men around me extend their hands, palms up in prayer. The service closes with cries of "Labbayk, Hussein! I am here, Hussein, at your command."

We crunch our way over the rubble of devastated buildings, walk to the car and swoop along empty roads into the mountains, rain spattering on the windscreen, to Nabatieh, a Shia town which commemorates Ashura in the

Bloody Shia festival marking death of imam divides Muslims

traditional manner. The curtain of cloud clears as we make for the Husseinia, the Shia meeting house with hundreds of the faithful.

Walking against the tide are boys with pads of gauze taped to their heads and blood-spattered shirts. Hamza remarks: "The boys go first, then men, and last old men."

Here security is provided by ranks of smartly dressed Lebanese soldiers and police bearing plastic riot shields. Ambulances from the Lebanese Red Cross and Red Crescent are parked on the roadside. In a first-aid tent, doctors and nurses bandage the walking wounded.

Clusters of bloodied youths jog along the street in front of the Husseinia. They carry knives, curved and straight swords or ceremonial weapons, and strike their foreheads with these implements to make blood flow.

A man carries a small boy, no more than three, his head streaming blood. As we climb the blood-spattered steps of the Husseinia, I pull my scarf over my head and enter an area of grieving men. Women and girls cluster in a railed-off area at the back.

Wounds are not random cuts from knives and swords, but deliberately inflicted by a man with a cut-throat razor, which he wipes on his sleeve after each incision, risking infection with Aids and hepatitis.

Once a cut is made, the devotee strikes his brow with his palm or the flat side of his weapon to make the blood spurt. Some beat a slow tattoo, others batter themselves in a frenzy of religious fervour.

Friends band together and bounce down the steps, spattering blood right and left. A single drop falls on my shawl, a tiny Ashura badge.

We pause at the top for an attendant to sweep a wave of blood thinned with rain into a drain before making our way out ahead of a rank of bloody men chanting, "Haydar, Haydar," another name for Ali, the murdered father of Hussein and founder of Shiism. "We are Shias and our blood is boiling."

Families take seats on the grassy slopes around the football field across from the Husseinia. Here the Battle of Kerbala is re-enacted by horsemen representing the army of the Sunni caliph and the gallant band of Hussein. Boys sporting bandages are served Turkish delight.

On the way back to the Dahiye we listen to Sayyed Nasrullah speaking to tens of thousands of the faithful. "We want one Lebanon, a Lebanon for all." He and Ayatollah Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, Hizbullah's spiritual mentor, banned flagellation in Beirut, as had Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

Load-Date: January 31, 2007

Former Israeli justice minister found guilty of sex crime

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

February 1, 2007 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A8

Length: 395 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: TEL AVIV

Body

TEL AVIV -- Israel was rocked by a sex scandal again yesterday when former justice minister Haim Ramon was found guilty of indecent assault against a 20-year-old **female** soldier.

Three judges unanimously found the 56-year-old lawyer and member of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's ruling Kadima party, had lied to the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court when he denied "placing his lips on her lips and inserting his tongue in her mouth," repeatedly, and against the complainant's will when the two of them met, for the first time, in his office.

The incident took place moments before the Israeli cabinet voted to go to war against **Hezbollah** in Lebanon last summer.

The judges found the testimony of the woman, who was only known in court as H, regarding the kisses was "authentic, coherent, credible, and reliable."

"This was not a kiss of affection," the court said. "This has all the elements of a sexual crime."

The conviction was another staggering blow to Olmert's coalition government, which has been reeling for months over severe public condemnation of its mishandling of the war against **Hezbollah** in Lebanon.

As well, the prime minister himself faces at least two criminal investigations into financial misconduct, his finance minister is under investigation for abusing his position for financial gain and another former minister has been charged with fraud, bribery and perjury.

Only last week, Israel's 61-year-old-president, Moshe Katsav, was charged with sex crimes including rape that involved several **women** less than half his age, as well as separate charges relating to fraud and obstruction of justice.

Public outrage over the war in Lebanon, where Olmert failed in his stated objective to win the release of two soldiers kidnapped by **Hezbollah**, and over the rising tide of sexual and financial misbehaviour by the country's political leadership, has also had a devastating effect on the prime minister's popularity. Recent polls have found more than two-thirds of Israelis want Olmert to resign.

Former Israeli justice minister found guilty of sex crime

A survey published two days ago by the popular Ynetnews website painted an even more damning picture.

It revealed only three per cent of the electorate wanted Olmert returned as prime minister in the next election.

"These are the lowest figures for an Israeli prime minister in the 30 years that I have been doing this," said pollster Rafi Smith, who conducted the Ynet poll.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Ariel Schalit, Associated Press; Former Israeli Justice Minister Haim Ramo and his girlfriend, identified only as Vered, leave Tel Aviv's magistrate's court yesterday. The court convicted Ramon of forcibly kissing a young **female** soldier, a case that riveted the country's attention and added another layer of scandal to Israel's beleaguered leadership. The verdict was expected to clear the way for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to launch a major cabinet shakeup. ;

Load-Date: February 1, 2007

Hilali can't say where aid for Lebanon war victims went

The Australian (Australia)

April 2, 2007 Monday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: LOCAL PHOTO; Pg. 1

Length: 911 words

Byline: Richard Kerbaj

Body

MATP

MUSLIM cleric Taj Din al-Hilali personally handed out in Beirut tens of thousands of dollars collected at Australian mosques in the aftermath of last year's Israel-Hezbollah war but has failed to properly detail where the money went.

The funds raised by Islamic organisations, including the Lebanese Muslim Association, following the 34-day war were earmarked for the victims of the conflict.

But documents obtained by The Australian reveal that \$US10,000 was handed to a supporter of the Iraqi insurgency, Sheik Bilal Shaaban, to go towards his Islamic radio station.

The \$70,000 raised by the Australian Muslim community was electronically transferred into the private bank account in Lebanon of an LMA employee -- Yihya Safi -- before they were withdrawn and handed out by Sheik Hilali and Sheik Safi.

While Sheik Safi provided the Lakemba-based LMA with receipts outlining his donations in Lebanon -- including a \$US10,000 contribution to a relief fund set up by the family of assassinated Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri -- Sheik Hilali has yet to give an official report on how he spent the money.

Attorney-General Philip Ruddock told The Australian he was concerned that funds raised in Australia for overseas relief efforts could end up in the hands of terrorist organisations.

A founding member of the Australian Muslim Doctors Against Violence group, Jamal Rifi, said the community was losing faith in donating money for charity because it was not being properly informed on how funds were being spent.

"The Islamic community ... has lost faith in where our money is being spent," he said. "And people have lost faith in donating money to any organisation."

LMA president Tom Zreika said community members who donated money to his organisation last year were also asking how it was disbursed, with some asking if the Sheik Hilali funds might have ended up in the hands of the proscribed terrorist wing of the Iranian-backed movement Hezbollah or its affiliates.

Hilali can't say where aid for Lebanon war victims went

"There's been allegations (among) a few people in the community that he gave the money to (Hezbollah's leader Hassan) Nasrallah," Mr Zreika said. But Mr Zreika said he was given "verbal assurances" by Sheik Hilali that the money was spent on relief efforts in north Lebanon and not to fund any political or terrorist organisation.

Dr Rifi accused Sheik Hilali of having links to Hezbollah, which also operates political and social wings. "He has the link with Hezbollah, definitely," he said.

Mr Zreika said he had asked Sheik Hilali to account for the donations.

But the cleric, who was given a three-month grace period in his position as mufti at the weekend, has yet to provide him with an official "detailed report" -- showing all receipts -- since his return to Australia in January.

"A report was sought from his office in respect of where the funds went," said Mr Zreika, a Sydney-based lawyer and Liberal Party member.

"He's always constantly said, 'Give me a couple more weeks, I'll give it to you'.

"I'm very disappointed, because I don't want to implicate our organisation with anything shifty or untoward ... and so that's why we've sought that report from him many, many times. What we need is not only the report, but we need statements from the bank as to how the money came in, how it was spent."

After The Australian inquired about the charity funds last week, the LMA was forced to obtain information on how Sheik Hilali spent more than \$US38,000.

In documents obtained by The Australian, Sheik Hilali has

Continued -- Page 2

From Page 1

scribbled his distributions in Arabic on "Rydges Hotel" scrap paper, simply putting dollar figures next to the names of those who received the money.

A \$US10,000 donation was made to Sheik Shaaban, head of the Islamic Unity Movement, while amounts of \$US5000 or less were made out to other clerics whose names are barely readable.

Sheik Hilali left for Lebanon last November following a controversy that was sparked when The Australian exposed his Ramadan sermon, in which he compared immodestly clad women to "uncovered meat" and joked about the notorious Sydney gang rapes.

The Australian also revealed last October that Sheik Hilali had, in an Arabic radio interview, praised militant jihadists in Iraq and Afghanistan, calling them men of the highest order.

Mr Zreika said the money was transferred to Sheik Safi, who was in Lebanon at the time, because he had "full and complete trust" in how the cleric would handle the funds. But it is understood that Sheik Hilali took charge of handing out the cash upon arriving in Lebanon.

It is believed that one of the most prominent Islamic charity fundraising groups, Bayt al-Zakat in Sydney, refused to send the \$130,000 it raised through the LMA.

Bayt al-Zakat chairman Adib Marabani said he refused to go through the LMA because he didn't want "any Dick and Harry" to handle the money.

"We didn't want the money to be distributed here and there, but we wanted the money to be distributed to the affected people there (in Lebanon)," he said.

Dr Rifi said transparency was the responsibility of the organisations and individuals who raised charity funds.

Hilali can't say where aid for Lebanon war victims went

"To restore the trust of the community ... every one of us, individual and organisation, has to be transparent ... and we inform the community where the money has been spent," he said.

Sheik Safi and Sheik Hilali, who is overseas, could not be reached for comment. Sheik Hilali's close associate Keysar Trad did not return the calls.

Load-Date: April 1, 2007

End of Document

Orchard better equipped to broker peace accord

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

August 17, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: FORUM; Pg. A9

Length: 282 words

Byline: Pat Doig, The StarPhoenix

Body

Re: Orchard's deal-making ability matches Mideast expertise (SP, Aug. 10). No matter how one views Hezbollah -- freedom fighters, or terrorists, as presumably Jonas Kiedrowski does -- the distinction is moot when one watches the Israeli military's incessant, indiscriminate and illegal bombing of innocent civilians.

It purposely has targeted the infrastructure of Lebanon, which is not a country called Hezbollah. This is what David Orchard deplores. He is not alone. The Jewish Women's Committee to End the Occupation is outraged at Ottawa's "morally unconscionable position" of silence "while Israel perpetrates a massacre of civilians in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon." Most Canadians are outraged as well.

Although I fail to get the connection to the Middle East conflict, Kiedrowski goes on to blame Orchard, not Peter MacKay for the latter's deception and breach of the legal contract he signed not to merge the Conservative party with Stephen Harper's Canadian Alliance. This is akin to Harper condemning the UN because Israel dropped a bomb on its personnel, too.

I do, however, like Kiedrowski's suggestion that maybe Orchard should go to Lebanon to personally broker a peace deal. Better Orchard, who has been calling for an immediate ceasefire to end the slaughter, than Condi Rice and George Bush, the great pretenders and suppliers of bombs to Israel.

Bombing countries will never get rid of "terrorism." As we have seen under Bush, it only gets worse. The only solution is to address the concerns of displaced persons and the dispossessed. Until those issues are dealt with fairly, the question will be not why there are terrorists but rather why wouldn't there be?

Pat Doig

Dundurn

Load-Date: August 17, 2006

The NDP is irrelevant

Ottawa Citizen

September 12, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A12

Length: 294 words

Byline: The Ottawa Citizen

Body

At its weekend policy convention, the New Democratic Party found several ways to ensure it remains planted on the margins of Canadian politics. One of them was the naive and demagogic resolution to remove Canadian troops from Afghanistan.

It's fine to question the strategy behind our engagement in Afghanistan. No one can say for certain that Canada will achieve its aims in that violent, war-torn country, or what the costs will be. If politicians want to suggest alternatives to the current intervention, they are free to do so.

But NDP leader Jack Layton is not suggesting a real alternative. He is merely calling for removal of the troops and for Canada to focus instead on development and peace-building -- which is a completely dishonest position because he should know that without neutralizing the Taliban, development and peace-building are impossible.

Canada calls it the "3D" plan: defence, development and diplomacy. Mr. Layton may not like the "defence" element, but sadly the suicide bombers are not freedom fighters who would become peaceful if the Canadians and their allies left. Without the presence of coalition troops, most if not all of Afghanistan would revert to Taliban or warlord rule.

There would be no more secular schools or female politicians.

Perhaps Mr. Layton and his party faithful are suddenly pacifists? No, that can't be right, because at the convention they defended Hezbollah, a terrorist group whose official symbol is the AK-47.

When one lonely NDPer, Winnipeg's Judy Wasylycia-Leis, noted that Hezbollah is a bona fide terrorist group, the crowd booed her.

The Canadian left, with the NDP as its vehicle, was once a respectable political constituency. How sad to see NDPers become not just irrelevant, but in some cases malevolent.

Load-Date: September 12, 2006

**Blair 'feels betrayed by Bush on Lebanon'; As Foreign Affairs Committee
calls emergency session on Middle East war. . .**

Mail on Sunday (London)

August 20, 2006 Sunday

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Section: 2ND 04; Pg. 5

Length: 697 words

Byline: SIMON WALTERS; SUSAN CLARKE

Body

THE alliance between George Bush and Tony Blair was in danger last night after it was revealed that the Prime Minister believes the President has 'let him down badly' over the Middle East crisis.

A senior Downing Street source said that, privately, Mr Blair broadly agrees with John Prescott, who said Mr Bush's record on the issue was 'crap'.

The source said: 'We all feel badly let down by Bush. We thought we had persuaded him to take the Israel-Palestine situation seriously, but we were wrong.'

How can anyone have faith in a man of such low intellect?' The disclosure comes ahead of a mini recall of Parliament to allow MPs to vent their fury over Mr Blair's handling of Israel's war with Hezbollah and whether the recent terror plot in Britain was affected by his role in the Iraq war.

Foreign Affairs Minister Kim Howells, who has criticised Israeli attacks on women and children, is to be summoned before an emergency meeting next month of the Labour-dominated Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee.

The highly unusual move to allow a Parliament evidence session during the summer recess mirrors emergency meetings called after the July 7 bombings in London.

The rift between No10 and the White House stems from British anger that Mr Bush failed to do enough to pursue the 'road map' to peace between the Israelis and Palestinians, which he approved, at Mr Blair's instigation, on the eve of the Iraq war.

'We have been banging on at them for three years about the need to address the Palestinian problem but they just won't engage,' said a senior Government insider. 'That is one of the reasons there is such a mess now.' It is understood Mr Blair hopes to undertake a highly controversial oneman mission to the Middle East when he returns from his holiday, including a trip to war-torn Lebanon.

Until now, the Prime Minister has given Mr Bush 100 per cent backing on all foreign policy issues since the Iraq war in 2003. But Mr Blair's refusal to distance himself publicly from the White House's all-out support for Israel's attacks on Hezbollah guerillas in Lebanon has enraged Labour MPs and several Ministers.

Blair 'feels betrayed by Bush on Lebanon' As Foreign Affairs Committee calls emergency session on Middle East war. . .

However, a Downing Street official said: 'We believe our best approach is to use our influence with the American Government to persuade them of the importance of making progress to achieve peace in the Middle East.' Mr Blair's advisers say his portrayal by critics as Mr Bush's 'poodle' is a travesty and claim he gets results by hammering out their differences in private.

But they do not deny that, behind the facade of public support, Downing Street's patience with Mr Bush has never been stretched so far.

The decision by the Foreign Affairs Select Committee to stage its emergency debate on September 13 after Mr Blair opposed calls for a full recall of Parliament is a further reflection of backbench unrest.

MPs have been demanding that the Government explains its stance on the crisis, which saw Mr Blair back Israel's use of force against Hezbollah militants in Lebanon which has left hundreds of civilians dead and thousands homeless.

Mr Howells will be questioned over the Government's handling of the crisis, which has seen the Cabinet deeply divided over Israel's actions. He will also be asked to update MPs on the latest UN peacekeeping efforts which will see thousands of international troops deployed into a buffer zone on the Israel-Lebanon border.

Labour committee member Eric Illsley confirmed that the committee would take evidence from Mr Howells on September 13. He said: 'There has been a public clamour for a full recall of Parliament.' Meanwhile John Prescott has been involved in another foulmouthed incident over Tony Blair's policy on the Middle East, it was claimed last night.

He is said to have had a heated exchange with Lord Chancellor Lord Falconer, one of the few Cabinet Ministers to defend Mr Blair's stance on Israel's war with Hezbollah, when the conflict was raised during a Cabinet meeting and Lord Falconer denied that Ministers had disagreed on the issue.

Mr Prescott, one of the Ministers who led the revolt, allegedly snapped at Lord Falconer: 'Of course they f***** did, you were f***** there.'

Additional reporting: Susan Clarke

Load-Date: August 21, 2006

Pope calls for immediate ceasefire

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

August 3, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A11

Length: 269 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: VATICAN CITY

Body

VATICAN CITY -- Pope Benedict issued an impassioned call Wednesday for an immediate ceasefire in the Middle East, saying "nothing can justify the spilling of innocent blood."

Clenching his fist and his voice filled with emotion, Benedict said: "Our eyes are filled with the chilling images of torn bodies of so many people, especially children -- I am thinking in particular of Qana."

Benedict was referring to the Israeli attack Sunday on the southern Lebanese town of Qana that killed 56 civilians, mostly women and children.

It was the latest in a half-dozen peace appeals by the Pope that have consistently included calls for an immediate ceasefire.

He has spoken out on every public occasion since the fighting began three weeks ago, reminiscent of his predecessor, Pope John Paul, who became a rallying point for critics of the Iraq war.

Israel and the U.S. have resisted such peace calls, saying efforts must be made for a "durable" settlement. In a reflection of differences, European Union foreign ministers did not agree Tuesday on a proposed draft that had called for an "immediate ceasefire" -- apparently due to opposition spearheaded by Britain and Germany.

That appeared to stem from concerns that trying to force Israel into an unconditional ceasefire now would be seen as a victory for Hezbollah fighters, which Western countries and Lebanon itself want to see disarmed.

During his recent Alpine vacation, Benedict made clear that attempts at reaching any settlement should be left to diplomats "because we don't enter politics. . . . Our goal is simply peace, and we will do everything to help attain peace."

Graphic

Pope calls for immediate ceasefire

Colour Photo: Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters; Pope Benedict XVI calls for a lasting political solution between Israel and **Hezbollah** and a stop to more "spilling of innocent blood" in Lebanon.

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

End of Document

***We did not know about civilians, Israel says; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS,
Reaction***

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 31, 2006 Monday

Fourth Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 6

Length: 493 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin in Qana and agencies

Body

ISRAEL'S air force was unaware that civilians were sheltering in a building it bombed in the southern Lebanese village of Qana yesterday, killing 54 people, the military chief said.

"We did not know of the whereabouts of civilians in the village," Lieutenant-General Dan Halutz was quoted as saying by the NRG Maariv website after meeting President Moshe Katsav.

A senior air force commander said a precision-guided bomb was dropped on a home in Qana on the assumption that it was sheltering **Hezbollah** crews that had fired several volleys of missiles into northern Israel.

"Had we known there were that many civilians inside, especially **women** and children, we certainly would not have attacked it," the commander told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

Asked how Israel's intelligence services could know about missile launches from Qana but not about the presence of dozens of civilians, the commander said: "We are capable of detecting missile launches because they are very dynamic."

By contrast, he said the civilians appeared to have been holed up in the building for days, and were therefore almost impossible for aerial surveillance systems to discern.

According to the officer, **Hezbollah** launched scores of missiles from Qana into Israel, including one that hit a hospital. He said several of the launches took place within a few dozens metres of the house that was bombed.

General Halutz indicated that despite international outcry over the killings, Israel would pursue its campaign against **Hezbollah** until the cross-border missiles ended.

"We will continue to fight and residents of northern [Israel] will receive quiet and calm. It will take more time but it will happen," NRG quoted him as saying.

Meanwhile the US President, George Bush, has apologised to the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, after London complained Washington had not followed correct procedures for sending bombs to Israel via a British airport.

We did not know about civilians, Israel says MIDDLE EAST CRISIS, Reaction

Mr Blair's spokesman told reporters travelling with him that Mr Bush raised the issue briefly at the start of his meeting with Mr Blair at the White House.

"President Bush did apologise for the fact that proper procedures were not followed," the spokesman said.

Last week the US used Prestwick Airport in Scotland to rush a new consignment of precision-guided bombs and missiles to Israel, which had exhausted its own stocks in its onslaught against Lebanon.

Last week Israel bombed and shelled a UN observer post for several hours, despite protests, until an aerial bomb smashed a bunker in which international military observers were sheltering, killing all four.

Israeli aircraft have also attacked Red Cross ambulances and civilian vehicles attempting to comply with Israel's orders to flee their homes. In the worst such incident 20 people were killed in a single air strike on a convoy fleeing the village of Marwaheen.

Lebanon's Health Minister, Mohammad Khalifeh, said yesterday that the death toll from Israeli strikes was about 750.

Graphic

Tony Blair and George Bush in Washington on Friday.Photo: AP

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Israeli regrets at civilian deaths ring hollow: The war on Lebanon will strengthen fundamentalists and hurt Jewish state

The Gazette (Montreal)

August 4, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. A19; Josee Legault

Length: 714 words

Byline: JOSEE LEGAULT, The Gazette

Body

There has never a lack of arm-chair generals in any Middle East crisis. But seeing Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert give multiple statements of regret about civilian deaths in Lebanon makes it difficult not to question Israel's actions.

What's an apology worth in armed conflict anyway? Olmert expressed regret over the Israeli bombing deaths of UN observers and Lebanese civilian women and children in Qana, but his words carried no real act of contrition. Quite the contrary.

Washington's prolonged efforts to delay any real ceasefire gave Olmert time to push for a massive ground offensive sure to cause more civilian deaths in Lebanon, Israel and even Gaza.

In armed conflicts, the words "apologize" and "regret" have little weight. They're meant to assuage public outrage at home or abroad and seldom change the course of action that led to these deaths in the first place.

Israel's right to exist and to defend itself is fundamental and must be upheld. But the way in which Olmert has chosen to do it is questionable from both a political and a moral perspective.

Is it moral to punish the Lebanese people for their government's inability to crush or at least contain Hezbollah over the years? Was the threat to Israel's very existence so direct that it would make it moral to take innocent lives and destroy basic infrastructure in Lebanese cities, including the recently reconstructed Beirut?

Even if such a threat was real, were there not less destructive ways to protect Israel?

Is it moral for Olmert not to recognize that Hezbollah, a terrorist organization that's as much a cancer on Lebanon as it is on the region, is also partly the product of Israel's past occupation of Lebanon and another symptom of the unresolved statehood for Palestinians?

Some say it's moral for Israel to kill innocents because Hezbollah behaves immorally. It surrounded itself with Lebanese civilians while targeting Israeli civilians with Katyusha rockets and suicide bombings. Yesterday, Olmert said in an interview with the Times of London: "When we kill innocent people we consider it a failure, when (Hezbollah kills) innocent people they consider it a success."

Israeli regrets at civilian deaths ring hollow: The war on Lebanon will strengthen fundamentalists and hurt Jewish state

But judging it a failure or a success doesn't bring back the dead.

We might not live in Israel and grasp all the explosive complexities of the region. But politically, many fear that some of Israel's actions - such as its attacks on Lebanon - end up feeding the terrorist, anti-Jewish and anti-Israel beast they are meant to eradicate.

A number of commentators in the Israeli media also question the wisdom of a purely military strategy that kills more civilians than terrorists and is turning Lebanon into another martyr nation for fundamentalists. Some judge the strategy an all-out failure. Like the U.S. invasion of Iraq, it risks farther exacerbating hatred of Israel, thus, in the end, going against the Jewish state's vital security interests.

In Lebanon, how many Muslims and even Christians will now carry this hatred with them?

And what about Canada in this equation? What did Prime Minister Stephen Harper accomplish by siding unconditionally with Washington and Jerusalem? Canada might not have been a major actor on the international scene, to say the least, but it has now lost what chance it had to preserve its credibility as a potential, peace-oriented backroom player in the Middle East.

By riding Washington's coattails, Ottawa fell off the diplomatic radar.

With Canada's growing involvement in Afghanistan as well, Harper is turning this country into a branch-plant of Washington's problematic foreign policy.

Like Olmert, he failed to take the moral high ground. Canada is now numbered among those who believe that the threat of terrorism and fundamentalism will be brought down by military might.

For the sake of future innocent lives and the safeguard of the very values that Harper, President George W. Bush and Olmert say they share and defend - "democracy, equality and tolerance," to quote Olmert in The Times - we better hope they're right.

But what if instead, in the post-9/11 world, the lack of constructive solutions in that region continue to feed Muslim fundamentalism and its ensuing anti-Western and anti-Israel resentment?

Then more civilians lives would be lost with more official, empty regrets to follow.

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

Captured Israeli 'in Egypt for swap'

The Australian (Australia)
September 6, 2006 Wednesday
All-round First Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 9

Length: 495 words

Byline: Abraham Rabinovich, Jerusalem

Body

MATP

HAMAS has transferred the captive Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit to Egypt in anticipation of his exchange for 800 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli hands, according to the Arabic-language newspaper al-Khayat, published in London.

The report received apparent confirmation, in slightly different form, from Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who told a Bahrain newspaper that a deal for Corporal Shalit's release had been reached and that the soldier "will be transferred" to Egypt, at which time the number of Palestinian prisoners to be released by Israel will be announced.

Corporal Shalit's capture two months ago by militants who tunnelled into Israel from the Gaza Strip triggered severe Israeli reprisals that have taken the lives of about 250 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, knocked out part of its electricity supply and imposed severe economic sanctions. In addition, leading Hamas legislators on the West Bank have been imprisoned.

Al-Khayat, a widely respected publication, said Israel had refused to release prisoners "with blood on their hands" as part of the deal, which means anyone involved in executing or planning fatal terror attacks.

It has also refused to release Marwan Barghouti, a leading Fatah figure seen as the person most likely to inherit Mr Abbas's role as leader of the Fatah movement and possibly as head of the Palestinian Authority.

The al-Khayat report, which cited Palestinian sources, said the deal also included Palestinian agreement to a temporary truce, which presumably means a halt in the firing of rockets into Israel from the Gaza Strip, and Israeli agreement to lift the restrictions it has imposed since Corporal Shalit's capture.

A senior Israeli minister told Israel Radio he was unaware of any such deal. Israeli defence sources declined to comment.

The militants holding Corporal Shalit, who turned 20 in captivity, have demanded the release of all Palestinian women prisoners, as well as juveniles and men who have been in prison for 20 years or longer. They also sought the release of men in leadership positions who do not fall into those categories, such as Barghouti.

Captured Israeli 'in Egypt for swap'

Meanwhile, Israel has accepted the offer of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's help in obtaining the release of two soldiers captured by **Hezbollah** in a raid from Lebanon on July 12 that triggered the month-long war.

Israel demands the unconditional release of sergeants Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, who were seized on Israeli territory. However, it is understood that they will not be released unless Israel also releases prisoners. Any deal reached will be between Israel and the Lebanese Government.

Hezbollah is particularly keen for the return of Samir Kuntar, who has been held by Israel for 28 years for clubbing to death a four-year-old girl and shooting her father in a raid. It is not clear whether Israel will agree to his release. It was primarily to obtain Kuntar's release that **Hezbollah** staged the raid to seize soldiers for an exchange.

Load-Date: September 5, 2006

End of Document

Bravo to pro-war monks

Ottawa Citizen

August 20, 2006 Sunday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A10; David Warren

Length: 724 words

Byline: David Warren, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

My spirits were lifted this week, when a bunch of "pro-war Buddhist monks" (so described by the news agency) in Colombo, Sri Lanka, attacked a rostrum full of Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Buddhist clerical peaceniks.

The peaceniks were promoting various acts of appeasement toward the psychopaths in Sri Lanka's northern jungles who are called the Tamil Tigers.

But mostly, they were like peaceniks anywhere -- on the lookout for a photo opportunity.

I must admit, there is a certain thrill in sanctimony, even when, as in the West, it involves taking no risks -- and the harm you do, by undermining people who are risking their lives, can only come to others. That does not make it less evil, however. In my experience, the sanctimonious pose is the invariable indicator of a fraud, before God and his fellow man. You find that the moment his ideals are put to the test.

Whereas truly righteous indignation is not a pose, and will endure testing.

Naturally, the peaceniks fought back when attacked. Their prescriptions are only meant for others. It was a good scuffle, according to Reuters journalists, although "there were no reports of any serious injuries."

Hundreds of people have been slaughtered this year alone by the Tamil Tigers, who use -- who pioneered -- many of the techniques that fanatical Muslim terrorists now use around the world. They are the original "suicide bombers," according to one account, and pioneering recruiters of women and children. Their fanaticism is more ethnic than Hindu -- but anti-Muslim as well as anti-Sinhalese. Arguing with them is as pointless an activity as this planet offers. They are armed, organized, determined, ruthless and the thing to do is kill them. Capturing them is only a holding action, because they will return to slaughter when released.

As usual, the western media tend to romanticize the Tamil Tigers, and give easily distracted attention to any "war crimes" that could possibly be charged against the legitimate forces of the government of Sri Lanka. What can I say? It is hard to account for the behaviour of some western journalists without a theory of demonic possession. I'm sure the pro-war Buddhist monks would agree.

All I can say is, "Bravo, pro-war Buddhist monks!" You do honour to your saffron robes.

Bravo to pro-war monks

Am I a warmonger, as many of my correspondents, and some journalistic colleagues, suggest? I am glad they are able to get something right. When there is a war to fight, and no alternative to fighting it, you bet I am a warmonger. The sooner we have destroyed the enemy, the sooner we can get back to sucking our thumbs.

The rostrum I should particularly like to attack -- ideally with the help of a few battle-seasoned Buddhist monks -- is that upon which the West's diplomatic community arranged itself last week, after brokering a Lebanese ceasefire that leaves Hezbollah neither disarmed nor accommodating; waiting to have its missiles replenished by its masters in Tehran and Damascus. I felt particularly ill while reading Condoleezza Rice's defence of the infamy in Wednesday's Washington Post.

It contained the ridiculous lie that Hezbollah had earned "the blame of the world for causing the war." (Lying is another indication of poor character.)

The war wasn't over. Israel hadn't won it yet. They had no business signing a ceasefire agreement before Hezbollah had been destroyed. The rest of the world had no business making them sign a ceasefire that the whole Muslim world is reading as a "hudna" (a deceitful peace, allowing one's own side to regroup). I can only hope a few lessons are learned, and that the next round in this war will end differently.

In the meantime, do not ask peace from Israel. The sponsors of Hezbollah and Hamas, chiefly Iran and Syria, have been perfectly candid about their intentions: "Ceasefire now, annihilation later."

I am a Catholic. We have our own history with the Jews. But forget that: no time to discuss it. If the reader of this column is a Jew, I want him to go to the mirror right away, and say 1,000 times, "never again!" And I want every Catholic, every Christian, every decent person, Muslims included, to say the same on Israel's behalf.

This is a war -- a real, honest-to-goodness war between irreconcilables -- and it ends not in ceasefire, but in victory or defeat.

David Warren's column appears Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday.

Load-Date: August 20, 2006

PERSPECTIVE: Rogue nation: Read the truth about Israel; Yesterday, Israeli Liz Berg described the realities of being in the firing line of Hezbollah. Today, Jamal Tadmory, argues Lebanon is the victim of an illegal occupation and cowardly war

Birmingham Post

August 2, 2006, Wednesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 9

Length: 1014 words

Byline: Jamal Tadmory

Body

For days, I've been asked to write and speak out on my view of what is going on in Lebanon.

I am not a writer, but a graphic designer. The terrible pictures of the collective killing, residential demolition, invaders dislodging peaceful people from their houses and rooting them along with their citrus and olive trees, carnage, bloodshed and assassinations are drawn deep in my heart and soul.

However, I found it difficult to draw a picture of what is unfolding in Lebanon without comparing it with similar pages written in Gaza and the rest of Palestine.

We've been led to believe that the capture of the two Israeli soldiers led to Lebanon's war, while we conveniently forget the plight of the thousands of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners. More than 400 of them are women and children.

That was not the cause, but the excuse for their long planned war.

The Israelis wanted the world to turn their eyes away from the daily criminal bombardment of the Palestinians in Gaza' the isolated and most densely populated land in the world.

This would meet with the aim of the US to draw our attention away from the daily killings of Iraqis for the last three years, in contrast with the undelivered promises of peace, justice and human rights.

It is now nearly three weeks since Israel launched its cowardly-fought war starting with destroying the infrastructure of Lebanon.

Bridges, hospitals, airports and seaports were targeted and destroyed.

Instead of fighting Hezbollah directly, they went indiscriminately, destroying building after building, town after town.

More than 6,000 houses have been destroyed, 600 civilians killed, a third of them are children and more than three quarters of a million people displaced.

PERSPECTIVE: Rogue nation: Read the truth about Israel Yesterday, Israeli Liz Berg described the realities of being in the firing line of Hezbollah. Today, Jama....

In the little village of Marwe-heen, a first glimpse of the atrocity is seen - a family fleeing their houses in accordance with the Israeli instruction and seeking refuge at one of the United Nation's centres were shelled and burned in their car.

This was demonstrated again in the killing of four UN observers - Canadian, a Chinese, a Finish and an Austrian - through "an apparently deliberate attack by Israeli Defence Forces", according to UN Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan.

However, and to the astonishment of the free and honest world, the UN's own Security Council failed to condemn Israel, a state that believes it is above the law.

On Sunday, we saw the carnage in Qana. More than 60 dreadfully trapped corpses of sleeping children and women were being pulled from the rubble caused by American-made and Israeli-delivered 'intelligent bombs'.

A hideous reminder of the 1996 Qana massacre of over 100 civilians sheltering in a UN compound.

On that day, Israel's defence forces knew that more than 800 civilians were taking shelter there.

Guided bombs battered the bodies of men, women and children. Both outrages were caught on TV.

The then UN Secretary General was hounded out of office for criticising Israel for this massacre. But many similar massacres were not captured on TV, and consequently the world did not take notice of them.

In parallel with all of these events, the collective killing and terrorising in Gaza and the West Bank continues unnoticed in the background. Nevertheless, this was a continuation of Israel's black history tarnished with bloodbath and massacres such as: Deir Yasseen, Kafr Qassem, Al-Aqsa, Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi and Sabra and Shateela in Beirut to name but a few.

Recklessly, Mr Bush defended Israeli disproportionate action by saying that "every nation has the right to defend itself".

Perhaps, he needs to be reminded that the Palestinians and the Lebanese are deep-rooted nations in this part of the world. They are the victims of illegal Israeli occupation and aggression for more than half a century and they too have the right to defend themselves and the right to be protected from the daily bombardment and destruction carried out by the Israelis.

United Nation resolutions 194, 242, 338, 425 and others are yet to be implemented and Israel is yet to take notice of them. Latest count of United Nation resolutions stand at 1696. This gives you an idea of how long Israel has defied the UN.

For years, the Lebanese demanded the return of the occupied Sheeba Farm, the release of the Lebanese PoWs and maps of the landmines planted by the Israeli army forces inside Lebanon during 1982 invasion, which regularly injure innocent civilians.

The USA and the UK only now took note of these legitimate demands after recognising the deep hole that they have been dropped in by their created and sponsored rogue country, Israel.

Democracy, human rights, justice and Geneva law in Mr Bush and Blair's dictionaries, are the continuous bombardment of innocent people, depriving them from access to foods, clean water and humanitarian aid targeted by the Israeli planes and the demolition of the civilian infrastructure to win a proxy war they have failed to win either in Afghanistan or in Iraq.

Day after day the US administration refused to call for an immediate ceasefire while the British Government seems to have no rules to play - while the rest of the international community has been united in its demand that the killing should stop.

PERSPECTIVE: Rogue nation: Read the truth about Israel Yesterday, Israeli Liz Berg described the realities of being in the firing line of Hezbollah. Today, Jama....

Muslims, Christians and Jews used to live together in harmony and peace before the extradition of the criminal Zionists to Palestine.

Conspiracies, assassinations and lies are well known characteristics of the Israeli tactics. However, and to the disgust of all the Lebanese people, they tried this time to employ the dirty tactics used in Iraq.

The Israeli spokesmen and women are repeatedly claiming that in this war they are defending their country and the Sunni Muslims in Lebanon. This will only serve to confirm that they are behind the sectarian killing in Iraq.

They should know very well that Sunni Muslims are as keen to defend their country as any other loyal, noble, honourable and honest Lebanese.

The Lebanese people are wise enough to distinguish between the resistance and self-defence carried out by the people of a powerless country and the terrorism practised by a criminal and immoral state.

Graphic

Lebanese citizens carry their belongings as they walk through the rubble of destroyed apartment buildings in the southern suburbs of Lebanon and (below) Jamal Tadmory

Load-Date: August 2, 2006

**Why the West must exit now; LEADER Bringing troops home will save lives
and ease Middle East tensions**

Sunday Express

September 17, 2006 Sunday

U.K. 1st Edition

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Section: LEADER; 26

Length: 949 words

Byline: By Paul Moorcraft MILITARY EXPERT

Body

FIVE years after 9/11, pulling all Western forces out of the Middle East might be the only long-term solution to the war on terror. The West is losing this war. If you measure the chaos in Iraq, the economic disruption to airlines or the alienation of Muslims in Europe, it is difficult to declare even a draw here.

Even in "multicultural" Britain, if 10 passenger aircraft had been blown out of the sky, mosques would have been burning throughout the country. Such polarisation is exactly what the Jihadists want.

A complete military withdrawal from all Islamic lands may be the Jihadist ambition but it would also remove nearly all the friction, especially if there were to be a solution to the Israeli/Palestinian struggle.

This is not appeasement but practical politics. We are using a military machine designed for the Cold War, not a terror war.

The West should play to its strengths - particularly its economic muscle. It should intervene - not occupy - and only briefly and preferably as part of UN missions.

The current Lebanese ceasefire may well implode, not least if Jerusalem tries to complete the unfinished US/Israeli business of wiping out Hezbollah. Military solutions to the chronic Israeli-Arab conflict cannot work. Iraq aside, Hezbollah's Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah has unified Shia and Sunni Muslims. The inevitably temporary patching up of this centuries-old schism is destabilising for Anglo-American strategy.

Hezbollah's new kind of war could soon be emulated in Afghanistan and Iraq. Despite the provocations of Iran's leader President Ahmadinejad, the US eventually will realise that the Iranians, who taught Hezbollah, would deploy the same tactics if the (unlikely) military option were taken against Tehran. As a result, Iran will be left to acquire nuclear weapons, which may be a minor threat compared with Pakistan's bomb. Pakistan is a proven training ground for terrorists in India and UK, let alone in Afghanistan and Kashmir.

DOMESTIC politics could play a role. A new British Prime Minister could break the AngloAmerican military coalition and November's mid-term US elections could lead to Congress slashing military funding.

If the US and UK withdrew rapidly from Iraq, with flags flying and bagpipes playing, and concentrated instead on winning in Afghanistan - the original base of Al Qaeda and the crucible of the 9/11 abomination - this military mess

Why the West must exit now LEADER Bringing troops home will save lives and ease Middle East tensions

could be won but this week's Nato fiasco in trying to get more troops demonstrates that the military alliance will not take decisive action in the badlands of southern Afghanistan.

If we fight on with present troop levels, what will happen? The US will humiliatingly withdraw from Iraq as the civil war causes partition, and Nato forces will eventually succumb to domestic pressure while the Taliban retake Kabul.

There is no political stomach for all-out war, so an orderly military withdrawal should come sooner rather than later.

The Anglo-US policy of constructive destabilisation has failed in that regimes have emerged that are not to our taste.

Democracy in Lebanon didn't curb Hezbollah, nor did we much like the Palestinian Hamas victory. Maybe even a freely-elected government in Tehran would still want to develop nuclear power.

To assume that Arabs had as much right to, and facility for, Western democracy was a noble idea. Perhaps the US NeoConservatives were right to assume that dethroning tyrants would bring people power - but that does not necessarily equate with a pro-Western democracy.

Worse, people power is more difficult to navigate than deals with generals and kings. The West wants stability but it is in the nature of political transformations that long periods of instability result.

Withdrawal from Iraq can hardly make matters worse and it may be the only way the Baghdad government can secure enough legitimacy to avoid partition. In both Iraq and Afghanistan, decisive military victories led to security vacuums because there were not enough boots on the ground.

Afghanistan was manageable in 2002-3 but resources and troops were siphoned off to Iraq. Supporting President Karzai and empowering Afghan women were also noble aims but so long as Pakistan plays a double game and continues to support or tolerate Jihadists, winning the war in Afghanistan is mission impossible. A rapid withdrawal makes sense.

The elaborate US command structures in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and elsewhere in the region would become largely redundant. And although Washington would continue to be ultimate guarantor of Israel, a two-state solution would make that a far less contentious issue.

BRITAIN has occupied Iraq three times and failed to bring peace.

During the Raj, it failed also to subdue the Afghans. It is trying again, even though the policy of destroying opium will turn nearly every Afghan against Nato. Meanwhile, British troops risk daily a repeat of Rorke's Drift, when an isolated garrison was surrounded by Zulus, resulting in the slaughter of thousands of Britons.

Bringing the legions home will save many lives, not least those of British troops. It will also remove one of the main grievances of the Islamic world.

In the Second World War, General MacArthur's promise to return to the Philippines after the US disaster there and Britain's retreat at Dunkirk allowed both powers to go back as victors in less than five years. This time, Britain and America will need a generation to return in moral, not military, strength to the Middle East.

Dr Paul Moorcraft is director of the Centre for Foreign Policy Analysis.

A former senior instructor at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, and the Joint Services Command and Staff College, he has worked extensively throughout the Middle East.

Graphic

Why the West must exit now LEADER Bringing troops home will save lives and ease Middle East tensions

FRONT LINE: But British forces in Iraq are not equipped to win the war on terror Picture: ESSAM AL-SUDANI/GETTY

Load-Date: August 29, 2007

End of Document

Lebanese pay respects to Christian leader; Supporters prepare for major Beirut funeral rally today

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

November 23, 2006 Thursday

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. d6

Length: 983 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: BIKFAYA, Lebanon

Body

Mourners wept and showered rice Wednesday on the coffin of a slain government minister who opposed Syrian influence in this divided nation, as his supporters mobilized for a massive show of force at his funeral in the capital, Beirut.

A strong turnout today could further fuel the political crisis between anti-Syrian forces who back the Lebanese government and pro-Syrian groups led by the Shiite Muslim group **Hezbollah**, which wants to topple the Western-backed prime minister, Fuad Saniora.

Just days before Tuesday's assassination of prominent Christian politician Pierre Gemayel, **Hezbollah** had threatened to hold mass protests of its own against the government. A **Hezbollah** official said Wednesday that the group would not carry out any action in the next few days "in order to calm the emotions." The official spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

Still, in the newly charged atmosphere, many feared the crisis could move into the volatile streets.

"This is scary. If things continue this way, who knows where we are heading," said Tony Gemayel, a 35-year-old relative participating in mourning ceremonies held by the Maronite Christian family in their ancestral hometown of Bikfaya in the mountains above Beirut.

In a sign of the heightened tensions in Bikfaya, some two dozen soldiers and an armored personnel carrier guarded the offices of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, a pro-Syrian party whose premises were attacked by a mob of angry Gemayel supporters Tuesday night.

Saniora asked the United Nations for "technical assistance" in finding the 34-year-old industry minister's killers, amid widespread accusations that Syria was behind it. Damascus denied the claim.

The prime minister also received a boost from the United States, with President Bush calling him to promise "unwavering support" for his government.

Gemayel was killed after two cars blocked his vehicle at an intersection in a Beirut suburb as he left a church. Assassins shot him numerous times through a side window.

Lebanese pay respects to Christian leader Supporters prepare for major Beirut funeral rally today

He was the fifth anti-Syrian figure killed in Lebanon in two years.

Some supporters called for revenge against Syria and its allies. But Pierre Gemayel's father Amin - a former president - and the Maronite Church quickly urged calm, hoping to avert an explosion of violence in the multi-sectarian nation of 4 million already struggling with a deepening political crisis.

During Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war, such a killing would have triggered mass retaliation.

"In the face of the dark forces that try to destroy the country, I call on all Lebanese not to be overwhelmed by hatred, but to strengthen national unity, justice and reconciliation," Pope Benedict XVI told pilgrims Wednesday in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican.

The government canceled Independence Day celebrations nationwide. In the Christian heartland north and northeast of Beirut, schools and shops were closed and traffic was light. But, underlining the political and sectarian divide, businesses were open as usual in Shiite areas in south Beirut where **Hezbollah** dominates.

Bikfaya's main street and square were draped with white ribbons. Pictures of the slain minister with a black stripe of mourning were posted on walls and car windows.

Gemayel's coffin, draped in the flag of his Phalange Party, was driven from Beirut up to the town, nestled in Mount Lebanon's pine woods. It was followed by motorists waving the Phalange flag - white with a green cedar tree in the middle. The cortege stopped at the town entrance where - next to a statue of Pierre Gemayel's grandfather, the party's founder - pallbearers lifted the casket on to their shoulders and carried it to the stone-walled house.

Supporters jolted the coffin in a traditional expression of extreme anguish as it passed through hundreds of weeping mourners. **Women** on apartment balconies showered rice on the coffin as it made its way.

In the Gemayel home, nuns and priests led by a bishop relative said prayers around the closed coffin as relatives and thousands of villagers and supporters walked past and paid condolences to his father. Standing next to Amin Gemayel was Pierre's cousin, Nadim Gemayel, who lost his father, president-elect Bashir Gemayel, in a bomb explosion in 1982.

In the Beirut suburb of Jdeideh where he was gunned down, several hundred supporters turned out Wednesday night for a candlelight vigil around the shot up vehicle, which was guarded by troops.

Tiny Lebanon is one of the most politically complex and volatile countries in the Middle East, with deep divisions among its Christian, Sunni Muslim and Shiite Muslim communities. Each community accounts for about a third of the country's population, though Shiites - most of whose leaders are backed by Syria and Iran - edge out the others with a plurality.

On Tuesday, Bush accused Syria and Iran of trying to undermine Lebanon's government, but he stopped short of blaming them for the killing. Syria condemned the assassination and denied any role in it.

Saniora has linked Gemayel's slaying to the issue that sparked the political crisis with **Hezbollah**: a plan for an international court to try suspects in the 2005 assassination of former Premier Rafik Hariri.

That killing triggered an international outcry and massive street demonstrations at home that forced Syria to pull its thousands of troops out and end a 29-year domination of its smaller neighbor.

The head of the Maronite church and anti-Syrian politicians expressed fears of more killings of Cabinet members aimed at bringing down the government and preventing it from approving the Hariri tribunal, which the U.N. Security Council approved hours after Gemayel's slaying.

"It seems the Syrian regime is continuing the assassinations," Walid Jumblatt, the political leader of Lebanon's Druse community, said Wednesday. "I expect more assassinations, but whatever they do, we are here and we will triumph."

Lebanese pay respects to Christian leader Supporters prepare for major Beirut funeral rally today

Load-Date: November 24, 2006

End of Document

**To the gods of war, a sacrifice; MORE THAN 60 KILLED AS ISRAELI
MISSILES RAIN DOWN ON THE VILLAGE WHERE JESUS TURNED WATER
INTO WINE**

Daily Mail (London)

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 8

Length: 830 words

Byline: RICHARD PENDLEBURY

Body

A TEENAGE mother clutches her two month-old baby to her chest. Both are dead and mutilated. Beneath them, in what has become their concrete and steel tomb, are dozens more; body after broken young body, tangled and as yet unreachable in the ruin of a single house.

This was Qana, where more than 60 civilians, mostly women and children, are thought to have been killed in an Israeli missile strike in the early hours.

Such horror, such pitiless ruination, with the only consolation that the death toll and the shocking images beamed around the world should indeed could bring an end to this squalid and bloody conflict.

Call it a blood sacrifice from the children and mothers of Qana, paid to the gods of war those politicians and military commanders from Israel and Hezbollah who have so far killed hundreds of civilians in less than three weeks.

The guidebooks tell you that Qana is probably the New Testament Cana in Galilee, where Jesus performed his first miracle turning water into wine at a wedding feast.

Yesterday there was only blood and the miracle was that some survived the impact of two very large bombs. The official Israeli line is that Qana and the house it struck was being used by Hezbollah to fire rockets into Israel, little more than five miles away.

Nobody should decry Israel's right to defend itself. But this was a ghastly error at best, a war crime the phrase used by the Lebanese president and most of his furious people at worst.

'Why have they attacked one and two-year-old children and defenceless women?' asked one bereaved man, Mohamed Samai, as the bodies, wrapped in plastic sheets, were assembled under an awning with flowers placed on the corpses.

Lebanese prime minister Fouad Siniora said that among the victims of the attack was a day-old baby.

Last week Daily Mail photographer Jamie Wiseman and I had paid an uncomfortable visit to Qana, buzzed by Israeli F-15 fighter bombers. When we returned yesterday it was clear that the village had undergone a terrible battering.

To the gods of war, a sacrifice MORE THAN 60 KILLED AS ISRAELI MISSILES RAIN DOWN ON THE
VILLAGE WHERE JESUS TURNED WATER INTO WINE

The house, the charnel house, was on the very edge of the village, overlooking an arid valley of stones and olive trees which cannot have changed much since the time of Jesus. We passed a line of Red Cross volunteers sheltering in the shadow of a stone wall, one woman weeping for what she had just seen.

Most of the houses in the lane were destroyed. But most of them had been empty when the missiles struck. Not the home of tobacco farmer Mohammed Hachem. His three-storey home was safe, he had said, or at least safer. It was on the very edge of the village and a taller building next door but further up the hill protected it from the trajectory of Israeli artillery shells.

That is why more than 60 people, largely from the Hachem and Chaloob families, had been sheltering there since the war began.

THEY were there on Saturday night, gathered in two basement rooms, when the Israeli air force began a sustained attack on the village at around 7pm.

According to those present, the Hachem house was struck by two missiles at approximately 1.15am yesterday morning.

'The explosions destroyed the windows and doors of my home,' said Abu Ali Hakeem, another tobacco farmer, who lives 300 yards away.

'We could do nothing until 6am because the bombardment was so intense.' Mr Hakeem said that for two hours the villagers of Qana rallied, trying to extract the dead and the living using their bare hands.

The villagers pulled out 17 corpses and six injured, two seriously, before the Red Cross arrived at 8am, he said. Then they worked together.

By late afternoon an excavator was tearing at the ruins of the house. This was not a rescue mission now but a recovery of bodies.

The scraping of the shovel masked the constant sound overhead of Israeli jets, unmanned drones and explosions in nearby villages.

As each bucket load was moved one expected, and feared, to see a small hand or limb flapping amid the earth and rubble. You did not need to be a parent to be moved by this, but if you were, as I am, the emotion was acute. At 5.20pm came a shout and the digger stopped. A rescue worker could see another body. The crowd braced itself for a new tranche of dead.

Qana knows suffering. In Israel's 1996 'Grapes of Wrath' offensive 800 civilians were sheltering in the UN compound in the village when it was hit by artillery fire. Some 102 were killed and 120 wounded. The scandal halted the Israeli offensive.

Mohammed Ismail, a carpenter wearing a Hezbollah T-shirt, said that Qana was cursed.

'Why Qana? I will tell you why.

Because here Christian and Muslim live together as friends side by side, visiting each other. They do not like that.' They are the Americans and the Israelis. Far from snuffing out Hezbollah, this war is radicalising the Lebanese people, of all faiths, and boosting Hezbollah's popularity. Qana might be the tipping point for a ceasefire. Killing dozens of children does not play well in Main Street USA.

That is scant consolation for those left in this hellish place.

Graphic

To the gods of war, a sacrifice MORE THAN 60 KILLED AS ISRAELI MISSILES RAIN DOWN ON THE
VILLAGE WHERE JESUS TURNED WATER INTO WINE

(1) A RUINED LANDSCAPE: THE SCENES OF DESTRUCTION IN THE VILLAGE OF QANA IN SOUTHERN LEBANON ARE CLEAR FOR THE WHOLE WORLD TO SEE AFTER AN ISRAELI AIR STRIKE IN THE EARLY HOURS OF YESTERDAY (2) HORROR: THE BODIES OF SOME OF THE VICTIMS, WRAPPED IN PLASTIC, AT A TEMPORARY MORGUE (3) RESCUE MISSION: LEBANESE SOLDIERS AND RED CROSS WORKERS LOOK FOR VICTIMS IN A COLLAPSED BUILDING AFTER THE ISRAELI AIR STRIKE

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Reaction is as affronting as the meltdown

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 3, 2006 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Comment; Pg. 11

Length: 995 words

Byline: Miranda Devine. , devinemiranda@hotmail.com

Body

Gibson's critics should be as appalled by his drink driving as his anti-Semitic comments.

OF MEL Gibson's two sins last Friday - driving while drunk and making anti-Semitic comments - it is only the latter which has been blown into a hanging offence. The comments are widely regarded as career-ending, with calls for the 50-year-old Australian-raised actor to be charged with hate crime, blacklisted by Hollywood and "professionally shunned".

Gibson was arrested near his home in Malibu, California, after allegedly speeding at 140kmh in a 72kmh zone. His blood alcohol reading was a well-pissed 0.12, well over California's legal limit of 0.08.

But overshadowing his dangerous crime of drink driving is Gibson's rant when he was arrested. "F---ing Jews ... The Jews are responsible for all the wars in the world," he is said to have told one police officer, before asking, "Are you a Jew?"

The comments are bizarre and indefensible, and raise the question of whether Gibson might share the views of his demonstrably anti-Semitic father, Hutton, who once said the Holocaust was mostly "fiction".

But where is the same outrage over Mel's drink driving, which had the potential to kill and maim innocent people, which his words, no matter how vile, did not.

The disproportionate share of opprobrium allocated to each of Gibson's twin offences demonstrates the wrong-headed and increasingly blase attitude we have towards drink driving, which remains the "single most important cause of road deaths in Australia, and is implicated in up to one-third of driver and pedestrian deaths", according to the Royal Australasian College of Physicians. In 2004, one in seven people aged 14 years and over admitted to driving a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol.

Gibson has issued two apologies for his behaviour, but like the worst drink drivers, appears to be a serial offender. Canadian reports say he was arrested for drink driving there in 1984, during the filming of Mrs Soffel. He pleaded guilty and was fined for "impaired driving" after running a red light, hitting another car and registering a blood alcohol reading of between 0.12 and 0.13.

There were also unconfirmed reports that Gibson had twice been pulled over for speeding in Malibu in the past three years and let go, despite one police officer's suspicion he had been drinking. Anyone who has lost a family

Reaction is as affronting as the meltdown

member to a drink driver, as I have, will feel aggrieved that Gibson's actual crime has received so little comparable criticism.

In any case, the furore over Gibson's anti-Semitic comments is driven less by what he said than by the "gotcha" reflex, as all those people who attacked his hugely successful 2004 religious blockbuster, *The Passion of the Christ*, now claim vindication. The anti-Semitism they claimed suffused the movie has now been proved, in their eyes, even though most people who watch the movie see the criticism as absurd. Roman soldiers are depicted as villains and Jews, such as Jesus and his mother, as heroes. Several conservative Jewish commentators praised the movie Gibson directed and produced. And anyway, if you condemned all art because the artist is a ratbag, there wouldn't be much left.

But the runaway popularity of the movie was a slap in the face to Gibson's critics, who are jumping at the chance to try to win the argument now. Some, like the British writer Christopher Hitchens, have gone all out. Writing online in *Slate*, Hitchens said the Catholic Gibson was "sick to his empty core with Jew hatred" and had made his anti-Semitic remarks "because of his religion, not just his warped personality", thus damning every Catholic.

Before he accepted Gibson's second apology to the "Jewish people" yesterday, Abe Foxman, head of the American Anti-Defamation League, said: "[Gibson's] tirade finally reveals his true self ... We would hope that Hollywood now would realise the bigot in their midst and that they will distance themselves from this anti-Semite."

Foxman and the league seemed to be taking Gibson's trash talk more seriously than what the Los Angeles Times columnist Zev Chafets described as "one of the most gory anti-Jewish crimes in American history [this week when] Naveed Afzal Haq brought a pistol to the Jewish Federation office in Seattle and shot six women, killing one ... This personal jihad got second billing on the ADL website under 'Mel Gibson's Apology for Tirade 'Insufficient'."

The reaction to Gibson's drunken tirade should be seen in the context of a rise in anti-Semitism across the globe, spurred recently by the battle between Israel and Hezbollah terrorists in Lebanon, and especially the horrendous images of dead children in Qana after an Israeli attack. Regardless of the necessity and difficulty of fighting Hezbollah, hiding as it is behind civilians, there is no denying that anti-Israel sentiment and its frequent corollary, anti-Semitism, have been fuelled by the images of carnage.

It has been a public relations disaster for Israel and a coup for Hezbollah, which was shooting rockets from near the building where the children in Qana were sheltering. While the world wept, Hezbollah rejoiced at the condemnation heaped on Israel.

Last year, the US State Department reported the rise in global anti-Semitism, noting the "increasing frequency and severity of anti-Semitic incidents ... particularly in Europe". In Spain the Prime Minister, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, recently claimed to "understand" the sentiments of the Nazis. France's ambassador to Britain described Israel as a "shitty little country".

Closer to home, the ABC this week was embarrassed into an apology for a biased and "inappropriate" story about the Middle East crisis for its program for school children, *Behind The News*. The show described Hezbollah as an organisation of Palestinian "refugees" and its terrorists as "soldiers" rather than Iranian-backed terrorists determined to destroy Israel.

Anti-semitism is on the rise but Mel Gibson is the least of it.

Graphic

ILLUSTRATION

Reaction is as affronting as the meltdown

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Prince and the Middle East revolution; MUSIC

Australian Financial Review

January 6, 2007 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: PERSPECTIVE; Review; Pg. 32

Length: 1423 words

Byline: Joseph Braude. Joseph Braude is the author of *The New Iraq: Rebuilding the Country for Its People, the Middle East, and the World*.

Body

An army of Arabic pop stars, led by their boss Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal, rival mosque preachers and politicians for the attention of Arab masses, writes Joseph Braude.

During the Arab-Israeli war last year, Beirut tabloids were filled with the expected denunciations of Israel, along with the occasional shot at Hezbollah for sparking the conflict by kidnapping two Israeli soldiers. But they saved plenty of outrage for a local group of powerful elites they charged with wounding Lebanon's fighting spirit: a crew of sexy, wealthy pop stars, accused of fleeing by limo and private jet as soon as the going got tough.

"The first missile had barely been launched on South Lebanon," fumed music critic Iman Ibrahim in the online Arabic-language daily Elaph, "before most of the artists of Lebanon had packed their suitcases".

Among the first to skip town, wrote Ibrahim, was curvaceous Beirut beauty Haifa Wehbe, dubbed "the sexiest woman in the Middle East" by People magazine last spring - herself a native of the Shiite-dominated Lebanese south where Hezbollah has most support.

Behind the pundits' outrage lies the story of a revolution in Arab pop culture that started in Lebanon and has turned seductive young vocalists and dancing divas into influential public figures. In most Arab capitals recently, street protesters hoisted banners cheering Hezbollah and demanded Arab elites adopt a similar stance. But Wehbe and other top-selling Arab pop stars don't answer to the Arab street.

If they take orders from anyone, it's Al-Waleed bin Talal, the wily Saudi prince whose entertainment empire dominates Middle Eastern music and satellite television. A nephew of Saudi King Abdullah, the tall, wiry, mustachioed prince (whom Forbes called the fifth-richest man in the world) earned his fortune in the Saudi construction industry. He is also a major shareholder in Planet Hollywood and Euro Disney and made headlines when his huge investment in News Corp stock protected Rupert Murdoch from a hostile takeover.

"Royals, in general, they earn their living by being royal," Saleh Al-Ghoul, an executive director for the prince's flagship Kingdom Holding Company, noted in Al-Waleed's authorised biography. "What made him different is that he earned his way."

Prince and the Middle East revolution MUSIC

Back in the mid-1990s, Prince Al-Waleed noticed that millions of Arabs were installing rooftop satellite dishes and tuning into American MTV, French soft porn, and the then-fledgling Al-Jazeera. "There was a gap, there was an opening," the prince recalled in an interview with biographer Riz Khan. "Whenever I see an opening, I like to fill it."

It's one thing to sneak a satellite dish onto your roof, however, and quite another to ask a conservative Saudi girl to dance half-naked for the camera - even if you are a prince. So Al-Waleed took his idea and his chequebook to Lebanon, where a more risqué entertainment industry had been thriving for decades.

The music empire he built, Rotana Audio Visual Company, manages the careers of about 120 leading Arab vocalists, owns the rights to their songs, and produces their American-style music videos.

The company operates the five biggest satellite channels on which Arabic music is broadcast, reportedly drawing tens of millions of viewers per day, and it also rules major concert venues.

Video clips produced by Rotana have become more than just a lucrative business venture. In addition to offering viewers a taste of Western-style pop culture, they are a vehicle for self-expression of a sort that is truly revolutionary.

While Haifa Wehbe sings and dances a slow flamenco in the rain wearing a slinky red dress, a steady stream of Arabic text-messages that viewers have paid to transmit via their mobile phones crawls underneath the image like the stock exchange ticker tape. Subscribers to the service can express their personal desires in a way that was unimaginable even five years ago.

"People are sending in messages, saying, 'Hi, I'm 23, looking for a hot girl in Cairo', " says Patricia Kubala, a Cairo-based graduate student from the University of California at Santa Barbara.

In a society in which sex and flirtation have long been relegated to the bedroom, Rotana and other music networks have given young people a risk-free outlet for self-expression.

"That's a major component of the video clip phenomenon that bothers and perplexes a lot of people," Kubala says.

For the prince, who claims credit for introducing the concept, it's also good business. "My channel pays for itself with just these messages and advertising," he told his biographer.

Supporters of Hezbollah and Hamas have alleged a conspiracy to corrupt Arab youth. Music television producers "want us to dance over the wounds of our people in Palestine and Iraq", another leading Islamist has been quoted as saying.

In the Iraqi holy city of Karbala in 2005, a thousand people demonstrated against an alleged affront by Lebanese idol Nancy Ajram.

Despite vigorous attacks, pop idols rival mosque preachers and politicians for the attention of Arab masses. Their fans, mostly in their teens and 20s, comprise one of the largest baby booms in human history. And what may be most disturbing to Arab hardliners is that Prince Al-Waleed's most popular vocalists, having won the hearts of Arab youth, have also begun to vocalise a progressive political agenda.

When millions of Lebanese gathered peacefully in downtown Beirut a year ago to demand that Syrian troops withdraw from Lebanon, Haifa's Let Me Live was played on the PA system. She told Arabic women's magazine Laha she had recorded the song deliberately to send a message, "because it discusses . . . freedom, considered to be among the most basic of human rights".

Lebanese diva Elissa allegedly pushed the matter further by calling on Syrian troops to withdraw. After al-Qaeda bombers killed scores of Egyptians and Westerners in the Sinai resort town of Sharm el Sheikh in July 2005, Ajram announced her plan to hold a two-day charity concert on behalf of the victims.

Prince and the Middle East revolution MUSIC

The benefit concert never materialised - but over the ensuing months, Ajram toured hospitals in which bombing victims were being treated and reportedly donated proceeds from her concerts to their medical fees.

All these liberal pronouncements by Rotana artists in turn seem to affirm the tradition of progressive Arab politics that Prince Al-Waleed grew up with. As a young man, his father, Prince Talal bin Abdul Aziz, called unsuccessfully for sweeping political reforms, declaring himself a socialist in the early 1960s and briefly broadcasting anti-monarchist radio propaganda from his exile in Cairo. The elder prince eventually reconciled with Saudi leadership and returned to the kingdom, on the condition that he refrain from all political activity. By way of Rotana, the young Prince Al-Waleed appears to have found an indirect way to channel his father's values through dozens of singers.

Enter **Hezbollah** and its recent war with Israel. More than 2000 bombs were dropped by Israeli planes on the Islamist-controlled Lebanese south as well as selected targets throughout the country. Yet Rotana's extensive Beirut studio facilities in the mostly Christian neighbourhood of Ashrafiya remained unscathed.

There's no evidence the Israelis see Rotana as especially friendly to their cause, but the fact is most Rotana artists declined to profess support for **Hezbollah** fighters - and their silence spoke volumes.

And despite Arab tabloid reports of sexy Lebanese singers' mass exodus from Lebanon, several of the most prominent Rotana faces remained in Beirut, in solidarity with their fellow Lebanese. They just didn't incite young men to join the battle.

Witness sultry starlet Nawal al-Zoghbi, who, by visiting classrooms on daily goodwill missions, has focused her efforts on keeping kids in school despite the violence.

With the **Hezbollah**-Israeli war now in remission, Prince Al-Waleed's major performance venues have been hosting a series of fund-raising concerts to support the reconstruction of Lebanon. Among the lyrics sung at those concerts is a popular refrain by al-Zoghbi:

"I do not want you to burn my life," she sings. "I want to live. I want to live."

In the context of rising Islamic extremism, which promotes an eagerness to die for a sacred cause, that's a pretty radical idea. As the late leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, put it: "We have men who love death as you love life." It's nice to know they also have at least one prominent woman who's willing to lend her powerful voice to the opposite sentiment.

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: East meets West . . . Haifa Wehbe, above, and Nawal al-Zoghbi. Photo (above) AFP

Load-Date: April 6, 2012

Israeli official convicted of indecent assault: Ex-justice minister found guilty of kissing female soldier

Edmonton Journal (Alberta)

February 1, 2007 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A14

Length: 530 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: TEL AVIV

Body

TEL AVIV -- Israel was rocked by a sex scandal again Wednesday when former justice minister Haim Ramon was found guilty of indecent assault against a 20-year-old **female** soldier.

Three judges unanimously found the 56-year-old lawyer and member of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's ruling Kadima party had lied to the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court when he denied "placing his lips on her lips and inserting his tongue in her mouth," repeatedly, and against the complainant's will when the two of them met for the first time in his office.

The incident took place moments before the Israeli cabinet voted to go to war against **Hezbollah** in Lebanon last summer.

The judges found the testimony of the woman, who was only known in court as H, regarding the kisses was "authentic, coherent, credible and reliable."

"This was not a kiss of affection," the court said. "This has all the elements of a sexual crime."

The conviction was another staggering blow to Olmert's coalition government, which has been reeling for months over severe public condemnation of its mishandling of the war against **Hezbollah** in Lebanon.

As well, the prime minister himself faces at least two criminal investigations into financial misconduct, his finance minister is under investigation for abusing his position for financial gain and another former minister has been charged with fraud, bribery and perjury.

Only last week, Israel's 61-year-old-president, Moshe Katsav, was charged with sex crimes including rape that involved several **women** less than half his age, as well as separate charges relating to fraud and obstruction of justice.

Public outrage over the war in Lebanon, where Olmert failed in his stated objective to win the release of two soldiers kidnapped by **Hezbollah**, and over the rising tide of sexual and financial misbehaviour by the country's

Israeli official convicted of indecent assault: Ex-justice minister found guilty of kissing female soldier

political leadership, has also had a devastating effect on the prime minister's popularity. Recent polls have found more than two-thirds of Israelis want Olmert to resign.

A survey published two days ago by the popular Ynetnews website painted an even more damning picture.

It revealed only three per cent of the electorate wanted Olmert returned as prime minister in the next election.

"These are the lowest figures for an Israeli prime minister in the 30 years that I have been doing this," said pollster Rafi Smith, who conducted the Ynet poll.

Ruth Ben-Israel, a retired professor emeritus of law at Tel Aviv University, said she was "not only disappointed, but ashamed" of politicians who only thought of themselves and their positions.

"They are corrupted and not just sexually," the internationally respected 76-year-old expert on social justice said.

"Once in office they think that they are nearly Gods and forget their ideals. It is all about power and interests.

"Israel of today is not the Israel that my husband and I helped create. It is not the Israel we dreamed of."

Ramon faces up to three years in jail when the court pronounces a sentence on Feb. 21. When Ramon's conviction was announced in court his girlfriend, who appeared to be several decades younger than him, hugged him supportively.

Ramon indicated he intended to appeal his conviction.

Graphic

Colour Photo: The Associated Press; Former Israeli justice minister Haim Ramon sits in court in Tel Aviv on Wednesday after he was convicted of forcibly kissing a young female soldier. ;

Load-Date: February 1, 2007

Refugees get billionaire's boost

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

August 5, 2006 Saturday

1 Edition

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 14A

Length: 952 words

Byline: SUSAN TAYLOR MARTIN

Dateline: NIZZANIM, Israel

Body

As foamy breakers crash against the powdery sand, teenagers in bikinis stroll along the beach. Younger kids bounce down huge inflatable slides while their parents relax with the morning papers.

It may be the world's most unusual refugee camp.

Since Israel and the radical Lebanese group Hezbollah began their hostilities three weeks ago, as many as 8,000 people from northern Israel have found safety from rocket attacks in a seaside tent city financed entirely by a Jewish Russian billionaire.

Refugees get three hot meals a day, with snacks in between. Sheets and towels are changed daily. Laundry is returned within 24 hours. Many of Israel's top entertainers perform live at night, near the big screens that show Israeli TV and popular movies.

"They give us treatment like in a hotel but everything is free," said Simona Alosch, who fled the city of Zefat with her husband, two children and several relatives.

The setting and amenities could not be in sharper contrast to the dire refugee situation across the border in Lebanon, where Israeli shelling and airstrikes have left thousands homeless and driven hundreds of thousands more into Syria and other countries.

At least 28 people - most of the them women and children - were killed Sunday when an Israeli missile hit an apartment building where they had taken refuge in the south Lebanese city of Qana. While calling the strike a "tragic mistake," Israel says Hezbollah was launching rockets from the area and that residents had been warned to leave.

Many, though, were too old, sick or poor to go. Others feared traveling on roads that had been heavily damaged by previous airstrikes.

In Israel, by comparison, relatively few people have lost their homes, and the death toll stands at 75, to at least 530 in Lebanon. Yet the randomness of the Hezbollah rockets has terrified residents of northern Israel, prompting many to flee to safer parts of the country.

Refugees get billionaire's boost

As in Lebanon, it was largely the poor who were left behind. Financier Arcadi Gaydamak said concern for them is the reason he is spending \$500,000 a day on the tent city.

"We are in war time and many thousands of people need to be in a secure situation with their children and expressions of solidarity," he said by phone from Moscow.

A banker and entrepreneur who spent part of his youth in Israel, Gaydamak, 54, is wanted in France on allegations of fraud and tax evasion stemming from an arms-for-oil deal with Angola. Here in Israel, however, he is admired for his philanthropy. Shortly before Hezbollah kidnapped two Jewish soldiers July 12, prompting Israel's massive offensive, Gaydamak donated \$2.5-million to the Israeli ambulance service.

As Hezbollah rockets rained down on the north, he phoned David Nitsani, owner of an event-planning company, and told him, "Do whatever is needed as long as the danger is there," Nitsani recalled. He leased part of a beach-front national park and brought in dozens of tents, 7,000 towels, 8,000 mats and 300 fans.

Within 48 hours of Gaydamak's call, the first refugees were streaming into camp. The number quickly swelled to 5,000, including the Aloses.

A week after the fighting started, the family left their home and restaurant business in Zefat and drove six hours south to the resort city of Eilat. But they couldn't afford to stay more than a few days because of price gouging by hotels there.

Now they sleep on foam mats in an enormous tent that can accommodate 200. They have minor complaints about long lines for meals, the stuffiness at night, the sand in the sheets. But the kids, 12 and 16, enjoy a wide range of activities, from swimming to art lessons to classes in Jewish tradition.

"It's like a summer camp, the young people are very happy here," Simona Alosch said. "They don't want to leave."

So many refugees have settled in that organizers had to open a second encampment south of the first. Serving both are a clinic, police station and synagogue.

"This is running a city, not a party or event," said Nitsani, who has moved his own offices to the beach. "I feel a huge responsibility for what goes on here."

Thus far he has dealt with lost children, a bar mitzvah and a birth. (Parents and baby were moved to a hotel, at no cost to them.) A kid was caught stealing a fan and, in a warning to others, a few families have been kicked out for causing trouble.

"There's been some small violence," Nitsani said. "People fight over blankets - not because we don't have enough but because they wanted four. The mentality is grab as much as you can because nobody knows what's going to happen tomorrow."

Some residents of northern Israel have criticized their government for doing little to help them beyond warning them to take cover when they hear an air raid siren. The tent city has closely coordinated with Israeli police and other agencies, but gets no public money.

"The government is a little confused," Nitsani said. "In a way, they don't want to encourage people to leave their homes - the formal attitude is they should be strong and not give in to threats. But the reality is people are leaving."

Among them was a sunburned Roni Packer, 24. She and her boyfriend had been living on a kibbutz in northern Israel, near where they attend college and work as waiters in a now-deserted summer resort.

On a recent afternoon, Packer handed out towels to other refugees as Israeli F-16s roared overhead on their way to Lebanon.

Refugees get billionaire's boost

"There are some problems here," she said, "but we are trying our best. In Lebanon, they can't go anywhere so we are thankful we have this place."

Susan Martin can be contacted at susan@sptimes.com.

ON THE WEB

ONLINE GALLERY: More photos taken by Times photographer John Pendygraft at the Nizzanim refugee camp are at links.tampabay.com

Graphic

TIMES PHOTOS, JOHN PENDYGRAFT (2) TIMES MAP

Load-Date: August 5, 2006

World datelines

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

February 6, 2007 Tuesday

Copyright 2007 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

Length: 580 words

Byline: Compiled from Deseret Morning News wire services

Body

Britain

LONDON -- A letter bomb exploded Monday at a London company that controls the city's traffic congestion fee, fire officials said. One worker suffered minor injuries to her hand.

Cameroon

YAOUNDE -- An overloaded wooden boat sank in high waves off Cameroon's coast, killing at least 63 people, a government official said Monday. Fifteen passengers were believed to have survived, but at least 20 were missing and feared dead.

Germany

SITTENSEN -- Six people were found shot dead early Monday at a Chinese restaurant in northern Germany, police said. The bodies of three men and three women, some of them tied up, were found in Sittensen, a town of some 10,000 people south of Hamburg, police said.

Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE -- Gunman seized an American missionary of Haitian descent as he left a church near Haiti's capital and have demanded a ransom for his release, U.N. police said Monday.

Iran

Shrugging off the threat of tougher U.N. sanctions, Iran has set up more than 300 centrifuges in two uranium enrichment units at its underground Natanz complex, diplomats and officials said Monday.

Israel

JERUSALEM -- The Israeli army on Monday said it uncovered four bombs on the Israeli side of the border with Lebanon and accused Hezbollah guerrillas of planting the explosives in recent days. If confirmed, it would mark a violation of a U.N.-brokered cease-fire by Hezbollah and indicate a failure by international peacekeepers to prevent new attacks on Israel. Both Hezbollah and U.N. officials said they were looking into the report.

Italy

World datelines

MILAN -- Thousands of mourners flocked to a cathedral in the Sicilian city of Catania on Monday for the funeral of a police officer whose death in a soccer riot prompted calls for new measures to curb stadium violence in Italy.

Namibia

WINDHOEK -- Chinese President Hu Jintao announced new development aid for Namibia on Monday, promising an interest-free loan and money for schools in the sparsely populated, mineral-rich desert country.

North Korea

North Korea must "get out of the nuclear business entirely," the chief U.S. negotiator said Monday, adding he believed Pyongyang "was prepared to negotiate" at the coming arms talks in Beijing. Christopher Hill refused to comment on news reports that the North is prepared to freeze a key nuclear reactor and accept inspectors in exchange for 500,000 tons of heavy oil.

Philippines

MANILA -- A French-led marine expedition team believes it has discovered thousands of new species of mollusks and crustaceans around a Philippine island, officials and scientists said Monday. Some 80 scientists, technicians, students and volunteers from 19 countries surveyed the waters around Panglao island, 390 miles southeast of Manila from 2004-05.

Russia

MOSCOW -- Prosecutors filed new charges Monday against former oil baron Mikhail Khodorkovsky, now serving the fourth year of an eight-year prison term in Siberia. The relentless pursuit of the tycoon has showcased President Vladimir Putin's highly successful campaign to tame Russia's oligarchs using its politically pliant justice system.

Syria

Syrian President Bashar Assad said in an interview aired Monday that the Bush administration does not have the vision to bring peace in Iraq and that his country could help calm the crisis if approached.

Thailand

BANGKOK -- Thailand's military-installed prime minister on Monday dismissed the national police chief, who has been criticized for failing to solve a series of bomb explosions in the capital on New Year's Eve.

Load-Date: February 6, 2007

The kidnap of this woman's husband sparked the latest war in the Middle East

The Sunday Times (London)

November 19, 2006

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Section: FEATURES; Sunday Times Magazine; Pg. 62

Length: 4945 words

Byline: Lesley White

Body

But is the young Israeli soldier still alive, will his captors Hezbollah trade him, and will Israel pay the price? Lesley White meets a family on a quest for answers

Patience is not a quality normally associated with Israelis in downtown Tel Aviv, car horns blare, coffee vendors and hotel waiters are gruffly to the point but in a two-storey, whitewashed house in Nahariya, a small town 10 kilometres south of the Lebanese border, the sound of patience is deafening, pervasive, a sort of silent scream.

This is the home of Shlomo and Malka Goldwasser, parents of the kidnapped soldier Ehud, known as Udi, who was seized on Israeli territory by Hezbollah fighters on July 12 with a fellow reservist, Eldad Regev. Theirs is not a religious home: there are no scrolls of the Torah or menorah candelabrum on show, though an Israeli flag flutters from a downstairs window. "The only time I go to synagogue is to drink whisky with my good friend the rabbi," laughs Udi's father, Shlomo. But there are other symbols of belief scattered around his sitting room: stickers printed with "Bring Udi Home", posters, press packs and blue solidarity bracelets, not just campaigning tools but articles of faith.

Across the border, the black-turbaned Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and his followers are banking on the fact that, for Israelis raised on the Old Testament and Holocaust studies, it is morally imperative to bring Udi Goldwasser back, whatever dirty dealing it takes. Islamic mothers may accept their sons' martyrdom as suicide bombers; Jewish mothers like Miki Goldwasser, as she is known, prize life above all else. In the summer, Iranian-supplied Katyusha rockets rained down on her seaside town in a war sparked by the fate of her 31-year-old son, but on a sunny November morning, the Mediterranean sparkles, the Goldwassers' cat scavenges crumbs of cake, and builders undertaking their latest extension wander in and out. In the aftermath of disaster, normality has crept back in; yet you know instantly from the strained faces, the sack of supportive letters from around the world, that something is not right.

Their son is one of a holy trinity. Just a month before his abduction, another soldier, 19-year-old Corporal Gilad Shalit, was kidnapped in Gaza by Hamas fighters. The three young men have become symbols of their nation's frustration and outrage, its certainty that its enemies operate outside the moral sphere, and a stalled peace process. The Goldwassers have neither time nor will for reviewing the rights and wrongs of recent history: for them it's a waiting, sometimes a praying, but mostly a hoping game.

The kidnap of this woman's husband sparked the latest war in the Middle East

Udi Goldwasser's unit was ambushed as it patrolled the border in two armoured Humvees. Three soldiers were killed by Hezbollah's rocket-propelled grenades, and five more died when a tank trying to rescue them hit a mine. As the Israeli army reacted to the firing, the gunmen whisked their two prisoners over the border.

It is not in itself a sensational story (these young men were soldiers, not rabbis or doctors) but it precipitated a war in which 1,100 Lebanese and 160 Israelis died. "It would not even make a headline in the United States," says Shlomo, 59, a short, wiry man who speaks English carefully with an air of exhausted resignation. He has no interest in the logistics of the abduction, declined the army's offer to visit the location; wants to think only of the future. "This event is huge for us," he says. "But what lies behind it is huge for the world. Thank goodness for Bush and Blair for recognising the threat of Islamic extremism."

All the Goldwassers echo this fear in low, ominous voices. But they also know that the war launched against Lebanon in response to the kidnapping was not a crusade against "terror", nor a realistic way to secure their release; it was an ultimately lost opportunity for Israel to disarm an enemy stockpiling arms. "War was not the way to bring our son back," says Shlomo, a patriot who sees nothing wrong in teaching Hezbollah a lesson, but not while they are holding his son.

Today he and Miki look mildly stunned. There are no public tears, just a disbelief that this has happened to such an ordinary family. And yet all Israeli lives are unpredictable, buffeted in the tides of fragile Middle Eastern relations. It is a dangerous country in which to raise your sons, with national service and reservist duty required in one month in every year. "Maybe," says Miki, "but you never question it. It is our homeland."

Udi Goldwasser did not much care for politics, let alone the onward march of Zionism. In this year's March elections he voted for the Green party. He did his national service and his reserve duty because he believed them necessary. "Growing up he always saw my example," says Shlomo. "If a thing is your duty you have to do it. He didn't like it but he never skipped it."

The waiting has been harrowing for them, the ignorance of what the prime minister, Ehud Olmert, is doing or not doing to negotiate a release, even worse. When they say they are kept in the dark, you believe them. The sequence of dashed hopes has produced in the family what Udi's wife, Karnit, calls the "glad-sad" dichotomy; the war ends, but the hostages are not returned; the naval blockade is lifted, they do not appear, UN resolution 1701 addresses post-war priorities, and there is no word. "I believe to any problem there is a solution," says Shlomo, a former ship's captain and patriarch of a pragmatic family. "I don't criticise the government, but the bottom line is the results are zero."

On Yom Kippur the last Israeli soldier on Lebanese soil came home, but Udi did not return to his marital home in Haifa, nor to this tidy house where his parents now offer hospitality and memories to strangers in the hope that he will be thought of as a loved young man rather than a statistic. For Udi was nothing if not an individual. When his family moved to South Africa in 1987, he decided he didn't like it and returned to Israel to live with an aunt; there was no arguing with him. "I always said I raised him by remote control," smiles Shlomo. "He did what he thought was right."

On the morning of July 12, Shlomo was in Namibia on business, packing a suitcase for his return to Durban, where he works for a shipping company. On the CNN channel he saw that two Israelis had been kidnapped near Zar'it village, where he knew his eldest son was completing the last day of his tour as reservist. "CNN knew within half an hour after it happened because Hezbollah released their information immediately to the media. In Israel they didn't know for an hour and a half." By 10pm he had been informed that his son was probably kidnapped, rather than dead.

On his parents' return to Nahariya their younger son, Yair, a forthright police detective, put it to them straight. "I told them we could sink or swim as a family," he says, "that we had to keep going for Udi." The youngest brother, Gadi a dog handler was travelling in the Himalayas, but got home in two days. For we must not confuse patience, reluctance to make demands or challenge the official channels, with passivity.

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Since July's events Shlomo and Karnit have travelled the world speaking to broadcasters and youth groups and foreign ministers, held rallies in remembrance of the missing soldiers, never stopped taking calls and having meetings that might ease the channels of communication with the abductors. "The way to do it is by building pressure from those Hezbollah respect," says Shlomo. "If I could speak to the Iranians it would be better, but they don't want to know. They do listen to the Russians, though, so we met with the mufti of Russia, the head of Muslims there."

The Goldwassers have filled the miserable weeks of waiting with their quests for a "sign of life" from his captors, into which all their suspended fury and depression and fear have been channelled. "I am so afraid to feel, I shut myself off," confides Miki. "I can't give into it, though, because I need to send him all my love and strength." Nobody knows if the family's efforts will help Udi, but they are certainly helping them. "None of us had ever done an interview," says Shlomo. "Now we're asked our opinion on world affairs. What do we know about releasing hostages or anything else! The Sunday Times can't bring my son back, but you can make sure he is not forgotten."

His message to Hezbollah? "I say to the guards of our son, not just his kidnappers, to be very careful because if they touch Udi, they will be blamed, not Hassan Nasrallah." His wife nods, a petite woman with glasses and a warmth that turns her into everybody's mother, pottering to and from her kitchen. She is the family archivist who has made photo albums for her three sons to be presented at their weddings, and she is annoyed today because she can't find Udi's. "It must be here somewhere." A distracted air in a highly practical woman is the only sign of her torment, that and the shadows beneath her eyes.

But she has been emboldened rather than cowed by her ordeal. "I told the chief of staff to his face that I blame the army. If there had been surveillance cameras on the border, Udi wouldn't have needed to be there." She looked Tony Blair straight in the eye and asked him to go to Lebanon and intercede with the prime minister, Fouad Siniora. "He was sympathetic and charming... but he was too busy."

Does she hate the men who took Udi? "Hezbollah are brainwashed," she answers. "They are taught to hate from tiny children, that their role is to wipe us from the map. How can I hate people if they can't help being what they are? I just want to get back to being a housewife. I am a potter but I can't touch the clay." Instead she holds her own private vigil, nurses her mementos: in a utility room is a stack of toys from her sons' childhoods, neatly stored Lego, the broken-stringed guitar he passed on to Gadi, a model plane. "All being saved for his own children," she says, matter-of-factly. Usually in robust health, she has recently been struck with a virus that has made her deaf in one ear, but nothing can stop her extolling the virtues of her eldest son. "A Polish mother talk about her son? Ha! Bribe me!"

Little Udi was the dream baby; never cried; could name any make of car at the age of three; taught himself to read at five; played piano so well his teacher thought he had learnt to read music when, he finally admitted, he was playing by ear; won his class competition at 10 but refused to be moved to a school for the brightest children. His father laughs: "Udi always wanted an easy life." No, no, defends Miki, "he just didn't want to be separated from the other kids." Then there is his sailing, his yacht skipper's licence, his scuba-diving with Yair off the coast a few minutes from their family home, his mountain-biking on Mount Carmel. Udi was the mature one, the son Miki could trust with the motorbike she denied his teenage brothers.

With her first-born there is a unique, almost telepathic bond. While he was motorbiking in Australia she had an overwhelming sensation that something was wrong. "That day I was crazy like hell." In fact, he had fallen from his bike and lost consciousness. On the morning of July 12, at home in her Durban apartment, she turned on her computer for news, read of the attack at Zar'it and started to cry. When assured by Karnit at Shlomo's request that Udi was fine, she still couldn't stop. "In Israel you hear these stories, and you are sad, but I'm not the sort of woman who cries all the time. That morning I just couldn't stop myself."

Half an hour's drive south is the Haifa flat of Udi and Karnit Goldwasser, part of an Israeli generation demanding a safe, normal life instead of ideology and strife. Always using the present tense, Karnit tells me that Udi wants to move to Tel Aviv for the jazz clubs and theatres. "He wants a lively life." She is 30, delicately beautiful, so skinny with worry that her gold wedding ring flies off her finger as she gesticulates. Her comforts here are their dog, a

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former stray, and her array of cellphones, pagers, e-mail receivers... She is organised and precise, painstakingly looks up every elusive word on her electronic Hebrew-English Oxford dictionary while the phone tinkles intermittently. One call is from another of the injured soldiers in Udi's Humvee, Tomer, with whom she is regularly in touch.

Usually a keen cook, there is no food in her fridge. "My friend was so shocked, she said, 'Karnit, this isn't you,' " she confides. The daughter of an army officer turned air-traffic controller, she and Udi grew up in Nahariya, pupils at the same high school. They fell in love nine years ago, "soul mates" who knew they were meant to be together. She trusted him so much she would fall asleep against his back riding pillion on his Suzuki GS500. "I fell in love with him because of his mind. He is sharp and clever, he has educated me. Before him I didn't watch nature and history programmes, or see thoughtful movies." He is mentally strong, she insists: if he's alive he will be coping. "He'll know what to concentrate on inside his head, and what not to dwell on. He believes in God, but his prayers will be thinking of home and family, and of me."

They both attend the Technion institute of technology (an Israeli MIT), both embarked on master's degrees in environmental engineering; designing solutions for sewage, pollution, water systems. (As Shlomo smiles wryly, "Udi's interest is cleaning the world from shit. Good for him!") Between degrees they travelled for three months to southeast Asia, where they visited Cambodia's Angkor Wat. "Udi had seen what the Taliban had done to religious shrines in Afghanistan, and wanted to see this one before it was too late." Six years ago they moved into their flat, with its pale tiles and its simple furniture, its small neat rows of books and CDs, and right now the over-clean, empty feel of a home not much lived in.

Dominating the tiny sitting room is the picture of Udi used in their campaign, taken on his wedding day last October, happy and expectant, just before he saw his bride. Their marriage was postponed because neither wanted an orthodox ceremony the only sort fully recognised by the government which would have entailed lying to the authorities that she was a virgin and that they had not lived together. Besides, he told her he didn't need a ceremony or a ring to make him feel married. "He was married to me in his heart."

Finally, they married in a conservative ceremony in an Arabic house in the old Tel Aviv quarter of Jaffa, but like thousands of other couples a year must travel abroad for another wedding for their union to be completed. Udi wants to do it in New York, a city he intends to live in for a while. She talks confidently of their plans as if he were scheduled for release tomorrow, of the future father who wants a baby girl because they love their daddies more, and to whom he will teach all his interests. What if she likes different things? "He says, 'That's fine, tell me what it is and I will become an expert in it.' "

Alongside his studies, he worked in the Technion, taught children for tuition credits, took photos at weddings and bar mitzvahs. He never relished his army tours. "When he saw the hatred in the Palestinian children's eyes, it hurt him," remembers Karnit. "In Gaza, if there were children around he tried to hide his gun. Seeing how the Palestinian children were living affected him badly: the open sewage, the rubbish in the streets, the polluted water they were drinking without knowing it. He knew that only peace would sort out those problems, only peace can raise us up, not bring us down."

His last tour of duty was his first in the north, where his family assumed he would be safer. What he saw there was shocking and salutary for the product of a warm, comfortable home. "His friends tell me he never stopped talking about the infrastructure of Lebanon, how the country could be helped and improved. As part of a peace process, Udi would help build drains or what they needed in the poorest villages."

On the morning of the kidnapping, knowing that her husband would be home in the evening; she began cooking his favourite meat-filled pastries, learning of the attack on the radio news. She texted her husband: "Are you okay? Me and the cats and the dog are waiting for you." Udi's pies were eaten by the friends who gathered 60 by the end of the day as anxiety turned to panic, and then shock. At 3.30pm the army officer arrived with a doctor she did not require.

To eliminate Udi as an unidentified body, they requested a DNA sample, but she had washed everything in preparation for his homecoming, and the day he left his shampoo had spilt all over his toothbrush, making it too

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clean to be of use. "I gave them a coat and asked for it back because he will need his winter coat, he loves it," she smiles. Preparing to return to Nahariya, where she spent much of her time, she packed up his cameras, afraid the empty flat might be burgled, then opened her wardrobe and selected a black outfit in case there was a funeral. "My heart told me he was alive, but my brain told me, maybe not. I am very practical." Her mother made her put the black clothes back; the army then informed her that the dead soldier was not Udi. "It's strange your world has fallen in, and then you are happy."

Karnit was supposed to finish her master's in October but has been unable to work on anything apart from Udi's release. "Udi is my job right now." She talks to people "who want to listen and people who don't want to listen". Later this month she will be addressing the dinner after the Technion lecture in London. It is in memory of the Israeli pilot Ron Arad, who was captured 20 years ago by south Lebanese militiamen, never to be confirmed dead or alive. Karnit's nightmare is a repeat scenario.

The prime minister, Ehud Olmert, who keeps a picture of the three missing soldiers on his desk in Jerusalem, returns her calls; sometimes she meets the former Israeli security chief Ofer Dekel, now working full time on the releases, in Tel Aviv. "You can't talk on the telephone." They appear to tell her nothing, however.

She had so far declined the help of counsellors and psychologists. "I'm going to see them when I know that Udi is coming back, so that I can prepare myself for him. I'll need the right tools to help him readjust, though we are a very strong, open couple and I'm sure he will be able to tell me everything." On the day of his return will she bake the pastries he missed in July? She offers one of the few happy smiles of our meeting. "Cooking? When Udi comes home I'm not going to spend time on cooking!"

What does Karnit Goldwasser want her government to do? Though Israel has a prodigious history of trading prisoners for hostages in May 1985 it released 1,150 prisoners in exchange for three Israelis captured in Lebanon she will not demand that. As for heroic rescue attempts, they are dangerous: in 1994 the Israeli hostage Nachson Waxman died in the attempt to release him. "I am asking all who are helping with the Lebanon reconstruction to help us get a sign of life, a letter from him, or even better a visit from an intermediary which would encourage him so much. I don't want them to ask for this as a condition of helping, but to keep asking while they are helping. So far we have had nothing."

In October she approached the Lebanese president, Emile Lahoud, in the UN general assembly, where she was a visitor. "After his speech about how poor they are and the problems they have, I told him I was the wife of Udi Goldwasser, the kidnapped soldier, and he tuned away from me and ran, muttering something in Arabic I didn't understand. I got the impression that he just couldn't cope." Kofi Annan promised he would help; Sergey Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, told her in the European parliament six weeks ago that he had intelligence that Udi was alive, the Italians have said the same, all of which means only, as Shlomo puts it, that "Hezbollah are planting the message that they are alive, for whatever reason".

A trading of prisoners remains the hostages' best chance; as "high value" assets, they are worth keeping alive. "He's not useful to them if he's dead." says Karnit. "And if he's alive, I believe they are taking care of him." In July, Hezbollah demanded the release of hundreds of Arab prisoners, but it is thought they will settle for the few Lebanese in Israeli jails. "If they want two prisoners for one," says Shlomo, "I say increase it to four to one. Whatever they want, double it. That is my view as a father."

By January he must return to South Africa and his job; Miki will stay in Israel until her son comes home. She tells me she believes he is surviving on the love she and Shlomo poured into him as a child. "He was brought up with love, he has his family, his wife who he loves to craziness, a reason to live, to have his baby girl." What will his doting Polish mother do when he walks through her front door? "I'm going to kiss him until he can't stand it any more... And then I'm going to kick him back to Hezbollah for all the worry he has caused me! He'll say that Hezbollah are a breeze compared to the treatment he got from his mother." In her weary laugh you hear the audacious spirit that keeps her going, that refuses to let go of the feisty humour her son loved.

The redemption of hostages is a core principle of Judaism, described as a "great bar mitzvah" in the rabbinical texts that equate life in captivity with starvation or death. Even for the secular, the knowledge of Jews denied their

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freedom tears at the heart of a nation founded on self-preservation, where remembering past captivity is a civic duty, where the sense of "never again" fires all efforts to free its people.

"Our son is a strong man psychologically," reflects Shlomo, whose Latvian mother and Polish father came to the promised land in 1933, met on a kibbutz, and could never have imagined the legacy of bitterness inspired by their hopeful journeys. "If Udi is alive he will cope." Then he adds a thought which illuminates his family's courage, making you speechless for a moment. "My uncle was one of the first in and last out of Auschwitz. He was a shoemaker and was useful to the Germans. If he survived that horror and went on to live a good life, my son can survive whatever is happening to him."

THE DECADES OF ABDUCTION

Numerous Israeli soldiers have been kidnapped and murdered by enemy forces over the years. The fate of many remains unknown

DECEMBER 1973 Eli Lupo is kidnapped and killed after hitching a ride at the Beit Lid junction near Netanya.

JANUARY 1979 David Shamir is taken by Rafah- based terrorists and killed near the Gaza Strip.

NOVEMBER 1980 Avi Bromberg is kidnapped and murdered. His body is found near the Nahal training base.

JUNE 1982 Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman and Yehuda Katz are captured by Syrian forces in the battle of Sultan Yacoub. Still missing in action (MIA).

MAY 1983 David Bukra is kidnapped at Beit Lid junction, then shot. His dismembered body is found in the West Bank.

APRIL 1983 Samir Assad is kidnapped in Sidon and thought to have been killed by an Israeli air raid while in captivity.

AUGUST 1984 Moshe Tamam is kidnapped and murdered on his way home to Havatzelet Hasharon. His body is found near Ma'aleh Datan.

NOVEMBER 1984 David Manos is kidnapped and murdered on the Lod-Petah Tikva road. His body is found two years later.

NOVEMBER 1984 Hadas Kedmi is kidnapped while hitchhiking. Her body is found at Carmel foothills 10 years later.

APRIL 1985 Akiva Shaltiel is kidnapped on the Petah Tikva-Rosh HaAyin road. His body is found near Beit Aryeh.

JUNE 1985 David Pelzan is kidnapped and killed. His body is found at Kissufim junction.

DECEMBER 1985 Moshe Levi is kidnapped and murdered. His body is found near Moshav Mazor.

FEBRUARY 1986 Yosef Fink and Rachamin Alsheikh are kidnapped in Lebanon by Hezbollah. Their bodies are returned to Israel in July 1996.

OCTOBER 1986 Ron Arad is captured by Lebanese Shi'ite militia when his plane goes down over Lebanon. Still MIA.

SEPTEMBER 1987 Hanoach Danman is kidnapped and murdered while hitchhiking near Akko. His body is found near Kfar Masaryk kibbutz.

FEBRUARY 1989 Avi Sasportas is kidnapped and shot by Hamas terrorists while hitchhiking at Hodaya junction. His body is found in May 1989.

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MAY 1989 Ilan Saadon is kidnapped by Hamas terrorists. His body is found near Tel Aviv seven years later.

SEPTEMBER 1992 Alon Caravani is kidnapped and stabbed to death after hitchhiking with Hamas members in central Israel.

DECEMBER 1992 Nissim Toledano is kidnapped by Hamas militants in a bid to free their leader, Ahmad Yassin. His body is found in the occupied West Bank two days later.

OCTOBER 1993 Ehud Roth and Ilan Levi are kidnapped and murdered after hitching a ride in the Gaza Strip.

MARCH 1993 Yehoshua Friedberg is kidnapped and murdered by terrorists. His body is found near Jerusalem.

AUGUST 1993 Yaron Chen is kidnapped and murdered hitchhiking near Ramallah. His body is found in a burnt-out car.

APRIL 1994 Shachar Simani is murdered by Hamas terrorists disguised as Jews. His body is found north of Jerusalem.

JULY 1994 Aryeh Frankenthal is kidnapped and murdered after hitchhiking in Beersheba. His body is found the same day.

OCTOBER 1994 Nahshon Wachsmann is kidnapped while hitchhiking. He is murdered by his captors when IDF special forces storm the West Bank safe house he is being held in.

SEPTEMBER 1996 Sharon Edri is murdered by Hamas while hitchhiking home to Moshav Zanoah. His body is found in a West Bank village.

AUGUST 1997 Guy Hever goes missing from his army base on the Golan border. He remains MIA.

OCTOBER 2000 Adi Avitan, Benny Avraham and Omar Sawaid are abducted by Hezbollah while patrolling Shebaa farms on Israel's border with Lebanon. In JANUARY 2004 their bodies are returned to Israel in a prisoner-exchange deal.

july 2003 Oleg Shaikhet is kidnapped and killed near Upper Nazareth.

JUNE 2006 Gilad Shalit is captured by Palestinian militants in Gaza. Still MIA.

JULY 2006 Ehud 'Udi' Goldwasser and Eldad Regev are abducted by Hezbollah while patrolling the Lebanese border. They are still MIA.

THE ROAD TO MASS FATALITIES

JUNE 24 Two Palestinian civilian brothers, Osama and Mustafa Abu Muamar, are abducted by the IDF in Al Shouka, near Rafah.

JUNE 25 Palestinian militants kidnap the Israeli soldier Corporal Gilad Shalit, 19, during a raid on an army post near the Gaza Strip, via a tunnel they have dug near Kerem Shalom. Two other IDF soldiers are killed and four wounded in the attack. Shalit suffers a shoulder wound and a broken left hand. Israel says it will do everything it can to retrieve the soldier.

JUNE 26 Shalit's captors issue a statement offering information about him if Israel agrees to release all female Palestinian prisoners and all Palestinian prisoners under the age of 18.

JUNE 28 Israeli forces enter Khan Yunis in Gaza to search for Shalit. An Israeli spokesman claims: "Israel did everything it could in exhausting all diplomatic options."

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JUNE 29 The commander of the Israeli Southern Command, Aluf Yoav Galant, confirms Shalit is still in Gaza. Israel's minister of justice adds that Shalit is being held in southern Gaza. The military correspondent for the Israel Broadcasting Authority claims that Shalit is in Rafah, and still alive.

JULY 1 The Palestinians issue another demand, asking the Israelis to free 1,000 Palestinian prisoners in addition to all women and young prisoners as previously demanded, and to end their assault on Gaza. The BBC reports that Shalit may have received medical attention, possibly for stomach and shoulder wounds. This has been subsequently denied by other Palestinians. Israeli government authorities threaten that the "sky will fall" if Shalit is harmed.

JULY 3 The Palestinians issue a 24-hour ultimatum for meeting their demands, and threaten unspecified consequences if Israel refuses. Israel rejects it, stating "there will be no negotiations to release prisoners".

JULY 12 Hezbollah guerillas capture two more Israeli soldiers, 31-year-old Ehud Goldwasser and 26-year-old Eldad Regev, in a cross-border raid. Israel accuses Lebanon of an act of war. Hezbollah continues to insist on a prisoner exchange and warns against confrontation. Within hours, Israeli warplanes, tanks and gunboats are shelling southern Lebanon. Hezbollah fighters based in southern Lebanon retaliate by firing Katyusha rockets across the border with Israel. In southern Lebanon, Israeli troops encounter heavy resistance eight are killed and two others are injured. Israel calls up reserve troops as it pledges a swift and large-scale response to the Hezbollah attack.

JULY 13 Israel lays siege to Lebanon, bombing Beirut airport, blockading sea ports and declaring its air space closed, as the crisis over the two captured soldiers erupts into open warfare. Hezbollah responds by bombarding Israel with scores of rockets, some of which hit Haifa, Israel's third largest city.

JULY 18 Israeli air strikes continue. The number of Lebanese killed since the start of Israel's offensive reaches about 230, with 25 Israelis killed. The UN warns of a humanitarian disaster as Lebanese flee their homes, with air strikes on roads and bridges hampering efforts to help them. The offensive will not officially end for another seven weeks, by which time as many as 500 Hezbollah fighters and over 1,000 Lebanese civilians will have been killed. One hundred and sixty Israelis will have lost their lives. Meanwhile, the three captured Israeli soldiers stay in the hands of Hezbollah.

Load-Date: December 1, 2006