

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:27:00AM EEST

Job Number: 223498492

Documents (100)

1. [*Realities, absurdities of Israel - U.S. policies*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

2. [*Rocket barrage deepens crisis MIDDLE EAST BURNS; Israel*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

3. [*Diplomatic pressure rises, as more 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

4. [*A LETTER FROM LEBANON 'Summer is cancelled, the bullet holes no longer look cool'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

5. [*Rocket barrage deepens crisis MIDDLE EAST BURNS*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

6. [*Israeli rockets rain down on Lebanon as 40 targets hit*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

7. [*Crisis in the Middle East, day by 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

8. [*Humanitarian catastrophe looms*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

9. [*My Lebanese friend is praying for the souls of the Israelis obliterating her city Remarkable grace under fire in shattered 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

10. [*Hill protesters slam Harper for response to crisis: PM showed 'immaturity' by not denouncing*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

11. [*Israel broadens attacks: Showdown spirals toward war: Iran accused of helping to cripple naval vessel*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

12. [*Cruel, corrupt and full of hatred - it's Iran 's mullahs who are to 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

13. [*Beirutis Try to Plumb the Abyss Between Elegance and Chaos*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

14. [*On the Hopes for a Mideast 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

15. [*'THE HUMAN SANDBAGS' More than 100 child victims in Lebanon . Now the fear is they are used as shields*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

16. [The Mideast and Ideas for Peace](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

17. [The war rages on](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

18. [THE BOMBING](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

19. [Towards 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

20. [International Force Is Favored, But No Nation Commits Troops](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

21. [*In an Unlikely Target for Rockets, Mourning and Pleas for Peace*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

22. [*Foreign force has Israeli OK: Jewish state says it would prefer to see NATO-led troops on 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

23. [*IT IS TIME FOR IRAN TO END THE KILLING*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

24. [*Israeli jets strike as Rice told: Stay away*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

25. [*Brutal battle for uncertain peace*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

26. [*Israeli missile strike in Lebanon kills more than 50*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

27. [The price of saving Shalit](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

28. [Light of Beirut fades on its darkest day ON THE GROUND MIDDLE EAST 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

29. ['Cache' and 'cachet' nab the unwary](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

30. [Palestinian refugees in Lebanon vow to get revenge: 90,000 crammed into camp 'have already experienced what Lebanese are feeling'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

31. [Hard-to-kill militia chief is cut from different cloth](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

32. [*Get out, half million protesters tell 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

33. [*Smarter than being a martyr*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

34. [*No Time To Skimp on Men and Materials*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

35. [*No Time To Skimp on Men and Materials*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

36. [*A Haifa 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

37. [Israel says pull-back to border is not an end to Gaza offensive](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

38. [A town's quiet grief mirrors 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

39. [Israeli envoy denies force disproportionate](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

40. [Israel warns of large-scale ground invasion of 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

41. [Sacrificing a democracy while supporting an ally Globalist](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

42. [Airstrike kills at least 56 on 'sad, bloody Sunday'](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 200643. [ISRAELIS HAVE NO MONOPOLY ON PAIN](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 200644. [More than just rights](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 200645. ['We are ready to strap explosives to our children and send them to Israel'](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 200646. [KILLED AS THEY FLED CRISIS IN MIDDLE EAST VILLAGERS DIE IN ISRAELI AIR ATTACK](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

47. [*Sending more troops won't help CAPITAL IDEA*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

48. [*Neoconservatism turning Middle-East into powder keg*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

49. [*Lebanon sends Rice packing after Israelis kill 37 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

50. [*LETTERS TO THE EDITOR*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

51. [*Middle East crisis: Al-Qaida: Bin Laden's deputy calls for global war on 'crusaders'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

52. [*Sounding off on all sides*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

53. [Bin Laden deputy urges Muslims everywhere to fight 'crusaders'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

54. [Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

55. [BRITAIN / INTERNATIONAL: Anger as children die in rocket blast Condoleezza Rice heads for home as talks derailed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

56. [Conflict deepens Lebanon 's divide between rich and poor](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

57. [Navy warships sail to rescue Britons caught in Beirut hell MoD forced to act as 10,000 nationals are trapped in war zone](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

58. [US policy in tatters after raid MIDDLE-EAST CRISIS, Analysis](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

59. [Israel suspends air strikes after 50 killed in attack](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

60. [THE CROSS AND CRESCENT OF LEBANON How to bring Christians back into the Crusaders' camp](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

61. [Israeli raid kills at least 30 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

62. [PRO- SYRIA PARTY IN BEIRUT HOLDS A HUGE PROTEST](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

63. [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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

64. [Mercury rising](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

65. [Carrier heads for the Gulf to rescue Britons in Beirut hell ...but it's stilltwodays' sailing away](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

66. [CHILDREN KILLED IN AIRSTRIKE MASSACRE MIDDLE EAST 'JUST DAYS FROM OPEN 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

67. [Inside the hell of a city under siege](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

68. [*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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 200669. [*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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 200670. [*Evacuees back in Britain as Lebanon rescue stepped up*](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 200671. [*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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 200672. [*Fire rains down in endless 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

73. [Rally boosts pro- Syrian forces](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

74. [Israel in the wrong](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

75. [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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

76. [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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

77. [Evacuated Britons tell of Beirut nightmare](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

78. [Middle East crisis: Boiling point: Escalating 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

79. [*Run for your life: the rush to flee Israel 's air strikes*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

80. [*UN chief slams 'cowardly' militants over civilian deaths - MIDDLE EAST IN 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

81. [*Arab Majority May Not Stay Forever Silent*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

82. [*UN chief slams 'cowardly' militants over civilian deaths*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

83. [*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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

84. [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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

85. [U.S. evacuations nearly complete](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

86. [First British evacuees dock safely after fleeing 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

87. [In sermon, leading imam of Egypt assails terrorism People who kill innocents in the name of Islam are "liars and charlatans," he tells worshippers.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

88. [Middle East crisis: Just war of self-defence or slaughter of the innocent - one conflict through different eyes: Two weeks of violence in Lebanon have seen an estimated 616 people killed and hundreds of thousands displaced. Suzanne Goldenberg and Rory McCarthy speak to some of those caught in the conflict on both sides](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

89. [Two sides, one question: Why?: 'This is war. If we are not strong, it will go on forever.'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

90. [This is the devastation rained on Beirut. But as this dispatch reveals, Israel remains utterly defiant in the face of global censure](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

91. [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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

92. [Dead are left to rot in the rubble as airstrikes make rescue impossible](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

93. [Missiles and ridicule demoralise the UN](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

94. [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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

95. [Across the Middle East, Sermons Critical of the U.S.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

96. [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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

97. [At least seven Canadians killed 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: Jan 01, 2005 to Jul 31, 2006

98. [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: Jan 01, 2005 to
Jul 31, 2006

99. [Deep in the crater of death, they shook their fists at the sky AS MISSILES TERRORISE TYRE, A MOUNTING TOLL OF GRIEF 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: Jan 01, 2005 to
Jul 31, 2006

100. [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: Jan 01, 2005 to
Jul 31, 2006

Realities, absurdities of Israel-U.S. policies

The Toronto Star
July 30, 2006 Sunday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: OPINION; Pg. A17

Length: 765 words

Body

The humanitarian and moral crises in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip are the inevitable outcome of Israeli-American exceptionalism elevated to dangerous levels under George W. Bush and now adopted holus bolus by Stephen Harper.

It was a given that Israel would respond to the abductions and killings of its soldiers in Gaza and Lebanon. But there are many theories about how and why its response became so disproportionate that it triggered worldwide condemnation.

A new cabinet got railroaded by the defence establishment.

Israel was taken aback by the range, payload and accuracy of Hezbollah's missiles and had no choice but to go in, guns blazing, to send a strong message.

The abductions provided the excuse to do what Israel was planning anyway - try and destroy Hezbollah and Hamas.

Israel and the U.S. are redrawing the map of the region, with a wink and a nod from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan. They are all spooked by the American disaster in Iraq, the growing influence of Iran, the failure to curb its nuclear program, and by the rise of Hezbollah, in particular.

Regardless, the crisis has brought to the fore some of the realities and absurdities of Israeli-American policies.

Arab lives are cheap.

"Is the value of human life less in Lebanon than that of citizens elsewhere?" asked a distraught Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora. "Are we children of a lesser God? Is an Israeli teardrop worth more than a drop of Lebanese blood?" Yes.

Bush wants an end to the conflict but he does not want a ceasefire. The U.S. sympathizes with the suffering of the Lebanese and the Palestinians but it won't stop the Israeli offensives that create the suffering.

The immediate causes of the twin wars in Gaza and Lebanon must be addressed but not the nearly four decade-long occupation and colonization of Palestinian and Syrian lands.

Israel won't negotiate a prisoner exchange - getting its soldiers back in return for four or five Lebanese prisoners and some of the 1,500 Palestinian prisoners, including women and children - even though it has swapped prisoners before.

Realities, absurdities of Israel - U.S. policies

The 2004 UN resolution on Lebanon, calling for Hezbollah to be disarmed, must be enforced - but not the 1967 and 1973 Security Council resolutions calling on Israel to vacate Arab-occupied lands.

The Lebanese government is too weak to disarm Hezbollah but must nevertheless do so. Hezbollah - as the main representative of the Shiites, the single largest community, constituting 35 per cent to 40 per cent of the population - is, in fact, part of the government that's supposed to do the disarming.

We need an international force to contain Hezbollah even though France, the former occupier of Lebanon (1920-'43), Germany and others won't join without Hezbollah's consent.

Previous buffer zones between Lebanon and Israel had to be abandoned but a new one must be created.

Hezbollah must be shunned in favour of the Lebanese government even though the latter parrots all of Hezbollah's demands: prisoner exchange; an end to Israeli violation of Lebanese air space; the return of the disputed Shabaa Farms; and the release of Israeli maps showing where mines have been laid.

It is important to protect Lebanon's nascent democracy but it's all right to cripple it with the current military offensive.

Democracy must be promoted but crushed if it does not produce the right results, as in the Occupied Territories.

Israel can destroy but others must pay. Saudi Arabia has pledged \$1.5 billion, the U.S. \$30 million, the EU \$12.6 million and Canada \$1 million to help fix the bombed infrastructure, as they had done earlier in the West Bank and the Gaza.

Iran and Syria should not arm Hamas and Hezbollah but the U.S. can arm Israel, to which it has just rushed aviation fuel and bunker-buster bombs.

Pulverizing Palestinians, by force and economic strangulation, hasn't worked for 40 years but it must continue, even if it produces evermore militant forms of resistance.

Assassinating Arab leaders seems not to deplete their bench strength but targeted killings must go on, the latest in the Israeli crosshairs being Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah.

Iran and Syria can contain Hezbollah and Hamas but Iran and Syria must be boycotted.

NB: The Arab/Muslim world is inflamed; militancy is rising; moderates are marginalized; Islamists are winning wherever America is most involved; and the U.S., the biggest power in the world, and Israel, the biggest power in the region, are driven more and more by insecurity and fear.

It is to this world order that Harper has committed Canada.

Haroon Siddiqui appears Thursday and Sunday. [hsiddiq @ thestar.ca](mailto:hsiddiq@thestar.ca).

Load-Date: July 30, 2006

Rocket barrage deepens crisis; MIDDLE EAST BURNS; Israel

Australian Financial Review

July 17, 2006 Monday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 Fairfax Media Publications Pty. Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; International News; Pg. 12

Length: 770 words

Byline: Tony Walker JERUSALEM with wires

Body

Conflict between Israel and Lebanon's militant ***Hezbollah*** movement has undergone a serious escalation following a rocket barrage on the northern Israeli city of Haifa that has left at least eight people dead.

The rocket attacks on Haifa represent a significant widening of the crisis and will invite strong Israeli retaliation, adding to concerns about a spreading regional conflict.

At least five rockets hit Haifa, Israel's third-largest city, landing in a residential area and near the city's refinery, an apparent target for the Lebanese militants. But it was a direct hit on a storage room at the city's train station that caused most casualties.

Hezbollah attacks on the coastal town of 270,000 near the Israel-Lebanese frontier represent a direct challenge to Israel's ability to defend its northern population centres, and expose their vulnerability.

Meanwhile, Israel's bombing campaign over the length and breadth of Lebanon showed no sign of letting up at the weekend.

Israeli troops also attacked targets in the Gaza Strip where a bitter three-week stand-off over the abduction of an Israeli soldier has placed the Palestinian enclave and its 1.4 million residents under siege.

The international community remained bitterly divided over Israel's onslaught against ***Hezbollah*** strongholds and Lebanese infrastructure targets, with little sign of a consensus on how to calm the most dangerous Middle East crisis in a decade.

Arab leaders groped for a common position on what many of them regard as ***Hezbollah***'s reckless challenge to Israel that has brought death and destruction raining down on a fragile nation. But Israel's extreme reaction has obliged Arab moderates to condemn Israeli tactics while at the same time calling for United Nations intervention to end fighting before it further destabilises an already unstable region.

Saudi Arabia, which fears the spread of Iran-supported radical Shi'ism, accused ***Hezbollah*** of "adventurism" in provoking Israel.

But criticism from US allies mounted at the weekend, adding to pressures on the Bush administration to play a more conspicuous role in efforts to stop the mayhem

Rocket barrage deepens crisis MIDDLE EAST BURNS; Israel

Turkey's Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, gave voice to widespread concerns about US inaction when he said: "The powerful continue to crush the weak, but unfortunately those who hold power in the world are keeping silent."

Israel's attacks on Lebanon's infrastructure, including roads, bridges and power stations, have been widely condemned as a form of "collective punishment" harming all Lebanese, not just the **Hezbollah** militants.

Israel was also coming under strong criticism for the killing of innocent civilians caught in the crossfire of Israeli bombing raids.

In one episode, 16 people, many of them children, were killed in a raid near the southern Lebanese village of Marwaheen. **Women** and children were fleeing attacks on the village and surrounding areas.

Israeli aircraft yesterday heavily bombed Beirut's southern suburbs, **Hezbollah**'s stronghold, but they were also in action against targets elsewhere in Lebanon, including the north and the east towards the Syrian border.

Hezbollah, meanwhile, fired waves of rockets ever deeper into Israel, hitting the tourist town of Tiberias and raising the possibility of attacks further south as far as Tel Aviv itself.

In a potentially ominous development, Israel accused Iran of helping to fire a missile that damaged an Israeli warship late last week, disabling the vessel and killing at least one sailor. Three others are missing.

Iran has denied involvement, but its firebrand President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, further stoked tensions when he likened Israel to "Hitler" in comments on state television condemning the Israeli bombing campaign. Iran is viewed as the main supporter and sponsor of **Hezbollah**, the "party of god", which emerged at the time of Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

The death toll in the present conflict rose above 100 in Lebanon and reached about 23 in Israel. The fighting broke out when **Hezbollah** captured two Israeli soldiers and killed eight others in a raid across Israel's northern border.

Lebanon's beleaguered Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, indicated that he might send the Lebanese Army to the south to wrest control, but this would risk a confrontation with the **Hezbollah** militia and possible civil war.

NO RESPITE.

Weekend attacks in the Mideast

Lebanon: Israeli bombing continues and civilian casualties mount. Western countries prepare to evacuate their nationals.

Israel: Civilian casualties as **Hezbollah** rockets reach unprecedented 35kms into Israel.

Gaza: Israeli troops move back into northern Gaza Strip.

Graphic

MAP: NO RESPITE. Weekend attacks; Israel, Syria, Jordan, West Bank. SOURCE: The New York Times

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

Diplomatic pressure rises, as more die

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

July 24, 2006 Monday

0 Edition

Copyright 2006 Times Publishing Company All Rights Reserved

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 2A

Length: 648 words

Dateline: SIDON, Lebanon

Body

Mideast diplomats were pressing Syria to stop backing Hezbollah as the guerrillas fired more deadly rockets onto Israel's third-largest city Sunday. Israel bombarded targets in southern Lebanon, hitting a convoy of refugees.

Israel's defense minister said his country would accept an international force, preferably NATO, on its border after it drives back or weakens Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. President Bush's chief of staff, Joshua Bolten, said Sunday that the administration would be open to an international peacekeeping force but does not expect U.S. forces to participate in one.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice arrives in Israel today for talks with Mideast leaders. The United States backs Israel's refusal to talk about a cease-fire until it completes the military campaign against Hezbollah, but is under increasing pressure to help end the growing suffering and destruction in Lebanon.

A delegation from Saudi Arabia asked Bush on Sunday to push for a cease-fire.

"We requested a cease-fire to allow for the cessation of hostilities," the Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, said after meeting in the Oval Office with Bush, Rice and other top officials.

U.S. officials were publicly cool to the request.

In the 12th day of fighting, guerrillas launched a new barrage of more than a dozen rockets against the Israeli city of Haifa, killing two people and setting an apartment building on fire. Israeli missiles struck a convoy of fleeing Lebanese, killing four people, including a journalist.

In the far south, fighting with Hezbollah raged around the Israeli military's foothold in Lebanon - the border village of Maroun al-Ras, where the Israeli army has maintained a significant presence since Saturday. Hezbollah reported three fighters killed.

With Israel and the United States saying a real cease-fire is not possible until Hezbollah is reined in, Arab heavyweights Egypt and Saudi Arabia were pushing Syria to end its support for the guerrillas, Arab diplomats in Cairo said.

Diplomatic pressure rises, as more die

Meanwhile, a campaign to get humanitarian aid into Lebanon was gearing up. Officials were trying to speed the delivery of food, medicines, blankets and generators down bomb-shattered roads to the south where they are needed most - though Israel has not defined a safe route to the region.

The top U.N. humanitarian official, Jan Egeland, called for at least \$100-million in immediate aid but said billions of dollars would be needed to repair the damage from a conflict that has stunned Lebanon.

Egeland toured the rubble of Beirut's bombed-out southern suburbs, where Hezbollah had its headquarters. He condemned civilian casualties on both sides but called Israel's offensive "disproportionate" and "a violation of international humanitarian law."

At least 381 people have been killed in Lebanon, including 20 soldiers and 11 Hezbollah fighters, according to security officials. At least 600,000 Lebanese have fled their homes, according to the World Health Organization.

Israel's death toll stands at 36, with 17 people killed by Hezbollah rockets and 19 soldiers killed in the fighting, which began when the guerrillas snatched two Israeli soldiers and killed eight others in a cross-border raid July 12.

Lebanon's foreign minister, Fawzi Salloukh, said Sunday the two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah are in "good health."

The bombardment across the south grew, with over 120 targets attacked, the Israeli military said.

A minibus was struck, knocking a hole in the roof and killing three people and wounding 16 - including 10 women and four children, said Hassan Nasreddine, an International Red Cross doctor who arrived at the scene soon afterward.

A photographer for a Lebanese magazine, Laya Nejib, 23, was also killed as her taxi approached the convoy and the missiles landed, said her driver, who escaped unharmed. She was the first journalist killed in the Israeli campaign.

Graphic

PHOTO, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Load-Date: July 24, 2006

A LETTER FROM LEBANON; 'Summer is cancelled, the bullet holes no longer look cool'

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 17, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 The Federal Capital Press of Australia PTY Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: A; Pg. 2

Length: 838 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

AFTER the first 10 days of July I could see what locals meant when they said that no matter how much fun you had in Beirut in winter, summer blows your mind.

Its the combination of history, culture, food, beautiful women and the local beer, Almaza, no hangover no matter how much of it you drink.

The locals were the most welcoming people I've ever met. The buildings had all these cool bullet holes in them.

Even the most pessimistic locals I spoke to about the political situation assured me that nothing would happen till after the summer.

Then, after a huge night out I was going to sleep - some time after dawn I heard what sounded like fighter jets overhead - too loud and high pitched for normal planes. I told myself, "You're imagining things," rolled over and went to sleep.

Much later in the day, I joined friends for "morning" coffee and started talking about my crazy night and they all stared at me like I was crazy. "You haven't heard, have you?", they asked. "Heard what?"

Seven Israeli soldiers had been killed, two taken hostage. Israel had begun bombing the south.

Some say the impetus came from Iran and that Hezbollah's direct provocation of Israel, at such an inopportune time for the Lebanese, was a move by Tehran to divert the weight of world attention from its confrontation with the West over its nuclear program.

Others say that Syria wanted to keep Israel busy with Lebanon. This was, according to many, another case of Lebanon acting as a field in which the more substantial regional powers play out their never-ending world cup, using the Lebanese people as a ball.

Still others, mainly the Shi'a supporters of Hezbollah, rallied around their leader Hussein Nesralah, acting out of sympathy for the many Palestinians, who have been kidnapped as part of the escalating conflict in Gaza. Or perhaps he feels if Hezbollah generates conflict with Israel it can prevent further pressure building within Lebanon

A LETTER FROM LEBANON 'Summer is cancelled, the bullet holes no longer look cool'

for it to comply with UN security council Resolution 1559 which calls for Hezbollah itself to be disarmed along with all other Lebanese militias.

If the goal was to remind the Lebanese of the threat from the south, it succeeded. But many people see clearly that this time Hezbollah has provoked the wrath of that threat and don't appreciate the fact that summer, with its big tourist dollars, is cancelled, or that the power is out, or that they now are awake all night worrying about their family. The bombs fall in unpredictable locations all across this tiny little country, roughly the size and population of greater Sydney.

It seems the current situation, at least in the short term, has begun to polarise the population over the question of Hezbollah, whom many Lebanese, including many non-Shi'a, have referred to in the past respectfully as "The Resistance". A Druze friend, who was sitting in my flat with me, listening to the bombs, said, "Obviously, while the Israelis are here, we are with Hezbollah, but once this settles down, there is reckoning to do in this country."

Hezbollah's Shi'a support base, who are bound by religious affiliation and filled with gratitude to Hezbollah for their liberty from the Israeli occupation, will be less easily swayed. It has become a binary opposition for many of them - if you aren't with Hezbollah then you are with the Israelis, who, among their many sins, were responsible for tens of thousands of deaths during their occupation of Lebanon. You may as well be with Satan.

This well of support is not, however, bottomless, the same friend who talked about a "reckoning" in Lebanon when the confrontation has died down also informed me of his cab ride over. The driver had been a Shi'a who had fought in the south with Hezbollah against the Israelis, "Isn't it great?" the cab driver had said, "We really humiliated them, caught them by surprise."

My friend had nodded his head, but then posed a question, "Only, who is going to pay for this?"

The car went quiet and both men knew the answer. Lebanon was going to pay. While the Israelis dropped pamphlets warning civilians to avoid known Hezbollah infrastructure and while they were bombed to help "make a better future" for Lebanon, they were also bombing the airport and the local roads, particularly bridges, as well as all major routes out of the country, imposing a naval blockade, isolating Lebanon from the outside world and destroying the lives of its inhabitants.

Universities and thousands of businesses have already closed. The driver broke the silence to agree that it was a problem. He pulled up his jeans to reveal two wooden legs and said, "Nobody can say I don't hate the Israelis, but I have a family to feed."

Whatever Hezbollah was thinking when they did it, they did it; they gave the Israelis a reason to cancel summer.

At first, most of us thought this would pass. "A storm in a tea cup," I texted home. Then last night we heard bombing for hours on end and throughout the day. At least 10 have gone off in the last two hours.

Summer is cancelled. The bullet holes no longer look cool.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

Rocket barrage deepens crisis; MIDDLE EAST BURNS

Australian Financial Review

July 17, 2006 Monday

Second Edition

Copyright 2006 Fairfax Media Publications Pty. Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; International News; Pg. 12

Length: 772 words

Byline: Israel Tony Walker JERUSALEM with wires

Body

Conflict between Israel and Lebanon's militant ***Hezbollah*** movement has undergone a serious escalation following a rocket barrage on the northern Israeli city of Haifa that has left at least eight people dead.

The rocket attacks on Haifa represent a significant widening of the crisis and will invite strong Israeli retaliation, adding to concerns about a spreading regional conflict.

At least five rockets hit Haifa, Israel's third-largest city, landing in a residential area and near the city's refinery, an apparent target for the Lebanese militants. But it was a direct hit on a storage room at the city's train station that caused most casualties.

Hezbollah attacks on the coastal town of 270,000 near the Israel-Lebanese frontier represent a direct challenge to Israel's ability to defend its northern population centres, and expose their vulnerability.

Syria warned yesterday it would make a "harsh and direct" response if it was attacked by Israel. "Any aggression against Syria will have a firm and direct response not limited in time or means," Information Minister Mohsen Bilal said.

Meanwhile, Israel's bombing campaign over the length and breadth of Lebanon showed no sign of letting up at the weekend.

Israeli troops also attacked targets in the Gaza Strip where a bitter three-week stand-off over the abduction of an Israeli soldier has placed the Palestinian enclave and its 1.4 million residents under siege.

The international community remained bitterly divided over Israel's onslaught against ***Hezbollah*** strongholds and Lebanese infrastructure targets, with little sign of a consensus on how to calm the most dangerous Middle East crisis in a decade.

Arab leaders groped for a common position on what many of them regard as ***Hezbollah***'s reckless challenge to Israel that has brought death and destruction raining down on a fragile nation. But Israel's extreme reaction has obliged Arab moderates to condemn Israeli tactics while at the same time calling for United Nations intervention to end fighting before it further destabilises an already unstable region.

Rocket barrage deepens crisis MIDDLE EAST BURNS

Saudi Arabia, which fears the spread of Iran-supported radical Shiism, accused Hezbollah of "adventurism" in provoking Israel.

But criticism from US allies mounted at the weekend, adding to pressures on the Bush administration to play a more conspicuous role in efforts to stop the mayhem

Turkey's Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, gave voice to widespread concerns about US inaction when he said: "The powerful continue to crush the weak, but unfortunately those who hold power in the world are keeping silent."

Israel's attacks on Lebanon's infrastructure, including roads, bridges and power stations, have been widely condemned as a form of "collective punishment" harming all Lebanese, not just the Hezbollah militants.

Israel was also coming under strong criticism for the killing of innocent civilians caught in the crossfire of Israeli bombing raids.

In one episode, 16 people, many of them children, were killed in a raid near the southern Lebanese village of Marwaheen. Women and children were fleeing attacks on the village and surrounding areas.

Israeli aircraft yesterday heavily bombed Beirut's southern suburbs, Hezbollah's stronghold, but they were also in action against targets elsewhere in Lebanon, including the north and the east towards the Syrian border.

Hezbollah, meanwhile, fired waves of rockets ever deeper into Israel, hitting the tourist town of Tiberias and raising the possibility of attacks further south as far as Tel Aviv itself.

In a potentially ominous development, Israel accused Iran of helping to fire a missile that damaged an Israeli warship late last week, disabling the vessel and killing at least one sailor. Three others are missing.

Iran has denied involvement, but its firebrand President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, further stoked tensions when he likened Israel to "Hitler" in comments on state television condemning the Israeli bombing campaign. Iran is viewed as the main supporter and sponsor of Hezbollah, the "party of god", which emerged at the time of Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

The death toll in the present conflict rose above 100 in Lebanon and reached about 23 in Israel. The fighting broke out when Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers and killed eight others in a raid across Israel's northern border.

NO RESPITE.

Weekend attacks in the Mideast

Lebanon: Israeli bombing continues and civilian casualties mount. Western countries prepare to evacuate their nationals.

Israel: Civilian casualties as Hezbollah rockets reach unprecedented 35kms into Israel.

Gaza: Israeli troops move back into northern Gaza Strip.

Graphic

MAP: NO RESPITE. Weekend attacks; Israel, Syria, Jordan, West Bank. SOURCE: The New York Times

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

Rocket barrage deepens crisis MIDDLE EAST BURNS

End of Document

Israeli rockets rain down on Lebanon as 40 targets hit

Evening News (Edinburgh)

July 21, 2006, Friday

1 Edition

Copyright 2006 The Scotsman Publications Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: Pg. 2

Length: 493 words

Body

ISRAELI bombs pounded Lebanon today, striking more than 40 targets, mainly in southern Beirut.

And a United Nations-run observation post just inside Israel was hit during fighting between Israel and Hezbollah militants. The Israeli army blamed Hezbollah rockets, but a UN officer said it was an artillery shell fired by Israel.

Troops were also fighting Hezbollah militants inside the Lebanese border.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora said the number of Lebanese killed in the ten days of violence was more than 330.

He said that more than 55 bridges had been destroyed and claimed Israeli forces had also targeted medical convoys.

"This attack is no longer against Hezbollah, it is an attack against the Lebanese and Lebanon," he said.

Meanwhile, Israel warned hundreds of thousands of people to flee southern Lebanon "immediately", signalling a large-scale ground invasion was imminent.

Reports said Israel's military leaders had decided a major incursion across the border was the only way to push Hezbollah back.

HMS Bulwark, the Royal Naval assault ship carrying 1300 British evacuees - the biggest single exodus from Lebanon - arrived safely in Cyprus today.

Meanwhile, more Britons evacuated from Lebanon arrived back on UK soil.

Some 82 people, mainly women and children, landed at Gatwick early today on the final leg of their journey.

Defence Secretary Des Browne denied that the British response in evacuating people from Beirut had been too slow.

"This is a very complicated and quite difficult operation and I don't think we should underestimate the security issues that were involved," he said.

"This is a very successful operation which to date has allowed 2800 people to be evacuated. ."

Israeli rockets rain down on Lebanon as 40 targets hit

Asked why Britain was not calling for an immediate ceasefire in the conflict, he replied that there was no "quick fix".

"There is, on one view, a very simple solution to this and that is that Hezbollah could in the immediate crisis hand over prisoners and stop sending their missiles into Israeli territory."

Top Israeli officials met last night to decide how big a force to send into Lebanon.

They said Israel would not stop its offensive until Hezbollah was forced behind the Litani River, 20 miles north of the border - creating a new buffer zone in a region that saw 18 years of Israeli presence from 1982.

Signs of the dramatic escalation came as UN chief Kofi Annan warned of a humanitarian crisis.

He denounced Israel for "excessive use of force" and Hezbollah for holding "an entire nation hostage".

The United States - which has resisted calls for it to press its ally Israel to halt the fighting - is sending Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to the region, arriving in Israel on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Early today, one air force officer died and three were injured when two Israeli helicopters collided near the Lebanese border.

Meanwhile, the Lebanese exodus from the south of the country continued today with people streaming north to Beirut and other regions.

Load-Date: July 21, 2006

End of Document

Crisis in the Middle East, day by day

The Toronto Star
July 22, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NATIONAL REPORT; Pg. F03

Length: 1314 words

Body

June 9

Eight members of a Palestinian family are killed while picnicking on a beach in Gaza in an apparent Israeli shelling. The bloody images of dead Palestinian civilians and wailing survivors on the beach kindle anger against Israel.

June 10

After the beach bombing and Israeli forces' killing of a top Gaza militant, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas declares a three-day mourning period, and Hamas' military wing says it would no longer honour a 16-month cease-fire with Israel.

June 25

Palestinian militants infiltrate into Israel through a tunnel at a Gaza border crossing, kill two Israeli soldiers and capture another, Cpl. Gilad Shalit. The militants

demand the release of detained Palestinian women and children in return for information about Shalit.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert rejects the demands and orders the military to prepare for combat. Israel sends ground troops into Gaza after the assault and warns that militants and their leaders would be killed if the abducted soldier is harmed.

July 12

Hezbollah militants attack Israel, kill seven Israeli soldiers, wound eight and capture two. The group says it captured the soldiers to secure the release of detainees held in Israeli prisons.

Israeli rockets target roads and bridges in southern Lebanon in an apparent attempt to block escape routes, and troops enter the country to search for the abducted soldiers. Eight soldiers are killed and two injured in fighting with Hezbollah.

July 13

Israel's first wave of air strikes cripple and destroy essential infrastructure in Lebanon, including runways and fuel storage tanks at Beirut's international airport, military bases, and the main highway between Beirut and Damascus. About 60 people in Lebanon are killed during the missile strikes.

Crisis in the Middle East, day by day

Hezbollah reacts to the Israeli strikes, launching over 100 Katushya rockets into northern Israel and killing two civilians. A rocket strikes Haifa, Israel's third-largest city.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper calls the Israeli response to **Hezbollah**'s initial attack "measured."

July 14

Israeli air strikes continue to pummel Lebanon. More roads and runways are destroyed and **Hezbollah**'s headquarters in Beirut is hit.

Following the attack, **Hezbollah** TV airs a recorded audio speech during which Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, the group's secretary general, says: "You want an open war, we will go to the open war. We are ready for it. War, war on every level."

It is reported that a **Hezbollah** rocket launched into the northern Israeli town of Meron kills a woman and 4-year-old girl.

The United Nations Security Council meets in an emergency session to discuss a request by Lebanon to condemn the Israeli attacks. It is unable to agree on a response, but issues a brief statement calling for countries in the region to co-operate with UN efforts to arrange a ceasefire.

July 15

An Israeli air strike in southern Lebanon kills 15 people, including several children, Lebanese police report. Eighteen Lebanese villagers attempting to flee to the southern city of Tyre are killed when missiles hit their vehicles.

Hezbollah volleys rockets at the Israeli city of Tiberias, near the Lebanon-Israel border. Rockets also hit other Israeli cities near the border. No injuries are reported.

July 16

The Israeli military initiates air strikes targeting central Beirut, its suburbs and a key power plant. Eight Canadians are killed, including Ali El-Akhras, his wife Amira, and their four children aged 1, 4, 6 and 8. The extended family from Montreal was on holiday in the village of Aitaroun.

Hezbollah missiles target a rail repair station in Haifa. Eight people are killed.

Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay announces the government intends to evacuate Canadian citizens from Lebanon as soon as possible.

July 17

Israeli air strikes extend to the north, killing at least 15 people in and around Lebanon's second-largest city, Tripoli. Also under attack are Beirut, the eastern city of Baalbek and the port of Abdeh. Ten people are reportedly killed while driving across a bridge south of Beirut as Israeli missiles strike, as are nine Lebanese soldiers in Abdeh and nine Lebanese civilians in a missile attack in the city of Tyre - all were from one family, six of them children. Six Lebanese civilians are killed in an air strike on the village of Aitaroun, witnesses tell **Hezbollah** TV.

In Israel, Olmert says the attacks will not end until the two captured Israeli soldiers are freed and **Hezbollah** is no longer a threat.

Hezbollah continues to fire rockets into Israel, destroying an apartment block in Haifa and killing three people. A rocket lands near a hospital in Safed, reportedly injuring six people.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair suggest sending an international force to Lebanon to halt the **Hezbollah** attacks, but Israel says it is too soon to consider such a move.

Crisis in the Middle East, day by day

Palestinian gunmen in the West Bank city of Nablus ambush Israeli troops, killing one and wounding six.

In Gaza City, Israeli air strikes destroy the Palestinian foreign ministry building.

The international community steps up its evacuation of foreigners from Beirut, as thousands of Lebanese flee their homes. Canada hires seven ships from Cyprus to provide passage to Canadians who wish to evacuate Lebanon.

July 18

Israeli strikes continue for a seventh day, again hitting Beirut and Tyre. Eleven Lebanese soldiers die and 35 are injured in an air attack in the east of Beirut, and six bodies are pulled from the rubble of a building in the town of Aitaroun.

Hezbollah rockets continue to target the Israeli port city of Haifa.

The UN warns of a humanitarian disaster as Lebanese flee their homes, with air strikes on roads and bridges making it difficult for help to reach those in need. Annan calls for an international force to stop the fighting but the U.S. and Israel indicate they're not in agreement with the suggestion.

July 19

About 270 Canadians are evacuated from Beirut, after just one of seven ships shows up, while hundreds of other people are turned away at the city's port.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora says 300 people have been killed in the Israeli offensive, including at least 55 Lebanese civilians in air strikes. He appeals for an end to the hostilities and says Lebanon "has been torn to shreds."

Twenty-nine Israelis have died - including 15 civilians killed by rocket attacks - since the Israeli offensive against **Hezbollah** militants began.

Residents in the southern village of Srifa say at least 12 people are killed, while at least six people die in the southern town of Nabatiyeh.

Scores of **Hezbollah** rockets are fired into northern Israel, where two children in Nazareth are killed. Rocket fire also hits other cities, including Haifa and Tiberias.

Relief agencies announce that 500,000 people are now displaced within Lebanon and the need for water, food and shelter will soon be dire.

July 20

Nearly 1,400 Canadians are evacuated by ship from Beirut. The Canadian embassy says it could be two weeks before all the Canadians who want out can be evacuated.

Meanwhile, Harper meets the first evacuees in Cyprus, and flies 88 of them home to Canada aboard a government plane.

Israeli army strikes in a refugee camp in the Gaza Strip kill three people, including a 10-year-old girl, according to Palestinian medical personnel.

Annan presses for an "immediate" ceasefire between Israel and **Hezbollah**, and unveils a settlement plan involving the early release of two captured Israeli soldiers and the deployment of a stabilization force.

July 21

About 850 Canadians are evacuated by ship out of Beirut.

Crisis in the Middle East, day by day

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice rejects the idea of an immediate ceasefire between Israel and **Hezbollah**.

The death toll: at least 335 people in Lebanon, 34 in Israel.

Israeli tanks mass at the Lebanese border, apparently in preparation for a full-scale land invasion.

Compiled by Victoria Kent

Sources: Star files, Reuters

Graphic

ap photo Canadian nationals in Beirut wait to be evacuated on ships Wednesday. Fewer than 300 people managed to get out that day.

Load-Date: July 22, 2006

End of Document

Humanitarian catastrophe looms

The Toronto Star
July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A09

Length: 726 words

Byline: Andrew Mills, Special to the Star

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

Tens of thousands of Shiite Muslims fleeing danger and death in southern Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs have taken refuge in the city's Christian and Sunni quarters in the last six days.

The sudden influx of so many displaced Shiites, many of whom support the militant group *Hezbollah*, threatens to upset Lebanon's delicate sectarian balance.

For the first time in decades of conflict, Shiite refugees have had to take shelter in neighbourhoods where many residents oppose *Hezbollah* and blame the Islamic group for wrongly provoking the Israeli offensive that has killed more than 200 Lebanese since last Wednesday.

Israeli offensives in southern Lebanon have displaced Shiites many times over the last 30 years or so, but they've always taken refuge in the largely Shiite suburbs of south Beirut. But now, both the South and the southern suburbs are under Israeli fire and the Shiites must flee into the city itself.

What nobody knows is exactly how many people have been displaced, but it is clear that a humanitarian crisis looms ahead.

"People are aware that this is a problem that must be tackled, but the situation is changing so fast that plans beyond that are not being put into place," said a European diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"Cumulatively, there's risk that this will lead to a breakdown in law and order."

The Lebanese government has unlocked public schools for refugees to live in but has provided little else. That has allowed *Hezbollah* - which operates a social wing that provides health care and runs schools - to step into the breach, supplying foam mattresses, food and water to the displaced.

In the largely Christian neighbourhood of Achrafieh, tense *Hezbollah* "officials" guarded the entry to the Ones School yesterday afternoon, which has become home to 1,200 Shiite refugees. With walkie-talkies and clipboards, they monitor who comes in and out with bureaucratic precision, whether they're Red Cross doctors, journalists or refugees.

Humanitarian catastrophe looms

Upstairs, in classroom No. 3, eleven refugee families - with a combined total of 25 children - have been sleeping on the floor for five nights now. Shortly after the first attacks began, they fled villages in Lebanon's deep south, an area that is now one of the most dangerous spots in Lebanon.

"Three rockets landed around our house," said Jaffar Ashar, a father of five from a village near the southern city of Tyre. Nobody was hurt and within the hour he had loaded his entire family into the car and they drove north to Beirut.

But Israeli air strikes had taken out a bridge on the road and the family had to abandon their car, ford the river and find a taxi on the other side to take them the rest of the way.

They've been sleeping on the classroom floor every since.

In the corridor outside, women cook noodles on propane stoves and a group of men sit smoking a nargileh (water pipe).

"I think my house is still intact," said Hisham Sharifi, who has come from the Beirut suburb of Harat Hreik, a nearby Shiite neighbourhood that has been hit dozens of times in the last six days.

Like all the refugees interviewed at the Ones School yesterday, Sharifi had high praise for Hezbollah's continued attacks against Israel. Hezbollah's officials lurked within earshot for all the interviews.

"Hezbollah fights for our rights, for the rights of all Lebanese," Sharifi said.

But a few blocks from the school, in Sassine Square, the heart of Christian East Beirut, residents are intolerant of Hezbollah and its Shiite supporters.

"We want to live. We want peace. They want to fight," said Elie Freiha, 37, who owns a falafel shop in Sassine Square. "It's their identity and it will lead this country to disaster. We cannot live with that."

In this part of town, there's not only a growing backlash against Hezbollah, there's praise for the way Israel has responded - unleashing the deadliest attacks against Lebanon since 1982.

"There is no other solution for (Hezbollah). The Lebanese government can't disarm Hezbollah and I think Israel will succeed," said Claude Saliba, 30, a restaurant supplier. "Israel should do it. Not just for us Christians but for all Lebanese."

To be sure, some Christians in East Beirut looked past sectarian lines and saw the Shiite refugees as fellow Lebanese under attack:

"We cannot tell them to leave. They are suffering, just like us," said Charlotte Bridi, 61.

Graphic

MAHMOUD ZAYAT AFP-Getty Images A Shiite refugee from a southern Lebanese village feeds her child in a school in Saida yesterday as Israeli air strikes continued against Lebanon for the sixth consecutive day. Tens of thousands of displaced Shiite Muslims have holed up in Beirut's Christian and Sunni neighbourhoods.

Load-Date: July 18, 2006

My Lebanese friend is praying for the souls of the Israelis obliterating her city; Remarkable grace under fire in shattered Beirut

Daily Mail (London)

July 26, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: ED IRE; Pg. 12

Length: 1311 words

Byline: R N N MULLEN

Body

WE ARE not able to differentiate any more whether it is light or dark,' the email reads. 'The sun hasn't risen for three days. All we hear is that children, women and old people have died. My brother, Lebanon has become an antique. Youth are leaving. Lebanon is empty of the people who believed in it, empty of the minded and knowledgeable ones, empty of faith.' I never thought that any friend of mine would be party to such correspondence.

But these are the anguished words of the sister of a very good friend of mine sent to him in recent days. She lives in Beirut with their family. He lives in Rome.

Their normal correspondence would have been of everyday things family and friends, perhaps deeper thoughts about life. But in the space of a week, their lives have been turned upside-down. Now they speak of an appalling reality. The systematic destruction of their country, and the killing and maiming of hundreds of innocent people, occupies their minds. An ancient human problem has overtaken them and, using the most modern of communications techniques, they struggle to stay in touch and come to terms with it all.

'I don't want to cry but all I am doing these days is crying,' she writes.

'Not because of the fear itself, but because of the many things that are taking place. We are passive to it all. Yesterday was real hell.

We weren't able to sleep even for a few seconds tomorrow I am going with a friend of mine to volunteer with Caritas (Catholic relief agency). They need members.' When the news broke that Hezbollah had captured two Israeli soldiers, my friend in Rome knew that there would be trouble.

There is never a good time for such things but the outbreak of the current conflict couldn't have been worse for him personally.

After much saving up, he had bought his plane ticket to return to Lebanon.

That was a big decision. There are no low fares airlines connecting Beirut with Rome. And because it was high season and Lebanon was crammed with tourists, nothing was going for less than e700. He bought his ticket on Monday. Hezbollah seized the Israeli soldiers on Wednesday. Within days it was chaos and he knew he would not be flying.

My Lebanese friend is praying for the souls of the Israelis obliterating her city Remarkable grace under fire in shattered Beirut

The Lebanon he knew and loved has changed overnight. Courageously, his country had emerged from the shadow of past invasions to become a beacon to the Middle East again. Militarily it is weak. It has no anti-aircraft missiles and no army aircraft. Its interests are touristic, economic and cultural.

Like Switzerland, its defence rests more on the self-interest of states around it than on its own raw power.

Its current crisis stems from a serious problem that the Lebanese were in the process of resolving. Since Israel ceased to occupy South Lebanon in May 2000, the Hezbollah group, made up of Shi'ite Muslims had built up a large arsenal of weapons. Lebanon's national army has 64,000 men, but Hezbollah, with its 4,000 frontline fighters, is determined and disciplined and operates as a state within a state. It has a powerful and determined backer in Iran.

Last year, the group almost doubled their representation in the Lebanese Parliament and secured two seats in the national government.

As we know only too well from the Irish experience, there can be no true democracy when one of the political parties has an armed militia. But the sad thing is, talks were already under way to resolve the issue.

The United Nations had passed a resolution calling for the disarming of Hezbollah.

The Israelis had a legitimate interest in all these manoeuvres. They have everything to fear from having a well-armed, highly-motivated enemy over its border especially one which disputes Israel's very right to exist.

Hezbollah's arsenal is believed to include anti-tank systems, armoured personnel carriers and mortars of various calibers. They have large quantities of rockets and missiles as the people of Haifa now know. Hezbollah also has the Zelzal-1 missile. The word means 'earthquake' in Arabic. The missile could wreak havoc in built-up areas, population centres and concentrations of enemy forces.

Hezbollah was keeping these arms, the group claimed, because Israel retained control over a small, 20km long patch of land called the Shebaa Farms, as well as a number of Lebanese prisoners. They also pointed to the presence of armed Palestinian groups within the refugee camps of South Lebanon. But if Israel had ceded on the question of the refugees and the Shebaa Farms, Hezbollah wouldn't have had a leg to stand on in the eyes of Lebanese opinion. There was no great sympathy for Hezbollah.

As the world now knows, however, Israel chose a different route in response to the latest provocation by Hezbollah. And the people of Lebanon, especially members of the Christian community, feel betrayed.

'Growing up Christian in Lebanon, you'd always hear that it was Israel that kept us from being destroyed by the Muslims,' says Aaraj, a Lebanese priest now living in the U.S. 'My family had very close relationships with Muslims, and we admired the Jews. But if you bomb this place over and over again, you're going to destroy these relationships, and I don't know what comes next.' Some Lebanese wonder if Israel really values innocent civilian life at all. 'Is Arab blood water?' asks my Lebanese Christian friend who, crucially, does not see himself as Arabic. Christian groups in Lebanon are shocked at the indiscriminate nature of the Israeli attacks. They themselves have suffered. Christian areas like Ashrafieh, where few Muslim people live, have been bombed.

Also hit was a Christian Lebanese TV station, Tele Lumiere, which has nothing to do with the conflict. The Israelis killed 15 Lebanese soldiers who were noncombatants and who were under orders not to fire.

The point is certainly not that the Israelis should prefer Christians to Muslims. It's that they have far exceeded what was permissible in defence of their country.

Instead of concentrating their fire on Hezbollah strongholds, they set about deliberately destroying Lebanon's civilian infrastructure. This can't be justified merely on the basis that Hezbollah is part of the Lebanese government.

My Lebanese friend is praying for the souls of the Israelis obliterating her city Remarkable grace under fire in
shattered Beirut

Even war has its rules, and the international community has decreed that civilians may be placed at risk only where there is military necessity.

Civilians should not be targeted out of revenge or as a means of creating political pressure.

So Israel may have committed a war crime. The Israelis seem to want Lebanese people to witness the destruction of their country, the deaths of many innocents, and to blame Hezbollah. Such a disproportionate use of force amounts to 'collective punishment', an established taboo in the eyes of the civilised world.

It may also be counterproductive. There are now 850,000 displaced people in Lebanon according to one report. The country faces a humanitarian disaster.

Israel's stated objective of putting Lebanon back 20 years stands in sharp contrast, for example, to America's stated aim of creating a prosperous, stable democracy in Iraq. Israel may achieve its aim of stopping Hezbollah's military reach into Israel, but leave the militants in control of the region nonetheless.

The Lebanese people, whose army is of little more use than the Swiss Guard would be to the protection of Italy, see their country as a pawn in a game between greater powers. Israel, backed by the United States, wants to destroy Hezbollah and perhaps go after Iran. Hezbollah, backed by Iran and Syria, wants destruction on a large scale in Lebanon the better to stoke up sympathy for their cause among the Muslims of the Middle East.

It's a horrible situation for decent people to live in. But some of Lebanon's own people are showing remarkable grace under fire. 'These cowardly people,' writes my friend's sister about the Israeli bombers flying overhead, 'I don't know why I am praying for them. But I feel that they need it more than we do.'

Load-Date: July 27, 2006

Hill protesters slam Harper for response to crisis: PM showed 'immaturity' by not denouncing

Ottawa Citizen

July 17, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 Ottawa Citizen, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A2

Length: 463 words

Byline: Alexandra Zabjek, The Ottawa Citizen

Dateline: HEZBOLLAH, Israel

Body

HEZBOLLAH, Israel - Deriding Prime Minister Stephen Harper as a carbon copy of U.S. President George W. Bush, angry Lebanese-Canadians and their supporters marched on Parliament Hill yesterday to condemn recent Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Mr. Harper's reaction to the crisis.

About 200 protesters, many carrying Lebanese and Palestinian flags, circled in front of the Peace Tower in the afternoon and demanded an end to the bombings.

The protesters also sharply criticized Mr. Harper, who said Thursday that "Israel has the right to defend itself" after Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers a day earlier. Israel's response to the kidnappings was "reserved," said Mr. Harper on the eve of the G8 summit.

"The Harper response was not at all nuanced," said protester Wassim Garzouzi, 22. "The last government was a bit more diplomatic."

Mr. Garzouzi, whose parents are stuck in Lebanon after going there for holidays, said the Harper government showed "immaturity" when it did not condemn both sides in the crisis as other countries had done.

Mr. Harper joined Mr. Bush last week in placing sole blame for the crisis on Hezbollah, while Russia and France criticized Israel's attacks as being a disproportionate response to the kidnappings.

Yesterday, Mr. Harper joined G8 leaders to produce a strongly worded statement, demanding that Hezbollah and Hamas free kidnapped Israeli soldiers and calling on Israel to "exercise utmost restraint."

Many protesters noted Mr. Harper's reaction differed from what they might have expected from former prime minister Jean Chretien.

"I think he is trying to improve the image of the country with the United States," said George Shammass, 77, of Ottawa. "Chretien wouldn't say this. I prefer my country to have a more balanced humanitarian attitude."

Protesters said they did not attend yesterday's rally to support Hezbollah, but many appeared at least mildly sympathetic to the group, which is banned as a terrorist organization in Canada.

Hill protesters slam Harper for response to crisis: PM showed 'immaturity' by not denouncing

"What about Gaza and Lebanon and Hezbollah? They don't have the right to defend themselves?" asked Walid Darwish, saying the Hezbollah kidnappings were a response to earlier Israeli incursions into the Gaza strip.

Yesterday's protest ended abruptly when a scheduled speaker was interrupted by a man who took control of the microphone and decried Zionism and the "occupation of Palestine." The female speaker apologized for the man's remarks before ending the rally.

At a rally Montreal, organized by a group called the Montreal Lebanese Committee, some marchers carried signs with photos of Mr. Harper that read, "We were stupid for voting for you."

About a dozen children headed the march for a period, shouting along with their parents, "Israel assassin, Canada complice" (Israel murderer, Canada accomplice).

Graphic

Photo: Jean Levac, The Ottawa Citizen; Demonstrators gathered on Parliament Hill yesterday to demand an end to Israeli attacks on Lebanon.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

Israel broadens attacks: Showdown spirals toward war: Iran accused of helping to cripple naval vessel

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 16, 2006 Sunday

EARLY Edition

Copyright 2006 The Gazette, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 862 words

Byline: CanWest News Service; Los Angeles Times

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

Israeli air strikes hit central Beirut for the first time yesterday and cross-border rocket barrages struck deeper inside Israel, reaching the previously unscathed city of Tiberias as the confrontation between Hezbollah and the Jewish state spiralled toward all-out war.

Fuelling fears that the conflict could spill over into regional strife, Israeli officials asserted that Iranian personnel had helped fire a missile Friday that crippled an Israeli naval vessel off the coast of Lebanon and killed at least one sailor. Israel and the United States have accused Iran, Hezbollah's chief patron, of bearing ultimate responsibility for the Shiite Muslim group's actions.

Israeli fighter jets, attack helicopters and warships attacked the northern port city of Tripoli, a major border crossing with Syria and a lighthouse on Beirut's waterfront that Israel said was equipped with radar which helped target the Israeli warship.

But Israel continued to concentrate its most intense fire on Hezbollah strongholds in southern Beirut and major transport arteries leading from the south to the capital and to Syria.

Civilians on both sides bore the brunt of the violence. A single Israeli air strike killed at least 15 people fleeing the fighting in south Lebanon, 12 of them children. More than 100 Lebanese have been killed in four days of air strikes, according to Reuters. Four Israeli civilians also have died.

Two separate rocket barrages hit the Israeli resort city of Tiberias, injuring eight people and sending frightened sunbathers fleeing the shores of the Sea of Galilee. The strike, the first rocket attack in Tiberias since the 1973 Yom Kippur war, heightened Israel's anxiety that many of its urban centres now lie within the range of Hezbollah's weapons.

Israel accused Iran yesterday of supplying the sophisticated radar-guided missile used in the attack on its Saar 5 missile ship, as well as the men to run it. The ship, which was struck 15 kilometres from shore, was so badly damaged that it had to return to the Israeli port of Haifa for emergency repairs.

Israel broadens attacks: Showdown spirals toward war: Iran accused of helping to cripple naval vessel

Israel charged that that members of Iran's Revolutionary Guard were in Lebanon providing Hezbollah with help. An Israeli general said that it had not been aware that Hezbollah had acquired the missile and that instructions had now been issued to counter the threat.

In a statement issued by its Beirut embassy, Iran denied that it had any troops in Lebanon or that it had anything to do with the missile strike. State television in Iran said President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad condemned the Israeli offensive.

At least 90 rockets fell yesterday across northern Israel, pushing the total since the fighting broke out to more than 400, the Israeli military said. Tens of thousands of northern Israel's 750,000 people are spending much of their time in bomb shelters or in their homes, venturing out only to stock up quickly on supplies.

The fighting was triggered by a Hezbollah cross-border raid on Wednesday that left eight Israeli soldiers dead and two in Hezbollah's captivity.

Israel declared the raid an act of war by Lebanon, whose leaders say they are powerless to rein in Hezbollah, which is also a partner in the government.

In by far the strongest statement to emerge from a largely silent Lebanese administration during the past four days, Prime Minister Fouad Siniora implored the UN to save his country from ruin. "We call for an immediate cease-fire backed by the United Nations," an impassioned Siniora told a news conference in Beirut. In a counterweight to the declaration of war issued by Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah the previous night, Siniora spoke with despair. "Destruction is raining down around the clock," he said.

The Arab League said after an emergency meeting in Cairo yesterday that the peace process had failed in the Middle East and called on the UN Security Council to intervene.

At the G8 gathering in Russia, U.S. President George W. Bush urged Syria to "exert influence" to rein in the Shiite militia. But Israel has insisted that Syria is not a target in this offensive. When an air strike hit close to the Syrian border yesterday, Israeli commanders were quick to put out the word that military activity was within Lebanese territory and to accuse Hezbollah of falsely reporting otherwise.

In Lebanon, the latest barrage of Israeli airstrikes hit heavily Shiite neighborhoods in Beirut's southern suburbs, the Bekaa Valley and villages hard against Israel's frontier.

At least 15 people, including women and children, were killed as they fled the southern town of Marwaheen, apparently on Israeli orders. The group included 12 children. The Israeli military said the intended target of the strike had been Hezbollah rocket-launching sites, and expressed regret over civilian casualties.

Amid fears the fighting could prove prolonged and bloody, several European countries began to evacuate their citizens.

Israeli military officials, meanwhile, sought anew to prepare the country for a lengthy confrontation. "We have to be ready for some more days, perhaps more than that - perhaps weeks - to face this reality," declared Maj.-Gen. Gadi Eizenkot, the head of the army operations branch.

Graphic

Colour Photo: HASSAN AMMAR, AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE VIA GETTY IMAGES; Lebanese civilians outside the hospital in Tyre look at the bodies of the people killed by an Israeli missile as they fled the southern town of Marwaheen. The group included 12 children, images of their mangled corpses were displayed on Lebanese television.

Israel broadens attacks: Showdown spirals toward war: Iran accused of helping to cripple naval vessel

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

End of Document

Cruel, corrupt and full of hatred - it's Iran's mullahs who are to blame

Daily Mail (London)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 12

Length: 1216 words

Byline: ANN LESLIE

Body

OH GOD. Oh Allah. Oh whoever you may, or may not, worship - how long must this go on? The crisis and bloodshed in the Middle East seems endless, and insoluble.

In decades of covering the region, I have seen 'hopeful' peace plans come and go.

But every time these plans fail - as they always have done - blame is variously attributed to Zionism, Islamofascism, the Americans, Jews in general, corrupt Arab dictators and, of course, Britain for having been the imperialist power that divided up the Muslim 'caliphate' after the defeat of the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

And did I mention Uncle Tom Cobley?

So often, the blame game in the Middle East seems to be the only game in town.

Now, Bush and Blair are playing it - not only (correctly) accusing Hezbollah, the heavilyarmed and disciplined Islamist paramilitary group in Lebanon, of provoking the latest conflict, but also Iran and Syria, a secular dictatorship run by the Alawites, a small Shia sect.

Syria doesn't mind murdering its own fellow Muslims if it deems them to be threatening the brutal, stupid and corrupt Assad regime.

After all, the father of the present hereditary ruler of allegedly republican Syria cheerfully flattened an entire neighbourhood of the city of Hama which housed Islamic opponents, including their women and children. The Arab world scarcely shrugged.

But, of course, if militant Islamists - who wouldn't be tolerated in Syria - set about killing Israelis, well that's fine by the Syrian regime: Ah, dear Arab brothers, do you want some money, offices, transport facilities, the odd rocket or two?

No problem! We want to get rid of the 'Zionist entity' too! As you know, we (unlike those U.S-toadying Arab regimes such as Jordan and Egypt) don't even recognise the 'Zionist entity' as a legitimate nation.

But it is Iran, a martyrdomobsessed Shia theocracy, run by corrupt and relentlessly cruel mullahs (one of whom, under Sharia law, strangled to death with his own hands a teenage girl for 'immorality') which is largely responsible for what is going on now on the shores of the Mediterranean.

Cruel, corrupt and full of hatred - it's Iran 's mullahs who are to blame

The thousands of rockets which **Hezbollah** claims to possess come from Iran, via Syria.

The abolition of Israel has been a formal part of Iran's constitution since the 1979 revolution (when the Ayatollah Khomeini, who later condemned Salman Rushdie to death for publishing a novel which he found offensive, despite never having read it).

When I last went to Friday prayers in the Iranian capital Tehran, a sleek, fat, deeply corrupt ayatollah, swathed in a white turban and wielding a Kalashnikov, gave the sermon.

He was the mullah whom the West had fooled itself into thinking was 'pragmatic' and 'moderate'.

And what did he preach? It was the usual bloodthirsty rant: 'Death to Israel!' 'Death to America!' 'Death to Britain!'.

(To the Iranian regime, America is the 'Great Satan'; Britain is the 'Little Satan').

Recently, that same ayatollah declared that Iran didn't have to go to the trouble of 'wiping Israel off the face of the map' (which the loopily fundamentalist Iranian president declares to be his aim).

This 'moderate', 'pragmatic' mullah confidently predicted that the two terrorist groups **Hezbollah** and Hamas would - thanks to Allah, the most merciful, most compassionate - do the job instead.

Hezbollah was set up in the Eighties by Iran's Revolutionary Guard in response to the long and bloody occupation of Southern Lebanon by Israel.

Years ago, I was told by a **Hezbollah** spokesman in Beirut that 'we are here to drive the Israelis out of Lebanon'. But the Israelis left Lebanon six years ago.

So why does **Hezbollah** remain in place? Because it is dedicated not to freeing Lebanon from foreign forces, but to destroying Israel.

Its manifesto includes the Russian tsarist forgery The Protocols Of Zion, which alleges a plot by Jews to conquer the world, as well as one of the ahadith (the sayings of the Prophet), which declares that Paradise can only be attained if all Jews are destroyed.

It is horrifying now to witness the fact that, between them, the implacable **Hezbollah** and the implacable Israel are destroying Lebanon piece by piece.

When I first went to Beirut, it was dubbed the 'Paris of the East': sophisticated, cosmopolitan, laid-back, seductive, louche, smelling of coffee, croissants, intrigue, and good red wine - of which the Sunni Muslims as well as the Christians were very fond.

I would stay in the achingly glamorous St George hotel (still in ruins) on the coastal corniche; it used to be full of spies (such as Kim Philby) and 'businessmen', and all-round chancers, wheelerdealing effortlessly in several languages, surrounded by glittering shoals of heavily madeup, bejewelled wives, girlfriends and high-class tarts.

That seductive, open-hearted, open-minded, witty and glamorous Lebanon was gradually beginning to emerge again after 15 years of civil war.

Last year, I went there after the so-called 'Cedar Revolution' which, thanks to massive popular and peaceful demonstrations, drove the hated Syrian occupation forces out of the country.

But then I went to the southern suburbs of Beirut - now being bombed by the Israelis - to interview a member of the **Hezbollah** 'politburo'.

This was a totally different Beirut; it resembled the poorest neighbourhoods in Tehran. The broken-down streets were full of black-veiled **women** and **Hezbollah** flags - pale yellow and green, adorned with a fist bearing a Kalashnikov.

Cruel, corrupt and full of hatred - it's Iran 's mullahs who are to blame

Portraits of the grim, beetlebrowed Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini and the current Iranian Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, adorned the lampposts.

And posters saying 'No to 1559' were everywhere. The UN Security Council's Resolution 1559 demanded that foreign forces (i.e. Syria) leave Lebanon and that all militias be disbanded. Syria left, the various militias were disbanded - but not Hezbollah.

The bearded, turbaned Sheikh Abdul Majid Ammar informed me that Hezbollah would never disarm, 'because, otherwise, Lebanon cannot defend itself against Israel'. But Israel is not attacking Lebanon, I pointed out. 'But it might,' he answered levelly.

And now, of course, it has - largely because Hezbollah in Lebanon is a fully-armed state within a state, bent on Israel's destruction. The Lebanese Government is too weak to destroy Hezbollah (besides, many of its military men are, like Hezbollah, Shia Muslims and therefore unwilling to fight their 'brothers').

So what can the world do, apart from wring its hands?

It could perhaps assemble an international force (including Arabs) to create a demilitarised zone on the Lebanese/Israeli border. And call for a ceasefire.

And pressure Hezbollah and Hamas to relinquish the Israeli soldiers they have kidnapped.

And, of course, pressure the Israelis to hold back and not dismantle hapless Lebanon for its failure to control its state within a state. Only the Americans - who keep Israel afloat with aid and weapons - can do the latter.

But both Syria and Iran must be willing to use their influence to rein in their terrorist surrogates.

If they don't, I'm afraid that beautiful, seductive Beirut will keep on burning: the smoke from its bombed buildings, the despairing cries of its people, will continue to bring back terrible memories of those long, murderous, civil-war years which, until the past few days, they believed they had finally left behind.

Graphic

LEADER OF A CRUEL REGIME: IRAN'S AYATOLLAH KHAMENEI

Load-Date: July 18, 2006

Beirutis Try to Plumb the Abyss Between Elegance and Chaos

The New York Times

July 25, 2006 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 2; Foreign Desk; Pg. 11; TURMOIL IN THE MIDEAST: DIVISIONS

Length: 1387 words

Byline: By SABRINA TAVERNISE

Dateline: BEIRUT, Lebanon, July 24

Body

The Paul Restaurant is still serving elegant lunches of prosciutto and chevre. At the Printania, an elegant hotel on a hill east of the capital, stylish guests sip Arabic coffee near a glass display case of eclairs and chilled chocolate mousse.

Some miles away, in the southern suburbs, the destruction from Israeli airstrikes is more earthquake than war zone. Streets have entirely disappeared. Rubble from bombed buildings in some areas is piled several stories high. City blocks, or what is left of them, are ghostly.

In the days since Israeli planes began to bomb Lebanon, this seaside capital has been almost physically split in two, with its largely Shiite flank mutilated by Israeli airstrikes and most of the rest of the city remaining relatively unscathed, if quieter and emptier than usual.

The stark physical contrast reflects a deep and growing divide in Lebanese society between the less affluent, more religious Shiite south and the more urban center, largely of Sunni Muslims, Druse and Christians, which has built and benefited from a long-awaited economic boom.

"The country is going in two totally different directions," said Ghassan Salhab, a Lebanese filmmaker and a middle-class secular Shiite. "One is, 'We have an enemy and we need to fight it,' " he said, referring to Hezbollah's supporters. "The other is, 'We want to live and build and go with the world, wherever it goes.' "

For the south, which suffered for more than a decade under Israeli occupation, Hezbollah's leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, is a folk hero who helped drive out the Israelis. But many middle-class Lebanese who have worked for the past decade to generate an economic revival are tired of war and resent Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid on July 12.

"The first thing I thought was, 'How crazy to go wake up the monster,' " said Issam Saleh, a secular Shiite and an engineer who spends most of his days writing poetry in the garden at the Paul Restaurant. Hezbollah "knew exactly what would happen, but did it anyway."

Beirutis Try to Plumb the Abyss Between Elegance and Chaos

Even so, as the Israeli bombardment of the south drags on, dividing lines have softened: Even those who hate Hezbollah are horrified by the destruction. Now, as the war rages without any foreseeable end, almost everybody has been wondering where their embattled country can possibly go from here.

For Mr. Salhab, who has spent the days since the bombings filming in his now empty neighborhood in central Beirut, the question came sharply into focus through a camera lens, during the evacuation of tens of thousands of foreigners by sea to Cyprus.

"There was the sea and the sky and a boat that came into the frame," he said, sitting in a crowded coffee shop called Wimpy's in downtown Beirut. "Then another, and another.

"You have to ask the question: What is next?"

In many ways, divisions have always been the story of Lebanon. In the 1970's and 80's, this country's many sects fought a civil war so bloody that Beirut became a synonym for disaster zone. Later, Israelis occupied the southern portion of the country to drive out the Palestine Liberation Organization. Many Christians initially greeted the Israeli invaders as deliverers. As the occupation dragged on, it was the southern Shiites who suffered most.

But the recent fighting is more troubling, in part because its roots are deeper. Instead of looking to drive out an essentially foreign group -- the P.L.O. -- Israel is engaged in a conflict with Hezbollah, a homegrown Lebanese one. That group has eagerly plunged into battle, defining it in religious terms, difficult to defuse in talks.

The division burst into the open last year, when hundreds of thousands of demonstrators, Christian and Muslim, marched in support of the government after the assassination of Rafik Hariri, the country's wealthy former prime minister, who had driven the transformation of postwar Beirut from a dead zone to a vacation destination. The marches brought together Lebanese who had even fought against each other in the civil war.

At the same time, Hezbollah and thousands of Shiite supporters organized huge counterdemonstrations in support of Syrian forces that the government was trying to evict.

"It was like a thorn in our hearts," said a Lebanese businessman, a Druse, who was stranded in the Damascus airport on Thursday after fleeing Lebanon.

In Beirut, the disconnect seemed particularly sharp in the Sanayeh Park, where refugees sprawled on blankets and grimy foam mattresses lay next to evening walkers. At night, Hezbollah songs are sung, annoying residents.

On Saturday evening two women in head scarves, a mother and a daughter, stood across the street holding a bag of potatoes in front of a sparkling apartment high-rise and a sign that read Garden View Apartments.

"They don't look at us," said the daughter, Samar Halewei, 37. Her mother disagreed, saying many people in the neighborhood had treated them kindly. The owner of a car on which Ms. Halewei had been leaning got in and drove away, removing her resting place.

Some of the gap between the two Beiruts has roots in historical animosities. On Saturday in Fatqa, a small Christian town north of the capital, an angry mob of men attacked a car that had a sticker of a Christian group that has made an alliance with Hezbollah, throwing things at the car and pounding it with their fists. Hours before, a friend of the attackers, a guard at a nearby television tower, had been killed in an Israeli airstrike, and the men were furious that Hezbollah's actions had invited destruction on their town.

"They wanted this war," said a man in a striped shirt named Joel. A cashier at a grocery nearby, Rita Dekmak, began to cry when she started to speak about the dead man. She spoke darkly of Shiite soldiers who been stationed near the tower but left suddenly.

"They all left because they knew," she said, wiping her tears.

Beirutis Try to Plumb the Abyss Between Elegance and Chaos

While the bombing has forced thousands of southerners, mostly Shiites, to flee for their lives on roads with broken bridges, often without any possessions, many middle-class residents of the capital have taken refuge in mountain towns just north and east of here.

In Broumana, a resort town a 30-minute drive up a mountain from Beirut, the garden at the Printania Hotel was full of well-dressed guests on Saturday, sipping drinks and enjoying the afternoon. Scenes of absolute desolation flashed on the screen of a large television that had been set up for the World Cup but was now watched avidly for news of bombings and the conflict. A glass case of pastries stood nearby.

But the longer Israeli planes continue to pound the country, the more the Lebanese find it difficult to stay angry with Hezbollah. Horrific scenes unfolded on the Printania screen: collapsed buildings and vast stretches of rubble in Nabatiya, in the south.

"We're not Hezbollah supporters, but we cannot excuse what the Israelis are doing," said Rima Beydoun, a secular Shiite who owns an advertising agency.

"We knew there would be repercussions, but no one expected they would be like this," Mr. Salhab, the filmmaker, said of Shiite support for Hezbollah. "I am very critical of that part of my country, but I have to put it aside, because we are being destroyed.

"At this point, I can't just say: Hezbollah, go to hell."

The situation is made all the more complicated by the nature of Hezbollah. It functions as a civil aid group as well as a militia, helping with schools and in hospitals, and in many cases providing essential public services at times in the years of the war when the government was simply not able. It has a savvy media operation, with a spokesman who takes groups of journalists on tours of the devastation in southern Beirut with a truck that blares Hezbollah fighting songs from rows of speakers.

"It's a dead end because Israel cannot win," Mr. Salhab said, finishing his coffee.

The destruction continued in southern Beirut, but Mr. Salhab did not want to film it. He had seen the images on television, but needed a more personal way to understand them.

In the end, he chose to stay in his own neighborhood.

"I tried to film this place which is at the margins of destruction," he said. "I just wanted to film the strange suspended life there."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: At the De Prague Cafe in Beirut, it is possible to have a quiet beer and conversation. A few miles away, Israeli jets are leveling Shiite districts. (Photo by Bryan Denton for The New York Times)

(Photo by Associated Press)

(Photo by Agence France-Presse) Chart/Map: "PRIMER: Religion and Fighting in Lebanon" Lebanon is a country characterized by extraordinary religious diversity, with leadership and politics divided along sectarian lines. Religious Distribution Shiite Muslims -- 35% of total population PREDOMINANT AREAS: Southern Beirut, southern Lebanon,

Beirutis Try to Plumb the Abyss Between Elegance and Chaos

around Baalbek in the Bekaa Valley Sunni Muslims -- 25% of total population
PREDOMINANT AREAS: Sidon, Tripoli. Are widely dispersed, but primarily urban.
 Druse An offshoot of a Shiite Islamic sect, 5% of total population
PREDOMINANT AREAS: Area south of Beirut
 Christians 35% of total population
 25% Maronite
 10% other Christians
PREDOMINANT AREAS: Beirut suburbs, the mountain ridges
 Map of Lebanon highlighting the areas listed above.
A History of War
 Lebanon's recent history includes a 15-year civil war, 29 years of Syrian domination and regular fighting between **Hezbollah** and Israel.
 1975 -- Civil war begins. Over the next 15 years, Christians, Sunnis, Shiites, Druse, Palestinians and Syrians fight each other in shifting combinations.
 1976 -- Syria sends troops into Lebanon as peacekeepers, effectively beginning its control of the country.
 1978 -- After Palestinian attacks, Israel sends troops into southern Lebanon (below).
 1982 -- Israel invades Lebanon. The Syrian Army is ousted from Beirut and thousands of Palestinian guerrillas leave after a 10-week siege.
 1982 -- **Hezbollah**, the radical Shiite force backed by Iran and Syria, emerges.
 1985 -- Israel withdraws from all of Lebanon except for a nine-mile wide buffer zone on the southern border.
 1990 -- The civil war ends.
 2000 -- After years of increasingly sophisticated attacks by **Hezbollah**, Israel withdraws from southern Lebanon.
 2005 -- Rafik Hariri, a former Prime Minister, is assassinated. Pressure increases on Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon, and it withdraws in April.
 2006 -- **Hezbollah** captures two Israeli soldiers, Israel launches attacks on Lebanon. (Sources by Central Intelligence Agency

news reports)
 Chart/Map: "Attacks Both Precise and Blunt" Israeli attacks on Beirut since July 12.
IN THE CITY -- Three targets were hit with strikes that did not damage much of surrounding area. A radar installation on a lighthouse was destroyed, but the lighthouse still stands.
HARET HRAIK NEIGHBORHOOD -- This suburb, which served as **Hezbollah**'s headquarters, has been bombed practically every day. Whole blocks have disappeared into heaps of rubble. Some buildings still stand, but the neighborhood is essentially destroyed.
SOUTHERN NEIGHBORHOODS -- Four other neighborhoods have been bombed for several days though not as extensively as Haret Hraik.
 Map of Beirut highlighting the following areas attacked by Israel:
 Lighthouse
 Sea port area
 Trucks mistaken for rocket launchers were destroyed at this site.
 Chouaifate
 Kfarchima
 Baabda
 Hadet
 Haret Hraik

Load-Date: July 25, 2006

On the Hopes for a Mideast Truce

The New York Times

July 28, 2006 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 4; Editorial Desk; Pg. 28

Length: 586 words

Body

To the Editor:

Re "Cease-Fire Talks Stall as Fighting Rages on 2 Fronts" (front page, July 27):

Against the wishes of the rest of the world, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice insists that there is no point to calls for a cease-fire unless the conditions are right to make it a lasting one.

So what if a cease-fire lasts only a day before fighting erupts again? Don't those lives saved in one day mean anything? Would a temporary cease-fire create more lost lives in the future?

Enough with the cold calculus of realpolitik; stop the loss of human lives now.

Kate Somers

Princeton, N.J., July 27, 2006

To the Editor:

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora of Lebanon asks rhetorically, "Is the value of human life less in Lebanon than that of citizens elsewhere?" (front page, July 27).

This is a question he should ask of Iran and Syria, as well as of Hezbollah.

It is Iran, Syria and Hezbollah that deliberately emplace missiles next to women and children, in residential neighborhoods. These terrorists, not Israel, spend innocent human life as if it were inflated currency of little worth.

Dennis Flynn

Byfield, Mass., July 27, 2006

To the Editor:

The systematic dehumanization of the Arab people is evident when Israel targets Lebanon for collective punishment.

On the Hopes for a Mideast Truce

The Hezbollah terrorists have adopted the same logic of holding the Israeli people responsible for the actions of their government.

When Prime Minister Fouad Siniora asks, "Is the value of human life less in Lebanon than that of citizens elsewhere?," the answer, devoid of diplomatic parlance, is yes, if you agree with the Israeli attacks.

Jahan Habib

Boston, July 27, 2006

To the Editor:

Why is there no outrage against Hezbollah or Hamas, only criticism of Israel? Israel never sought these conflicts.

It appears that terrorist organizations have special dispensation to bring death and destruction to any country without condemnation from the international community. The question is why.

What sad times for the world and humanity.

Linda Vaughn

Daytona Beach, Fla., July 27, 2006

To the Editor:

Nicholas D. Kristof ("In Lebanon, Echoes of Iraq," column, July 25) uses the example of Israel's restrained conduct toward Hezbollah from 2000 until two weeks ago to prove the wisdom of restraint.

But Israel's restraint during this time allowed Hezbollah to arm itself to the teeth right along the Israel-Lebanon border, waiting for the appropriate excuse to rain down rockets on Israel's towns and cities.

Since Israel didn't seem to care, the international community didn't put much effort into enforcing United Nations Resolution 1559 (which calls for the disarming of Hezbollah).

Now that Israel has put its foot down by responding strongly, the international community has followed, and there is a consensus that Hezbollah must be disarmed.

This would not have been possible if Israel had responded to this attack as it had to others.

Ben Bokser

Jerusalem, July 25, 2006

To the Editor:

Nicholas D. Kristof mentioned that Israel was not rewarded for its withdrawal from Gaza and Lebanon.

The reports from Gaza after the withdrawal leave little room for the idea of a reward.

The Israeli forces withdrew from Gaza and tightly shut the air, sea and land access to the strip. Goods perished at the "crossing points," and the movement of humans occurred at a snail's pace, when and if it occurred at all.

These restrictions resulted in a suffocating atmosphere, a de facto siege. What is there to reward?

Hana El Sahly

Houston, July 25, 2006

On the Hopes for a Mideast Truce

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

End of Document

'THE HUMAN SANDBAGS'; More than 100 child victims in Lebanon. Now the fear is they are used as shields

The Evening Standard (London)

July 20, 2006 Thursday

Copyright 2006 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved

London
**Evening
Standard**

Section: C MERGE; Pg. 1

Length: 492 words

Byline: VALENTINE LOW

Body

CHILDREN in Lebanon are bearing the brunt of the violence.

More than 130 are feared to have been killed in nine days of attacks, a British charity said this afternoon.

The warning from Save The Children comes amid claims that civilian families are being used as "human sandbags" by **Hezbollah** fighters around their missile launch sites.

About 300 people have died and 1,000 wounded, with another 500,000 fleeing the war zone, since Israel began bombarding the country as it attacked the militant Islamic organisation based there.

The UN believes that a third of those killed are children. But Save The Children believes the proportion is as high as 45 per cent.

One leading Israeli commentator echoed the feelings of many of his fellow countrymen when he accused **Hezbollah** of using civilians - and by extension, children - as human shields. Writing in today's Evening Standard, Amos Oz said: "**Hezbollah** missile-launchers are too often using Lebanese civilians as human sandbags."

The scale of the devastation suffered by the civilian population has prompted a senior UN official to declare that the country was on the brink of a "catastrophe".

Jan Egeland called for a truce to allow aid agencies to begin the relief effort, adding: "It is nearly impossible in southern Lebanon to move anything anywhere because it is too dangerous. It is too dangerous for our people to move things."

Mr Egeland said neither **Hezbollah** nor the Israelis seemed to care about civilian suffering, and the wounded could not be helped because roads and bridges had been cut by Israeli air strikes.

'THE HUMAN SANDBAGS' More than 100 child victims in Lebanon . Now the fear is they are used as shields

Aimee Ansari, programme director for Save the Children in the Middle East and North Africa, said: "Lebanese families are quite big, so when you bomb a house, you get children. There was one incident, one of my staff members there was talking about, where it was a family of nine, of whom five were children.

They all died." Save The Children's Jasmine Whitbread said: "The attacks on Gaza and Lebanon have created conditions of extreme hardship for children." Unicef has launched an appeal to raise money to help women and children.

The organisation's Shima Islam said the cash was needed for emergency medical aid, family kits, special-food for children, and generators-"We are particularly concerned about the inability to move medical supplies because of the damage to the infrastructure - the airports, roads, power plants and bridges."

Children fell victim to the violence almost as soon as the fighting started nine days ago, following a cross-border attack by Hezbollah on an Israeli military patrol, in which eight soldiers-were killed and two captured.

An Israeli air raid on the home of a Shia Muslim cleric allegedly connected with Hezbollah killed the cleric - Sayyed Adil Akkash - his wife and 10 children. Israeli children have also been among the casualties.

Rockets fired yesterday by Hezbollah guerrillas killed two Israeli Arab children playing outside a house in Nazareth.

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

The Mideast and Ideas for Peace

The New York Times

July 22, 2006 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 4; Editorial Desk; Pg. 12

Length: 631 words

Body

To the Editor:

Re "More Than a Cease-Fire Needed" (editorial, July 21):

How do we enlist the United States in any peace process that involves Arab countries when our unconditional support for Israel makes us suspect from the start?

The proposal for peacekeeping troops to enforce a cease-fire will die aborning, since Israel has consistently rejected any suggestion of an international force on its borders.

There should first be a Security Council resolution calling for an end to indiscriminate shelling of civilian targets in Lebanon and a cessation of Hezbollah shelling of northern Israel.

If and when such a cease-fire is attained, peace talks may begin. Such talks should be comprehensive, and aggressive attention should be given to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

These talks must be all-inclusive, with Hamas and Hezbollah as participants, regardless of American objections.

Leonard Amada

Whiting, N.J., July 21, 2006

To the Editor:

It's clear that you see Hezbollah as the leading agent in the hostilities now raging in the Middle East. But Hezbollah and Hamas were both formed in response to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land.

If you call for a return of Israeli soldiers without asking anything of the Israelis in return, for example the release of children and women held in Israeli prisons, then nothing will have been achieved.

Kathleen Hill

New York, July 21, 2006

To the Editor:

The Mideast and Ideas for Peace

Do you really think that the international community, by words or resolutions, can force Hezbollah to disband its militia?

Hezbollah and organizations like it will disband only when they are destroyed. It's the same in Iraq. These organizations are committed to one thing: the destruction of Israel and the United States.

Israel is showing the world what can and will happen if these organizations continue unfettered. The world needs to wake up and take these organizations out, once and for all, lest we be fearful of them for the rest of our lives.

Bret P. Wallach

Hicksville, N.Y., July 21, 2006

To the Editor:

It is certainly true that the people of Lebanon and Israel need more than a cease-fire. Although the recent provocation of the Israeli war machine was uncalled for, Israel since 1967 has violated the Lebanese airspace and waterways and has invaded the country at will.

Any international force that may become involved should deploy on both sides of the border to protect the Israelis from rockets and the Lebanese from the Israeli firepower. It should have the authority to stop Israel's violation of Lebanese airspace and prevent Israeli forces from invading Lebanon again.

Reconstruction and compensation issues should be addressed as part of any deal, or forces unfriendly to the United States will offer the help in exchange for political influence.

Lebanon will need a Marshall Plan to rebuild, with guarantees this time that it will not be victimized again.

Wael A. Jaber

Shaker Heights, Ohio, July 21, 2006

To the Editor:

The principle of proportionality in international law is not a formula whereby there should be one dead Lebanese for every dead Israeli.

Proportionality means that the destruction caused by military force must be outweighed by the good it will accomplish; one cannot use more force than necessary to achieve one's objectives.

The high number of civilians killed by Israeli forces is disproportionate, not to the number of Israeli victims of Hezbollah's rockets, but to the goals Israel claims it is trying to achieve in Lebanon.

If anything, the devastation and the high body count are making Hezbollah's anti-Israeli arguments more plausible to the many Lebanese affected by Israel's wide-ranging attacks.

Max Paul Friedman

Bochum, Germany, July 21, 2006

The writer is a professor of history at Florida State University.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

The Mideast and Ideas for Peace

Load-Date: July 22, 2006

End of Document

The war rages on

University Wire

July 27, 2006 Thursday

Copyright 2006 The Crimson White via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 1271 words

Byline: By Kristen Trotter, The Crimson White; **SOURCE:** U. Alabama

Dateline: TUSCALOOSA, Ala.

Body

I said goodbye to Beirut on Saturday morning through the back of a Chinook helicopter. The helmet and hearing protection a Marine slid on my head right before I boarded blocked out the roar of the helicopter but trapped my thoughts inside my head, where they bounced around and fought for supremacy over my conflicting emotions.

The square gray buildings stacked on the hillside next to the vibrant blue sea were blurred both by my tears and by the exhaust heat from the helicopter, but I could still make out the plumes of smoke rising from the neighborhood that was bombed while I boarded the Chinook.

My time in Beirut had come to a close, and I left far differently than I came. I had expected to bring back suitcases full of sheeshas, carpets and a Turkish coffee pot.

Instead I was evacuated, leaving most of my clothes behind and bringing back only a new understanding of an age-old conflict and a compassion for the people on both sides who are caught in the middle.

I am not a Jew hater. I have never been one.

While I was living in Cairo, I took a trip to Jerusalem. At the border crossing between Taba, Egypt and Eilat, Israel, me and three companions were detained and interrogated for seven hours by Israeli border guards.

One of my friends had two Iranian visas in her passport, reason enough to detain us, and another of our group was Egyptian, though her last name Salib, which means "cross" in Arabic, should have given a clue that she was not a Muslim fanatic.

But I didn't complain. Israel had a right to be suspicious, and I was happy to wait however long it took the guards to figure out we were not a threat.

One of the soldiers was particularly gruff. A far cry from the mustachioed Egyptian soldiers, she had short cropped hair and wore her uniform pants low around her hips in a soldier-chic sort of way. When I asked her not to stamp my passport with the Israeli stamp so I could gain entry to Arab countries, her questioning reached the third degree.

As we were finally leaving, I mentioned her gruffness to my Norwegian friend Hilde, the one with the Iranian visas. She shot me a sharp look.

The war rages on

"Did you know her brother was killed by a Hamas suicide bomber?" she asked. Apparently that had come out during Hilde's marathon interrogation session.

And the gruffness made sense. I didn't complain. She had a right to be gruff.

I didn't even complain when they arrested me several days later. I was accustomed to the laxness of Egyptian security, and didn't think twice about buying a souvenir knife in the old city. When I went through security at the bus station, however, I quickly realized that although Israel was only a day's bus ride away from Cairo, it occupied a completely different world.

I was questioned again and searched, and then detained in a small room with two female soldiers. I admitted my own stupidity, and we laughed and joked and compared apartment prices from Cairo to Jerusalem to Tuscaloosa. Jerusalem is slightly more expensive than Tuscaloosa, we decided before they took me to the police station.

I didn't resent the tight security. When suicide bombers are a fact of life, you can't afford to relax. I accepted this, and I loved Jerusalem. I loved Israelis and their matter-of-fact approach to life in the face of death. I especially loved their falafel.

But just as I don't hate Israel, I also don't unequivocally support everything the nation does. Just as suicide bombs are a fact of life there, daily Israeli bombing of innocent civilians has become a fact of life in Lebanon, and the suffering there is hard to ignore when you're in the middle of it.

In the newsroom of my newspaper in Beirut, we watched in amazement as the world media distributed pictures of Israelis hiding in bomb shelters from Hezbollah rockets that killed eight people in Haifa. The almost 400 Lebanese civilians killed and 750,000 displaced from the bombings merited only an after mention. The suffering we watched firsthand was not so real, not so close to home to the rest of the world.

And that is understandable, but not easy to handle. It was hard to watch the world cheering for the planes that dropped bombs around us, on our friends and family. It was difficult to listen to my fellow Americans call me naive for reporting what I saw around me. As I left on the helicopter Saturday, I felt as if I was abandoning Lebanon, abandoning the people who had no voice to convey their plight.

What they want to tell the world is simple. They do not support Hezbollah; in fact, most Lebanese hate the organization. Sunni Muslims and Christians would love to see Hezbollah eliminated; they resent Hezbollah for dragging them into this conflict and causing their suffering. While many Americans may see a news video of masked Hezbollah men carrying Kalashnikovs and equate them with all of Lebanon, nothing could be further from the truth. Most Lebanese are just ordinary people who want to go on with their lives, who want to be free of war.

But getting rid of Hezbollah means civil war, something this country has seen too much of. The huge loss of civilian life during the previous 15-year civil war is not something people here want to repeat, so in a sense Hezbollah holds the nation hostage. But while they detest Hezbollah, what the Lebanese detest even more is the heavy-handed Israeli military campaign that has absolutely destroyed their country and swelled Hezbollah's ranks.

People in Lebanon are shocked when the rest of the world tells them that it is reasonable to hold them responsible for a group they cannot control and do not support, that it is fair to kill their families and destroy their homes in retaliation. I shared their amazement when the rest of the world denied Israeli attacks on civilians.

Just two days ago Israel bombed two Red Cross ambulances. Do the huge red and white crosses painted on top of the vehicles look like Hezbollah rocket launchers? Last week a school in Tyre was targeted and tens of children died. Does an elementary school look like a Hezbollah training camp? In south Lebanon, entire villages are cut off and isolated; humanitarian organizations cannot reach them to dig civilians out of the rubble because of Israeli attacks.

Hospitals are running out of medicine; people lack food and water. In Tyre, bodies were left rotting on the bombed roads because those who came to collect them were targeted. The city resorted to mass graves after running out of wood for coffins.

The war rages on

It is true that **Hezbollah** hides behind civilians. It is true that the militant, fundamental organization has hijacked a nation. It is true that **Hezbollah** provoked this attack, and it is detestable. I do not support or defend **Hezbollah**, its grisly tactics, or the suffering it brings to innocent people. But that does not mean that I must unequivocally support an Israeli response that has gone beyond reasonable retaliation, a response that has no regard for human life or suffering.

All the Lebanese want is the world to recognize they are not a nation of terrorists who want to wipe Israel off the map. All they ask for is a reasonable consideration of their plight, one that considers their side and their suffering alongside Israeli suffering. All they want to tell the world is that just because you hate **Hezbollah** doesn't mean you must ignore the injustice of Israel's response.

All they ask is that you consider their plight.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Kristen Trotter has been in Beirut, Lebanon, for most of the summer working for the Lebanese paper, The Daily Star. This is the second part of her first-person account of her experiences in the war-torn region.

(C) 2006 The Crimson White via U-WIRE

Load-Date: July 27, 2006

End of Document

THE BOMBING

The Toronto Star
July 31, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A01

Length: 1481 words

Byline: Oakland Ross, Toronto Star With files from Associated Press, Reuters

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Israel has suspended its aerial bombardment of south Lebanon for 48 hours, following the bloodiest day of the Middle Eastern war so far.

But even yesterday's horrors - more than 50 dead civilians, most of them children, in a single Israeli attack - are unlikely to bring the conflict to an early end.

That was the consensus of a clutch of experts on the battle-scarred region who spoke to the Toronto Star yesterday in the wake of an Israeli air force attack earlier in the day that flattened a four-storey apartment building in the village of Qana in southern Lebanon, with a shocking loss of life.

"The government of Israel is determined not to halt the operation until it reaches a successful conclusion," said Ephraim Halevy, former head of the Israeli intelligence service, Mossad, and now director of the Center for Strategic and Policy Studies at Jerusalem's Hebrew University.

"And I don't expect a blatant demand by the United States, calling on Israel to reach an immediate ceasefire."

Most experts interviewed by the Star yesterday said they expect the war to continue for some time to come, never mind mounting international demands for a ceasefire and a negotiated settlement that might impose an end to a conflict that seems to grow more reckless and destructive with each passing week.

More than 50 civilians, including at least 37 children, were killed in yesterday's aerial attack on Qana, the worst one-day death toll since the war erupted nearly three weeks ago.

Speaking before the United Nations Security Council, Israeli Ambassador Dan Gillerman called it a "horrible, sad and bloody Sunday." He apologized for the air strike but blamed Hezbollah, which he said uses Lebanese civilians as human shields while intentionally targeting Israeli civilians.

In Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said the campaign to crush Hezbollah could last up to two more weeks.

"We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents (yesterday) morning," he told his cabinet, according to a participant. "If necessary, it will be broadened without hesitation."

THE BOMBING

Israel's announcement last night of a 48-hour suspension of aerial sorties over south Lebanon was intended to allow humanitarian agencies to deliver emergency aid to people stranded in the war-wracked south and to help them flee the area.

Last night, Israeli officials raised questions about just what occurred in Qana and said they also wanted to take time to investigate events leading up to the building's collapse at around 9 a.m. yesterday, or about seven hours after the Israeli air force says it made its bombing run over the village.

Israeli officials left open the possibility that Israel might hit targets to stop imminent attacks, and that the suspension could last less than 48 hours if the military completes its inquiry before then. It is unlikely Israel would maintain a ground offensive without air support.

Early today, Israeli warplanes launched raids on eastern Lebanon, Lebanese security sources said. The sources said at least two air strikes hit roads near the border with Syria in the early hours.

The Security Council expressed "extreme shock and distress" at the attack on Qana. A statement adopted unanimously last night by the 15-nation council "strongly deplores this loss of innocent lives" but did not call for an immediate truce, as requested by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan but opposed by the United States.

Instead, it stressed "the urgency of securing a lasting, permanent and sustainable ceasefire" and affirmed the council's determination to work "without any further delay" to adopt a resolution "for a lasting settlement of the crisis."

In Europe and elsewhere, there were growing calls for an immediate end to the conflict, which had already claimed hundreds of lives and inflicted hundreds of millions of dollars in economic damage even before yesterday's attack in Qana.

"This is going to make it more difficult for the Americans to fend off European pressure for a ceasefire," said Aluf Benn, diplomatic correspondent for the Israeli newspaper Haaretz.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice cancelled a planned trip to Beirut yesterday and spent the day in Jerusalem instead, where she held meetings with Olmert and Israeli Defence Minister Amir Peretz.

She called for "an urgent end to the fighting," but this seemed to fall well short of pressing Israel to accept a prompt ceasefire or to withdraw its ground forces from southern Lebanon.

"This is the first time we have had a clear-cut green light (from Washington) in this regard," said Yaacov Bar-Sim-Tov, director of the Swiss Centre for Conflict Research, Management and Resolution at Jerusalem's Hebrew University.

The conflict between Israel and Hezbollah guerrillas erupted into open war earlier this month after Hezbollah's irregular forces killed eight Israeli soldiers, captured two more, and began firing salvos of rockets - erratically aimed for the most part, but sometimes deadly - toward populated areas of northern Israel.

In response, political and military leaders in this country vowed to destroy the organization as an effective military force, and the war was on.

Three weeks later, Israel has still not managed to squash Hezbollah. The imperatives for Olmert's government now seem to be political as well as military.

"If the Israeli operation ends prematurely, in a way that allows Hezbollah to attack in six weeks or six months from now, the government will be in very great trouble," said Gerald Steinberg, director of the Program on Conflict and Diplomacy at Tel Aviv's Bar-Ilan University. "A premature ceasefire could cost this government dearly."

Meanwhile, there was no letup yesterday on the other side of the conflict, as Hezbollah put in its busiest day of the war so far, launching 156 rockets into northern Israel as of 11 p.m., more than on any other day since the conflict

THE BOMBING

broke out July 12. Some 30 rockets landed in or around the town of Keryat Shmona. At least eight people on the Israeli side were injured in yesterday's attacks

"The other side is not so eager to end hostilities, either," said Benn.

The attack on Qana flattened a building where more than 60 displaced people were in the basement. Many died as they slept. Rescue workers called off the search for bodies or survivors after hours of digging through the rubble with their hands, lifting out the twisted, dust-caked corpses of children.

Israel said it was unaware civilians were in the building and accused Hezbollah of firing rockets from Qana. Hezbollah vowed to retaliate, and the governing Palestinian movement Hamas also pledged to hit back with attacks on Israel. "Those people including women and children who were killed in this horrible tragic incident may have been killed by Israeli fire but they are the victims of the Hezbollah," Gillerman, the Israeli ambassador, told the Security Council.

"They are the victims of terror. If there were no Hezbollah this would never have happened."

Qana is already a potent symbol of Lebanese civilian deaths at Israeli hands. In April 1996, Israeli shelling killed more than 100 civilians sheltering at the base of UN peacekeepers in Qana during Israel's "Grapes of Wrath" bombing campaign.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said yesterday any talk of a larger peace package must wait until the firing stops.

"We will not negotiate until the Israeli war stops shedding the blood of innocent people," he told a gathering of diplomats. But he underlined that Lebanon stands by ideas for disarming Hezbollah that it put forward earlier and that Rice praised.

He also hinted that any Hezbollah response to the air strike at Qana was justified.

Benn said all indications are that Israel will keep its military operation going, noting: "We have virtually no (domestic) opposition to the war now."

That was true before yesterday's distressing loss of life amid the wreckage and rubble at Qana, and it may well be true still.

However, say the experts, the war will end eventually, and the terms of an eventual ceasefire will have to include such matters as the deployment of an international force to patrol southern Lebanon, as well as a possible exchange of prisoners between Israel and Hezbollah, and perhaps the turnover by Israel of a small parcel of land claimed by Lebanon and located on the Golan Heights.

It seems doubtful, however, that either the current fighting or an eventual ceasefire agreement will bring long-term peace to the region. "The future," said Steinberg, "is going to be murky."

Elsewhere, the Lebanese army opened fire yesterday on Israeli helicopters trying to land near a town in the Bekaa valley, security sources said. The four helicopters appeared to be trying to land soldiers near the town of Yammouni, they said. The helicopters flew away before Israeli warplanes launched air raids on the area, the sources said.

With files from Associated Press, Reuters

Graphic

THE BOMBING

Marco Di Lauro getty images Buildings are reduced to rubble after an Israeli air strike on Qana in southern Lebanon yesterday. More than 50 civilians, including at least 37 children, died. Israel accused **Hezbollah** of firing rockets from Qana. JACOB SILBERBERG ap An Israeli woman reacts yesterday as she stands at a site where a rocket fired by **Hezbollah** guerrillas from Lebanon hit the northern Israeli town of Akko, slightly wounding one person. Marco Di Lauro getty images Buildings are reduced to rubble after an Israeli air strike on Qana in southern Lebanon yesterday. More than 50 civilians, including at least 37 children, died. Israel accused **Hezbollah** of firing rockets from Qana. JACOB SILBERBERG ap An Israeli woman reacts yesterday as she stands at a site where a rocket fired by **Hezbollah** guerrillas from Lebanon hit the northern Israeli town of Akko, slightly wounding one person.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Towards war

The Times (London)

July 17, 2006, Monday

Copyright 2006 Times Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 248 words

Body

JUNE 25 Militants from Hamas, Popular Resistance Committees and Jish al-Islam use a tunnel to cross the border between Gaza and Israel. Two Israeli soldiers are killed in the ambush, four injured and one, Corporal Gilad Shalit, kidnapped.

JUNE 28 Israel launches airstrikes against Gaza, with its troops entering southern Gaza for the first time since the withdrawal ten months before.

JULY 12 **Hezbollah** launches rockets and mortars on Israeli towns along the Lebanese border. A force then moves into Israel, attacking two armoured Humvees near the Israeli village of Zar'it. Three Israeli soldiers are killed, two taken hostage Israel retaliates with airstrikes, destroying bridges and civilian infrastructure in southern Lebanon. Lebanese TV channel al-Manar reports 55 civilians killed.

JULY 13 Israeli jets bomb Lebanon's international airport near Beirut, forcing its closure. **Hezbollah** bombards Israeli towns Nahariya and Safed, killing two and wounding 29.

JULY 14 Two Israeli civilians killed in rocket attacks in Meron. **Hezbollah** leader Sheikh Nasrallah declares "open war"

JULY 15 Three Patriot missile defence batteries deployed by in Haifa. At least 15 Lebanese villagers, including nine **women** and children, are killed by an Israeli airstrike on vehicles fleeing a village in southern Lebanon.

JULY 16 Eight people are killed after **Hezbollah** fire rockets at Haifa; an Israeli airstrike in response kills 23 Lebanese.

In five days of fighting, 148 Lebanese and 24 Israelis have been killed

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

International Force Is Favored, But No Nation Commits Troops

The New York Times

July 25, 2006 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 2; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1; TURMOIL IN THE MIDEAST: THE CONFLICT

Length: 1800 words

Byline: By CRAIG S. SMITH and GREG MYRE; Craig S. Smith reported from Avivim for this article, and Greg Myre from Jerusalem. Sabrina Tavernise contributed reporting from Beirut, and Hassan M. Fattah from Tyre, Lebanon.

Dateline: AVIVIM, Israel, July 24

Body

In some of the most intense ground clashes so far, Israeli troops and Hezbollah militants fought fiercely Monday in and around two hilltop towns in southern Lebanon where the Israeli military is seeking to drive the militants away from the border.

The main battle was on the outskirts of Bint Jbail, about two miles across the border into Lebanon, where 2 Israeli soldiers were killed and 14 wounded, the Israeli military said. Hezbollah fighters were believed to have sustained a greater number of casualties, the military added, though it did not have figures.

The fighting came as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice arrived in the region, making an unannounced stop in Beirut, where she met Lebanon's prime minister, Fouad Siniora. Ms. Rice expressed concern for Lebanese suffering, and the United States said it would give \$30 million to aid in the country's recovery. "Thank you for your courage and steadfastness," she told Mr. Siniora.

But the visit was tense. Mr. Siniora angrily described the damage to his country, including about 380 people killed and some 750,000 displaced, and, according to a statement released by his office, said the Israeli bombing had set Lebanon back "50 years."

Ms. Rice said Washington would support a cease-fire once Hezbollah freed two Israeli soldiers taken captive 13 days ago and pulled back from the border with Israel, said C. David Welch, the assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs.

She repeated the message in a later meeting with an emotional Nabih Berri, the speaker of Parliament and a Hezbollah ally and presumed intermediary, who insisted that a cease-fire come first, and then a prisoner exchange.

Passing through empty streets, Ms. Rice saw little of the damage inflicted on Beirut, which was not bombed by Israel while she was there. Ms. Rice arrived in Israel on Monday evening and held talks with Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni.

Israeli military officers said the offensive on Bint Jbail began Sunday, though they gave slightly differing accounts on how far Israeli troops had advanced.

International Force Is Favored, But No Nation Commits Troops

The military spokesman's office said the troops were on the outskirts, fighting their way in as of Monday evening. But Capt. Mitch Pilcer of the army's northern command, said, "We're definitely in there, we control it, though there are still pockets of resistance."

Soldiers in a rear staging area near the Israeli border town of Avivim said they had encountered sustained fighting and faced land mines, artillery fire and antitank rockets.

When asked what it was like in Lebanon, one member of an armed bulldozer crew who would give only his first name, Noam, because of the Israeli Army policy that prohibits soldiers from talking to the press without authorization, said there had been an enormous amount of antitank missile fire.

He said the monstrous, olive drab bulldozers that the Israeli Army used to clear roads and demolish buildings drew heavy fire.

"It's not Lebanon, it's Afghanistan," he said.

For a time, the Israelis were focused on efforts to rescue the crew of a disabled tank, which had come under heavy fire. Some, if not all, of the four crew members inside were wounded, soldiers said.

They said one of the wounded was a battalion commander and others said one crew member had been killed. They were eventually recovered and the wounded were sent to hospitals in Israel, the soldiers said.

At the Menara Kibbutz on a high ridge overlooking Lebanon, streams of smoke drifted from the town of Mes e Jbail, apparently from Israeli shelling. Fires burned elsewhere across the otherwise gentle landscape.

Bint Jbail, also smoking, could be glimpsed in the distance. Below the kibbutz, on an outcropping, sat a United Nations observer outpost, built of cinder blocks and concrete blast walls. The United Nations observers, meant to monitor the border after Israel's withdrawal, could do nothing but watch.

The push for Bint Jbail comes after the Israeli forces moved into Marun al-Ras, a smaller town closer to the border. It, too, is set on a hilltop and Hezbollah has used it as a crucial base, the military said.

While the Israeli forces were in Marun al Ras, they continued to come under fire from Hezbollah forces, beginning early in the morning, the military said. Marun al Ras is just a short distance across the border, and there have been clashes between Israeli and Hezbollah forces in the area for the past six days.

The Israeli Air Force bombarded both towns throughout the day.

An Israeli helicopter returning from a mission to Lebanon crashed on the Israeli side of the border, killing both crew members, the military said. Hezbollah said it had shot down the helicopter, but the Israeli military said it believed the crash was caused by a technical problem.

Though Israel's military and political leaders say they do not want to undertake a major ground offensive in southern Lebanon, but only want to clear Hezbollah fighters and weapons from the border region, the past several days of fighting have demonstrated that doing so will take time.

One Israeli officer, who asked not to be identified because he was speaking without authorization, said that in a full-scale war, the military would simply bypass those small villages and push north, coming back later to mop up when the main objective had been reached. "We're doing the opposite here," he said.

The Israeli military has found a well-protected network of bunkers and tunnels, with large stocks of Katyusha rockets and other weaponry. So far, the operation has not slowed the Hezbollah rocket fire.

More than 80 rockets crashed into northern Israel as of Monday evening, wounding about 20 people, the military said. The rockets again touched off brush fires, turning the clear summer sky gray with smoke in the town of Kiryat Shmona, which was hit by a heavy barrage in the afternoon.

International Force Is Favored, But No Nation Commits Troops

Avi Dichter, Israel's public security minister, said the military objective in southern Lebanon was to weaken Hezbollah to the point where it could not seriously threaten Israel from the border area.

"From an Israeli perspective, the target is not to totally dismantle Hezbollah," said Mr. Dichter, a former director of the Shin Bet security agency. Israel, he said, was "hoping that somehow we'll succeed in setting up a new situation between Israel and Hezbollah."

Responding to criticism over the large number of civilian deaths in Lebanon, Mr. Dichter said: "A war is not a surgical operation, and air war is not a surgical operation. You identify the targets, bombs are sophisticated and accurate. But you see a cement truck and from the air it looks just like a Katyusha truck. Sometimes from the air you hit the wrong target."

In an interview on the Arab satellite channel Al Jazeera, Hezbollah's leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, said his movement would define victory simply as the survival of the militia.

"Victory in this case does not mean that I will enter and conquer the north of Palestine," Sheik Nasrallah said. "If the resistance survives, this will be a victory. If its determination is not broken, this will be a victory."

He also accused Arab states he did not identify of encouraging Israel to strike at Hezbollah.

"Some of the Arabs provided a cover and encouraged Israel to continue the battle," he said. "Israel was told that this is a golden and historic opportunity to annihilate the resistance in Lebanon."

In southern Lebanon, at least seven civilians were killed, including two children, in a renewed wave of Israeli airstrikes that hit several homes around Tyre, Agence France-Presse reported.

Overnight, two Red Cross ambulances were bombed within moments of each other while taking wounded people to Tyre, the Red Cross said. One man who was being transferred died of his wounds, while others were severely injured, and six paramedics were hurt in the attack, in the town of Qana.

About 380 Lebanese have been killed in 13 days of fighting, a vast majority of them civilians, according to the Lebanese. Israeli military officials say they believe they have killed around 100 Hezbollah militants.

A ferry chartered by Germany docked in Tyre and delivered much-needed food and emergency supplies. The town has been largely isolated from the north of the country because of attacks on roads and bridges.

Also Monday, the United Nations appealed for \$150 million in relief for Lebanon. Jan Egeland, who is in charge of humanitarian affairs for the United Nations, said the money was needed for emergency medicine, food and other supplies for the next three months. He said approximately 800,000 Lebanese had been affected by the bombardment.

A day after criticizing Israel for "disproportionate" strikes against civilians, Mr. Egeland accused Hezbollah of "cowardly blending" among women and children.

"I heard they were proud because they lost very few fighters and that it was the civilians bearing the brunt of this," he said. "I don't think anyone should be proud of having many more children and women dead than armed men."

Mr. Egeland said Lebanon was dangerously short of fuel and was talking to Israel about a safe corridor to allow supplies to reach the most devastated areas.

"It's urgent," he said at a news conference in Beirut. "Most of the schools in the country are filling up with internally displaced persons."

One school in Beirut had six toilets for 1,000 people, he said.

There was also renewed violence in the Gaza Strip.

International Force Is Favored, But No Nation Commits Troops

Israeli artillery shelled two towns in the northern Gaza Strip, killing five Palestinian civilians, including two children, Palestinian hospital workers reported.

Palestinian militants fired eight rockets into southern Israel, the Israeli military said, but they caused no serious damage or injuries.

The Israeli military responded with shells, hitting an apartment building and open spaces just outside in Beit Lahiya. Three civilians were killed, and several people were wounded, according to Palestinians in the area.

The Israeli military said it did not single out civilians but was investigating the possibility that one or more rockets "misfired." The military said it regretted any civilian casualties.

Later, another Israeli attack killed a woman and a child in the nearby Beit Hanun area, according to the Palestinians.

The military said it fired on a Palestinian cell that was launching rockets and identified a hit. The military said it was not aware of any civilian casualties.

Israel has been dropping leaflets in northern Gaza, warning civilians to move away from areas where Qassam rockets are being launched.

Israel, meanwhile, put its diplomatic missions abroad on alert for possible attacks by Hezbollah or Muslims angered by the offensive, Reuters quoted Israeli security sources as saying.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: Israeli soldiers evacuated wounded comrades yesterday in southern Lebanon as the military pressed its offensive against Hezbollah militants. (Photo by David Furst/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images)(pg. A10)

Smoke rose from burning shops in a southern suburb of Beirut, Lebanon, after an Israeli airstrike yesterday. (Photo by Hussein Malla/Associated Press)(pg. A1)Chart/Map: "On the Ground"Yesterday, fighting intensified along the border in southern Lebanon as Israeli forces battled for control of Bint Jbeil, a Hezbollah stronghold.Map of Lebanon and Israel highlighting Bint Jbeil. (pg. A10)

Load-Date: July 25, 2006

In an Unlikely Target for Rockets, Mourning and Pleas for Peace

The New York Times

July 21, 2006 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 2; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9; TURMOIL IN THE MIDEAST: NAZARETH

Length: 990 words

Byline: By GREG MYRE

Dateline: NAZARETH, Israel, July 20

Body

This Arab town never expected to be entangled in the Israel-Hezbollah fighting. But on Thursday, residents mourned two young brothers killed by Hezbollah, while directing a host of grievances at Israel.

The Hezbollah rocket crashed into a residential neighborhood in the town's winding hills on Wednesday afternoon, killing Rabia Taluzi, 7, and his brother Mahmoud, 3, as they walked home from a cousin's house. Two of their older brothers, Motaz, 13, and Allah, 12, were with them but escaped serious injury.

Dozens of subdued women in black filled the living room of the Taluzis' apartment on Thursday to pay condolences, while Allah slept in the room he had shared with his younger brothers, his face buried in his hands.

The living room window was cracked from the force of rocket explosion. Sad music played on a stereo. Israeli fighter jets roared overhead, flying north toward Lebanon.

In contrast to Jewish Israelis, who overwhelmingly support the government's tough military response to a Hezbollah incursion last week, the mourners in Nazareth tended to be only mildly critical of the Lebanese group and often more so of Israel.

Some said only that they wanted an immediate end to the shooting, and steered clear of politics. Nazareth's mayor, Ramez Jaraisi, said Israel, as the stronger party, should seek an immediate truce and negotiate with Hezbollah for the release of two captured Israeli soldiers.

But some strongly criticized Israel. "The world should say to Israel, 'We don't want any more of your aggression,'" said Nabila Espanioly, a psychologist and self-described political activist who was in the Taluzi home. "What Israel is doing is state terrorism. You can't just kill civilians and destroy villages."

Hezbollah rockets have hit three Arab towns in northern Israel during the past week and have also hit an Arab home in Haifa, a city with a sizable Arab minority. The Taluzi brothers were the first Israeli Arabs to be killed, though many have been wounded. But there is no sign that this has narrowed the huge rift in public opinion between Jewish and Arab Israelis.

In an Unlikely Target for Rockets, Mourning and Pleas for Peace

Arabs account for more than one million of Israel's seven million citizens, and most insist that they are loyal to Israel. Yet they are also sympathetic to Arabs throughout the wider region, with a particular attachment to Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, many of whom are their relatives.

Ahmed Tibi, an outspoken Arab member of Israel's Parliament, on Monday introduced a motion that would declare no confidence in the government's handling of the conflict with Lebanon. The measure was soundly rejected, winning support only from other Arab legislators and drawing sharp criticism from right-wing Jewish lawmakers.

"There is an overwhelming consensus in Israeli society, and I don't want to be part of it," Mr. Tibi said in a telephone interview on Thursday. He emphasized that he opposed the Hezbollah attacks and empathized with Israelis facing rocket fire, but he added: "I cannot accept this destruction of another country by Israel. War crimes are being committed."

The Israeli government rejects such charges and says it is Hezbollah that intentionally aims its attacks at Israeli civilians and uses Lebanese civilians for cover. "Terrorists use the population and live among them," Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said this week. "It's difficult to target like a surgery. Unfortunately civilians sometimes pay the price of giving shelter to terrorists."

Referring to Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers, which ignited the conflict on July 12, the mayor, Mr. Jaraisi said, "The reason given for starting this war will not be solved by fighting, only through negotiations."

"I'm calling on the parties, mainly the Israeli government, to respond positively to the calls for a cease-fire and start negotiations, direct or indirect," he added. "This is the way to save innocent lives, like those of the two little boys."

Much of the Arab Israeli population is concentrated in the northern part of the country. Nazareth, where Christians believe Jesus spent his childhood, is one of the largest Arab towns, with 75, 000 residents who are a mix of Christians and Muslims.

Hezbollah has not said what the target was, but Nazareth residents said they were sure that their town had been hit by mistake. It had never been hit by a rocket until Wednesday. Residents said that even if Hezbollah's new, longer-range rockets might be able to reach Nazareth, 25 miles south of the Lebanese border, it would not be a target, because of its Arab population.

"No one expected rockets here," said Amna Taluzi, the aunt of the boys who were killed.

Still, some residents criticized Israel for not providing warning sirens and bomb shelters in Nazareth, as it has done in northern Jewish towns.

"This is another example of how the Arab sector is neglected," said Muhammad Awsy, 45, a municipal worker who arrived at the scene just seconds after the boys were killed Wednesday. "Look around -- you don't see playgrounds or other facilities here. This gives us the feeling we are living in a different state."

Israel's Home Front Command did not immediately respond to requests for comment. But the newspaper Haaretz said that Nazareth did not have sirens because the town was not believed to be in danger, but that the Home Front Command would soon be connecting it to the system.

Residents say that before the rockets hit here, most of them had not altered their routines.

Though most of the town's children continued to play outside, Nohad Taluzi, the mother of the boys who were killed, had insisted that her eight children remain in the house.

But the children begged her, and began to cry, said Amna Taluzi, their aunt. As a compromise, Nohad Taluzi allowed her sons to walk several blocks to play inside their cousin's house. When they were walking back, the family said, they were hit.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: Allah Taluzi, 12, asleep yesterday in the bed he shared with two younger brothers, who were killed Wednesday by a **Hezbollah** rocket attack while walking home from a cousin's house. (Photo by Rina Castelnuevo for The New York Times)

Load-Date: July 21, 2006

End of Document

Foreign force has Israeli OK: Jewish state says it would prefer to see NATO-led troops on border

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 24, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 The Gazette, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 738 words

Byline: KATHY GANNON, AP

Dateline: SIDON, Lebanon

Body

Mideast diplomats were pressing Syria to stop backing Hezbollah as the guerrillas fired more deadly rockets onto Israel's third-largest city yesterday. Israel bombarded targets in southern Lebanon, hitting a convoy of refugees.

Israel's defence minister, Amir Peretz, said that his country would accept an international force, preferably NATO, on its border after it drives back or weakens Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

Israeli forces captured two Hezbollah fighters in a battle in southern Lebanon, Israeli military officials said early today.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to reporters, had no further details.

The Israeli military had no immediate comment.

With U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice arriving in Israel today, both the Arabs and Israelis appeared to be trying to set out positions ahead of Washington's first diplomatic mission to the region since the fighting began. The United States backs Israel's refusal to talk about a ceasefire until it completes the military campaign against Hezbollah.

Still, daily casualty figures appeared to be lowering - about nine confirmed yesterday by Lebanese security officials, compared with dozens each day last week.

In the 12th day of fighting, guerrillas launched a new barrage of more than a dozen rockets against the Israeli city of Haifa, killing two people and setting an apartment building on fire. Israeli missiles struck a convoy of fleeing Lebanese, killing four people, including a journalist.

In the far south, fighting with Hezbollah raged around the Israeli military's foothold in Lebanon - the border village of Maroun al-Ras, where the Israeli army has maintained a significant presence since Saturday. But so far, they were not advancing. Hezbollah reported three of its fighters killed.

Foreign force has Israeli OK: Jewish state says it would prefer to see NATO-led troops on border

With Israel and the United States saying a real ceasefire is not possible until Hezbollah is reined in, Arab heavyweights Egypt and Saudi Arabia were pushing Syria to end its support for the guerrillas, Arab diplomats in Cairo said.

A loss of Syria's support would deeply weaken Hezbollah, though its other ally, Iran, gives it a large part of its money and weapons. The two moderate Arab governments were prepared to spend heavily from Egypt's political capital in the region and Saudi Arabia's vast financial reserves to break Damascus from the guerrillas and Iran, the diplomats said.

Israeli Defence Minister Peretz said once the offensive had got Hezbollah away from the border, his country would be willing to see an international force move in to help the Lebanese army deploy across the south. He suggested to the cabinet that NATO be in charge of the force.

U.S. President George W. Bush's chief of staff, John Bolton, said yesterday the administration would be open to an international peacekeeping force but does not expect U.S. forces to participate in one.

Meanwhile, a campaign to get humanitarian aid into Lebanon was gearing up. Officials were trying to speed the delivery of food, medicines, blankets and generators down bomb-shattered roads to the south where they are needed most - though Israel has not defined a safe route to the region.

The top UN humanitarian official, Jan Egeland, called for at least \$100 million U.S. in immediate aid but said billions of dollars would be needed to repair the damage from a conflict that has stunned Lebanon just as it had emerged from reconstruction after years of civil war.

Egeland, trying to organize the aid effort, condemned civilian casualties on both sides but called Israel's offensive "disproportionate" and "a violation of international humanitarian law."

A convoy of nearly 70 people fleeing Tairi - a border village Israel warned residents to evacuate a day earlier- was driving with Lebanese Red Cross ambulances when missiles hit nearby, some of the ambulance drivers told journalists in the port city of Tyre, where the wounded were taken.

A minibus was struck, knocking a hole in the roof and killing three people and wounding 16 - including 10 women and four children, said Hassan Nasreddine, an International Red Cross doctor who arrived at the scene soon afterward and saw the bodies in the van.

Layal Nejib, a photographer for a Lebanese magazine, was also killed as her taxi approached the convoy and the missiles landed. The 23-year-old Nejib, a photographer for Al-Jaras magazine, was the first journalist killed in the Israeli campaign.

Load-Date: July 24, 2006

IT IS TIME FOR IRAN TO END THE KILLING

Weekend Australian

July 29, 2006 Saturday

All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2006 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: FEATURES; Leader; Pg. 18

Length: 833 words

Body

MATP

In Lebanon and Israel, Ahmadinejad has blood on his hands

"IS the value of human life less in Lebanon than that of citizens elsewhere? Are we children of a lesser God?" asked Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora this week in Rome. "Is an Israeli teardrop worth more than a drop of Lebanese blood?"

' It's a good question and one that drips with as much anger and poignancy as Shylock's famous soliloquy in *The Merchant of Venice*. But it is also, sadly, the wrong question. For, in the present conflict, there is no difference between Lebanese and Israeli blood. Both nations are being made to pay the price for policies set by thuggish theocrats in Tehran and, to a lesser extent, Damascus. Those are the men to whom Mr Siniora's question needs to be directed. Hezbollah, aka the Party of God, touched off the current conflagration by kidnapping two Israeli soldiers and killing three others in a cross-border raid just over two weeks ago. That attack was only the latest in a long series of often fatal harassment actions conducted by the terrorist group since it filled the void left by Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000. Through it all, Hezbollah has been a puppet of the Iranian theocracy, which created it more than 20 years ago with the purpose of using terrorism to expand the Shia regime's influence throughout the Middle East. In retaliating against Hezbollah and pressuring Lebanon to control its territories and kick out the organisation, Israel is taking a logical step against an Iranian regime whose leaders routinely vow to "wipe Israel from the face of the map". Every one of the nearly 500 deaths of the past two weeks, whether Lebanese or Israeli, is tragic. But those who complain Arab blood is cheap must realise that the price is being set in Tehran, not Jerusalem. And the power to stop the bloodshed lies most of all with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who at a stroke could get Hezbollah to lay down its arms and quit a country in which it does not belong.

When one strips away all the emotional and political baggage from the situation in the Middle East, the present conflict is at its heart a battle between a liberal democracy and a fascist dictatorship. It should be no trouble to figure out which side is in the right. Yet events in the Middle East are seen through one's individual political prejudices. In the West, too many on the Left are unable to put aside their reflexive anti-Americanism and romantic beliefs that Islamic radicals are simply freedom fighters to judge the situation fairly. Thus groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas that use terror as the means to spread their own political and religious obsessions are not seen as the bad guys; rather, Israel is. This view has poisoned the debate in many sectors of the media, where Israel's defensive actions are routinely cast in an aggressive light, and in the streets, where at so-called peace rallies Stars of David appear on banners next to swastikas separated by a "=" sign. But if those who blame Israel were to put

IT IS TIME FOR IRAN TO END THE KILLING

away their anti-American prejudices and forget for a moment the half-baked postmodern narrative of colonisers and liberators, they would see in Hezbollah something that could just as easily be called the Nazi Party of Tehran. Today all Israel wants in the present conflict is for the Nazis to go home. Hezbollah was created by a regime every bit as totalitarian and anti-Semitic as the Third Reich. The values of the Iranian theocracy, which executes homosexuals, oppresses ethnic and religious minorities and treats women as property, should be offensive most of all to the progressive Left. Although there have been some heartening and worthwhile efforts on the left, such as the Euston Manifesto, to come to terms with these facts, it is the liberal democracy of Israel that is all too often cast by progressives as the villain. Were a similarly fascist group to emerge in the Arafura Sea and lob missiles into Darwin on a daily basis, Canberra would likewise have no choice but to respond militarily.

The questions Mr Siniora -- and indeed the whole civilised world -- should be asking are: "Why won't Iran bring Hezbollah to heel? Are Tehran's lunatic ambitions worth the life of even one Lebanese or Israeli?" Lebanese and Israelis alike suffer from Hezbollah's presence. The region's Sunni Muslims would likewise not fare well under a resurgent Shia Iran that would turn back the clock on democratisation and reform. World outrage should be directed not at Israel but at Iran and Syria. The Australian wishes, along with all Australians, that there was no violence in the Middle East and that the bombs of Hezbollah and Israel did not have to take so many lives -- especially those of children. But we also recognise that a ceasefire for its own sake will do nothing to prevent future bloodshed. For the moment, then, our wish would be for more pressure, both from within the Arab world and without, to be brought to bear on Tehran to halt this madness.

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

End of Document

Israeli jets strike as Rice told: Stay away

The Advertiser (Australia)

July 31, 2006 Monday

Metro Edition

Copyright 2006 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 5

Length: 334 words

Byline: HUSSEIN SAAD, QANA

Body

AN ISRAELI airstrike killed 54 Lebanese civilians, including 37 children, yesterday, prompting Lebanon to tell U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice she was unwelcome in Beirut until a ceasefire was declared.

The raid on the southern village of Qana was the bloodiest single attack during Israel's 19-day-old war on **Hezbollah**.

As a wave of anger spread across Lebanon and the Arab world, several thousand protesters chanted "Death to Israel, Death to America" outside the United Nations headquarters in Beirut and some smashed their way into the building.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora said he would not hold negotiations before a ceasefire, scuppering Dr Rice's visit.

Dr Rice, who was in Israel and had planned to go to Beirut later in the day, said she was saddened by the Qana air raid, but stopped well short of calling for an immediate ceasefire.

The Israelis had bombed Qana at 1.30am (8am SA time), destroying a three-storey building where about 63 people were sheltering in the basement.

"Why have they attacked one and two-year-old children and defenceless **women**? What have they done wrong?" asked Mohamed Samai, whose relatives were among the dead.

Hezbollah and the governing Palestinian movement expressed intentions to retaliate.

Dr Rice said it was "time to get to a ceasefire", but she insisted this required changing the status quo before the war, which began after **Hezbollah** guerillas seized two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid on July 12.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told his Cabinet the assault in Lebanon would go on.

"We will not blink in front of **Hezbollah** and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances," he said. Mr Olmert told the Cabinet of his "deep sorrow" at the civilian deaths in Qana.

It is believed he also ordered that aid be allowed in to the village.

Israeli jets strike as Rice told: Stay away

Israeli warplanes struck Qana only hours after **Hezbollah** leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah threatened to rocket more cities in central Israel if attacks on Lebanon continued.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Brutal battle for uncertain peace

The Sunday Times (London)

July 30, 2006

Copyright 2006 Times Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: FEATURES; News; Pg. 12

Length: 2369 words

Byline: Uzi Mahnaimi in Northern Israel, Hala Jaber in Beirut, Tony Allen-Mills in Washington, John Follain in Rome and Rosemary Bennett in San Francisco

Body

Ambushed in the Lebanese town of Bint Jbeil, Israeli troops found Hezbollah fighting hard. This special report of the battle and wider war shows why there is no easy end in sight.

Peering through the pre-dawn gloom, Major Roi Klein of the Golani infantry brigade knew that he was in the right place. He could see the minaret towering above the Lebanese town of Bint Jbeil, near Israel's border. Behind him his men were creeping towards the stone houses, their faces streaked with green-brown camouflage paint.

Whispers passed down the line as the Israeli infantrymen advanced on a town notorious as a stronghold of Hezbollah guerrillas. The streets were empty. The Islamic militants who had been peppering northern Israel with rocket attacks appeared to have withdrawn.

As they reached the buildings, Klein identified a clinic from the aerial reconnaissance photographs he had studied. Then a blood-freezing scream split the silence: "Allahu akbar" - God is greatest.

The next thing the soldiers heard was the clatter of a hand grenade rolling out of the darkness. Klein shouted

"Grenade!" The explosion blew his legs off.

Klein died in the arms of one of his soldiers; it was last Wednesday morning, the day before his 31st birthday.

"All hell broke loose," said Sergeant Ram Boneh, who was only slightly injured and was later taken to a hospital in Haifa. "There were RPGs (rocket-propelled grenades), rifles, hand grenades, from every window and house.

We were trapped by at least eight positions around us."

On a hilltop across the border in Israel, officers with powerful binoculars saw the Hezbollah ambush erupt. "The bastards are alive and kicking," muttered one. He radioed for assault helicopters to move in.

The day before, five Israeli soldiers had been injured in a "friendly fire" incident involving one of their own helicopter pilots who was trying to give them covering fire. So this time the helicopters fired well clear of their trapped comrades. The volley of rockets failed to dislodge the Hezbollah ambushers.

Hand grenades continued to rain on the Golani soldiers. A fight from house to house developed. Shouts in Hebrew and Arabic mixed with the gunfire. "We took over one house," said Sergeant Evyatar Dahan, another survivor. "One

Brutal battle for uncertain peace

of us threw in a hand grenade. Then I got a bullet in my shoulder. It came out of my back. I couldn't carry on and shouted for the medic."

As the fighting wore on, the Israelis dragged their dead and injured into a house.

The **Hezbollah** fighters were closing in on them. "We could hear them approaching, encouraging each other with shouts in Arabic and then screaming when they were hit by the choppers overhead."

The battalion commander, Colonel Yaniv Ashor, realised his men would not be able to retreat with their dead and feared the **Hezbollah** forces would seize the bodies.

Three Israelis with severe wounds also needed to be evacuated.

From the command and control position on the Israeli side of the border, the officer in charge called in more Black Hawk helicopters, or Owls, as they called in the Israeli air force. "Heavy fire from the ground," the Owls squadron leader was overheard to say on radio. "No permission to land." Ground fire and a barrage of mortar shells aimed at the likely landing site forced the Owls to hold off.

Once again the Israelis had to call on greater firepower.

Shortly after midday F-16 fighter jets screamed in at low altitude, firing rockets at the **Hezbollah** positions. Under cover of the bombardment, 12 soldiers carrying three stretchers raced from their hideout towards the Owls, which had swooped in to hover just above the ground. The soldiers from the "669" rescue team jumped out and hurriedly loaded the injured. Within minutes the choppers were on their way to Rambam hospital in Haifa.

In Bint Jbeil another eight Israelis lay dead and their comrades were not going to leave them behind. As darkness drew in, reinforcements crept into the town and, in a long and tiring march, the dead were carried out on stretchers.

The furious battle and its toll sent shock waves through Tel Aviv and revealed to the wider world that there was going to be no quick ending to this Middle Eastern conflict. Three weeks after **Hezbollah** ignited the violence by killing eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapping two others, the Israelis are still struggling to clear the militants and their rockets out of southern Lebanon.

Yesterday **Hezbollah** remained entrenched in Bint Jbeil; the death toll in Lebanon had reached more than 600, according to the Lebanese authorities, and hundreds of thousands had fled from their homes.

Yet some 80% of the Lebanese people, far from rejecting **Hezbollah**, were expressing their support for its actions, according to one opinion poll. In Iran radical Islamic students were setting off to join the battle.

Tony Blair and President George W Bush pushed for an international force to police the border area - but made no call for an immediate ceasefire. "Our goal is to achieve a lasting peace; that requires a free democratic Lebanon," said Bush.

Blair added: "This can only work if **Hezbollah** are prepared to allow it to work."

There was little sign that **Hezbollah** would, as Israel demands, withdraw its fighters and cede control in the south to the Lebanese army. Quite the opposite.

Yesterday **Hezbollah** fired a Khaibar 1 rocket, with four times the range of its usual Katyusha rockets, at the Israeli town of Afula - its deepest attack so far.

FOR civilians the conflict has brought misery mixed with defiance. In Beirut last week 2,000 refugees from the fighting were trying to reorganise their lives within the confines of an underground car park.

Several floors beneath a shopping mall in the Shiyah district, Lebanese mothers were last week fussing around Julia al-Haj, one of six babies who have been born underground since the Israeli bombardments began.

Brutal battle for uncertain peace

Julia's mother Sarah is only 14 and struggling to manage her new daughter in a makeshift home on a single car parking space.

"Despite all, we remain steadfast," said Sarah's father, Haj Ali al-Miqdad, who has four other children.

Al-Miqdad said he would willingly send his 16-year-old son Hussein to join the Hezbollah resistance. Shbeed Shehab, who escaped the Israeli attacks on Barasheet in south Lebanon, went a step further - he has named his newborn son Raed, after a type of rocket used by Hezbollah.

The refugees have turned the car park into a gloomy but well arranged sanctuary, with food delivered from the supermarket above and small camping cookers provided.

Television screens have been installed for adults and children and the corner of one level has been turned into a mosque.

Above ground, some residents were still refusing to leave their homes, despite the devastation of Beirut's southern suburbs. Among them last week were Victoria Chamoun, a 77-year-old Christian, and Fatima Mohammed, 75, a

Shi'ite Muslim, who have lived in neighbouring flats

in the Hezbollah-controlled Haret Hreik neighbourhood for 52 years.

Ignoring appeals from friends, neighbours and Hezbollah officials - and the wholesale destruction of buildings around them - the two women have refused to budge.

"I moved in previous wars and was humiliated as a refugee," said Chamoun as she made a cup of warm milk for her husband, an 85-year-old invalid. "I'm not going to be humiliated again."

Later she sat with her friend Mohammed on a sofa and recalled the bombardments all around them. "Sometimes the sofa moves across the floor from the force of the bombs outside," she said. "There's no electricity, no water, no nothing." The conditions are squalid and insanitary. "We're probably going to die of the smell," she joked grimly.

Yet the women, like many other Lebanese, remain defiant. "May Allah destroy and finish these Israelis off," said Mohammed.

Part of the support is down to the social role that Hezbollah has developed alongside its military presence. Amid the rubble-strewn streets, members of Hezbollah patrol on scooters, accosting strangers and checking on visitors. Their purpose is to protect shops and homes abandoned during the bombing.

At the same time Hezbollah's television station survives, despite being bombed, and has been inundated with callers from the Arab world pledging support for Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the Hezbollah leader. It continues to pump out propaganda images of fighters with rockets and other weapons.

"Victory is coming and is assured" say the slogans.

WHILE Lebanon burnt last week, western diplomats fiddled in Rome. At a summit in the Italian capital, Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, and Margaret Beckett, the foreign secretary, wrangled with the rest of the world over a single word: "immediate".

It was the sticking point in the final communique. Kofi Annan, the United Nations secretary-general, as well as foreign ministers for 11 countries including Russia, France, Germany, Italy and Egypt, wanted the conference to call for an "immediate ceasefire".

But in a vast hall of the Italian foreign ministry, a monstrosity of white stone built by the dictator Benito Mussolini, Rice objected to juxtaposing these two words - and nothing would sway her.

Brutal battle for uncertain peace

"Condi's argument was that there was no point in us standing up and calling for an immediate ceasefire as it is unachievable," a conference source said.

Back and forth the argument went. Philippe Douste-Blazy, France's foreign minister, was among the most vocal. "Madame Rice and I argued over this for an hour," he said afterwards. "Don't think that I'm against peace. I want it very much," shot back Rice heatedly at one point, but she insisted that a long-term solution must be found.

Amid the to-ing and fro-ing Fouad Siniora, the Lebanese prime minister, made an impassioned plea: "The killing must end. Now! If a quarter of the populations of your countries was fleeing and had in hand only a suitcase with some clothes, what would

you say? That's how Lebanon is now. Are we the sons of a lesser God?"

Skilfully deflating the emotions spurred by Siniora's words, Rice responded:

"Mr prime minister, we want

a ceasefire, we want it to be immediate, we want it for yesterday!

"We can leave here saying 'immediate ceasefire' but we want to leave here doing something more, building a real process which will bring a true, definitive peace for Lebanon and for this region."

The summit limply concluded with a communique that called for a "determination to work immediately to reach ... a ceasefire". This toothless proclamation left Israeli officials crowing that they had effectively been given carte blanche to prosecute their war.

Within hours Rice was on a plane to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia for a conference on Asian security. The secretary of state, an accomplished musician, was later photographed playing the piano for Asian foreign ministers while outside the venue Muslim demonstrators held up banners reading "Bush and Olmert (the Israeli prime minister) are fathers of Satan".

BLAIR arrived in Washington on Friday pursued as ever by British complaints that he is clinging to an ineffectual role as Bush's "poodle". He soon rebutted any hints of tension in the special transatlantic relationship.

After a Bush joke about microphones being switched on - a reference to his "Yo Blair" remarks accidentally broadcast at the G8 summit - the two men insisted that they were both committed to a peacemaking plan that would insert a foreign "stabilisation" force between the warring

parties.

Blair went even further, invoking the spectre of the September 11 attacks as a reminder of what might happen if terrorists were not confronted. "You're up against an ideology that's prepared to use any means at all, including killing any number of wholly innocent people," he said.

His visit to Bush was a stopover on a long-planned trip to California where the prime minister this weekend is addressing a meeting of executives of News Corporation, parent company of The Sunday Times.

As reports reached Blair that some of his cabinet colleagues and backbench MPs were voicing concern over the failure to call for an immediate ceasefire, he hastily amended his planned speech while flying on from Washington to San Francisco.

He inserted a passage making his determination for a lasting solution clear: "We knew Hezbollah were going to be a problem with a licence to run a state within a state complete with their own military force in the south of Lebanon. That's why we passed

resolution 1559 following the expulsion of Syria from Lebanon. We called for the area to be put in the sole control of the Lebanese army (and) for all militias to be disbanded. It never happened; this time it must."

Brutal battle for uncertain peace

He dispatched Nigel Sheinwald, his foreign policy adviser, back to London to prepare for the UN security council meeting this week on the crisis. Agreement on an international force for Lebanon is vital, believes Blair, and he is keen to win over Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish prime minister, so that Muslim troops are included.

However, many questions remain. The most serious concerns the assumption that **Hezbollah** can be disarmed by an outside force.

The group has shown little interest in laying down its arms, to which it has ample access through its well stocked sponsors, Syria and Iran. **Hezbollah** forces have had special training in Iran, according to Al-Sharq Al-

Awsat, the London-based Arabic daily, last week quoting a military source close to the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' leadership. It claimed that more than 3,000 fighters have been schooled in guerilla warfare, missiles, artillery and other techniques.

Not surprisingly some US officials last week portrayed the conflict as a proxy war by Iran and Syria to disrupt US efforts to bring democracy to the region. But others warned that the conflict might end up doing more harm than good to hopes for democracy.

Meanwhile, the death toll rises on both sides. When the bodies of the Israeli soldiers killed at Bint Jbeil were returned across the border last week, they were laid out in a peach orchard where military rabbis tended to them.

Klein was buried in Jerusalem on what would have been his birthday. The men he left behind at the border are waiting for new orders as Israel continues a war that has no easy conclusion in sight.

Load-Date: July 30, 2006

End of Document

Israeli missile strike in Lebanon kills more than 50

University Wire

July 31, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Indiana Daily Student via U-Wire

Length: 1241 words

Byline: By Kathy Gannon, Indiana Daily Student; **SOURCE:** Indiana U.

Dateline: BLOOMINGTON, Ind.

Body

Israeli missiles hit several buildings in a southern Lebanon village as people slept Sunday, killing at least 56, most of them children, in the deadliest attack in 19 days of fighting.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert expressed "great sorrow" for the airstrikes but blamed Hezbollah guerrillas for using the area to launch rockets at Israel, and said he would not halt the army's operation.

The Lebanese Red Cross said the airstrike in Qana, in which at least 34 children were killed, pushed the overall Lebanese death toll to more than 500. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice postponed a visit to Lebanon in a setback for diplomatic efforts to end hostilities. She was to return to the U.S. Monday morning, abruptly breaking off her diplomatic mission in the Mideast.

Before the airstrike, Olmert told Rice he needed 10-14 days to finish the offensive in Lebanon, according to a senior Israeli government official. The two said they would meet again Sunday evening.

"We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning," Olmert said during Israel's weekly Cabinet meeting, according to a participant in the meeting. "We will continue the activity and if necessary it will be broadened without hesitation."

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan called an emergency Security Council meeting Sunday at the request of Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora.

The council was expected to discuss a French-sponsored draft resolution spelling out a series of steps meant to resolve the crisis, including an immediate halt to fighting.

Rice said she had called Saniora to postpone her visit to Lebanon; angry Lebanese officials said it was their government that called off the meeting.

Israel said it targeted Qana because it was a base for hundreds of rockets launched at Israelis, including 40 that injured five Israelis on Sunday. Israel said it had warned civilians several days before to leave the village.

"One must understand the Hezbollah is using their own civilian population as human shields," said Israeli Foreign Ministry official Gideon Meir. "The Israeli defense forces dropped leaflets and warned the civilian population to leave the place because the Hezbollah turned it into a war zone."

Israeli missile strike in Lebanon kills more than 50

Rescuers aided by villagers dug through the rubble by hand. At least 20 bodies wrapped in white sheets were taken away, including 10 children. A row of houses lay in ruins, and an old woman was carried away on a plastic chair.

Villagers said many of the dead were from four families who had taken refuge on the ground floor of a three-story building, believing they would be safe from bombings.

"We want this to stop!" shouted Mohammed Ismail, a middle-aged man pulling away at the rubble in search for bodies, his brown pants covered in dust. "May God have mercy on the children. They came here to escape the fighting."

"They are hitting children to bring the fighters to their knees," he said.

Rice said she was "deeply saddened by the terrible loss of innocent life" in Israel's attack. But she did not call for an immediate cease-fire in the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah militias.

"We all recognize this kind of warfare is extremely difficult," Rice said, noting it comes in areas where civilians live. "It unfortunately has awful consequences sometimes."

"We want a cease-fire as soon as possible," she added.

The United States and Israel are pressing for a settlement that addresses enduring issues between Lebanon and Israel and disables Hezbollah -- not the quick truce favored by most world leaders.

Saniora said Lebanon would be open only to an immediate cease-fire.

"There is no place at this sad moment for any discussions other than an immediate and unconditional cease-fire as well as international investigation of the Israeli massacres in Lebanon now," he told reporters Sunday.

More than 5,000 people protested in central Beirut, denouncing Israel and the U.S., some chanting, "Destroy Tel Aviv, destroy Tel Aviv."

A few broke car windows and tried briefly to break into the main U.N. building until political leaders called for a halt to damage.

Lebanese Defense Minister Elias Murr questioned Israel's claim that Hezbollah fired rockets from the village.

"What do you expect Israel to say? Will it say that it killed 40 children and women?" he told Al-Jazeera television.

Qana, in the hills east of the southern port city of Tyre, has a bloody history. In 1996, Israeli artillery killed more than 100 civilians who had taken refuge at a U.N. base in the village. That attack sparked an international outcry that helped end an Israeli offensive.

Sunday's attack drew swift condemnation from several world leaders.

French President Jacques Chirac's office said "France condemns this unjustifiable action, which shows more than ever the need to move toward an immediate cease-fire."

Jordan's King Abdullah II condemned "the ugly crime perpetrated by Israeli forces in Qana."

Lebanese officials said most of their citizens slain in the conflict have been civilians. Thirty-three Israeli soldiers have died, and Hezbollah rocket attacks on northern Israel have killed 18 civilians.

Fighting also broke out between guerrillas and Israeli soldiers in a zone called the Taibeh Project area, about 2 miles inside Lebanon. The Israeli army said one soldier was wounded. Hezbollah's al-Manar TV claimed two Israeli soldiers were killed.

Israeli missile strike in Lebanon kills more than 50

Heavy artillery rained down on the villages of Yuhmor and Arnoun, close to Taibeh. In northern Israel, rockets fell on Nahariya, Kiryat Shemona and an area close to Maalot, the army said.

Israel has said it would launch a series of limited ground incursions into Lebanon to push back guerrillas, rather than carry out a full-fledged invasion. Israeli troops pulled back Saturday from the town of Bint Jbail, suggesting the thrust, launched a week ago, had halted.

But Lebanese officials reported a massing of troops and 12 tanks near the Israeli town of Metulla further to the northeast, on the tip of the Galilee Panhandle near the Golan Heights, suggesting another incursion could begin soon.

The Security Council has yet to take a stance on the fighting, in part because the U.S. has not called for a cessation of hostilities.

The French draft circulated also seeks a wide new buffer zone in south Lebanon free of Israeli and Hezbollah forces and monitored by international forces and the Lebanese army.

British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett said the strike on Qana was a "tragedy" but stopped short of calling for a cease-fire.

A peace package Rice brought to the region called for a U.N.-mandated multinational force that can help stabilize in the region, according to a U.S. official speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the discussions.

It also proposes: Disarming Hezbollah and integrating the guerrilla force into the Lebanese army; Hezbollah's return of Israeli prisoners; a buffer zone in southern Lebanon to put Hezbollah rockets out of range of Israel; a commitment to resolve the status of a piece of land held by Israel and claimed by Lebanon; and the creation of an international reconstruction plan for Lebanon.

The latter two provisions resembled parts of a proposal by Lebanon's government. But they fell short of Hezbollah's demands, including a prisoner swap to free Lebanese held for years in Israeli prisons and the disputed land, known as Chebaa farms, put under U.N. supervision until its status can be resolved.

(C) 2006 Indiana Daily Student via U-WIRE

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

The price of saving Shalit

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 21, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 The Federal Capital Press of Australia PTY Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: A; Pg. 13

Length: 1143 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

LENIN once said, "There are decades when nothing happens, and weeks when decades happen." As decades pass in the Middle East this week, does anybody still believe this is about saving three Israeli soldiers - a piece of Hollywood schmaltz called "Saving Corporal Shalit" and its two sequels? Are Beirut, Haifa and Gaza City burning for them?

Only a dwindling band of people now believe this, the official pretext for the twin-set of wars Israel is fighting on its northern and southern fronts. If it had been true, there was an obvious solution - swapping prisoners. Israel is currently holding 8200 Palestinian fighters, as well as at least three Lebanese fighters who were seized in Lebanon itself during the long 18 years when Israel was occupying its entire southern region.

Both Hamas and Hezbollah have said the Israeli soldiers will head home as soon as there is a fair swap.

This is such a wacky, left-wing idea that it was pursued by Ariel Sharon just two years ago, when he gave Hezbollah 429 prisoners in exchange for an Israeli businessman and three corpses. The people who scoff at this proposal now are implicitly saying that Sharon was a flower-power hippie - one of the few insults he has never earned in his long life.

The opponents of a prisoner-swap also warn gravely that it would fire the starting gun for an open season on Israeli soldiers, dozens facing snatching. But previous prisoner- swaps have not been followed by a spate of kidnappings; indeed, they have led to a period of calm.

So what is the real reason for the bombing of Lebanon? The most obvious is a desire permanently to remove the Hezbollah militia from its place nestling on Israel's borders, where it has amassed 13,000 rockets.

This was a grievance just waiting for a casus belli.

But is this aim of disarming Hezbollah reasonable? The Islamic fundamentalist group is indeed revolting. In their early days Hezbollah imposed a savage code of "Islamic behaviour" on the Muslims of South Lebanon, imprisoning women in their homes and murdering gays. Since then they have endorsed the suicide-murder of Israeli children as they sit in pizzerias, and even in 1994 bombed a synagogue in Buenos Aires, Argentina, killing 85 civilians totally unconnected to this conflict.

The price of saving Shalit

Yet if being ideologically repugnant, snatching fighters and owning rockets were a reason for a war, then Lebanon would have an even greater right to invade Israel. After all, it holds their snatched fighters, owns far more than 13,000 rockets (some nuclear) and has a history of invading their territory and committing mass slaughter on dishonest pretexts. One Israeli general demanded this week, "How long can we live with a knife to our throats?"

But the far bigger knife belongs to Israel. Are they really saying the right to self-defence and a buffer-zone of security belongs to them alone?

Hezbollah is at its core a self-defence organisation, however ugly, and its recent operations have been limited largely to this function. It was formed to expel Israeli troops who mounted an unprovoked invasion of Lebanon in 1982 in order to crush the Palestinian groups operating there.

By the time the Israeli forces finally left in 2000, they had killed an estimated 17,000 Lebanese citizens and Palestinian refugees.

Since the end of the occupation, **Hezbollah** had fired across the border only once, until Israel began its aerial bombardment last week. This was when the Israelis blew up Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas, outraging the world. (It is also worth remembering that half a million people in Lebanon get their drinking water from tanks provided by **Hezbollah**. At least 100,000 people depend on the hospitals and health clinics they run.)

There was always a way for Israel to put **Hezbollah**'s rockets beyond use without a single innocent Lebanese child being bombed, and without anyone being deprived of safe drinking water. Hasan Nasrallah, the head of **Hezbollah**, has been asked repeatedly if he would accept a two-state solution. He always replies that he will never sabotage "an internal Palestinian matter", and that if Israeli and Palestinian leaders negotiate a settlement both sides can accept, **Hezbollah**'s missiles will never be used across the border again. **Hezbollah** will be reduced to a local Lebanese problem. Revolting though he is, Nasrallah has always kept his word on these matters: he even explained to Sharon back in 2004 that at some point in the future he would kidnap more soldiers in a bid to reclaim the remaining fighters Sharon clung on to.

But a real negotiated two-state solution is precisely what Ehud Olmert does not want. Here we get to the central reason why Olmert has chosen a violent non-solution to **Hezbollah** over a peaceful authentic solution. Veteran Israeli peace campaigner Uri Avnery explains, "[In Israel] we have an ongoing, partly hidden debate about what's really the main thing - achieve peace or create a bigger Israel. The people in power today still believe that a greater Israel is more important.

They got away from the idea that all of the country of Palestine should become Israel, but they would still like to annex significant parts of the West Bank. That's their priority. As long as this is a priority ... they think peace is a bad thing."

Peace would create momentum towards negotiations with the Palestinians' democratically elected leaders - and that cannot be allowed to happen.

The Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz has just published a long, authoritative study of Olmert's motives, drawing on sources very close to the prime minister. It reveals that "Olmert has another consideration, of which he is not speaking [in public]. He wants to set a precedent for the convergence plan in the West Bank, to show that Israel won't accept terror from beyond the fence after it withdraws."

He knows the deal he plans to impose on the West Bank will be unacceptable to Palestinians. Not just to Islamic Jihad, but the vast majority. He has been proposing to seize strategically valuable chunks of the West Bank by annexing them to Israel since as long ago as 1978. So he is trying pre-emptively to terrify them now so they will not dare fight back.

So here it is, the kernel of emotional truth behind this war. Its clearest expression can be found in the speeches of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, figurehead for the right-wing of Zionism, the man Olmert was raised to revere.

The price of saving Shalit

Talking of the Arabs in 1923, Jabotinsky insisted, "A living people make enormous concessions ... only when there is no hope left."

That is the true purpose of the wars in Gaza and Lebanon - to ensure, at last, there is no hope left for the Arabs. But the Palestinians and Lebanese will not slump away.

They will become gripped with a nihilistic hate, and long after Olmert is nothing more than a skeleton and a statue, the hate will still burn.

Johann Hari is a columnist with The Independent.

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

End of Document

**Light of Beirut fades on its darkest day; ON THE GROUND MIDDLE EAST
CRISIS**

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 17, 2006 Monday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 7

Length: 791 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin

Body

Through its brazen onslaught, Israel has claimed a trophy never won before - Lebanon's spirit, Ed O'Loughlin reports from Beirut.

LEBANON has no air defences to speak of - no fighter planes or long-range surface-to-air missiles - so the Israeli Air Force can carve it up at its leisure.

The bombs come without warning, day and night, ripping through buildings, roads, offices, homes and refugee convoys.

Only afterwards do the shocked survivors hear the whisper of the jets, high above the reach of any ground fire, invisible in the summer haze.

At night you can see the fighter bombers: so confident are the pilots of their impunity that they pass over Beirut with their navigation lights on.

After four days of retaliation, the Israeli Government's tally stood at: a member of the Hezbollah militia, which started the whole business with its border raid last Wednesday, a bunch of Hezbollah offices and homes and more than 100 innocent men, women and children.

This was a reply to the deaths in action of 12 Israeli military personnel and four civilians, including a eight-year-old boy, killed by Hezbollah in subsequent exchanges of long-range fire.

Yesterday morning Hezbollah struck again, killing nine Israelis in a missile attack on Haifa in retaliation for attacks on Lebanese civilians and infrastructure.

Lebanon is paying a terrible price other than killings and terror. Beirut's airport has been shut, roads and bridges bombed, the harbours blockaded and fuel depots, power plants and even petrol stations set alight.

Along cratered roads, tens of thousands of people, terrified of air raids, are desperately trying to escape what until five days ago was a fragile but hopeful country, seeking its way back from a civil war that ended 15 years ago.

Light of Beirut fades on its darkest day ON THE GROUND MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

In the worst incident so far, 20 people - nine of them children - were killed when an Israeli missile hit their fleeing convoy. Israeli loudspeakers had flushed them out of their border village, Marwaheen, warning of a raid. Israeli defence is investigating.

The attack that took place in Beirut at 6.30pm on Saturday was far less bloody but it was brutally symbolic. Two Israeli helicopters circled high out over the Bay of Beirut and carefully dispatched salvoes of rockets at the civilian harbours in Jounieh and Beirut.

Their last two missiles singled out the lighthouse at the end of Beirut's world-famous corniche, sending the few last hardy promenaders dashing for cover.

Israel's onslaught has achieved the impossible: it has taken the light out of Beirut. By day a trickle of cars pass through the usually teeming streets. In both the Muslim west and Christian east, businesses are closed and families who have not fled keep close to their homes.

"Beirut has never been like this," said Leena Saidi, a Lebanese journalist. "Even during the civil war the shops and restaurants stayed open most of the time.

"People are saying, 'what's the point of opening?' It's not that they are frightened so much as they are depressed."

The area worst affected is Dahiya, a southern Beirut suburb and **Hezbollah** stronghold that is home to hundreds of thousands of mainly poor, Shiite Muslims.

On Thursday Israel dropped leaflets telling its people to flee. Bombs swiftly followed.

On Saturday morning Bashar Suef, 23, a Dahiya building attendant, was taking shelter in a dingy parking garage while more Israeli bombs slammed into buildings a block away.

He described the first night of bombing, when Israel attacked the elevated Old Airport Road where it runs past his building, destroying a section of flyover and cratering the Ghobeiri junction.

"It was about 3.15am when the first bomb hit ... and we all ran out to start taking the injured and dying to hospital. There were nine people wounded and two who died," he said.

Outside, incredibly, a few of Beirut's notoriously gung-ho taxi drivers were still whizzing down the streets. Although the pavements were empty, many families in Dahiya have remained at home, defying Israel's threats.

"Let them destroy the place if they like," Mr Suef said. "Whether now or later we will all die anyway, but if death comes sooner then at least we will have died defending our homes."

IN THE LINE OF FIRE

Hezbollah missile kills one sailor on Israeli warship. Three are missing.

Strikes on port cities Jounieh and Tripoli

Attack by Israeli helicopter gunship kills 20 including nine children.

Beirut-Damascus road bombed.

Hezbollah rockets wound eight.

Infrastructure destroyed, airport closed, **Hezbollah** office demolished.

Palestinian militants blow up hidden bombs; Israeli air strike kills two Palestinians and wounds six.

Hezbollah rockets kill at least nine.

Light of Beirut fades on its darkest day ON THE GROUND MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Militants holding Israeli soldiers captive - sparking the crisis - are demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners.

Graphic

MAP: IN THE LINE OF FIRE SOURCE: REUTERS, THE NEW YORK TIMES, BBC NEWS

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

'Cache' and 'cachet' nab the unwary

Bangor Daily News (Maine)

July 22, 2006 Saturday

All Editions

Copyright 2006 Bangor Daily News

Section: Pg. A13

Length: 792 words

Byline: KENT WARD

Body

Near as I can tell, when it comes to spelling and/or pronouncing the names of various organizations, countries and individuals in the daily news report, the rule is simple: Do as you damn well please.

The Middle East terrorist organization currently itching to commence World War III in Lebanon is spelled "Hezbollah" by The Associated Press and probably most newspapers in the world, but "Hizbullah" by Newsweek magazine, and variations of the two by Internet bloggers and others.

Pronunciations of the word are all over the board, as well. Some experts put the emphasis on the first syllable (HEZ-boll-ah), some on the second syllable (Hez-BOLL-ah), and some on the third (Hez-boll-AH). The impression left with anyone trying to make sense of the lashup is that it is entirely possible that members of the radical outfit themselves haven't a clue what their name is or how to spell or pronounce it. Call us anything, as long as you don't call us late to the next opportunity to raise hell with the world.

We went through the same drill when the independent emirate of Qatar was often in the Mideast news. Pronunciations by television's talking heads ranged from "Cutter" and "Cater," to "Gutter" and "Git-tar." God only knows what the reporters and anchors might have done with Ypres, had television been around when that World War I site was in the news. I suspect that the dictionary pronunciation "E-pr" probably wouldn't have been their first guess.

A few nights ago, a television network carried a story about the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea. A line of type ran across the bottom of the picture, identifying the Korean village of Panmunjom as "Panmanjon." And for some time now, the South Korean port city that will always be Pusan to the thousands of American servicemen and women who have passed through it has come out "Busan" in press reports.

The network's mangling of "Panmunjom" looks suspiciously like the handiwork of some lowly network clerk who learned via the modern education system that, when it comes to spelling, close-but-no-cigar is good enough.

The Pusan/Busan thing would seem to have more to do with the Asian/African/Third World penchant for periodically changing the spelling of place names in order to confuse foreigners. (You know you are a really old foggy when you still think of Thailand as Siam, or Zaire as the Belgian Congo.)

'Cache' and 'cachet' nab the unwary

When it comes to renaming its cities on a whim, though, the prize goes to Russia, where St. Petersburg became the Petrograd that became the Leningrad that became the St. Petersburg that one day may well morph into something else, depending upon the outcome of the next revolution.

The war in Iraq has produced some unique misuse of words, but perhaps none with the fingernails-scraping-the-blackboard cringe factor of "cachet" (pronounced "kashay") when mistakenly used for "cache" (pronounced "kash"), which is a hiding place for concealing provisions, implements and the like. A stash, in common speech.

"Cachet" has several dictionary definitions dealing with prestige, seals of official approval, designs on envelopes commemorating stamp- collecting events, and a medicinal preparation (leave it to the French). None, though, is even remotely close to a hiding place for provisions.

While watching a television documentary about the war in Iraq a while back, I heard a soldier refer several times to "cachets" of enemy ammunition his outfit had discovered. A day or so later, I heard an Army bird colonel also speak of "cachets" of weapons, and I figured I had found the source of the GI's confusion.

A number of readers subsequently sent e-mails commenting on the misuse. Among them was Scott Taylor, a former resident of Hancock County who hopes one day to return to Maine. Writing from an Ohio location, he stated that in watching television coverage of the war he hears "all too often an authoritative military type referring to having discovered that rarest of things, a weapons cache that rhymes with 'sashay.' If that weren't sufficiently irritating, I've also discovered two instances in print of references to weapons 'cachets.'

"My reaction, in either case, is similar to that when my darling's grapefruit squirts me in the eye from across the table..."

I know the feeling. It's about the same reaction I have when I read stuff like the real estate ad in the newspaper describing a home that features all-new "Thermo Pain" windows, or an obituary datelined "Westbridge Water, Mass."

Both, of course, were long ago added to my cache of keepers. As speed bumps on the information highway they may not carry the cachet of the caches of weapons in Iraq, but they do entertain.

NEWS columnist Kent Ward lives in Winterport. His e-mail address is olddawg@bangordailynews.net.

Load-Date: July 24, 2006

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon vow to get revenge: 90,000 crammed into camp 'have already experienced what Lebanese are feeling'

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

July 26, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 The Vancouver Sun, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A7

Length: 609 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: AIN EN-HELWE, Lebanon

Body

AIN EN-HELWE, Lebanon -- Sawsan Yassine is one of dozens of so-called double refugees of the latest violence in the Mideast.

A third-generation Palestinian refugee living in Lebanon, Yassine fled the Rashidiya refugee camp near the Israeli border after three missiles exploded near her home on the weekend, followed by leaflets in Arabic dropped by other aircraft that warned people in southern Lebanon to clear out.

With the city of Sidon already bursting with 70,000 people displaced by the fighting about 50 km to the south, Yassine, her 11-month-old twins, Hussein and Ali, and her mother-in-law have taken sanctuary nearby in the UN-sponsored Falouja school in the Ain El Helwe refugee camp.

Four other Palestinian families and several hundred Lebanese who also escaped from the violence joined the 28-year-old woman.

"The leaflets are a sign of Israel's failure," Yassine said. "The Israelis are trying to work on our mood, our psychology, but we became used to such messages during the occupation."

For the third day in a row there were no Israeli air strikes on Sidon, but several bombs shook south Beirut late Tuesday afternoon -- the same area repeatedly hit by Israeli bombs during the past two weeks. There was also heavy fighting between Israeli ground forces and **Hezbollah** near the Lebanon-Israel border.

An Israeli missile strike destroyed a house in the southern Lebanese town of Nabatiyeh on Tuesday, killing seven civilians.

Sixteen **Hezbollah** rockets hit the Israeli city of Haifa, striking a seven-storey apartment building and a city bus, among other targets. More than two dozen people were injured.

During a visit to the region Monday, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice suggested the violence between Israel and **Hezbollah** would eventually lead to a new era in the Middle East. There was no sign of hope in Ain En-Helwe on Tuesday.

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon vow to get revenge: 90,000 crammed into camp 'have already experienced what Lebanese are feeling'

The 90,000 Palestinians crammed into the camp, and the thousands of newcomers, were in no mood to talk about the possibility of an international peacekeeping force. Instead, the refugees were concerned about getting revenge for the Israel onslaught -- triggered by the abduction of two of its soldiers by Hezbollah -- that has killed nearly 400 people in Lebanon since it started July 12.

Most of the people in the camp and neighbouring Sidon are women, children and older men.

"Only Allah knows where my husband is now fighting for Hezbollah," said Tair Deba who fled her village, 17 km from the Israeli border.

Hannah Ibrahim, who headed north with her four children to escape the fighting, said she wanted to give them a chance to grow up, join Hezbollah and fight Israel.

"Whatever Israel does to us now, we will be back," she said.

A Lebanese mother of 10, who gave her name as Majadal, said several of her sons were with Hezbollah.

"I not only intend to return home," she said. "I want to continue on to Jerusalem."

The United Nations has launched an appeal for \$150 million in emergency funding to assist those displaced by the fighting and has described their situation as catastrophic. Until the violence erupted, the situation seemed manageable in Ain El Helwe and Sidon, where relief efforts were spearheaded by a dozen Palestinian organizations and Lebanon's Hariri Foundation.

"They came to us suddenly, but it has been a nice solidarity," said Amne Jibreal Sulieman, who heads the General Union of Palestinian Women in Lebanon.

"As Palestinians we have already experienced what the Lebanese are now feeling and we feel for their people."

The big question, Sulieman and others said, is how long the fighting would last and whether the 700,000 people who fled would be allowed to return to their homes.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

Hard-to-kill militia chief is cut from different cloth

The Australian (Australia)

July 24, 2006 Monday

All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2006 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 1718 words

Byline: Peter Wilson

Body

MATP

AS Israeli warplanes buzzed overhead late yesterday afternoon, the portrait of a determined man in black headwear stared down from a painted billboard on to one of the apartment-lined streets in southern Beirut that have become ground zero in Israel's assault on Hezbollah.

Israeli forces have been desperately trying for 11 days to kill the man in that poster; Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah.

And the jets that have already destroyed his nearby home and offices would return after dark with more bunker-blasters for another raid on these shattered streets.

"He is our hero and he is up to this challenge," said Abu Jaffa, a 42-year-old merchant who was sitting with two friends near the poster in the almost deserted Ruweis area, just 4km from central Beirut.

Rubble and shattered apartment buildings lined the streets, which were deserted so quickly that clothes still hung from clothes lines where they were abandoned a week ago.

But Abu Jaffa smiled confidently as he pointed to the fiery rhetoric of Nasrallah written on the poster in Arabic: "We will cut off the hands and tear out the soul of whoever thinks of taking away our weapons."

The armed and tightly disciplined fighters who had twice stopped us in the devastated streets of southern Beirut, and the resistance they are mounting to Israel's incursions into southern Lebanon, showed that Hezbollah was still functioning well despite almost two weeks of heavy bombardment of its headquarters district.

But Abu Jaffa seemed less confident when asked what difference it would make if the Israelis did manage to take out Nasrallah.

"He has strong men behind him and the resistance is not just one man, but, yes, he is very important to us all ... it would be terrible to lose him."

The importance of the 46-year-old Beirut-born cleric is underlined by the way his face pops up all over southern Beirut -- in posters, keyrings, even on computer screensavers and telephone cards.

Hard-to-kill militia chief is cut from different cloth

Some US government officials now share Israel's assessment that Nasrallah is a bigger danger than Osama bin Laden, and Israel's Interior Minister, Roni Bar-On, has removed any doubt that killing Nasrallah has become a top priority in the current conflict.

"Nasrallah has issued his own sentence. I doubt if he would be able to find a life insurance agent these days," Bar-On said. Nasrallah has certainly shown a much broader range of skills than bin Laden while leading and shaping the Shia "Party of God" over the past 14 years.

As a military leader, the charismatic religious orator is credited throughout the Arab world with driving Israel out of Lebanon in 2000, leaving him revered as the only Arab leader to have beaten modern Israel on the battlefield.

He is also such a shrewd player in mainstream politics that he ranks among the most influential politicians in Lebanon, and as an administrator he has built his organisation into a state within a state which often outdoes Lebanon's weak official government.

Apart from running the last private militia left in Lebanon, Hezbollah operates its own hospital, schools, clinics, TV and radio station. It also runs social welfare services ranging from collecting the garbage to repairing damaged homes for the largely poor Shia community.

"He is the shrewdest leader in the Arab world and the most dangerous," Israeli ambassador to the US Daniel Ayalon has told The Washington Post.

In a recent interview with the Post in his now-shattered offices, Nasrallah portrayed himself as a cleric with a life-long religious calling.

"When I was 10 or 11, my grandmother had a scarf. It was black, but a long one. I used to wrap it around my head and say to them that I'm a cleric, you need to pray behind me."

Beirut

His family was not especially religious but the young Nasrallah took a much more intense interest in Islam than his eight younger brothers and sisters.

In 1975, Lebanon's civil war forced his parents to shift from Beirut to their ancestral village in the country's south, where the intelligent and intense 15-year-old met and impressed radical clerics. They sponsored him for stints at respected Islamic schools in Iraq and Iran, but his studies were repeatedly interrupted by his growing political activities.

While still in his early 20s, his fiery preaching at a hardline religious school in Lebanon built him an avid following that he used to form armed resistance groups after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

Those groups helped to form the Iranian- and Syrian-sponsored Hezbollah, which formally announced its formation in 1985 to fight a holy war to liberate southern Lebanon.

In 1987, he was lightly injured while leading Hezbollah forces which defeated the rival secular Shia group Amal for influence in southern Lebanon.

He became the head of Hezbollah's central military command but

Continued -- Page 15

From Page 11

his biggest advance was in 1992. With the personal endorsement of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini he became Hezbollah's overall leader at the age of just 32 after its previous leader, Abbas al-Musawi, was ambushed and killed by an Israeli helicopter gunship.

Hard-to-kill militia chief is cut from different cloth

Already seen as more devout and brave than most Arab leaders, who have been notorious for their corruption and mismanagement, Nasrallah's status among disenchanted Arabs and other Muslims soared after the 1997 death of his eldest son, Hadi, who was killed while fighting Israelis in the south of Lebanon. While Lebanese leaders are better known for helping their own sons to avoid militant service, Nasrallah announced that he was pleased that he could now look the parents of other "martyrs" in the face.

Under his leadership, Hezbollah's guerilla campaign had sharply lifted its "kill rate" of Israeli troops in southern Lebanon. Thirteen Israeli troops had been killed in 1992 but that toll doubled the following year and tripled by 1997.

The Party of God usurped the role of the official Lebanese army near the border with Israel and pioneered modern Islamic suicide bombers and the deployment of simultaneous terror attacks, tactics that have been copied by Hamas and al-Qa'ida.

Israel's unconditional withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 was portrayed throughout the Arab world as Nasrallah's triumph, even though his group had been armed and funded by Syria and Iran.

He won further fame by using kidnapping to convince Israel to make huge unbalanced swaps of hostages, on one occasion securing the release of 23 Lebanese prisoners and more than 400 Palestinians in return for just one Israeli businessmen and the bodies of three dead soldiers.

The current crisis was sparked by another successful bid to capture human bargaining chips, with Hezbollah's seizure of two Israeli soldiers and killing of eight others.

But Nasrallah's most striking achievement has been as a political strategist, and his ability to build a force in legitimate Lebanese politics without ever abandoning violence.

Just months after Nasrallah became leader, Hezbollah contested Lebanon's parliamentary elections, winning 12 of 128 seats to blaze a trail later followed by the Palestinian radicals Hamas.

In the 2005 parliamentary elections, Hezbollah grew to 23 seats, making it one of the country's largest parties and earning it two cabinet seats, to go with an army of trade union leaders and local council members, clearly usurping Amal as Lebanon's main Shia movement.

To complement its support from Tehran and Damascus, Hezbollah built up independent funding from the Shia Lebanese diaspora in Australia and elsewhere, with Nasrallah's personal popularity acting as a major fundraising draw.

Hezbollah is on Washington's "priority list" of terrorist organisations, and in 2003 Australia made membership of its military wing illegal for Australian citizens, but Nasrallah has still enjoyed the trappings of a mainstream political leader.

He often addressed large rallies, converted his headquarters in the southern suburbs, which house about a third of Beirut's 1.5 million people, into something of his own political capital, and was further legitimised in 2000 when UN Secretary General Kofi Annan paid him a public visit during an official visit to Lebanon.

Nasrallah has often been happy to play the moderate. He opposed the use of violence over the publication of provocative cartoons of the prophet Mohammed by a Danish newspaper, has fiercely opposed bin Laden, and criticised the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre towers.

"What do the people who worked in those two towers, along with thousands of employees, women and men, have to do with war that is taking place in the Middle East? Or the war that Mr George Bush may wage on people in the Islamic world?" he asked a reporter. "Therefore we condemned this act -- and any similar act we condemn."

"The method of Osama bin Laden, and the fashion of bin Laden, we do not endorse them. And many of the operations that they have carried out, we condemned them very clearly."

Hard-to-kill militia chief is cut from different cloth

"The worst, the most dangerous thing that this Islamic revival has encountered ... was the Taliban," Nasrallah said. "The Taliban state presented a very hideous example of an Islamic state."

In 2004, he condemned the beheading of US contractor Nicholas Berg by al-Qa'ida in Iraq as a "despicable act" that did "grave damage to Islam and the Muslims". "It is unacceptable, it is forbidden to harm the innocent," he said.

Attacks on Israeli civilians were a different matter.

"There is no other means for the Palestinians to defend themselves. That is why I cannot condemn this type of operation in occupied Palestine."

Accused by Western intelligence services of running several overseas terror operations, Nasrallah is believed by some analysts to have long dissuaded the Israelis from killing him by making it clear that Hezbollah would respond with major attacks on civilians.

If the Israelis did see him as untouchable that protection is now over.

If he does survive the current conflict the crucial question is whether the overwhelming Israeli response to Hezbollah's latest provocation increases or undermines his support.

"This is not a legitimate organisation, this is a terrorist organisation," warned junior British Foreign Minister Kim Howells in Beirut yesterday.

"But by destroying infrastructure they (the Israelis) are driving moderate Muslims into the arms of Hezbollah."

Load-Date: July 23, 2006

Get out, half million protesters tell Syria

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

March 16, 2005 Wednesday

First Edition

Copyright 2005 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 14

Length: 362 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Beirut

Body

Lebanon's independence movement has seized back the initiative in its struggle with Syria and the Syrian-backed government by holding the biggest demonstration in the recent history of the Middle East.

Up to 500,000 people crammed into central Beirut on Monday to call for a complete withdrawal of Syrian troops and for a full and independent inquiry into the February 14 murder of former prime minister Rafik Hariri - the event which sparked the present crisis.

The monster rally dwarfed the pro-Syrian demonstration called on Tuesday of last week by Hezbollah, the mainly Shiite Muslim political and paramilitary movement. While Hezbollah packed out central Beirut's Escwa Square, the opposition rally filled to capacity the much larger Martyr's Square where Mr Hariri is buried. Many Lebanese blame his assassination on Syrian agents.

"I am here for freedom," said Noor, a middle-aged Sunni Muslim woman from the southern town of Sidon. "We are Lebanese. Our message to Syria is please go."

Monday's protest was different in both scale and nature to the Hezbollah demonstration, until Monday the biggest show of popular support in modern Middle Eastern history.

Whereas Hezbollah carefully choreographed and policed its show of support, with martial music, warm-up speakers and hundreds of walkie-talkie toting stewards, the opposition rally had a more spontaneous feel.

And while many Hezbollah supporters made a point of showing journalists that they were carrying pistols, Monday's mass rally had a less aggressive demeanour and had a much higher proportion of female participants.

Yet while the rally demonstrated the popular will for an end to Syrian domination, it also revealed the opposition's lack of any recognised leadership.

Mr Hariri, the leader of the Sunni Muslims, is dead, and the most effective surviving opposition leader, Walid Jumblatt of the mainly Druse Progressive Socialist Party, has not visited Beirut since his ally's murder, fearing that he too will be assassinated.

The list of speakers on Monday featured Mr Hariri's sister, Bahiya Hariri, herself an MP, and Marwan Hamade, an opposition MP who narrowly survived an assassination attempt last year.

Get out, half million protesters tell Syria

Graphic

PHOTO: Showing the flag ... demonstrators unfurl a huge Lebanese flag in preparation for the Beirut protest against the presence of Syrian forces in Lebanon. Photo: AFP/ Ramzi Haidar

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Smarter than being a martyr

The Times (London)

March 11, 2005, Friday

Copyright 2005 Times Newspapers Limited

Section: Features; 20

Length: 382 words

Byline: Dean Godson

Body

Remember the South Lebanese Army? It was widely dismissed as a bunch of Christian stooges. Hezbollah? Well, they are authentic indigenous freedom fighters who kicked out the imperialistic Zionists and run brilliant clinics and schools for the disempowered Shia of Lebanon. Or at least that's the impression you might derive from such indulgent portrayals as Jonathan Dimbleby's New World War, let alone Robert Fisk's articles.

So what are these authentic indigenous freedom fighters doing holding a demonstration to thank big brother Syria, which has occupied Lebanon for nearly 30 years? Moreover, why are theocrats piping up for a secular regime whose ideology derives from European Fascism?

Part of the answer is some of the top ranks of Hezbollah aren't quite so authentic and indigenous as many think. It has not been lost on many Lebanese that Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, the head of Hezbollah, only called for the demonstrations after Bashar Assad, the Syrian President, made his keynote address on Saturday which contained ominous codewords that portend a return to civil strife. He made particular reference to the events of May 17, 1983, an allusion to the peace which Lebanon signed with Israel and which his late father thwarted by physical force.

Nasrallah's address at Tuesday's rally was even more revealing. He defiantly declared that Lebanon is no Ukraine or Georgia -where the US encouraged "people power" that led to regime change. This declaration surely ranks with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's denunciation of democracy as a Western heresy that places man above God.

Hezbollah still has a store of capital for its role in looking after the most disadvantaged of Lebanese society. But its dual-hatted strategy is under stress.

For so long as the South was under Israeli rule, there was no contradiction between its nationalist role and its wider Islamist aspirations. Now that the Zionists are gone, on whose behalf are they still fighting?

That is why so many younger, apolitical Shia -including many women in jeans - attended the anti-Syrian demonstration. Unlike Tuesday's rally, no one needed to be press-ganged into attending. Hezbollah's cult of death and martyrdom hasn't quite as many takers as it once did. Or as the pre-war French might have said, "mourir pour Damascus?"

Load-Date: March 11, 2005

Smarter than being a martyr

End of Document

No Time To Skimp on Men and Materials

New York Sun (Archive)

July 28, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 The New York Sun, Two SL, LLC All Rights Reserved

Section: ISRAEL AT WAR; Pg. 7

Length: 715 words

Byline: Youssef Ibrahim

Body

When the history of the Iraq and Lebanon wars is written, it may be said they were lost because America and Israel failed to put enough boots on the ground - a petty reason to lose battles of destiny. We are not there yet, but we are pretty close to it.

The issue now is Israel's ongoing war with *Hezbollah* and its companions, Gaza, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad. Dismissing it as another Arab-Jew skirmish is a serious error. This war is the latest installment in the continuing clash of jihadist Islam and the global Judeo-Christian system.

Similarly, the war in Iraq - regardless of how it began in 2003 - has mutated into another front for jihadists to push their military theocracies and finally drown yet another Muslim country in the growing cesspool of jihadism. Similar outposts have been claimed or are being reclaimed in Somalia, Algeria, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and immigrant Muslim communities in Europe and America, where converts have used suicide bombings to blow up subways and buildings, high on the fumes of the Palestinian Arab struggle and assorted Muslim grievances against the West.

So Gaza and Lebanon are neither the last nor the first, but just the latest spots where people like Sheik Hassan Nasrallah of *Hezbollah* stage their wars of choice in the name of the prophet. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi did it in Jordan, as have Osama bin Laden and his no. 2, Ayman al-Zawahri, who jumped into the fray yesterday, warning the West of dire consequences over *Hezbollah*.

Sadly, whenever such conflicts flare, shortsighted Westerners and panicky Arab secularists start talking about negotiations and cease-fires, oblivious to the fact that jihadists are not the least bit interested.

Worse yet, when they do decide to accept the challenge and go to battle, as Israel and America did in Iraq and Lebanon, their leaders refuse to supply the hardware and the armies necessary. Fighting terror on the cheap has been President Bush and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's grievous error in Iraq, where twice as many Americans troops were needed from Day 1. The error is now being repeated by Israel's remarkably inept prime minister, Ehud Olmert, and his catastrophically pacifist defense minister, Amir Peretz. Such errors cost more than lives. They make for a Vietnam rerun, with all the strategic setbacks and emotional baggage that come with defeats.

The battle against suicide-ready Muslim fundamentalists is one where no prisoners will be taken by either side.

Hezbollah and Hamas, as well as their patrons, Iran and Syria, are in the vanguard of a relentless Islamist-jihadist march that challenges human values on a global scale, from Indonesia to Iraq, Lebanon to Palestine, and as far

No Time To Skimp on Men and Materials

away as Chechnya and the "Mad Max" land of Somalia. The jihadists' goal is reversing a 200-year history of achievements: Democratic values, freedom of expression, separation of church and state, establishment of civil societies, and the emancipation of women and human beings from theocratic and autocratic rule.

When Israel decided to put an end to what was, in effect, death by a thousand paper cuts - Kassam and Katyusha rockets and Hezbollah- Hamas cross-border raids - it set its sights on bringing down the terrorist proxies of Iran and Syria by dismantling the Hamas government and stripping Hezbollah of political power via a humiliating military defeat.

Yet three weeks into the fighting, Israel has pledged just 10% of its reservists, confining itself to a bombing campaign and a meager ground force in Lebanon. Hezbollah is already broadcasting to the whole jihadi planet that Islam has triumphed. The Web is abuzz with its gloating. There is even talk of negotiations that include Iran and Syria, another recipe for disaster.

Syria's objective is nothing less than to reassert its control of Lebanon and suffocate what is left of the great Cedar Revolution. Iran is the backer, financier, and godfather of Hezbollah and Syria.

Their goals are utterly incompatible with those of the group that just met in Rome, which pressured Secretary of State Rice on Wednesday to urge Israel to accept a cease-fire. For her part, Ms. Rice was talking of a "new Middle East," one following the now defunct greater democratic Middle East of 2004. We would settle for propping up the old Middle East.

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

End of Document

No Time To Skimp on Men and Materials

New York Sun (Archive)

July 28, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 The New York Sun, Two SL, LLC All Rights Reserved

Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 7

Length: 715 words

Byline: YOUSSEF IBRAHIM

Body

When the history of the Iraq and Lebanon wars is written, it may be said they were lost because America and Israel failed to put enough boots on the ground - a petty reason to lose battles of destiny. We are not there yet, but we are pretty close to it.

The issue now is Israel's ongoing war with **Hezbollah** and its companions, Gaza, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad. Dismissing it as another Arab-Jew skirmish is a serious error. This war is the latest installment in the continuing clash of jihadist Islam and the global Judeo-Christian system.

Similarly, the war in Iraq - regardless of how it began in 2003 - has mutated into another front for jihadists to push their military theocracies and finally drown yet another Muslim country in the growing cesspool of jihadism. Similar outposts have been claimed or are being reclaimed in Somalia, Algeria, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and immigrant Muslim communities in Europe and America, where converts have used suicide bombings to blow up subways and buildings, high on the fumes of the Palestinian Arab struggle and assorted Muslim grievances against the West.

So Gaza and Lebanon are neither the last nor the first, but just the latest spots where people like Sheik Hassan Nasrallah of **Hezbollah** stage their wars of choice in the name of the prophet. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi did it in Jordan, as have Osama bin Laden and his no. 2, Ayman al-Zawahri, who jumped into the fray yesterday, warning the West of dire consequences over **Hezbollah**.

Sadly, whenever such conflicts flare, shortsighted Westerners and panicky Arab secularists start talking about negotiations and cease-fires, oblivious to the fact that jihadists are not the least bit interested.

Worse yet, when they do decide to accept the challenge and go to battle, as Israel and America did in Iraq and Lebanon, their leaders refuse to supply the hardware and the armies necessary. Fighting terror on the cheap has been President Bush and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's grievous error in Iraq, where twice as many Americans troops were needed from Day 1. The error is now being repeated by Israel's remarkably inept prime minister, Ehud Olmert, and his catastrophically pacifist defense minister, Amir Peretz. Such errors cost more than lives. They make for a Vietnam rerun, with all the strategic setbacks and emotional baggage that come with defeats.

The battle against suicide-ready Muslim fundamentalists is one where no prisoners will be taken by either side.

Hezbollah and Hamas, as well as their patrons, Iran and Syria, are in the vanguard of a relentless Islamist-jihadist march that challenges human values on a global scale, from Indonesia to Iraq, Lebanon to Palestine, and as far

No Time To Skimp on Men and Materials

away as Chechnya and the "Mad Max" land of Somalia. The jihadists' goal is reversing a 200-year history of achievements: Democratic values, freedom of expression, separation of church and state, establishment of civil societies, and the emancipation of women and human beings from theocratic and autocratic rule.

When Israel decided to put an end to what was, in effect, death by a thousand paper cuts - Kassam and Katyusha rockets and Hezbollah- Hamas cross-border raids - it set its sights on bringing down the terrorist proxies of Iran and Syria by dismantling the Hamas government and stripping Hezbollah of political power via a humiliating military defeat.

Yet three weeks into the fighting, Israel has pledged just 10% of its reservists, confining itself to a bombing campaign and a meager ground force in Lebanon. Hezbollah is already broadcasting to the whole jihadi planet that Islam has triumphed. The Web is abuzz with its gloating. There is even talk of negotiations that include Iran and Syria, another recipe for disaster.

Syria's objective is nothing less than to reassert its control of Lebanon and suffocate what is left of the great Cedar Revolution. Iran is the backer, financier, and godfather of Hezbollah and Syria.

Their goals are utterly incompatible with those of the group that just met in Rome, which pressured Secretary of State Rice on Wednesday to urge Israel to accept a cease-fire. For her part, Ms. Rice was talking of a "new Middle East," one following the now defunct greater democratic Middle East of 2004. We would settle for propping up the old Middle East.

Load-Date: August 10, 2007

End of Document

[A Haifa Life](#)

The New York Times

July 30, 2006 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section 6; Column 3; Magazine; Pg. 13; THE WAY WE LIVE NOW: 7-30-06: QUESTIONS FOR A. B. YEHOASHUA

Length: 662 words

Byline: By Deborah Solomon

Body

Q: As one of Israel's most acclaimed novelists and public intellectuals, you happen to live in Haifa, which is close to the Lebanese border and among the towns in northern Israel struck this month by Hezbollah's rockets. What has it been like there? It's a bizarre combination. It's like Yom Kippur on the one hand, because the streets are empty and there are no cars. On the other hand, you can eat if you like.

Are you constantly heading into bomb shelters? Every modern house in Israel has its own safe room. The other day, a patient was insistent to come see my wife, a psychoanalyst. In the middle of the session, the sirens went off. The three of us rushed into the safe room. This was a really special session in which the psychoanalyst's husband is sitting with the patient. This is not done in New York.

As a so-called Israeli dove who has publicly expressed sympathy for the Palestinians, what do you think when the sirens go off and the rockets fall? This is so sad. How many fighters are in Hezbollah? A very tiny group. A few thousand? They are now putting disaster on millions of Lebanese who did not want this war and who now have to suffer.

As terrorist groups go, do you think Hezbollah is worse than Hamas? Hezbollah is far more extreme than Hamas. Hezbollah is an organization that denies the legitimacy of Israel.

But so does Hamas, whose charter calls for the destruction of Israel. Their official ideology is very anti-Israel, but Hamas is more reasonable because they have to live with the reality and provide food to the Palestinian people. Hezbollah is living in a vacuum. They're in Lebanon, but they're not responsible for the safety and welfare of Lebanon, having been founded as the messenger of Iran in a fanatic way.

Let's talk about your latest novel, "A Woman in Jerusalem," which comes out in this country in a few weeks. This is the most important thing! Meaning, I would like to speak not about the Hezbollah but my novel.

Isn't politics more important than your own career? Of course, but about my novel I can speak something more accurate, more intimate and more true than I can about Hezbollah.

The novel is surprisingly entertaining for a book about a bureaucrat employed by a bakery and an unclaimed female corpse at a morgue, the victim of a suicide bombing in Jerusalem. He is an alienated bureaucrat. From this

A Haifa Life

alienation, from this indifference, little by little, he takes moral responsibility for the neglect of this woman and falls in love with her even though he never met her.

Or rather falls in love with the process of mourning her, as if to atone for his unfeeling past. I wrote the book during the second intifada, when the question was what to do with these constant deaths. Israeli society, I saw, was repressing these deaths. When a bus or restaurant was blown up, the bus was taken away, the streets were cleaned and normal life returned. This was a kind of a formula -- we have to keep normal life. We don't have to be affected by this, as we don't know how to mourn. The heart was becoming hard, very hard. And this was the place which I wanted as a writer to open.

Along with other Israeli novelists, you've been active in trying to broker a peace with the Palestinians, flying to Geneva in 2003 for the signing of the Geneva Accord. Who else was there? A great part of the Israeli intelligentsia, including Amos Oz and David Grossman. We are very close friends.

Is there competition among you? We are competitive, but in order not to suffer from competition, we sublimate our competition in friendship.

How would you compare your fiction with theirs? I was considered one of the most optimistic of the novelists. But now, I have to say, I have lost a great quantity of my optimism.

Which makes you a pessimist about the future of Israel? No. I have children and grandchildren. I can be a pessimist for myself, but I have to be optimistic for them. I have to keep the spirit. Deborah Solomon

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo (Photograph by Gillian Laub)

Load-Date: July 30, 2006

End of Document

Israel says pull-back to border is not an end to Gaza offensive

The Irish Times

July 29, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 The Irish Times All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Middle East Crisis; Pg. 10

Length: 520 words

Body

Israelis tanks and troops pulled back to the Israel-Gaza border yesterday after a particularly deadly incursion that killed 30 Palestinians over three days, but the army said the withdrawal was temporary and did not mean its month-long offensive was over.

The latest Gaza fighting came as the world's attention stayed fixed on fighting further north, where Israel is waging war with Lebanon-based Hizbullah guerrillas.

An end to the violence in Gaza did not appear to be in sight, moreover, with Palestinian officials saying yesterday that negotiations for the release of prisoners had stalled.

Palestinian officials said they had not received a response from Israel to their softened conditions for the release of Israeli corporal Gilad Shalit (19), who was captured by Hamas-linked militants in a cross-border raid on June 25th. Hamas has called for Israel's guarantees that it would free women, children and long-serving Palestinian prisoners if Cpl Shalit is released.

Dr Salah Bardawil, a senior Hamas official, said Israel's refusal to guarantee that it would release any Palestinian prisoners if Cpl Shalit were freed created the stalemate. Dr Bardawil also denied reports that Hamas and Hizbullah were co-operating in negotiations for the release of prisoners.

He noted, however, that he would support such an effort "if it is in the interests of both Lebanese and Palestinians".

Israel's incursion into Gaza began after militants killed two soldiers and captured Cpl Shalit, who remains in the custody of the Palestinian militant groups.

An Associated Press count says Israeli troops have killed 159 Palestinians since they started attacking the Gaza Strip to try to recover Cpl Shalit and stop Palestinian militants from firing rockets into Israel. Most of those killed were militants, but included were a considerable number of civilians.

The Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for a rocket attack yesterday on the southern Israeli town of Zikim that injured two children who were hit by shrapnel.

In Algeria, Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas said the situation in the Palestinian areas and Lebanon was only likely to get worse after world leaders failed in Rome on Wednesday to agree on an immediate ceasefire.

"The situation will worsen and the consequences will be very heavy, not only for the region but probably for the entire world," he told Algeria's official news agency.

Israel says pull-back to border is not an end to Gaza offensive

Israeli aircraft yesterday hit a metal workshop in the city of Khan Younis that the military said was a weapons storehouse. The strike wounded nine people, including two children, hospital officials said, while hospital officials said a 40-year-old Palestinian man whose house was targeted by Israeli forces had died of his wounds.

Palestinians could be seen streaming out of their houses early in the day to clean up after Israel's latest incursion.

In the temporary absence of Israeli troops, residents inspected their battered houses and vehicles, while rescue workers searched for bodies underneath rubble and militants picked up mines and explosives they had planted to try and blow up Israeli tanks. - (AP)

Load-Date: July 29, 2006

End of Document

A town's quiet grief mirrors conflict

The International Herald Tribune

July 21, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 International Herald Tribune All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 5

Length: 862 words

Byline: Greg Myre

Dateline: NAZARETH, Israel

Body

This Arab town never expected to be entangled in the Israel-Hezbollah fighting. But on Thursday, residents mourned two young brothers killed by Hezbollah, while directing a host of grievances at Israel.

A Hezbollah rocket crashed into a residential neighborhood in the winding hills of Nazareth on Wednesday afternoon, killing Rabia Taluzi, 7, and his brother Mahmoud, 3, as they walked home from their cousin's house.

Two of their older brothers, Motaz, 13, and Allah, 12, were with them but escaped serious injury.

Dozens of subdued women in black filled the living room of the Taluzis' modest apartment Thursday to pay condolences, while Allah slept in the room he had shared with his younger brothers, his face buried in his hands. The living room window was cracked from the force of the explosion. Sad music played on a stereo. Israeli fighter jets roared overhead, flying north toward Lebanon.

But in contrast to Jewish Israelis, who overwhelmingly support the government's tough military response to a Hezbollah incursion last week, the mourners in Nazareth tended to be only mildly critical of the Lebanese group, and often more so of Israel.

Some were diplomatic, saying only that they wanted an immediate end to the shooting, and steering clear of politics.

Nazareth's mayor, Ramez Jeraisy, said that Israel, as the stronger party, should seek an immediate truce and negotiate with Hezbollah for the release of two captured Israeli soldiers.

Some stridently criticized Israel.

"The world should say to Israel, 'We don't want any more of your aggression,'" said Nabila Espanioly, a psychologist and self-described political activist who was at the Taluzi home. "What Israel is doing is state terrorism. You can't just kill civilians and destroy villages."

Hezbollah rockets have hit three Arab towns in northern Israel during the past week, and have also hit an Arab home in Haifa, a city with a sizable Arab minority. There have been numerous injuries, and the Taluzi brothers were the first Arabs to be killed. But there is no sign this has narrowed the huge rift in public opinion between Jewish and

A town's quiet grief mirrors conflict

Arab citizens of Israel. Arab Israelis account for more than one million of Israel's seven million citizens, and insist they are loyal to Israel.

Yet they are also sympathetic to Arabs throughout the region, with a particular attachment to Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Ahmed Tibi, an outspoken Arab member of Israel's Parliament, on Monday introduced a no-confidence motion for the government's handling of the conflict with Lebanon. The measure was soundly rejected, winning support only from other Arab legislators.

"There is an overwhelming consensus in Israeli society, and I don't want to be part of it," Tibi said in an interview Thursday. He stressed that he opposed the Hezbollah attacks and empathized with Israelis facing rocket fire, but added: "I cannot accept this destruction of another country by Israel. War crimes are being committed."

The Israeli government rejects such charges and says that it is Hezbollah that intentionally targets Israeli civilians, and uses Lebanese civilians for cover. "Terrorists use the population and live among them," the Israeli foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, said this week. "It's difficult to target like a surgery. Unfortunately, civilians sometimes pay the price of giving shelter to terrorists."

Much of the Arab Israeli population is concentrated in the north of the country, and Nazareth is one of the largest Arab towns, with 75,000 residents who are a mix of Christians and Muslims. Nazareth is about 40 kilometers, or 25 miles, south of the Lebanese border and had never been hit by a rocket until Wednesday.

Most residents had not altered their routine in the past week because they believed that the town would not be targeted because of its Arab population.

Most children in Nazareth continued to play outside, but Nohad Taluzi, the mother of the boys who were killed, insisted that her eight children remain in the house. But the children begged her and began to cry, said her sister-in-law, Amna Taluzi. As a compromise, Nohad Taluzi allowed her sons to walk several blocks to play inside the home of their cousins. They were hit while walking back home, the family said.

Hezbollah has not said what the target was, but Nazareth residents said they were sure their town was hit by mistake.

"No one expected rockets here," Amna Taluzi said.

Still, some residents criticized the Israeli government for not providing warning sirens and bomb shelters in Nazareth, as it has done in Jewish towns in the north.

"This is another example of how the Arab sector is neglected," said Muhammad Awsy, 45, a municipal worker who arrived at the scene just seconds after the boys were killed Wednesday. "Look around. You don't see playgrounds or other facilities here. This gives us the feeling we are living in a different state."

Israel's Home Front Command did not immediately respond to requests for comment. However, the Haaretz newspaper said Nazareth did not have sirens because the town was not believed to be in danger, but the Home Front Command would soon be connecting it to the system.

Load-Date: July 21, 2006

Israeli envoy denies force disproportionate

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 27, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 The Federal Capital Press of Australia PTY Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: A; Pg. 2

Length: 554 words

Byline: Paul Maley

Body

Israel's Ambassador to Australia has rejected accusations his country is using disproportionate force in its war against Hezbollah militants.

Meanwhile, his Syrian counterpart has denied Syria has armed the group and refused to condemn its rocket attacks on Israeli civilians.

Speaking just a day after Israeli forces bombed a United Nations observation post, killing four peacekeepers, the Israeli Ambassador Naftali Tamir told The Canberra Times that Israel was the using the "utmost care" in its strikes, which he said were aimed solely at Hezbollah fighters and infrastructure.

"I do not think we are using force excessively," he said. "We are using a very targeted sort of operation. I know the results are sometimes unfortunate, but those who are attacking us are doing it indiscriminately." Mr Tamir said yesterday's bombing of the long established UN observation post in the southern Hezbollah stronghold of Khiam, which UN Secretary General Koffi Annan said appeared deliberate, was an accident that would be investigated.

"To say to us that we are targeting the United Nations would be an absurdity ... the United Nations has never been, and will never be, a target," he said.

Mr Tamir rejected the suggestion that the bombing of the UN post betrayed a carelessness in the way Israel was prosecuting the war.

"I would not go to that extremity.

I would like the investigation to find out whether there was Israeli responsibility," he said.

Responding to media reports that Israel had attacked at least 10 Lebanese ambulances since the conflict began, Mr Tamir denied the vehicles had been fired on intentionally and cautioned against rushing to judgment.

"Accusation in the Middle East is something which is common currency," he said. "Sometimes it's more difficult to substantiate allegations in our part of the world.

There are cases where we were condemned and there was no substance to it."

Israeli envoy denies force disproportionate

Mr Tamir said ambulances "had been targeted in Israel, and targeted intentionally". He said the current violence was the result of Syria and Iran and "Hezbollah and Hamas are the puppets".

Mr Tamir said the imagery broadcast by the media had focused inordinately on the situation in Lebanon and more attention should be drawn to the suffering in Israel.

Syrian Ambassador to Australia, Tammam Sulaiman, denied his country was arming Hezbollah and refused to condemn the group for launching rocket attacks on Israeli civilian populations, although he said he regretted civilian deaths.

"We support the resistance," he said. "And this is part of the resistance ... the Lebanese people have the sovereign right to defend their people. The question really should be posed to Israel that Israel is occupying another land and targeting civilians." Mr Sulaiman said Israel was a "terrorist country" and that the kidnapping by Hezbollah of its soldiers was being used as "a pretext". "Israel wants every country, every party, every organisation to succumb to its needs," he said. "Syria and Lebanon were the only two countries that did not make peace with Israel according to the Israeli conditions."

He said Israel and their supporters in the West were guilty of double standards. "If they are honest in condemning terrorism they should condemn the terrorism of Israel, which really targets the children and women and civilian people," he said.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

End of Document

Israel warns of large-scale ground invasion of Lebanon

Evening News (Edinburgh)

July 21, 2006, Friday

Home Edition

Copyright 2006 The Scotsman Publications Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: Pg. 2

Length: 511 words

Body

ISRAEL today warned hundreds of thousands of people to flee southern Lebanon "immediately", signalling a large-scale ground invasion was imminent.

Reports said Israel's military leaders had decided a major incursion across the border was the only way to push Hezbollah back after nine days of the heaviest bombardment of Lebanon in 24 years had failed to do so.

Warplanes today resumed strikes on targets across Lebanon and the Israeli military said four of its soldiers were killed in a clash with Hezbollah guerrillas in the south of the country.

Meanwhile, HMS Bulwark, the Royal Naval assault ship carrying 1300 British evacuees - the biggest single exodus from Lebanon - arrived safely in Cyprus today.

And more Britons evacuated from Lebanon arrived back on UK soil. Some 82 people, mainly women and children, landed at Gatwick early today on the final leg of their journey.

Defence Secretary Des Browne denied that the British response in evacuating people from Beirut had been too slow.

"This is a very complicated and quite difficult operation and I don't think we should underestimate the security issues that were involved," he said.

"This is a very successful operation which to date has allowed 2800 people to be evacuated. I think we should be very proud of what our troops have done."

Asked why Britain was not calling for an immediate ceasefire in the conflict, he replied that there was no "quick fix" to the situation. He said: "There is, on one view, a very simple solution to this and that is that Hezbollah could in the immediate crisis hand over prisoners and stop sending their missiles into Israeli territory.

"In practical terms, it is almost impossible to envisage a set of circumstances where the Israeli action will stop while these missiles continue to rain down upon their territory."

Top Israeli officials met last night to decide how big a force to send into Lebanon.

They said Israel would not stop its offensive until Hezbollah was forced behind the Litani River, 20 miles north of the border - creating a new buffer zone in a region that saw 18 years of Israeli presence from 1982.

Israel warns of large-scale ground invasion of Lebanon

Signs of the dramatic escalation came as UN chief Kofi Annan warned of a humanitarian crisis in Lebanon and called for an immediate cease-fire.

He denounced Israel for "excessive use of force" and **Hezbollah** for holding "an entire nation hostage" with its rocket attacks and snatching of two Israeli soldiers last week.

The United States - which has resisted calls for it to press its ally Israel to halt the fighting - is sending Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to the region, arriving in Israel on Tuesday or Wednesday after stopping over in Arab nations.

At least 319 people have been killed in Lebanon and 32 in Israel since the fighting began.

Early today, one air force officer died and three were injured when two Israeli helicopters collided near the Lebanese border.

Hezbollah said two of its fighters had been killed in the latest fighting with Israeli troops. The UN has estimated about a half-million people in Lebanon have been displaced by the fighting.

Load-Date: July 21, 2006

Sacrificing a democracy while supporting an ally; Globalist

The International Herald Tribune

July 29, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 International Herald Tribune All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 962 words

Byline: Roger Cohen

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

When I was in Lebanon 22 years ago, a few months after 241 U.S. servicemen were killed by a suicide bomber, I met Fouad Siniora, now the Lebanese prime minister. He was working then as a financier and, in the world-weary way of his compatriots, he said:

"Lebanon is a wound kept open to bleed a little when it is in the interest of one of the parties."

Siniora seemed wise to me then, a shrewd man trying to plan a business in the midst of civil war, and the ensuing couple of decades have demonstrated his foresight. The blood has kept flowing in Lebanon, with occasional interludes of peace; a little blood sometimes, and then, at moments like this one, a lot.

Lebanon gained independence from France in 1943, five years before the foundation of Israel. Like its southern neighbor, it has found survival a battle. Like Iraq, another post-Ottoman invention, it has struggled with a multiplicity of religions, clans and ethnicities. Like any small country squeezed between greater powers, it has suffered its share of abuse.

Back in 1984, when I was in Beirut, the country was still suffering the consequences of the 1982 Israeli invasion, aimed in part at evicting the Palestine Liberation Organization. The PLO had been using Lebanon as a base, much like Hezbollah today.

The names change, the aims shift a little, the parties shuffle around the dance floor. But the basic facts endure: Lebanon is a weak country, flanked by a far stronger Israeli state still trying to define its borders, and living in an Arab neighborhood more ready to let Beirut "bleed a little" than back the much-trumpeted Arab cause with arms.

A little over two weeks into the conflict's current incarnation, it is safe to say the following: Hezbollah has already kept the Israeli Army busy longer than the army of any Arab state in the past several decades; the standing of its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, is likely to rise. The disarming of Hezbollah the group widely believed to have been behind the slaughter of the U.S. Marines back in 1983 appears remote.

Whatever vestigial standing the United States had as an honest broker in the Middle East has disappeared with the Bush administration's embrace of Israel's sustained use of force in response to Hezbollah's murderous July 12 cross-border raid.

Sacrificing a democracy while supporting an ally Globalist

With little subtlety and great predictability, the administration has gone through its familiar post-9/11 paces: Hezbollah equals terrorism, terrorism must be crushed, ruthlessness is the only way forward, and damn the consequences.

This position has allowed Israel to do its own post-9/11 thing. "Everyone understands that a victory for Hezbollah is a victory for world terror," said Haim Ramon, the Israeli justice minister.

Not so: A victory for Hezbollah is a victory for Hezbollah, which is not Al Qaeda, which is not the Palestinian national movement, which is not the Iraqi insurgency, which is not homegrown European Muslim suicide bombers.

Trying to turn the problems of the world into a single undifferentiated issue the war on Islamic terror does nobody any good.

Witness the current mayhem, a reflection of a terrible American failure to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in any serious way over the past five years.

Problems must be fixed one at a time, which requires the curiosity to understand them, and to come up with particular solutions. Not everyone in the Middle East wants to be Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan, a man generally ready to do America's bidding. Siniora, who is understandably furious, certainly does not want to be. Nor, of course, does President Bashar al-Assad of Syria.

But nor do these leaders want to be in the pocket of Iran. The United States has room to probe this ambivalence. But first, of course, it must stop giving a green light to Israel to, in the current parlance, smash terror.

Bush, however, is very unlikely to change course, especially in an American election year. His stance is popular not only with many Jewish Americans, but also the Christian right.

"The United States has been more a party to this conflict than an arbiter," said Mourhaf Jouejati, director of Middle Eastern Studies at George Washington University. "Lebanese democracy, a supposedly cherished American aim, has been sacrificed for the Israeli ally."

The fragile Lebanese polity born since the withdrawal of Syrian troops last year has been shattered.

The democratic movement of 2005, applauded by the State Department as the "Cedar Revolution," has been left with shipments of American food as a token of sympathy. America's regional record of cheering on democratic uprisings and disappearing when the going gets rough remember the Shiites of Iraq at the end of the 1991 Gulf war has notched another unhappy chapter.

The chapter could drag on. Unless America reins in Israel and engages with Syria as a means to curtail Hezbollah, the two sides could fight it out for months. Israel needs a clear victory and Hezbollah needs to survive to proclaim its own victory: Those competing aims look like a recipe for drawn-out conflict.

Twenty-two years ago, the Beirut airport was shattered and the only way out was to take a small launch from the Jounieh fishing harbor, north of Beirut, to a waiting vessel anchored 200 yards offshore.

I wrote then in The Wall Street Journal: "As the launch bobs beneath the liner, women scream, children stand paralyzed with fright, and officials nudge people into making the leap aboard. The alternative is go to back, so the Lebanese shut their eyes and perform yet another tearful and weary act a jump across a yard or more of heaving sea. Then it is over."

But it's not. Lebanon still bleeds. Siniora deserves better, not least from Washington. And Israel deserves a peace that no show of might will deliver.

E-mail: rocohen@nytimes.com

Sacrificing a democracy while supporting an ally Globalist

Load-Date: July 30, 2006

End of Document

Airstrike kills at least 56 on 'sad, bloody Sunday'

Yorkshire Post

July 31, 2006

Copyright 2006 JPIMedia Publishing Ltd All Rights Reserved

Length: 442 words

Body

David Hogg

DOZENS of civilians were slaughtered yesterday in the worst day of violence seen in the three-week-old conflict between the Israeli armed forces and Hezbollah militants in Lebanon.

At least 56 people sheltering in the basement of a three-storey building in Qana, south Lebanon, were killed when it was crushed by an Israeli airstrike at 1am.

Israel said in response to the international outcry which followed that its military had warned people to leave the area after Hezbollah guerrillas had fired 40 rockets into northern Israel from launch sites nearby.

Police officials said two extended families had taken refuge from heavy Israeli bombardment in the area.

Rescue workers scrambled throughout the day to dig through the rubble, lifting out bodies of women and children. At one point they found a single room with 18 bodies.

The official death toll included at least 34 children and 12 women.

Lebanese special envoy Nouhad Mahoud criticised the UN at its emergency meeting last night for its inaction, and said Israel was committing war crimes.

"Israel is committing atrocities against humanity. The fact that such massacres are yet... to be taken up by resolutions of this august council - that fact does not mean that the truth is to remain hidden."

Israeli Ambassador Dan Gillerman said yesterday was a "horrible, sad and bloody Sunday."

But he said Hezbollah intentionally targeted Israeli civilians and used Lebanese civilians as human shields, while Israel tried to avoid civilian casualties.

"Those people, including women and children who were killed in this horrible tragic incident may have been killed by Israeli fire, but they are the victims of the Hezbollah. They are the victims of terror," he said.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel was "not in a hurry to have a ceasefire" and is reported to have told the US that he needs 10 to 14 more days to finish its offensive.

"We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning," Olmert told his cabinet after the strike, adding that if necessary it will be broadened "without hesitation".

Airstrike kills at least 56 on 'sad, bloody Sunday'

The Lebanese government spent the last week putting forward proposals to disarm **Hezbollah**. Officials have also called for the deployment of an international force in the south.

But Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said any negotiations on a broader deal were off after the Qana killings.

"We will not negotiate until the Israeli war stops shedding the blood of innocent people," he said.

The Qana attack drew immediate condemnation from the Arab world, with Jordan's King Abdullah II voicing his strongest criticism of Israel yet, calling it an "ugly crime".

david.hogg@ypn.co.uk

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

ISRAELIS HAVE NO MONOPOLY ON PAIN

The Mirror

July 28, 2006 Friday

Eire Edition

Copyright 2006 MGN Ltd. All Rights Reserved



Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 555 words

Byline: PAT FLANAGAN

Body

ISN'T it just as well Britain was never governed by people like the bunch of war criminals now in charge of Israel?

Otherwise we might still be rebuilding what was left of Dundalk and other Border towns after the IRA kidnap and murder of British Army captain Robert Nairac.

What if the Brits launched air raids on Dublin after the IRA killed police officers in a rocket attack on Newry?

The suggestion is madness. The United Kingdom is a civilised country and anyway, there is no way the rest of the world would have let them get away with it.

But that is exactly what Israel has done.

Three conscripts were kidnapped and they kill hundreds of innocent women and children and plunge the whole Middle East into chaos.

Yet the world stands idly by and watches the carnage.

The Israelis are using the same methods deployed by the Nazis during the Second World War.

If the French Resistance assassinated or kidnapped even a solitary German soldier, entire villages were razed and their populations massacred.

What Israel is doing in the Lebanon and Gaza is just as bad. If they can't get the perpetrators they punish the people.

Israel has shown itself to be a cruel rogue state with no conscience. It is every bit as bad as or even worse than Syria and Iran.

ISRAELIS HAVE NO MONOPOLY ON PAIN

The intentional killing - for that's what it was - of four UN peacekeepers shows the contempt that country has for the international community. Because of the appalling treatment of the Jewish people by western nations over the centuries, there is a marked reluctance to criticise Israeli actions.

Certainly there is no other race on earth that has had six million of their people murdered in less than a decade. The Holocaust is truly a stain on the soul of humanity. But no one has a monopoly on pain and suffering.

They say that people who have evil done to them do evil in return. The sickening sights in southern Lebanon is proof of that.

When the bombs and missiles rain down on the apartment blocks and hospitals in Lebanon, the people there suffer their own little holocausts.

But to the Israeli war machine, the lives of Arabs, be they women or children, or of UN personnel are of little consequence.

They have murdered international observers, journalists, peaceful protesters and targeted Palestinian children.

Their "Berlin Wall" in the West Bank is making life impossible for thousands of families.

They have an illegal nuclear weapons programme and have not the slightest qualm about breaking international law.

Our Government has behaved well so far and Foreign Minister Dermot Ahern has not been slow to condemn Israel's outrageous behaviour.

But Ireland must go further and expel the Israeli ambassador from Ireland. If the Israelis want to behave like barbarians they should not be accorded the trappings of a civilised state.

Killing 400 civilians in an illegal war is nothing short of criminal and the perpetrators should be in the dock at The Hague.

They have descended to the level of terrorists like Hamas and Hizbullah and, instead of defeating these organisations, have made them stronger.

The irony is that Israel has not the manpower to occupy Lebanon permanently and, when the dust settles, Hizbullah will be back stronger than ever.

All this bunch of child-killers has done is to condemn future generations of Israelis and their neighbours to the horror of perpetual war.

Graphic

HORROR: Aftermath of Israeli attack

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

More than just rights

Ottawa Citizen

July 29, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 Ottawa Citizen, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. B5

Length: 320 words

Byline: John Jerry, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

Re: Lebanon has rights, too, July 25.

It's great to see the liberal lawyers wade into this sad state of affairs and clarify it for us.

In her opinion article, Barbara J. McKenzie states that as a sovereign state, Lebanon also has the right to self defence following Israel's counter-punch against Hezbollah.

Israel had withdrawn from Lebanon under a UN mandate following years of attacks by terrorists based in that country. Lebanon appeared to be moving toward real democracy with the expulsion of the Syrian army last year. The area had begun to stabilize and with it prosperity was returning. But this is the antithesis of what every terrorist group or nation wants. What they want is destitution and suffering on a massive scale so that they can provide the "alternative."

What Ms. McKenzie misses in her analysis is that a sovereign state also has responsibilities. While the geopolitical situation had stabilized, the Lebanese government condoned, if not supported, the continued growth of Hezbollah.

Hezbollah puts on public rallies, not promoting political views but rather militarism -- men, women and children all carrying weapons, some strapped with ersatz explosives demonstrating their willingness to export terror. What did the Lebanese people, or the sovereign state of Lebanon, do to stop such actions?

More specifically, what did the Lebanese government do to stop the importation (smuggling would not adequately describe its complicity) and stockpiling of thousands of rockets whose sole purpose was to terrorize Israel?

A sovereign nation has certain rights, but also many responsibilities. So do the people of that country. The Lebanese government is nothing but a puppet and proxy for Syria and Iran and extremist Muslims, and so too the Lebanese who voted in members of Hezbollah to their parliament. Now they shed crocodile tears for their plight, yet they are reaping what they have sown.

John Jerry,

Orleans

More than just rights

Load-Date: July 29, 2006

End of Document

'We are ready to strap explosives to our children and send them to Israel'

The Sunday Telegraph (LONDON)

July 30, 2006 Sunday

Copyright 2006 Telegraph Group Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; International - Middle East Crisis; Pg. 30

Length: 795 words

Byline: COLIN FREEMAN in Tyre

Body

NAYFA MUHANNA'S childbearing days are long over, her husband having taken a second wife to produce the younger half of his huge clutch of 16 children.

Now, though, after Israeli helicopter missiles destroyed the family farmhouse and wiped out their entire tobacco crop, she finds herself feeling broody again.

"It is our duty as mothers to start producing more boys to help the resistance," she said, to cheers from other residents in their refugee camp in the southern Lebanese city of Tyre, where all 19 family members pitched up a fortnight ago. "We want them to be martyrs for their country in the fight against Israel."

Nobody could accuse the family of not doing its bit for the "Party of God". Asked about the fighting in their village of Majdel Zoun, just a few miles from the Israeli border, Nayfa, 47, proudly mentions that her brother "disappeared" that day - not a suggestion that he is buried under rubble, but a coded way of stating that he has slipped off to join **Hezbollah**'s forces.

The next time she sees him he may well be in a coffin. Yet, if so, there appears to be no shortage of family members willing to replace him on the front line. "I am very excited about defending my country," said her oldest son Mahdi, who is just 15. "If I do not, and others do not, then who will?"

After two weeks of Israel's military offensives on the southern Lebanese border, a whole new generation of youngsters like Mahdi is being groomed to follow in their uncle's footsteps. Mahdi has dreamed of joining **Hezbollah** ever since he was 10, yet until two weeks ago the "enemy" has never been more than a vague presence at border fences. Now, though, he and thousands of other children who are too young to remember the last major Israeli incursion 10 years ago have witnessed a new one first-hand, yielding a fresh crop of traumatised young minds that **Hezbollah**'s propaganda machine can mould.

The Israeli army psy-ops leaflets airdropped into the border villages, which caricature **Hezbollah** leaders as cowardly snakes who send followers needlessly to the slaughter, are unlikely to win them over, especially not with so many of their parents spurring them on.

"We are ready to strap explosives to our children and send them to Israel," said Naim Mussalmani, 35, a farmer who fled the village of Shaitiah, on Tyre's outskirts. "My own brother exploded himself against the Israelis in 1998. Our **women** and children are ready to go out and fight if needs be."

'We are ready to strap explosives to our children and send them to Israel '

In the past two weeks, the normally peaceful Mediterranean holiday resort of Tyre has been flooded with refugees fleeing the farming villages dotting the Israeli border as they become battlegrounds for fierce clashes between Hezbollah guerrillas and their Israeli foes. The port city offers limited security as a safe haven: the crash of Israeli ordnance into the surrounding hillsides shakes Tyre's buildings relentlessly, and the sky over the deserted luxury marina hums constantly with jets and drone spyplanes.

Town Hall officials estimate that more than two thirds of Tyre's population of 270,000 have fled the city, leaving it more deserted than a rundown holiday resort in midwinter. Shops are shuttered, rubbish lies festering in stinking piles, and the only signs of life are in the schools and government buildings where villagers from the border areas have sought safety.

With few humanitarian convoys able to reach them because of damage to the main road from Beirut, living conditions for the diaspora are grim. The luckier ones are crammed into long-established Palestinian refugee camps, while the less fortunate are billeted in school classrooms, living off aid packages and with little access to washing facilities.

Worst off are those still trapped in the villages, unable to access even Tyre's meagre sanctuary because of the house-sized scoops that Israeli missiles have gouged in the narrow country roads.

Yet, despite the privations it has caused, there is little tangible sign of the Israeli campaign undermining support for Hezbollah. Among those from the villages, where nearly every house flies a Hezbollah flag, nobody queries the movement's fateful decision to kidnap two Israeli soldiers, nobody blames it for the death and destruction it has provoked, and nobody even expects the organisation to look after them in the consequent chaos.

"The Government of Lebanon is not taking care of us properly," said Mr Mussalmani. "We have to look to our Palestinian brothers, who are refugees of Israeli aggression themselves, to help us out. We do not ask Hezbollah for medicine or help. That is needed for their fighters, who are giving their blood for the nation. The whole of southern Lebanon are now ready to become martyrs."

The women standing around him in headscarfs shouted their agreement.

Load-Date: July 30, 2006

KILLED AS THEY FLED; CRISIS IN MIDDLE EAST VILLAGERS DIE IN ISRAELI AIR ATTACK

Sunday Mail
July 16, 2006, Sunday

Copyright 2006 Scottish Daily Record & Sunday Mail Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 292 words

Byline: By BRIAN LIRONI

Body

A LITTLE boy lies dead on a road in Lebanon across the road from his father - also killed as they tried to flee Israeli air strikes yesterday.

They were among 15 people, including women and other children, killed when their convoy came under fire.

They were fleeing the village of Marwaheen, close to the border with Israel in southern Lebanon, in response to Israeli orders.

Soldiers across the border used loudspeakers to tell them to leave the area or the village would be destroyed. They gave no reason for the ultimatum.

The villagers' convoy had only travelled about half a mile from their own homes when it came under attack from warplanes.

Survivors from the convoy claimed they tried to take refuge at a UN peacekeeping post but were turned away.

The attack came on the fourth day of heavy bombardments by the Israelis on targets in neighbouring Lebanon.

They are attacking Lebanon in revenge for the kidnap of two of their border patrol soldiers by Hezbollah militants, who have bases in Lebanon.

Thousands of Lebanese people have packed up and fled their homes since the Israeli assault began.

Yesterday's attacks followed the discovery of the bodies of four sailors killed by a Hezbollah missile attack on an Israeli ship.

Israeli military officials said they were recovered aboard the damaged ship, which was firing on Beirut.

Israel yesterday claimed Iran was helping Hezbollah soldiers.

They said an Iranian radio-guided missile hit the ship.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah fired five rockets into the northern Israeli city of Tiberias, about 22 miles from the border with Lebanon.

KILLED AS THEY FLED CRISIS IN MIDDLE EAST VILLAGERS DIE IN ISRAELI AIR ATTACK

And Israeli forces yesterday fired missiles in to the northern Lebanese port of Tripoli - their deepest attack since fighting began four days ago.

SUNDAY EMAIL

b.lironoi@sundaymail.co.uk

Load-Date: July 16, 2006

End of Document

Sending more troops won't help; CAPITAL IDEA

Australian Financial Review

July 29, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 Fairfax Media Publications Pty. Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 63

Length: 804 words

Byline: BRIAN TOOHEY

Body

Australian troops are much in demand. The Afghan government would like some more to help it stay in power while it adopts the Taliban's repressive behaviour towards women. Israel would also like Australian troops to join a new international force to save it the pain of occupying Lebanon after the latest exercise of its right to self-defence included attacks on ambulances, blocks of residential apartments, a clearly marked UN observation post and much of the country's infrastructure. Iraq wouldn't mind some more troops to help "finish the job" amid the daily carnage.

The time has come to ask whether committing more troops will help make life more tolerable for the people in this region. If not, why are we risking the lives of Australian troops when there's plenty for them to do closer to home?

Fortunately, no Australian soldiers have been killed in Iraq, other than Private Jake Kovco who was foolish enough to break army safety rules against having loaded pistols in the barracks. One soldier has already died in Afghanistan. There is now a serious risk that more will be killed in the highly dangerous Uruzgan province. Additional Australian troops are being deployed there to help protect a government that is corrupt and a parliament that contains warlords and drug barons who threaten women MPs with rape and death for speaking out against them.

President Hamid Kazai recently re-established the Department for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, which gained notoriety under the previous Taliban regime for the brutal oppression of women. A courageous female MP, Malalai Joya, said: "They haven't even bothered to change the name. The situation for women in Afghanistan has not improved. What we have in power under the mask of democracy are the brothers of the Taliban - fundamentalists, warlords and drug lords."

There is considerable evidence to support Joya's claims. Moreover, there is not much chance that the presence of foreign troops will bring security to the countryside, where a mix of disaffected tribal leaders, drug smugglers, bandits and Taliban religious zealots hold sway. It might have been different if foreign troops had not been diverted to the invasion of Iraq in March 2003. But it is too late to undo that staggering strategic blunder.

Luckily, none of the small number of Australian soldiers who are part of an existing UN mission in Lebanon was hurt in Israeli attacks last Tuesday. However, soldiers from four other countries were killed in the attacks on a clearly identified observation post whose location the UN mission had repeatedly given to the Israelis.

John Howard says he will consider sending more Australian troops to Lebanon when Israel finishes its military campaign. Perhaps a strong international presence in southern Lebanon could stop the armed wing of the militant

Sending more troops won't help CAPITAL IDEA

Shiite group, Hezbollah, resuming its cross-border attacks on innocent Israelis. But it's difficult to see any long-term benefit unless there is a much deeper commitment from all sides to a renunciation of the use of force.

An immediate obstacle was highlighted by the British Foreign Office minister, Kim Howells, in Beirut after Israel launched its air offensive following Hezbollah attacks. Howells said: "The destruction of infrastructure, the death of so many children and so many people - these have not been surgical strikes. If they're chasing Hezbollah, then go for Hezbollah. You don't go for the entire Lebanese nation."

Hezbollah was established after the 1982 Israeli occupation of Lebanon, which was intended to crush Palestinian militants based there. By the time Israel withdrew in 2000, Hezbollah had developed a formidable guerilla army and a strong political presence, including seats in the Lebanese parliament won at the recent democratic elections.

Israel would like to withdraw from its latest incursion in the next few weeks. But several commentators, who support Israel's right to exist, worry about its reliance on overwhelming force to secure its place in the Middle East. Their concern on this occasion is that the anger generated by the widespread damage caused by Israeli bombing will boost Hezbollah's recruiting drive.

Hezbollah justified its aggression before the current war as a response to Israel's heavy use of force in the Palestinian territories, including the kidnapping of elected members of parliament. In turn, Israel justifies this behaviour as a response to the kidnapping of one of its soldiers by Palestinian militants, who claimed to be responding to earlier Israeli behaviour. As usual, violence is explained by some antecedent action by the other side, leading to a seemingly unending cycle of destruction and killing. Australian troops should stay well clear until all sides renounce the use of force in an act of statecraft commonplace elsewhere.

Graphic

CARTOON: BODY POLITIC WARD O'NEILL

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

Neoconservatism turning Middle-East into powder keg

University Wire

March 8, 2005 Tuesday

Copyright 2005 Montana Kaimin via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 836 words

Byline: By Matt Singer, Montana Kaimin; **SOURCE:** U. Montana

Dateline: MISSOULA, Mont.

Body

The neoconservatives are facing a problem they didn't expect:

democracy spreading in the Middle East. This may sound like it fits nicely within the plans of the president, but the so-called "Cedar Revolution" under way in Lebanon, the increased likelihood of open elections in Egypt and the recent election in Iraq pose major foreign policy problems for the United States.

As soon as Lebanese protesters ousted the Syrian-backed government in Beirut, right-wing pundits started their crowing:

Bush's democratic revolution was working. One problem: it wasn't Bush's. Its leaders have cheered the killing of American soldiers. And Bush's own advisers have made clear a democratic tidal wave was not really their intention in invading Iraq.

In fact, elections were not part of the original plan in Iraq. The short time frame on elections in Iraq was a concession to Ayatollah al-Sistani and the insurgency. Al-Sistani's Shia followers have since been quite successful in establishing a parliamentary majority.

Since then, they have been calling for a U.S. withdrawal as well as working on closer ties with Iran. They have also increased fears of establishing Shariah -- Islamic law -- which would pose strict regulations, especially on Iraq's women.

Meanwhile, in Lebanon, the major faction opposing withdrawal of Syrian power is the Hezbollah (literally, the "Party of God") and other Shi'ites. Hezbollah is probably a name well-known to Americans.

They are the party responsible for the death of 241 U.S. Marines in Lebanon in 1983. Fingers remain pointed at Hezbollah for anti-semitic terrorism around the world. Yet for many in the Middle East, Hezbollah is a heroic organization, having been the only Arab army to ever defeat Israel in a military conflict.

And at this point, no one sect comprises a majority of the Lebanese population. The CIA World Factbook estimates that about 60 percent of the population is Muslim, while 40 percent is Christian. The Muslims are divided between multiple factions, with a Shia plurality; a small, economically well-to-do Sunni bloc; and the unorthodox Druze making up large factions as well. The Christians largest contingency is the Maronites who have had an uneasy

Neoconservatism turning Middle-East into powder keg

relationship with Muslims at many points, yet there are also Melkites, Armenians, Catholics, and Protestants within the Christian community.

So if you think that democracy in Iraq, with Shia, Sunni, and Kurdish factions looks messy, perhaps a brief history lesson is in order.

Beirut, Lebanon's capital, is synonymous with violent anarchy. And the explosion of violence that occurred in Lebanon in the 1970s is exactly what precipitated the Syrian occupation that so many local leaders are now claiming to oppose.

Even as Druze leaders like Walid Jumblat call for democracy, one needs only read papers months old to see these leaders reveling in the spilling of American blood. More honest perhaps than most is Hezbollah, which strictly opposes the removal of Syrian power in part because it would increase pressure on them to disarm.

But while Syrian withdrawal may set the stage for Hezbollah disarmament, it could also lead to explosive violence in a number of ways. First, let us remember that this is still Beirut, a city with more armed factions than UM has academic departments. Second, one factor currently limiting Hezbollah's electoral success is anti-Syrian sentiment. If Syria leaves, Hezbollah may actually grow in electoral power. Even if they disarm, their ability to control Lebanon's military would only grow.

And no one should doubt the continued dislike -- perhaps hatred is the proper term -- of Israel among residents of these Arab and Persian nations. Just as full democracy in Iran would not stop the drive for nuclear arms, democracy in Lebanon would not stop the likelihood of state terror against Israel.

Israel, then, is not aided, but possibly endangered, by Islamic republics popping up through the region, especially if they fall, one-by-one, to extreme Shia leaders.

If America can navigate this process of democratization and can convince Israel's Mossad to allow democratization and both nations can figure out how to build security, we'll be much better off. But the coming years are fraught with danger.

The main opposition to the process of democratization has not arisen from racism or cruelty, as many on the right have implied or explicitly stated. Rather, it has arisen from a concern that too many of the right-wingers and hawks in the Bush administration have repeatedly misunderstood the forces they have let loose upon the world.

The Bush administration originally envisioned that by this point, we would basically be withdrawn from Iraq, with a relatively stable chieftain comfortably installed. Fortunately, democracy is emerging in the Middle East. But it is no time to pop the corks or the hangover we experience may be unlike anything we can imagine. Bush has destabilized the Arab and Persian worlds. We'll be dealing with them for a long time.

(C) 2005 Montana Kaimin via U-WIRE

Load-Date: March 8, 2005

Lebanon sends Rice packing after Israelis kill 37 children

Western Mail

July 31, 2006, Monday

Second Edition

Copyright 2006 Western Mail and Echo Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 9

Length: 682 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 - 37 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'.

Lebanon sends Rice packing after Israelis kill 37 children

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 were seen overhead.: Israel agrees 48-hour aerial-activity ceasefire:Israel last night bowed to international pressure and agreed to a 48-hour suspension of aerial activity over southern Lebanon after an airstrike killed more than 50 civilians - half of them children. The suspension of over-flights was announced by US State Department spokesman Adam Ereli. He said Israel has reserved the right to attack targets if it learns that attacks are being prepared against them. 'The US welcomes this decision and hopes that it will help relieve the suffering of the children and families of southern Lebanon,' Ereli told reporters travelling with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice who had been on a week-long mission to halt the fighting between Israel and **Hezbollah**. An Israeli government official confirmed that prime minister Ehud Olmert agreed to the 48-hour halt in air strikes on Lebanon. A US State Department official said Rice had been working on such an agreement for some time before the attack on Qana. 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.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

End of Document

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The International Herald Tribune

July 28, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 International Herald Tribune All Rights Reserved

Section: OPINION; Pg. 7

Length: 219 words

Body

Margarita Mathiopoulos's article was a bit of a disappointment to read. Mathiopoulos seems to fault Lebanon and its people for their present dire straits for having "lacked the will and resources to rein in Hezbollah, let alone fulfill the disarmament provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1559."

She makes it clear that Hezbollah, a terrorist organization, "easily outgunned the country's weak and divided army." The question is, what could Lebanon have done otherwise?

But what is most disturbing in her piece is her opinion that since Israel and its people have always been "living on the edge of a volcano," being proportional "has never been part of the Israeli vocabulary."

What is that supposed to mean? That destroying Lebanon's infrastructure, killing innocent children and women in bombings, is O.K. and sort of proportional from the Israeli viewpoint?

Terrorists like Hezbollah do not really care what they do, that is why they are terrorists. But a state such as Israel should and must care, and not act indiscriminately.

I believe that Europe and the United Nations should take the lead and broker a peace agreement. The United States lost its credibility the moment it looked the other way while innocent humans were killed thanks to Israel's lack of proportionality.

Robert A. Vieites,

Miami

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

Middle East crisis: Al-Qaida: Bin Laden's deputy calls for global war on 'crusaders'

The Guardian - Final Edition

July 28, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 6

Length: 554 words

Byline: Brian Whitaker, Beirut

Body

Al-Qaida's deputy leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, made a dramatic intervention in the Lebanese crisis yesterday with a videotape calling on Muslims everywhere to rise up against Zionists and "crusaders".

"How can we remain silent while watching bombs raining on our people?" he asked. "O Muslims everywhere, I call on you to fight and become martyrs in the war against the Zionists and the crusaders," he said in the eight-minute tape, entitled The Zionist-Crusader War on Lebanon and the Palestinians, parts of which were broadcast by al-Jazeera television yesterday.

Zawahiri also criticised "impotent, treacherous" Arab governments for their feeble response to the Israeli attacks. "My fellow Muslims, it is obvious that Arab and Islamic governments are not only impotent but also complicit . . . and you are alone on the battlefield. Rely on Allah and fight your enemies . . . make yourselves martyrs."

"All the world is a battlefield open in front of us," he added. "The war with Israel does not depend on ceasefires . . . It is a jihad for the sake of Allah and will last until (our) religion prevails . . . from Spain to Iraq." (Spain was under Muslim rule for several centuries, starting in 711 and ending with the fall of Granada in 1492.)

In the recording, Egyptian-born Zawahiri wore a grey robe and white turban in front of a picture of the burning World Trade Centre.

In the background were photos of two other militants identified as Mohamed Atta, ringleader of the September 11 attacks, and Muhammad Atef (also known as Abu Hafs al-Masri), an aide of Osama bin Laden who was killed by a US air strike in Afghanistan in 2001. "There are 10,000 prisoners of war in Israel's jails that nobody bothers about, but when it came to three Israeli soldiers, the whole world was turned upside down," Zawahiri said in the message. Palestinian militants from Hamas are holding one Israeli soldier and the Lebanese **Hizbullah** is holding two.

"As they fight us everywhere, we will fight them everywhere; everyone who has joined in the crime must pay the price; we can't stand by and monitor these rockets spewing their fire on the people of Lebanon and remain quiet," Zawahiri continued. "The war with Israel is not based on any agreements or any border disputes . . . it is jihad for the sake of Allah, to free all of Palestine from occupation and to rid all the homes of Islam from the crusaders. The whole world is our battlefield."

Zawahiri did not mention **Hizbullah** - the Lebanese Shia organisation - by name. Al-Qaida's leaders are Sunnis and in a tape last June Zawahiri referred to Iraqi Shia as "infidels".

Middle East crisis: Al-Qaida: Bin Laden's deputy calls for global war on 'crusaders'

But in a message broadcast in 2004, Bin Laden said the September 11 attacks had been inspired by "the oppression and tyranny of the American/Israeli coalition against our people in Palestine and Lebanon" - especially the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

"I couldn't forget those moving scenes, blood and severed limbs, women and children sprawled everywhere. Houses destroyed along with their occupants and high rises demolished over their residents . . ." Bin Laden said in the tape. "As I looked at those demolished towers in Lebanon, it entered my mind that we should punish the oppressor in kind and that we should destroy towers in America in order that they taste some of what we tasted."

guardian.co.uk/alqaida >

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

End of Document

Sounding off on all sides

The Philadelphia Inquirer

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Philadelphia Newspapers, LLC All Rights Reserved

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A11

Length: 1206 words

Body

Here's a roundup of blogs, news and commentaries on the war in the Mideast. Also, at right, see what the region's English-language media are saying.

Walid Phares

<http://counterterrorismblog.org>, July 13

I developed the real four reasons for this war across the Lebanese-Israeli border:

1. Iran is concerned about the nuclear crisis and wants to deflate the issue away.
2. Syria is concerned about the Hariri murder investigation and wishes to postpone its results.
3. **Hezbollah** is concerned about the call for disarming its militias and therefore decided to flare up the conflict with Israel.
4. Finally, Hamas was sinking in crisis with Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah. Thus a jihad against Israel was the solution.

Saree Makdisi

Commentary, Houston Chronicle, July 14, www.chron.com

The tragedy now unfolding in Gaza is not merely one more episode in a supposed "cycle of violence" (which implies proportionality), let alone a genuine military contest (for only one side has an army)... . What is happening in Gaza is an expression of Israel's political vision... . the consolidation of a state with a Jewish majority in a land in which barely half the population is actually Jewish... . Israel seeks to forcibly isolate the land's remaining non-Jewish population into barren islands cut off from each other and the rest of the world.

James S. Robbins

National Review Online, July 17, www.nationalreview.com

Sounding off on all sides

In the global struggle against terrorist groups, **Hezbollah** has... enjoyed virtual immunity in the war on terrorism.

Until last week that is.

In response to a small-scale incursion and kidnapping of two of its soldiers... Israel has unleashed a massive response seeking a more thorough solution to the **Hezbollah** problem. Vladimir Putin showed his keen eye for the obvious when he stated, "It is our impression that aside from seeking to return the abducted soldiers, Israel is pursuing wider goals." No kidding, and long overdue at that.

Iran Daily

<http://www.iran-daily.com>,

July 17

Major General Yahya Rahim-Safavi on Sunday called for reinforcement of solidarity among Islamic states in the face of the escalating crimes of the Zionist regime and its allies.

"The U.S. planned these events to cover up its failures in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Zionists... would do better to end their attacks on the Gaza Strip and Lebanon, release the Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners of war, and declare a cease-fire because this war will definitely end in favor of the Muslim resistance movement," Rahim-Safavi said.

Michael Rubin

National Review Online, July 17, www.nationalreview.com

There will be a role for diplomacy in the Middle East, but it will only be successful if it commences both after the eradication of **Hezbollah** and Hamas, and after their paymasters pay a terrible cost for their support... . There will never be peace if Syria and Iran are allowed to use Lebanon as a proxy battlefield safe and secure in the knowledge that they will not pay directly.

Tim Hames

The Times of London, July 17, www.timesonline.co.uk

The notion of a Middle East peace process still rests on the premise that states can negotiate with one another. But recent events indicate that the authority of several states surrounding Israel has slipped to the point of incredibility. Hamas, **Hezbollah** and Islamic Jihad count for more than the Palestinian Authority, Lebanon and Syria. And while some of these groups have been sponsored by states (particularly Syria), they are now strong enough to exercise independence from their old masters.

Mark Steyn

Commentary, Chicago Sun-Times, July 16, www.chicagosuntimes.com

Israel withdrew from Gaza and, instead of getting on with a prototypical Palestinian state, Hamas turned the territory into an Islamist camp. Israel withdrew from Lebanon entirely in 2000, yet **Hezbollah** is now lobbing rockets at Haifa.

Why? Because in both cases these territories are now in effect Iran's land borders with the "Zionist Entity." They're "occupied territories" but it's not the Jews doing the occupying. So you've got a choice between talking with proxies or going to the source: Tehran. And, as the unending talks with the EU have demonstrated, the ayatollahs use negotiations with the civilized world as comedy relief.

Mona El-Farra

Sounding off on all sides

Commentary, Boston Globe, July 10, www.boston.com

To the outside world it might seem like an easy decision for Palestinians: Let the soldier go, and the siege will end. Yet for Gazans, even in the face of this brutal violence, another decision comes, not with ease, but with resolve. He is one soldier who was captured in a military operation. Today, several hundred Palestinian children and women are locked in Israeli prisons. They deserve their freedom no less than he does.

Frida Ghitis

Commentary, July 17

A strong Hezbollah means a weak Lebanon. It means an empowered Iran, even as it pursues its nuclear objectives. And it means ever more distant prospects for finding true peace in the region. Without Hezbollah, Lebanon and Israel will one day work toward reconciliation.

Politicians, diplomats and others who call for all sides to stop fighting, may feel like they're taking action. But... the international community... must recognize the conflict's cause is Hezbollah. To really help, they should demand its removal and offer to help Lebanon disarm this radical threat. Stopping the fighting now, without removing Hezbollah, will not end the suffering, it will only postpone it.

Fawaz A. Gerges

Commentary, Washington Post, July 17, www.washpost.com

People are anxious and fear the worst. With no way in or out of the country, a sense of panic is taking hold. The streets of Beirut, often congested, are deserted. How to survive if the hostilities last longer than a few days? Tens of thousands of tourists find themselves stranded in what appears to be a war zone... . Children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable in urban warfare. Like other fathers, I am worried about my own children and what to do with them. I cannot afford to take risks with their lives.

James Carroll

Commentary, The Boston Globe, July 17, www.boston.com

If the United States has been made so warlike by the one attack of Sept. 11, 2001, who should be surprised at the reactions of an Israel under constant siege? Indeed, the responses of Israel and America are related. Even though the futility of vengeful belligerence is on full display in Iraq, the United States does nothing to promote alternative strategies in resolving the Palestinian question. The Bush administration has not only squandered its considerable Middle East leverage, but has done more than anything to empower Islamic extremists, beginning with Iran.

William Kristol

The Weekly Standard, July 17, www.weeklystandard.com

Radical Islamism isn't going away anytime soon. But it will make a big difference how strong the state sponsors, harborers, and financiers of radical Islamism are. Thus, our focus should be less on Hamas and Hezbollah, and more on their paymasters and real commanders - Syria and Iran... . We have done a poor job of standing up to them and weakening them. They are now testing us more boldly than one would have thought possible a few years ago. Weakness is provocative. We have been too weak, and have allowed ourselves to be perceived as weak.

Load-Date: July 18, 2006

Bin Laden deputy urges Muslims everywhere to fight 'crusaders'

The Irish Times

July 28, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 The Irish Times All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Middle East Crisis; Pg. 10

Length: 551 words

Byline: Brian Whitaker in Beirut

Body

Al-Qaeda's deputy leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, made a dramatic intervention in the Lebanese crisis yesterday with a new videotape calling on Muslims everywhere to rise up against Zionists and "crusaders".

"How can we remain silent while watching bombs raining on our people?" he asked. "O Muslims everywhere, I call on you to fight and become martyrs in the war against the Zionists and the crusaders," he said in the eight-minute tape entitled The Zionist-Crusader War on Lebanon and the Palestinians, parts of which were broadcast by al-Jazeera television yesterday.

Zawahiri also criticised "impotent, treacherous" Arab governments for their feeble response to the Israeli attacks.

"My fellow Muslims, it is obvious that Arab and Islamic governments are not only impotent but also complicit . . . and you are alone on the battlefield. Rely on Allah and fight your enemies . . . make yourselves martyrs."

He added: "All the world is a battlefield open in front of us. The war with Israel does not depend on ceasefires . . . It is a jihad for the sake of Allah and will last until [our] religion prevails . . . from Spain to Iraq." (Spain was under Muslim rule for several centuries, starting in 711 and ending with the fall of Granada in 1492.)

In the recording, Egyptian-born Zawahiri wore a grey robe and white turban in front of a picture of the burning World Trade Centre.

In the background were photos of two other militants identified as Muhammad Atta, ringleader of the September 11th attacks, and Muhammad Atef (also known as Abu Hafs al-Masri), an aide to Osama bin Laden who was killed by a US air strike in Afghanistan in 2001.

"There are 10,000 prisoners of war in Israel's jails that nobody bothers about, but when it came to three Israeli soldiers, the whole world was turned upside down," Zawahiri said in the message. Palestinian militants from Hamas are holding one Israeli soldier and ***Hizbullah*** is holding two.

"As they fight us everywhere, we will fight them everywhere; everyone who has joined in the crime must pay the price; we can't stand by and monitor these rockets spewing their fire on the people of Lebanon and remain quiet," Zawahiri continued.

"The war with Israel is not based on any agreements or any border disputes . . . it is jihad for the sake of Allah, to free all of Palestine from occupation and to rid all the homes of Islam from the crusaders. The whole world is our battlefield."

Bin Laden deputy urges Muslims everywhere to fight 'crusaders'

Zawahiri did not mention **Hizbullah** - the Lebanese Shia organisation - by name. Al-Qaeda's leaders are Sunni Muslims and in a tape last June Zawahiri referred to the Iraqi Shia as "infidels".

In a message broadcast in 2004, bin Laden claimed that the September 11th attacks had been inspired by "the oppression and tyranny of the American/Israeli coalition against our people in Palestine and Lebanon" - especially the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

"I couldn't forget those moving scenes, blood and severed limbs, **women** and children sprawled everywhere. Houses destroyed along with their occupants and high rises demolished over their residents . . ." bin Laden said in the tape.

"As I looked at those demolished towers in Lebanon, it entered my mind that we should punish the oppressor in kind and that we should destroy towers in America in order that they taste some of what we tasted."

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

End of Document

Another lady who is not for turning; CRISIS IN LEBANON

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 29, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; News Review; Pg. 28

Length: 2218 words

Byline: Michael Gawenda

Body

Condoleezza Rice is toughing it out amid international criticism over the US stance on Lebanon, writes Michael Gawenda.

PHOTOGRAPHS can lie but the one of Condoleezza Rice at a press conference in Rome as she stood listening to Lebanon's Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, say his country was being torn apart by war was stark and dramatic.

Published on the front page of many American newspapers, it shows Rice not looking at Siniora - in fact, not looking at anyone. She has her left hand covering her forehead and her eyes are closed, her mouth set in a grimace.

Photographs can lie, but this one captures what confronts this most powerful of women representing the most powerful of nations: the most difficult - and defining - moment in her glittering career.

The wars between Israel and Hezbollah and Israel and the militants in Gaza, the hopes of a settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, the survival of the democratically elected government of Lebanon, indeed the whole of the Bush Administration's democracy project, including the outcome in Iraq, are on the line.

And Rice knows her career is on the line; that history will judge her a success or a failure on what happens in the Middle East. For in this second Bush term, she has, with George Bush's blessing, determined the Administration's Middle East policies.

From the time she became Secretary of State in January 2005, Rice made it clear one of her goals was to repair the ruptured relationships with US allies in Europe, to practise what she labelled "transformational diplomacy", to move away from the unilateralism of Bush's first term.

While Bush's approval ratings fell relentlessly, month after month, as Americans came to believe that the President, after Hurricane Katrina and the mess in Iraq, was incompetent, Rice's approval ratings soared.

While the approval rating of the Vice-President, Dick Cheney, dropped to about 17 per cent and there have been increasingly insistent calls, even from Republicans, for Bush to sack the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, Rice was in the ascendant. She even sidelined Cheney, the architect of the Administration's foreign policy in Bush's first term.

Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS IN LEBANON

Rice persuaded Bush to take the diplomacy route with Iran on its nuclear program, backing the European Union negotiations that Cheney had described as useless, even persuading Bush that the US should join the EU talks with Iran and offer a package of inducements if Tehran suspended its uranium enrichment activities.

Despite that as national security adviser in Bush's first term Rice had been involved in the decision to go to war in Iraq, she has managed to distance herself from the Iraq fiasco.

Rice, the celebrity Secretary of State, was nowhere to be seen in Rome this week, nor in Lebanon and Israel and Gaza before that. There were no children to greet Rice when she arrived in Rome for a day-long conference with European allies, Russian officials and Siniora on the crisis in the Middle East.

Rice knew that she would stand alone at the conference, isolated, with only lukewarm support from Britain for her position that there could be no ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah that, in her words, "did not deal with the fundamental issues".

Any agreement would have to involve Hezbollah returning two kidnapped Israeli soldiers, stop the rocket attacks on Israel, the creation of an international UN-sanctioned force to help the Lebanese army take control of south Lebanon from Hezbollah and Hezbollah's disarming.

In a sense, the outcome of the Rome conference - that there would be no call for a ceasefire - was predetermined, for Rice had made it clear during her lightning visit to Lebanon just days before that the US remained adamant Israel would be given time to seriously weaken - if not destroy - Hezbollah.

"There was disagreement going into Rome and there was disagreement coming out," says Robert Malley, a National Security Council official during the Clinton administration. "I'm not sure it was worth having."

The US position - Rice's position - has been clear from the time Hezbollah crossed the northern border with Israel more than two weeks ago, killed eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapped two others.

Some Hezbollah officials have said they were surprised by Israel's overwhelming response to this provocation and it is not clear whether Israel informed the US of its plans before it began the bombing campaign in Lebanon, but from the time the first bombs landed, Bush and Rice made it clear that the US would not seek to restrain Israel's assault on Hezbollah.

As the crisis has worn on, Rice's language has become blunter, angrier, less diplomatic. Before she left for Rome, she was asked whether the Bush Administration's democracy project in the Middle East - especially, but not only in Iraq - had failed and had benefited only terrorist organisations such as Hezbollah and Hamas.

"The suggestion that somehow Hezbollah and Hamas are recent creations and threats is pathetic," she said. When asked why she was not prepared to engage in the sort of shuttle diplomacy undertaken by previous secretaries of state in the Middle East, she replied: "I am prepared to do what I can but to shuttle for shuttle's sake, for no purpose, makes no sense."

IN THE Administration's view, what's at stake in the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah - and in Gaza - is not just Israel's security, but a threat of victory for Islamist totalitarianism and for Iran, one of its sponsors. As Martin Peretz, the editor-in-chief of the liberal The New Republic and no friend of Bush, put it: "Israel is fighting for themselves but the Israelis are also fighting for us."

"The Administration has evinced stunning moral and military clarity in the face of international pressure to rush towards a premature resolution ... Condoleezza Rice has been a compelling voice in the public argument and in the argument among allies as well."

But Anthony Cordesman, a Middle East specialist at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, says even if the Administration is right about what's at stake, its diplomacy is wrong-headed.

Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS IN LEBANON

"The Administration's posture of standing aside and bipartisan pandering in Congress have left the US without any effort to create a meaningful buffer between Israel and Hezbollah or help the Lebanese Government disarm it," he says. Passively waiting for Israel to make things worse for itself does not help.

"Failing to be seen to take visible action to resolve the crisis ... makes the US seem to be a partner to Israel with little regard for the Arab world. This is not a posture that helps Iraq, that helps regimes in Egypt and Jordan or helps build up support for dealing with Iran and Iraq. It is not a strategy that helps win the war on terrorism."

Among foreign policy analysts and even Administration supporters, there is a consensus emerging that the US has been too passive, too disengaged in the Middle East and that this has to change.

Edward Luttwak, a senior fellow at the centre, believes that despite the apparent support for an international UN-sanctioned force which would be stationed in southern Lebanon after a ceasefire, such a force, given the history of UN-sanctioned peace keeping operations, would be useless.

If that's the case, Luttwak says, then there is only the "horrible to contemplate" but irresistible diplomatic option and that is to get the Syrians involved to disarm Hezbollah and get Hezbollah more politically involved in Lebanon's Government, eschewing violence.

While that would mean recognition that Syria has some influence over Lebanon, despite last year's withdrawal of its forces, this is a price worth paying if it results in the Syrian President, Bashar Assad, abandoning his alliance with Iran.

"But unlike the military option, which is simply impossible, the diplomatic option is merely humiliating," Luttwak wrote this week in The Wall Street Journal.

But there is little evidence Rice will engage any time soon in the shuttle diplomacy she has just so recently fiercely rejected. Bush has more or less left it to Rice to explain and "own" the Administration's position on the war between Israel and Hezbollah and Israel's action against Hamas militants in Gaza, which is probably a wise decision given his two horror days this week in Washington during the visit of the Iraqi Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki.

What was meant to be a visit to shore up support for Maliki's embattled Government and to allow him to use an address to Congress to show that the democratically elected Prime Minister of Iraq was on board in the war on terrorism, became a fiasco when Maliki, on the eve of his visit to Washington, condemned Israel for its "criminal actions" in Lebanon and refused to condemn Hezbollah.

Bush had to stand in silence at a joint press conference as Maliki again refused to condemn Hezbollah even as some members of Congress announced that they would boycott Maliki's address to protest against what the Democratic National Committee chairman, Howard Dean, described as Maliki's "anti-semitism".

The Democrats who criticised Maliki were undoubtedly playing politics but they were making a point that is resonating with many Americans: that, in their view, the Iraq project, far from establishing a democratic system in Iraq friendly to the US - and Israel - has brought Iraq to the brink of civil war.

It has emboldened terrorists everywhere in the Middle East, increased Iran's influence in Iraq - and the region - and left the US disengaged and helpless to influence events in Gaza and Lebanon that could well lead to a region-wide conflict.

It is not only Democrats who hold this view. A former senior Administration official told the Herald that he had supported the war in Iraq, but that he was now convinced it will be seen by history as America's greatest foreign policy blunder.

"It has distracted us from other major foreign policy challenges in the region, including the Israel-Palestinian conflict. It has dramatically increased Iran's reach and influence in the region and, meanwhile, in other parts of the world, China is eating our lunch."

Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS IN LEBANON

Rice would accept none of this. People who know her say she is incredibly self-confident, that she loves challenges, that far from being disheartened by criticism, she is energised by it. As far as her position on Israel and Lebanon - and Gaza - is concerned, she has a couple of things going for her. For a start, unlike her predecessor, Colin Powell, she is close to Bush and has his complete support. Unlike Powell, she has not had to worry about being undermined by Cheney and Rumsfeld.

And, critically, there is virtually total support across the US political spectrum - if not among the foreign policy establishment - for Israel's actions in Lebanon and Gaza.

Polls consistently show a clear majority of Americans view Israel as a democratic ally of the US and the latest CBS poll, taken this week, shows 61 per cent are favourably disposed to Israel compared with 13 per cent for the Palestinians.

IN PRIVATE conversations, strictly off the record, there are some Republicans and Democrats who will tell you that what they describe as the lack of debate in America about the US-Israel relationship is unhealthy - the "elephant in the room" one described it - that can't be discussed.

Then they will tell you that three months before mid-term congressional elections is a bad time to raise the issue and, anyway, they basically support Israel in the war against Hezbollah, an organisation, they invariably point out, that killed 241 US marines and peacekeepers in a suicide bomb attack in Beirut in 1983.

As Israeli military commanders were saying that the bombing campaign in Lebanon and the fighting just across the Israeli border could continue for weeks, Rice was telling reporters in Malaysia where she was attending the ASEAN security conference that she was planning to return to the Middle East this weekend.

And Bush was telling reporters in Washington that he was not prepared to accept what he called a "fake" ceasefire and, after pointing the finger at Iran as Hezbollah's sponsor, said "now is the time to address the root causes of the problem and the root cause of the problem is terrorist groups trying to stop the advance of democracy".

"I view this as a clash of forms of government," he said.

Rice will go back to the Middle East reluctantly for she knows she has nothing new to offer except words of sympathy for the Lebanese people and the people of Israel and Gaza who are living with the consequences of this war. It is not even clear where she will go, though it is clear she won't head for Damascus, let alone Tehran.

In Malaysia, Rice apparently declined to take part in what has become a custom at the gala dinner of the annual Association of South-East Asian Nations meeting: a comedy skit by each delegation. Last year, for instance, the then deputy secretary of state, Robert Zoellick, sang My Darling Clementine and the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, came dressed as Darth Vader.

Rice said she would not be doing a skit because the fighting in the Middle East was not a time for jokes. "I will play the piano," she is reported to have said. "A reflective piece. Brahms is always good for that."

As that photograph from Rome so dramatically illustrated, she has a lot to reflect about.

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: A look that speaks volumes ... Condoleezza Rice reacts at the Rome press conference as Fouad Siniora gives details of how Lebanon is being torn apart. Photo: AFP Bad hit ... soldiers carry the body of a UN observer killed by an Israeli strike. Photo: Reuters

Another lady who is not for turning CRISIS IN LEBANON

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

**BRITAIN/ INTERNATIONAL: Anger as children die in rocket blast;
Condoleezza Rice heads for home as talks derailed**

Daily Post (North Wales)

July 31, 2006, Monday

North Wales Edition

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 11

Length: 588 words

Byline: ED JAMES

Body

AT LEAST 56 people, more than half of them children, were killed in an Israeli airstrike that crushed a building yesterday, the deadliest attack of the Israeli campaign.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice returned early to Washington with her diplomatic mission derailed after Lebanese leaders told her not to come.

Lebanon's prime minister said his country would not talk to the Americans over anything but an unconditional ceasefire. 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.

However, she made one of her strongest statements yet saying: "We want a ceasefire as soon as possible."

The US has resisted world pressure to call for a halt to the fighting, saying it wants first to ensure a deal is in place that will eliminate **Hezbollah** guerrillas from Israel's border and bring an international force to southern Lebanon.

The missiles struck just after 1am, levelling a three-storey building in Qana where two extended families, the Shalhoub and Hashims, had taken refuge in the basement from heavy Israeli bombardment in the area.

Throughout the day, rescue workers were digging through the rubble, lifting out bodies 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?" screamed Khalil Shalhoub, 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**, security officials said.

Israel said guerrillas had fired rockets from near the building into northern Israel.

In Beirut, some 5,000 protesters gathered in downtown Beirut, at one point attacking a UN building and burning American flags.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel "is not in a hurry to have a ceasefire" before it achieves its goals of decimating **Hezbollah**.

BRITAIN / INTERNATIONAL: Anger as children die in rocket blast Condoleezza Rice heads for home as talks derailed

He told Rice that Israel would need 10 to 14 more days to finish its offensive, according to a senior Israeli government official.

"We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning," Olmert told his Cabinet after the strike, 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 strike, Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said any negotiations on a broader deal were off.

"We will not negotiate until the Israeli war stops shedding the blood of innocent people," he told a press conference. He said the Lebanese government still supported the ideas it offered this week, but would not discuss them without a halt in the fighting.

Israel said Hezbollah guerrillas had fired 40 rockets into northern Israel from Qana, wounding five Israelis, before the airstrike - including some rockets launched from near the levelled building.

"We deeply regret the loss of any civilian life and especially when you talk about children who are innocent," said Foreign Ministry official Gideon Meir.

But he accused Hezbollah of "using their own civilian population as human shields" and said the military had warned people to leave the area.

The attack drew immediate condemnation from the Arab world, with Jordan's King Abdullah II voicing his strongest criticism of his Israeli peace partner yet, calling it an "ugly crime". Israel promised an investigation.

Graphic

Hezbollah supporters furious over the Israeli airstrike storm their way into the main United Nations building in Beirut
Picture: BEN CURTIS

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Conflict deepens Lebanon's divide between rich and poor

The International Herald Tribune

July 25, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 International Herald Tribune All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 978 words

Byline: Sabrina Tavernise

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

The Paul restaurant is still serving elegant lunches of prosciutto and chevre, while at the Printaniya, a hotel on a hill east of the capital, stylish guests can still sip Arabic coffee near a glass display case of eclairs and chilled chocolate mousse.

A few miles away, in this city's southern suburbs, the destruction from Israeli air strikes resembles an earthquake zone. Streets have entirely disappeared. Rubble from bombed buildings in some areas is piled several stories high. City blocks are ghostly.

In the days since Israeli planes began to bomb Lebanon, its seaside capital has been almost physically split in two, with its largely Shiite flank mutilated by Israeli airstrikes and most of the rest of the city remaining relatively unscathed, if quieter and emptier.

The stark physical contrast reflects a deep divide in Lebanese society between the less affluent, more religious Shiite south and the more urban center of Muslims and Christians that has built and benefited from a long-awaited economic boom.

"The country is going in two totally different directions," said Ghassan Salhab, a Lebanese filmmaker and a middle-class, secular Shiite. "One is 'we have an enemy and we need to fight it,'" he said, referring to Hezbollah supporters. "The other is 'we want to live and build and go with the world wherever it goes.' It's a very schizophrenic thing."

For the south, which suffered for more than a decade under Israeli occupation, Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, is a folk hero who helped drive the Israelis out of Lebanon.

But many middle-class Lebanese who have worked hard for the past decade to build an economic revival in their country, are tired of war and resent Nasrallah's move of capturing two Israeli soldiers in a brazen cross-border raid on July 12.

"The first thing I thought was, 'How crazy to go wake up the monster,'" said Issam Saleh, a secular Shiite and an engineer who spends most of his days writing poetry in the garden at Paul restaurant. Hezbollah "knew exactly what would happen, but did it anyway."

Conflict deepens Lebanon 's divide between rich and poor

Even so, as the Israeli bombardment of the south drags on, the divide has shrunk: Even those who hate Hezbollah are horrified by the destruction.

Almost everybody has been wondering where their embattled country can possibly go from here.

For Salhab, who has spent the days since the bombings shooting footage in his now-empty neighborhood in central Beirut, the question came sharply into focus through a camera lens during the evacuation of tens of thousands of foreigners by sea to Cyprus.

"There was the sea and the sky and a boat that came into the frame," he said, sitting in a crowded coffee shop called Wimpy's in downtown Beirut. "Then another and another. You have to ask the question: What is next?"

In many ways, divisions have always been the story of Lebanon. In the 1970s and '80s, the country's many sects fought a civil war so bloody that Beirut became a synonym for disaster zone. Later, Israelis occupied the southern portion of the country to drive out the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Many Christians greeted them as deliverers. As the occupation dragged on, it was the southern Shiites who suffered most.

But the recent fighting is more troubling, in part because its roots are deeper, Lebanese in the capital said. Instead of looking to drive out an essentially foreign group the PLO Israel is doing battle with a homegrown Lebanese one. That group, Hezbollah, has eagerly plunged into war, defining it in religious terms, difficult to defuse in talks.

The division burst into the open last year, when hundreds of thousands of demonstrators, Christian and Muslim, marched in support of the Lebanese government after the assassination of Rafik Hariri, the country's wealthy prime minister who had driven the transformation of post-war Beirut from a dead zone to a vacation destination. The marches brought together Lebanese who had even fought each other in the civil war.

At the same time, Hezbollah and thousands of Shiites supporters organized huge counter demonstrations in support of Syrian forces that the government was trying to evict.

"It was like a thorn in our hearts," said a Lebanese businessman, a Druse, who was stranded in the Damascus airport on Thursday, after fleeing Lebanon.

In Beirut, the disconnect seemed particularly sharp in the Sanayeh park, where refugees sprawled on blankets and grimy foam mattresses lay next to evening walkers. At night, Hezbollah songs are sung, annoying residents.

On Saturday evening, two women in head scarves, a mother and a daughter, stood holding a bag of potatoes in front of sparkling high-rise apartment and a sign that read: Garden View Apartments. "They don't look at us," said the daughter, Samar Halewei. Her mother disagreed, saying that many people in the neighborhood had treated them kindly.

Historical animosities play a part. In Fatqa, a small Christian town north of the capital, an angry mob of men on Saturday attacked a car that had a sticker of a Christian group that made an alliance with Hezbollah, throwing things at it and pounding it with their fists.

Hours before, their friend, a guard at a nearby television tower, was killed in an Israeli airstrike, and the men were furious that Hezbollah's actions had invited destruction on their town.

While the bombing has forced thousands of southerners, mostly Shiites, to flee for their lives on roads with broken bridges, many middle-class residents of the capital have taken refuge in mountain towns north and east of here. In the resort town of Broumana, a 30-minute drive up a mountain from Beirut, the garden at the Printaniya Hotel was on Saturday full of well-dressed guests, sipping drinks and enjoying the afternoon. Scenes of desolation flashed on a large television that had been set up for the World Cup, but was now watched for news of bombings and the war.

Conflict deepens Lebanon 's divide between rich and poor

End of Document

Navy warships sail to rescue Britons caught in Beirut hell; MoD forced to act as 10,000 nationals are trapped in war zone

Mail on Sunday (London)

July 16, 2006 Sunday

Copyright 2006 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: 3RD 04; Pg. 9

Length: 581 words

Byline: MARTIN SMITH

Body

TWO British warships were preparing to steam to Lebanon last night to help evacuate British citizens trapped in the conflict zone.

The flagship aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious* and the assault ship HMS *Bulwark* were deployed after criticism from Britons in Beirut, the Lebanese capital, that the Government was not doing enough to help.

Other countries have already mobilised their armed forces and around 10,000 Britons are trapped.

However, the 22,000-ton *Illustrious* was docked in Gibraltar last night, two days away, while *Bulwark* an 18,400-ton amphibious craft is on duties off Barcelona.

A military source said the Ministry of Defence could order eight helicopters Sea Kings and EH101s on board *Illustrious* to fly ahead of the carrier, refuel at Aviano in Italy and in Cyprus before starting an evacuation in Lebanon.

They could airlift small numbers to Cyprus. *Bulwark* is equipped with Merlin helicopters and is closer to the troublespot.

But before the flights begin, the SAS and SBS are likely to be sent ahead to secure the ground in order to guarantee the safety of British citizens.

One British woman yesterday described how she was hiding in terror in her Beirut home from the constant air strikes and that she felt 'completely abandoned' by the British Government.

Clair Vainola, 31, from Newcastle, working as a drug counsellor in the city since last November, said: 'There are planes overhead and I can hear bombs falling. It's terrifying.

'I rang the embassy and they told me the conflict was not serious and they would not be evacuating any British citizens.

How many more have to die before the Government classifies this as serious?'

Marnie Cashmore, 39, from Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, said her partner William Rushton, 43, arrived in Beirut on business last Tuesday just before the air strikes began.

Navy warships sail to rescue Britons caught in Beirut hell MoD forced to act as 10,000 nationals are trapped in war zone

She said last night: 'Bill has been virtually trapped in his hotel. He went to the embassy on Friday afternoon for help and no one answered the door.

'He said it was just like a case of "would the last person to leave turn off the lights". He is now driving to Syria.'

It was a different story for American, Italian and French citizens as their governments swiftly arranged for evacuation by warships and aircraft.

Israel launched its offensive after Hezbollah guerrillas crossed the border last Wednesday and captured two Israeli soldiers. Israel has bombarded Lebanon's airport and main roads and destroyed Hezbollah's headquarters in south Beirut. The Israeli military has conceded that it has hit more than 150 targets.

Yesterday an Israeli missile targeted a van near the southern Lebanese port of Tyre, killing 20 passengers including women and children and wounding six, police said. The van was carrying families fleeing Marwaheen.

Israeli aircraft also bombed a Hezbollah office in southern Beirut and attacked roads, bridges and petrol stations in north, east and south Lebanon, killing at least 12 and wounding 32, security sources said.

A senior Israeli intelligence official claimed Iranian troops helped Hezbollah fire a missile that damaged an Israeli warship off the Lebanese coast killing two and leaving two missing on Friday. Israeli officials also said a Hezbollah missile sank a merchant ship with 12 sailors on board.

Last night Israeli rescue services said Hezbollah had fired a second barrage of rockets at the city of Tiberias. Israeli warplanes then destroyed the Beirut office of senior Hamas official Mohammed Nazzal. He was not hurt in the attack.

Graphic

DEVASTATION: RESCUERS REMOVE BODIES AFTER AN ISRAELI MISSILE HIT THE LEBANESE PORT OF TYRE. RIGHT: CLAIR VAINOLA

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

US policy in tatters after raid; MIDDLE-EAST CRISIS, Analysis

Australian Financial Review

July 31, 2006 Monday

Second Edition

Copyright 2006 Fairfax Media Publications Pty. Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 13

Length: 837 words

Byline: Tony Walker JERUSALEM

Body

Israel's attack on a building in Qana, south Lebanon, in which at least 40 people died, many of them women and children, has shocked the world and irrevocably shifted international perceptions of Israel's military campaign.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's careful efforts to calibrate US diplomatic initiatives in the region to give Israel more time to smash Hezbollah is a policy in tatters.

The US faces a mounting region-wide crisis of confidence in its leadership. Its failure to push for an immediate ceasefire has opened the US to criticism it is enabling attacks that are causing widespread civilian casualties and distress.

America's non-response to the rapid deterioration of the Lebanese conflict was greeted initially with incredulity, but is now causing growing anger and disdain.

While moderate Arab states may at first have been appalled by Hezbollah's provocations, Israel's trashing of Lebanon in response to the capture of two of its soldiers has gone far beyond what might have been regarded as a proportional response.

Saudi Arabia, a pivotal Arab state because of its oil wealth, stiffened its criticism of the US and Israeli positions at the weekend, warning of a wider regional conflict unless more concerted efforts are made to stop the fighting.

"If the peace option is rejected due to Israeli arrogance," said a statement from the Saudi royal court, "then only the war option remains, and no one knows the repercussions befalling the region, including wars and conflict that will spare no one, including those whose military power is now tempting them to play with fire."

Rice dined in Jerusalem with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to discuss the latest developments, but there was no indication the US was about to ramp up its diplomatic efforts to bring about a quick cessation of hostilities.

Rice, whose ineffectual performance has drawn criticism both inside the region and at home in the US, told reporters travelling with her that she did not expect to present a comprehensive plan to regional leaders to stop the fighting.

"I don't expect to present somebody with a 'here are the five points you must accept,'" she said. "There has got to be some give and take. This is difficult."

US policy in tatters after raid MIDDLE-EAST CRISIS, Analysis

She was speaking as Israel rejected a United Nations call for a 72-hour ceasefire to allow emergency relief to be distributed in the southern Lebanon war zone, and for civilians trapped by the fighting to be evacuated.

The UN Security Council is due to debate a resolution on Lebanon early this week and Rice is expected to confer with council members in New York on Thursday, but there appears to be no great sense of urgency.

Her faltering mission came against the background of splits emerging in British Prime Minister Tony Blair's cabinet over his continued support for the US providing carte blanche for Israel in Lebanon. Former foreign secretary Jack Straw said it was "very difficult to understand the kind of military tactics used by Israel".

"They have not been 'surgical strikes' but have instead caused death and misery amongst innocent civilians," Straw said after meeting Muslim community leaders.

At a White House meeting on Friday, US President George Bush and Blair continued to resist lending their weight to international calls for an immediate ceasefire, leaving the impression that trans-Atlantic diplomacy was geared to enabling Israel to press on with its attacks against Hezbollah.

Both Bush and Blair spoke of a long-term plan to disarm Hezbollah and evict it from southern Lebanon as part of a more comprehensive UN-sponsored arrangement that would involve the deployment of an international force, but in the meantime Lebanon is being destroyed.

Bush said: "This approach will demonstrate the international community's determination to support the government of Lebanon and defeat the threat from Hezbollah and its foreign sponsors.

"This approach will make possible what so many around the world want to see, an end of Hezbollah's attacks on Israel, the return of Israeli soldiers taken by the terrorists, the suspension of Israel's operation in Lebanon and the withdrawal of Israeli forces."

Rice's statement at a press conference in Jerusalem last week that the destruction of Lebanon amounted to the "birth pangs of a new Middle East" has been widely ridiculed. But it explains why US policy has tilted further towards Israel on this occasion than during previous crises.

Bush and Rice appear to believe that Israel's defeat of Hezbollah would create the circumstances that would facilitate Washington's wider aim of remaking the Middle East, but the problem with this scenario is that the US ally has been unable to inflict a quick kill.

In Lebanon on Saturday, Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah appeared on his group's Al-Manar TV station to taunt Israel over its failure to achieve a swift military victory.

"It's clear that the Zionist enemy has not been able to reach a military victory. I'm not saying that. They said that. The whole world is saying that," Nasrallah said.

Graphic

Israeli troops guard a building hit by rockets in northern Israel (left), a mass funeral of victims of the Israeli offensive in Tyre, southern Lebanon (top) and landmines on board an Israeli armoured vehicle entering Lebanon. Photos: AFP, AP

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

End of Document

Israel suspends air strikes after 50 killed in attack

Daily Post (North Wales)

July 31, 2006, Monday

Mersey Edition

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 23

Length: 698 words

Byline: JON SMITH Daily Post Correspondent

Body

ISRAEL last night bowed to international pressure and agreed to a 48-hour suspension of aerial activity over southern Lebanon after an airstrike killed more than 50 civilians - half of them children.

The suspension of over-flights was announced by US State Department spokesman Adam Ereli. He said Israel has reserved the right to attack targets if it learns that attacks are being prepared against them.

"The US welcomes this decision and hopes that it will help relieve the suffering of the children and families of southern Lebanon," Ereli told reporters travelling with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice who had been on a week-long mission to halt the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

An Israeli government official confirmed that prime minister Ehud Olmert agreed to the 48-hour halt in air strikes on Lebanon.

A US State Department official said Rice had been working on such an agreement for some time before the attack on Qana.

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.

Rice returned early to Washington with her diplomatic mission derailed after Lebanese leaders told her not to come.

Lebanon's prime minister said his country would not talk to the Americans over anything but an unconditional ceasefire. 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.

However, she made one of her strongest statements yet saying: "We want a ceasefire as soon as possible."

The US has resisted world pressure to call for a halt to the fighting, saying it wants first to ensure a deal is in place that will eliminate Hezbollah guerrillas from Israel's border and bring an international force to southern Lebanon.

Israel suspends air strikes after 50 killed in attack

The missiles struck just after 1am, levelling a three-storey building in Qana where two extended families, the Shalhoub and Hashim, had taken refuge in the basement from heavy Israeli bombardment in the area.

Throughout the day, rescue workers were digging through the rubble, lifting out bodies 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?" screamed 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 women, security officials said.

In Beirut, some 5,000 protesters gathered, at one point attacking a UN building and burning American flags.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel "is not in a hurry to have a ceasefire" before it achieves its goals of destroying Hezbollah.

He told Ms Rice that 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 strike, according to a participant.

The Lebanese government this week had been putting forward ideas on disarming Hezbollah and deploying an international force in the south. But after the strike, Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said any negotiations on a broader deal were off.

Israel said Hezbollah guerrillas had fired 40 rockets into northern Israel from Qana, wounding five Israelis, before the airstrike.

"We deeply regret the loss of any civilian life and especially when you talk about children who are innocent," said Foreign Ministry official Gideon Meir.

But he accused Hezbollah of "using their own civilians as human shields" and said the military had warned people to leave the area.

The attack drew immediate condemnation with Jordan's King Abdullah II voicing his strongest criticism of his Israeli peace partner.

Meanwhile, Israel launched its second ground incursion into southern Lebanon.

The United Nations World Food Program cancelled an aid convoy's trip to the embattled south, after the Israeli military denied safe passage.

It will help relieve the suffering of the children and families

Graphic

Lebanese rescuers carry the body of a man recovered from under the rubble of a demolished building that was struck by Israeli missiles' Hezbollah supporters smash their way into the main UN building in Beirut

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

THE CROSS AND CRESCENT OF LEBANON; How to bring Christians back into the Crusaders' camp

What the Papers Say Part A (Russia)

July 28, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 Agency WPS All Rights Reserved

Section: PRESS EXTRACTS;; No. 136

Length: 1608 words

Byline: Nadezhda Kevorkova

Highlight: Christians in Lebanon comment on the conflict with Israel; Political logic would seem to suggest that there's no better country than Lebanon for unleashing a major war in the Mideast: it has 17 communities, all of which have fought each other at some time in the past. But the Lebanese aren't interested in an "Islam versus Christianity" war scenario.

Body

The Lebanese themselves are no longer concerned about the idea of war between Islam and Christianity. But since this topic does cause concern in political clubs around the world, particularly as applied to Lebanon, we decided to ask some Lebanese Christians whether they regard themselves as "new Crusaders."

In Lebanon, belonging to a particular community is a family tradition going back a thousand years. Whether or not they're believers, people have a strong awareness of which community they belong to. It's hard to displace people whose ancestors have lived in the same location for centuries.

The people of Lebanon include direct descendants of Phoenecians, Greeks, Romans, Arimatheans, and Crusaders. Their heritage is in their faces.

Long before politicians grew obsessed with the idea of a conflict between civilizations, people in Lebanon were fighting wars and making history, just as in the old days.

Political logic would seem to suggest that there's no better country than Lebanon for unleashing a major war in the Mideast: it has 17 communities, all of which have fought each other at some time in the past. But the Lebanese aren't interested in an "Islam versus Christianity" war scenario. Right now, they're concerned with far more prosaic problems: how to bury the dead while bombs continue to fall, how to provide water, food, and mattresses for 600,000 refugees in a nation of 4 million people, and how to keep children fed when jobs and homes are gone.

* * *

I've stopped in the Armenian quarter of Beirut to photograph some children. Within moments I'm surrounded by a whole press conference of people - a truly international mix. Jennifer, a Christian, and her family are from Syria. Akop, 19, is an Armenian. Yasir, 32, and his children are Sunni Muslims. Tony, a shopkeeper, is an Orthodox Christian.

They all have refugees staying in their homes. Thirty people are living in two rooms in the Jamili family's home. There are no more rooms to spare in the apartment. Madame Jamili tells us how shortly before the bombing began,

THE CROSS AND CRESCENT OF LEBANON How to bring Christians back into the Crusaders' camp

the refugees sought shelter at a United Nations post. They weren't allowed to cross the threshold; United Nations personnel wouldn't even talk to them. While the people were running back and forth seeking alternative shelter, the bombing began. (And an Israeli air strike killed five UN peacekeepers on July 25.)

* * *

I approach an Armenian priest who is walking by with a friend. He looks at my business card and flatly refuses to talk. Ten minutes later, his friend catches up with me: "He's not a Lebanese priest, he's from Jerusalem, and he fears he might get in trouble there if he says anything against Israel - that's why he's afraid to talk."

So that's how it is. The Bishop of South Lebanon celebrates mass under fire. Another priest is afraid of his own government.

* * *

Pierot Serhal, Maronite Catholic and a Lebanese member of parliament representing Hezbollah, has been trapped since the start of the war in his home town of Jezz in southern Lebanon. He's a surgeon, trained in Paris and working at the local hospital. The Maronites are Lebanon's largest Christian community.

"We support Hezbollah because they're fighting. The idea that Christians are against Hezbollah is Israeli propaganda. We Christians are in a better position to know whether we're for them or against them," says Dr. Pierot. "The late Pope John Paul II visited Lebanon and called on Christians to live in peace with Muslims. But aggression against our countries is pushing Christians out of here. Iraq had 3 million Christians before the war - now only 100,000 remain. The number of Christians in Lebanon is declining, and that's because of Israel, not Hezbollah."

He can't understand why the Russian Orthodox Church is keeping silent: "The Orthodox know the problems of Lebanon better than the Catholics."

* * *

I knock on the door of the First Baptist Church of the Bible in Beirut.

Pastor Richard Saddak starts off by preaching some Gospel at me, then moves on to current events: "Thirty-four people have been killed in Israel, 19 of them soldiers. Over 350 people are dead in Lebanon, all of them civilians, mostly children! Is that what they call defending their country? How does it fit in with international law? Or do certain countries feel free to ignore the law?" Pastor Richard was born in Australia and teaches at the American University in Beirut; English is his native language. "Bombing a dairy farm - what's that all about? Do they feel threatened by Lebanon's bridges, churches, yoghurt factories, or television stations? A Baptist pastor in Merdjayoun needs heart surgery, but it's become impossible to get to the hospital. This elderly man is having trouble breathing. Is he a threat to Israel too?"

Pastor Richard points out that Israel and Hezbollah have always exchanged prisoners. "Twelve years ago, Israel abducted two people from the Bekaa Valley in order to exchange them for a pilot who was shot down in 1967 and disappeared. Neither Hezbollah nor Lebanon attacked Israel at the time. Why is Israel allowed to start a war over two soldiers and call it self-defense? If they drop a nuclear bomb in self-defense and wipe Lebanon off the map, would politicians continue to keep silent? Politicians have forgotten the Sermon on the Mount: blessed are the peacemakers."

* * *

Bishop Elias Kfoury of Tyre, Sidon and South Lebanon (Antioch Orthodox Patriarchate) has his residence in Merdjayoun, a district capital in southern Lebanon - right in the border territory which Israel intends to purge and turn into a buffer zone.

Question: You're in a war zone. Why aren't you leaving?

THE CROSS AND CRESCENT OF LEBANON How to bring Christians back into the Crusaders' camp

Elias Kfouri: Many residents have been able to save themselves by leaving. But a great many still remain. Around a thousand people in Merdjayoun alone. Last Sunday I celebrated mass on the border, in the village of Derminaz. About 40 people attended the service. How could I leave? My flock is here. I don't fear for my own life. I'm worried about the children, women, and the elderly who are unable to leave. On Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday there was heavy bombing in Nabatiye and nearby villages. Seven people were killed in Nabatiye on Tuesday. Merdjayoun and surrounding villages are being bombed from the air every ten minutes - hitting the homes of people, ordinary people. The longest interval between bombs is half an hour. The planes are constantly overhead. The Orthodox church of St. George has been severely damaged. We're five kilometers from the border. There is heavy fighting there.

Question: Is any aid reaching the people at all?

Elias Kfouri: Aid - yes, Greece is sending a great deal. The problem is delivering the aid. Food products, medical supplies, water - many villages don't have any of these. Israel is making it impossible to deliver anything. The only remaining road is the one through the Bekaa Valley. It's being bombed all the time. All the roads around here have been blown up. The UN Security Council and the media should make every effort to stop the blockade.

Question: Why are the Orthodox churches keeping silent? Why are Christians around the world keeping silent?

Elias Kfouri: Ask the Russian Orthodox Church. The Russian Church is our friend. I'm not sure they are keeping silent. Perhaps we're just not hearing them? Bishop Nifon is in Moscow - he's an emissary of our Church, a wise and effective bishop, the voice of our people. As for Christians around the world, I'm cut off from information.

Question: Are you hearing any support from Russia and President Putin?

Elias Kfouri: We love Russians and Russia. But you should ask President Putin himself what he thinks of the situation in Lebanon.

Question: Many Western experts claim that Lebanese Christians are hostile to Muslims in general and Hezbollah in particular.

Elias Kfouri: It's not true that Christians are against Hezbollah. There is no such problem. All Lebanese are against Israeli aggression and Israel's policies, not against Hezbollah. Individuals may have their differences on political issues, but when you see someone devastating your country, political differences are set aside.

Question: It is said that Hezbollah runs southern Lebanon. Do you feel that's true?

Elias Kfouri: Hezbollah does not govern us. But people do trust Hezbollah. We have municipal and village administrations, elected by the people. If they don't perform well, the people elect someone else.

Question: How dangerous would occupation be for Orthodox Christians?

Elias Kfouri: Israel is trying to start an occupation, and it may succeed. I lived under occupation in the 1990s. They made no distinctions between Christians and Muslims. Christians who disobeyed the occupation regime, or showed resistance, were terrorized and sent to concentration camps just like any other Lebanese. Now they're bombing Christian homes and Muslim homes alike. A hundred Christians have been killed in the Christian district of Sabkha. Many Christians were killed in the village of Rnish. They were buried on Monday. On July 19, thirty families sought shelter in churches in Rashaya. The air-strikes spared neither the churches nor the people.

Beirut Airport, destroyed by bomb - was that for Muslims only? Only for Hezbollah's use? In Lebanon, you can't divide people into "Christians here" and "Muslims there." We're all intermingled. And the Christians are fighting occupation alongside the Muslims. The bombing campaign has brought the entire Lebanese people to the brink of humanitarian and economic catastrophe. And all the Lebanese people believe that Israel's actions, not Hezbollah, are to blame.

THE CROSS AND CRESCENT OF LEBANON How to bring Christians back into the Crusaders' camp

Translated by Elena Leonova

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

End of Document

Israeli raid kills at least 30 children

Birmingham Post

July 31, 2006, Monday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 7

Length: 332 words

Body

At least 60 people, more than half children, were killed in an Israeli airstrike that crushed a building yesterday - the deadliest attack of the Israeli campaign.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice returned early to Washington with her diplomatic mission derailed after Lebanese leaders told her not to come.

Israel said it targeted Qana because Hezbollah launched rockets from there.

"The army did not get an order to strike at Lebanese civilians. In Kfar Qana, hundreds of Katyusha rockets are hidden," Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said during his weekly cabinet meeting.

Gideon Meir, a senior Israeli foreign ministry official, said: "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 30 children were found, said Abu Shadi Jradi, a civil defence official. Corpses were still being pulled out, placed in plastic bags and loaded in ambulances, he said. He said the army dropped leaflets several days ago telling civilians to leave Qana.

Residents were too afraid to take the road out of Qana, which Israel had attacked repeatedly with rockets and bombs. Charred wreckage and smashed buildings line the road from Tyre to Qana, 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 asked.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora phoned UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, urging an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to arrange for an immediate ceasefire.

Graphic

Protesters angry over the Israeli air strike in Qana that killed 50 refugees broke into the UN building in the Lebanese capital Beirut yesterday, burning UN and American flags. Around 500 protesters massed outside, pushing through police barricades, smashing windows and breaking into the building. Demonstrators chanted anti US and Israel slogans and denounced Arab governments for not doing enough

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

PRO-SYRIA PARTY IN BEIRUT HOLDS A HUGE PROTEST

The New York Times

March 9, 2005 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2005 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 6; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 1331 words

Byline: By HASSAN M. FATTAH; Jad Mouawad contributed reporting for this article.

Dateline: BEIRUT, Lebanon, March 8

Body

Shouting anti-American and anti-Israeli slogans, hundreds of thousands of Lebanese poured into central Beirut on Tuesday in a show of strength by the militant Shiite Muslim party **Hezbollah**, which opposes a withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon.

The enormous crowd, in which many had been bused in from the Shiite slums of southern Beirut, was far larger than the anti-Syrian demonstrations of recent weeks that have drawn broad international support. It offered a defiant challenge to the Lebanese opposition forces that have insisted on Syrian withdrawal and exposed fault lines of class and ideology.

"Today, you decide the future of your nation and your country; today, you answer the world," the **Hezbollah** leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, said in a rare and surprise appearance. Banners held aloft read: "No to American-Zionist intervention. Yes to Lebanese-Syrian brotherhood."

President Bush, speaking later in Washington, stepped up pressure on Syria to withdraw its 14,000 troops before Lebanon's elections in May, saying the forces of authoritarianism across the Middle East are facing a fast-moving wave of popular opposition. The emergence of democracy in Lebanon, he said, would amount to a ring on "the doors of every Arab regime." [Page A10.]

The participants at the demonstration here represented, by and large, a very different Lebanon from the educated, better-off Christians, Druse and Sunni Muslims who have captured the world's attention since Rafik Hariri, the former prime minister, was assassinated Feb. 14 by a huge car bomb.

While the anti-Syrian opposition movement has been called the Cedar Revolution, a reference to the Lebanese national tree, it has also been called the BMW revolution. The demonstration included far more **women** with covered heads and many men in traditional dress.

Since the killing of Mr. Hariri, a billionaire who resigned as prime minister to protest Syrian domination of Lebanon, many Lebanese parties have called for the complete withdrawal of Syrian troops, which have been here since 1976.

PRO- SYRIA PARTY IN BEIRUT HOLDS A HUGE PROTEST

Backers of the withdrawal have taken to the streets in demonstrations reminiscent of the events in November in Ukraine, where a rigged election was overturned partly through popular rallies. The Lebanese opposition blames Syria for Mr. Hariri's death, a charge Syria has denied.

Hezbollah, or the Party of God, had remained quiet until Tuesday despite invitations by the opposition to join.

The opposition has been struggling to demonstrate that it is the voice of the majority while becoming a favorite cause of the Bush administration.

"Freedom will prevail in Lebanon," Mr. Bush said Tuesday. "The American people are on your side. Millions across the earth are on your side."

But **Hezbollah**, which the State Department classifies as a terrorist group, is now Lebanon's best organized political party and maintains a militia of some 20,000 men.

United Nations Resolution 1559, passed in September 2004, calls for both the withdrawal of all foreign forces and the disarmament of Lebanon's militias.

To **Hezbollah** and its followers, the foreign threat to Lebanon comes not from Syria but from Israel and its ally, the United States. Israel occupied part of southern Lebanon from 1982 until 2000 in order to prevent infiltrations from radical anti-Israel groups. Many Lebanese Shiites say Israel still has designs on their land and that the American-backed democracy movement is simply another form of American imperialism.

"Forget about your dreams of Lebanon," Sheik Nasrallah, the **Hezbollah** leader, said at the rally, speaking to Israel's leaders. "What you did not win in war, I swear, you will not win with politics."

Speaking to the Bush administration, he said: "You are wrong in your calculations in Lebanon. Lebanon will not be divided. Lebanon is not Somalia; Lebanon is not Ukraine; Lebanon is not Georgia."

Ahmad Moussa, 22, a student at the rally, said: "We're here to defend our liberty and our true sovereignty, the sovereignty of the resistance. The opposition wants to open the door to the Americans and to foreign intervention. We will stop them."

The demonstration was held in Riyadh al Solh Square a few blocks from Martyrs' Square, where the opposition movement has held its demonstrations. The pro-Syrian demonstrators filled the open field in front of United Nations offices in Beirut, and stretched across nearby overpasses, roads and tunnels.

Officially, the demonstration was sponsored by several political parties. But the rally was all **Hezbollah**, complete with well-designed banners, anthems, crowd control and a secret police infrastructure to ensure that things stayed peaceful.

Hezbollah, which has 13 of the 128 seats in the Lebanese Parliament and hopes to expand its power as the country prepares for the May elections, clearly wanted to make a show of strength through the demonstration, challenging the opposition's claim to represent the nation's future.

"I want to show the Americans, the French and the U.N. that we are the majority of the Lebanese and that we have a voice," said Youness Ismail, 26, a restaurant owner from the poor southern suburbs, who had arrived in the square on Tuesday morning. "All they have done is make us promises they never kept, and now they are trying to use the international community to reoccupy us."

Like the opposition movement, the demonstrators waved Lebanese flags and called for national unity, while demanding the truth behind Mr. Hariri's assassination. But the sea of people also raised photos of the Syrian president, Bashar al-Assad, and the Lebanese president, Emile Lahoud, an ally of Syria. Some banners read, "America is the source of terrorism."

PRO- SYRIA PARTY IN BEIRUT HOLDS A HUGE PROTEST

"This is a goodbye party, not a show of support for Syria," said the opposition leader Jibrán Tuweini, editor of the Lebanese daily *An Nahar*. "If they wanted this to be a challenge to us, they would have brought their party's yellow flags. But **Hezbollah** doesn't want to burn its bridges with anyone because ultimately they will have to return to the Lebanese people once everything is over."

At Martyrs' Square, opposition demonstrators who have been camping out expressed their frustration at the growing demonstration not far away. The roar of the crowd could be heard as the tents rustled in the wind, and many **Hezbollah** demonstrators walked past the opposition tents pitched at the square. The Lebanese Army showed up in full force to ensure that both groups were kept apart.

"Shame on them -- they are carrying flags and raising pictures of foreign leaders," said Samer Samer, 57, who had brought his two sons to the opposition camp. "They're like us; they want no foreign interference and want the U.S., Israel and France out. But we also want the Syrians out too."

Fears that the growing political tension will lead to a resurgence of violence have grown in recent days as Lebanon's political and sectarian fault lines have re-emerged. Lebanon's rival groups fought a vicious civil war from 1975 to 1990, leaving parts of the country in ruins.

"This is a delicate situation but not a dangerous one," Mr. Tuweini, the opposition leader, insisted as he watched the demonstration on television from his office overlooking Martyrs' Square. "I'm not worried about the unity of the Lebanese, but I am worried that car bombs and assassinations will happen as we try to defend it."

The demonstration came one day after Syria began a redeployment of its forces to the Bakaa region. But Mr. Assad and Mr. Lahoud said in a statement on Monday that a complete withdrawal would await negotiations with a future Lebanese government, raising the likelihood that Syrian soldiers will still be in the country during the elections in May.

On Tuesday, Lebanese officials told The Associated Press that the main Syrian intelligence offices, along with Syrian troops, would be relocated by March 23, when the Arab League is to hold its annual summit meeting in Algeria.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: Demonstrators carried a portrait of President Bashar al-Assad of Syria and an anti-American placard in Beirut, Lebanon, yesterday during a pro-Syrian rally organized by the militant Shiite group **Hezbollah**. (Photo by Hussein Malla/Associated Press)(pg. A1)

Lebanese **women** cheered while carrying a portrait of Syria's president yesterday at a **Hezbollah** rally in Beirut. Far more **women** with head coverings attended than have been present at anti-Syrian rallies earlier. (Photo by Lynsey Addario for The New York Times)

A Lebanese Shiite Muslim journalist watched from a balcony as hundreds of thousands of pro-Syrian demonstrators gathered in Beirut. (Photo by Norbert Schiller for The New York Times)(pg. A8)

Load-Date: March 9, 2005

PRO- SYRIA PARTY IN BEIRUT HOLDS A HUGE PROTEST

End of Document

Crisis in the Middle East

The Irish Times

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 The Irish Times All Rights Reserved

Section: LETTERS; Pg. 15

Length: 933 words

Body

Madam, - The failure of the United States administration or any of the other G8 countries publicly to condemn Israel for its war crime of collective punishments against Lebanese and Palestinian civilians is a disgrace.

In recent weeks more than 200 innocent Lebanese and Palestinian men, women and children have been slaughtered by the Israeli military, as part of its policy of collective punishment following the capture of three of its soldiers by Hizbullah. Israel has deliberately attacked civilian objects throughout Lebanon, including Beirut international airport, numerous bridges and petrol stations, a lighthouse and an electricity power station. It is a similar story in the Palestinian Gaza Strip, where Gaza international airport lies in ruins following repeated Israeli attacks, and there are serious power and water shortages after Israel bombed the only electricity plant.

Under the 1949 Geneva Conventions collective punishments are a war crime. Article 33 of the Convention states: "No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed" and "collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited." Article 147 outlaws "extensive destruction ... not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly".

In addition, Protocol 1 of the Geneva Conventions states: "In order to ensure respect for and protection of the civilian population and civilian objects, the parties to the conflict shall at all times distinguish between the civilian population and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives and accordingly shall direct their operation only against military objectives."

That failure of the United States to uphold international law and condemn Israel's war crimes shows once again that when it comes to the Middle East, the Bush administration is incapable of being even-handed with the countries and peoples involved. Instead of being potentially part of the solution to the Middle East conflict; the US, with its blind support for Israel, is actually part of the problem. - Yours, etc,

MAIRTÁN Ó GLIOSÁIN,

Athenry,

Co Galway.

Madam, - As I put my 15-month-old son to bed last night, I thought of parents trying to do the same but under threat of Israeli smart bomb or Hizbullah rocket.

Crisis in the Middle East

And while I agree with the right of any country to defend itself against outside attack, the continued targeting of Lebanese infrastructure and civilians is a war crime which we should not refrain from criticising. Is the irony of men, women and children fleeing their homes under aerial bombardment somehow lost on the government of Israel? - Yours, etc,

D.M. MORIARTY,

Knocklyon,

Dublin 16.

Madam, - Senator David Norris's hamfisted attempt (July 18th) to equate the Israelis' actions in Lebanon with those of the Nazis is crass in the extreme. His reference to the "right" of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians to be "incinerated in the Israeli blitzkrieg" is an absolute disgrace. Shame on you, Senator Norris. - Yours, etc,

BRENDAN McMAHON,

Naas,

Co Kildare.

Madam, - I am not a military tactician; I know nothing of warfare; I have never held a gun in my life. How, then, can I know that the Israeli strategy - the eradication of Hizbullah - is not going to work when the finest minds of the IDF insist that it will? Maybe I'm missing something. Or maybe they are: intelligence, perhaps?

The only thing that will work in this situation is justice in the form of a viable state for the people of Palestine. Does Israel not understand the nature of justice? And do the democracies of the West, especially the US, not understand that their continuing support for, or acceptance of, a palpable injustice puts the peace of most of the globe at risk? - Yours, etc,

JOSEPH McDONNELL,

Woodlawn Park,

Dublin 14.

Madam, - In the second World War, the total number of German dead represented 10.82 per cent of the population, and the Japanese rate was 3.61 per cent, but the UK lost 0.94 per cent and the US 0.32 per cent. Were the Allied defenders of freedom therefore "disproportionate"? What moral or military or historical logic suggests to Chirac and Putin that Israel is "disproportionate"? Since when is the aggressor entitled to suffer only the same losses as the defender? Did De Gaulle or Stalin make that complaint in, or after, the second World War?

A just war is not for revenge or reprisal, but to eliminate a deadly threat. The fanatical jihadi fringe is such a threat, and to other Arabs and Muslims as well. The "proportionate" casualties they take are whatever it takes to conquer them thoroughly, and remove their aggressive capacity for good.

My hopes and prayers are with the "armed democrats" of the IDF, on land, sea and air, on whose courage, determination, and skills not only the people of Israel depend, but all those who are, or who seek to be, truly free, including the majority in Lebanon. - Yours, etc,

TOM CAREW,

Crisis in the Middle East

Ranelagh,

Dublin, 6.

Madam, - Charles Krauthammer asserts (Opinion, July 17th) that the actions of the Palestinians before 1967 indicate that the sought return of the occupied territories is merely a smokescreen masking their real intentions. This is as illogical as suggesting that the Irish Government's acceptance of a majority decision on the future status of Northern Ireland is hollow because the 1937 Constitution claimed sovereignty over the entire island.

Times change, situations change, people's views change; to believe otherwise is to consign the world to a never-ending cycle of strife. - Yours, etc,

JACK HICKEY,

Dalkey,

Co Dublin.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

End of Document

Mercury rising

Guardian.com

July 20, 2006

Copyright 2006 Guardian Unlimited (© Guardian Newspapers Limited) All rights reserved

theguardian

Length: 1677 words

Highlight: Welcome to the Wrap, Guardian Unlimited's digest of the best of the day's papers.

Body

HOTTEST JULY TEMPERATURE EVER RECORDED

Of course the spotlight of the British press falls on Lebanon and Israel, where the violence continues unabated. And of course it falls elsewhere - on Poland, where twin brothers have taken the two leading offices of state; on Whitehall, where the Home Office is under attack from several fronts; even, in the Independent, on Iraq. But as much as any of this, today, the spotlight of the British press falls on the hitherto anonymous town of Charlwood in Surrey. For there, yesterday, the temperature reached 36.3 degrees Celsius, the hottest July temperature ever recorded in the United Kingdom.

The Telegraph devotes the top half of its front page (the bit traditionally reserved for attracting readers with startling news) to an admittedly very attractive photograph of someone feeling a bit hot and splashing water on their face. It then, in common with most of its rivals, devotes most of pages 2 and 3 to further reports of astonishing incidents, including, but not limited to: child feels a bit hot and plays with hosepipe; people lucky enough to have the day off feel a bit hot and go to the beach; soldiers unlucky enough to be on guard duty feel a bit hot but have to keep their bearskins on.

The Express shows a woman cooking an egg on the bonnet of her car: just because you can, it doesn't mean that you should. The Times entertainingly reports that a boy in Sheffield "borrowed a classmate's skirt" to make a point about uniform rules at his school. The head teacher said: "We realise it is very hot. If he wants to wear a skirt, he is welcome." But what of his classmate? Did she sit through double maths in her smalls?

If she did, she's in good company at the Sun, where a variety of attractive young women have found that when feeling a bit hot, it's best to take some clothes off. Happily for all concerned, photographers were on hand.

Of course, it does all have a serious side. The Guardian's business pages report on the massive drain on the national grid as fans and air conditioning struggled while office workers felt a bit hot. The demand sent power prices to 300 per megawatt hour, four times their level on Monday,

Back at the Telegraph, Boris Johnson can't understand why papers (such as the Telegraph) devote so much space to this stuff when so many important things are happening in the world. "One warm day and the whole country flops down in a faint like a bunch of wilted pansies. I mean, what's got into us, eh?" The Wrap sometimes suspects that his column is not written by Boris Johnson, but by an Automatic Boris Johnson Parody Generator. Have we

Mercury rising

forgotten, asks the ABJPG, that our Empire conquered the world (even the parts that are a bit hot) while our "French and German rivals were having a siesta"?

Ever the contrarian, the Independent unearths a picture of Cornwall, where it was raining.

Enough of this. I'm not even going to tell you about the Telegraph letter writer who had a lovely day at the seaside with her grandson, notwithstanding it was a bit hot.

- * Heatwave drives up power prices
- * Telegraph: Boris Johnson
- * Sun: Record baker
- * Mail: Britain sizzles to record temperature

CRITICISM OF ISRAEL GROWS

Robert Fisk, in Beirut, is impatient. "How soon must we use the words 'war crime'? How many children must be scattered in the rubble of Israeli air attacks before we reject the obscene phrase 'collateral damage' and start talking about prosecution for crimes against humanity?" Fisk's report laments the death of a single child, name unknown, "whose dead body lies like a rag doll beside the cars which supposedly were taking her and her family to safety".

Fisk's USP is subjectivity, but the Independent commendably prints his report opposite a dispatch from Donald Macintyre in Nazareth. Macintyre too concentrates on the deaths of children, shelled by Hizbullah. He says Hizbullah's rockets are now targeting Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs indiscriminately. A Guardian sidebar laconically notes that 63 Lebanese and four Israelis were killed yesterday.

The Times says that Britain is concerned that Israeli action against Hizbullah is counter-productive, and crucially is not denting the organisation's ability to fire rockets at Israel. The Guardian reports a Hizbullah claim that an Israeli attack on one of its command bunkers had failed. The FT quotes the Lebanese prime minister, who says the attacks are bolstering support for Hizbullah.

The Guardian also says that France has "challenged the Bush administrations's hands-off approach" to the crisis by calling for "immediate action by the UN security council to stop the fighting".

It's grim news everywhere. The Guardian also reports on the "forgotten war" in Gaza and the West Bank, where 13 Palestinians were killed yesterday. The Independent's leader column calls readers' attention back to Iraq, where, it says, there have been 5,818 violent deaths in May and June alone.

- * Israeli jets destroy hillside village
- * France pushes UN for action
- * Times: Dead left to rot in the rubble
- * Independent: Donald Macintyre

STREET ROBBERIES UP

The Guardian sums up events at the Home Office with the headline: "Street crime surge dents Reid fightback". Figures showing that some violent crime has increased, notably robberies, have been released a day after the home secretary, John Reid, announced a shake-up of civil servants in his department. Meanwhile, says the Times, a report by the prime minister's "delivery unit" criticised the Home Office for failing to motivate its staff or deliver value for money.

Mercury rising

The Sun finds some good news on crime, reporting that the prime minister has ordered a crackdown on "soft sentences". It says "the automatic right to parole at 50% of a life term is to be scrapped", by which it means the automatic review of prisoners to assess their suitability for parole is to be scrapped for some violent offenders, if a less excitable report in the Times is to be believed. The Times also says that the rigid one-third reduction in sentences for a guilty plea is to be replaced with concessions at the judge's discretion.

* Crime surge dents Reid fightback

* Sun: Blair axes soft sentences

* Times: No parole for violent criminals

KACZYNSKI TWINS TAKE CONTROL IN POLAND

The Times uses a combination of words and pictures to make clear its feelings about the "terrible twins" who took power yesterday in Poland, when Jaroslaw Kaczynski was appointed prime minister. His younger brother Lech is president. The paper prints two pictures of the twins. The first shows them as child actors in a 1962 film, in which they look pale, eerie and a little bit sinister, wearing orange jumpsuits and staring into the middle distance. In the second they are seated in the Polish parliament, dressed in suits, but looking pale, eerie and a little bit sinister, with Jaroslaw staring into the middle distance.

The Times says they "suspect foreigners, are almost telepathic and promise to defend their culture", and, again, that they are "homophobic, intolerant, ultranationalist and always eager for a scrap with Poland's neighbours." Wrong 'uns, in short. Apart from anything else, Lech will "sometimes pick up the phone before it rings, knowing that his brother is calling." Creepy or what?

* Times: 'Terrible twins' take over

BETTER-OFF CHILDREN MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP CANCER

If, like a former boss of this writer, you take the Mail and the Express, you will find no comfort today, be you rich or poor. The Mail says that "youngsters in affluent areas" are more likely to develop childhood cancers. Those in Buckinghamshire are 22% more prone than those in Merseyside. Researchers think the figures may show the effect of population density, with children from poorer areas exposed to more infections earlier in life, and thus developing immunity more quickly than richer children who live in big houses in small communities.

But don't get too cheery, poor people, because the Express reports that the stress of being working class reduces a person's lifespan by up to nine years. The research suggests that poorer health in people from lower socioeconomic groups cannot be put down solely to traditional factors such as lifestyle and diet, and is probably related to insecurity and stress.

* Mail: Well-off children 'more at risk of cancer'

SURROUND SOUND

Many of the papers report on the cruise liner which started to list badly off Florida yesterday, causing several serious injuries. Several people were washed out of a swimming pool, and one man was in hospital after being hit by a flying chair. Only the Sun has found out what was playing on the ship's cinema when the incident happened. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, it was Kate Winslet in Titanic.

The Sun is also able to record that the ship was built in Italy.

* Sun: Brits in 'Titanic' terror

DEVOLUTIONARY APPETITES

Mercury rising

The Times finds space for a report on "DIY devolution" by small local authorities, which should be deathly dull, but acquires a romantic lustre because the small local authorities are in Italy. Apparently, Italian law allows local councils to change their affiliation to regional authorities if they choose.

The reasons given, says the paper, are usually gastronomic; some towns say they belong in a neighbouring region because their traditional dishes are similar to the towns of that region. Franco Vicini is involved in one such campaign, to move 16 villages from the Marche to Emilia-Romagna, where their "piadina" - flatbread filled with meat or cheese - is more at home. "According to the law we are in Marche," says Mr Vicini. "According to our stomachs we are in Emilia-Romagna."

The Wrap sympathises. Our stomachs are also in Emilia-Romagna. Sadly, our desks are in Clerkenwell.

* Times: Towns find an appetite for DIY devolution

COMING UP ON GUARDIAN UNLIMITED TODAY

More Britons are expected to be evacuated from Lebanon as HMS Bulwark reaches Beirut.

Westminster's standards watchdog meets to decide whether John Prescott breached parliamentary rules when he stayed at the ranch of an American billionaire bidding to open a super-casino in the Dome.

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

***Carrier heads for the Gulf to rescue Britons in Beirut hell; ...but it's
still two days' sailing away***

Mail on Sunday (London)

July 16, 2006 Sunday

Copyright 2006 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: FB 04; Pg. 9

Length: 792 words

Byline: MARTIN SMITH

Body

BRITAIN'S flagship aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious was last night preparing to steam to Lebanon to assist in the evacuation of British citizens trapped in the war zone.

The deployment of the 22,000-ton warship follows criticism from Britons in the Lebanese capital Beirut that while other countries had activated their armed services to evacuate foreign nationals, little was being done to help them.

But last night the vessel was docked at Gibraltar, two days away from the Lebanese coast. A Ministry of Defence spokeswoman said: 'No decisions have been taken but we are monitoring the situation and we are engaged in contingency planning. We are not prepared to comment on the details.'

However, a military source said the MoD could order eight helicopters Sea Kings and EH101s on board Illustrious to fly ahead of the carrier, refuel at Aviano in Italy and in Cyprus before starting an evacuation in Lebanon.

They could airlift small numbers to Cyprus. But before the mercy flights begin, the SAS and SBS are likely to be sent ahead to secure the ground in order to guarantee the safety of British citizens.

One British woman yesterday described how she was hiding in terror in her Beirut home from the constant air strikes and that she felt 'completely abandoned' by the British Government.

Clair Vainola, 31, from Newcastle, working as a drug counsellor in the city since last November, said: 'There are planes overhead and I can hear bombs falling. It's terrifying.'

'I rang the embassy and they told me the conflict was not serious and they would not be evacuating any British citizens.'

How many more have to die before the Government classifies this as serious?' Marnie Cashmore, 39, from Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, said her partner William Rushton, 43, arrived in Beirut on business last Tuesday just before the air strikes began.

She said last night: 'Bill has been virtually trapped in his hotel. He went to the embassy on Friday afternoon for help and no one answered the door.'

Carrier heads for the Gulf to rescue Britons in Beirut hell ...but it's stilltwodays' sailing away

'He said it was just like a case of "would the last person to leave turn off the lights". He is now driving to Syria.' It was a different story for American, Italian and French citizens as their governments swiftly arranged for evacuation by warships and aircraft.

Israel launched its offensive after Hezbollah guerrillas crossed the border last Wednesday and captured two Israeli soldiers. Israel has bombarded Lebanon's airport and main roads and destroyed Hezbollah's headquarters in south Beirut. The Israeli military has conceded it has hit more than 150 targets.

Yesterday an Israeli missile targeted a van near the southern Lebanese port of Tyre, killing 20 passengers including women and children and wounding six, police said. The van was carrying families fleeing Marwaheen.

Israeli aircraft also bombed a Hezbollah office in southern Beirut and attacked roads, bridges and petrol stations in north, east and south Lebanon, killing at least 12 and wounding 32, security sources said.

A senior Israeli intelligence official claimed Iranian troops helped Hezbollah fire a missile that damaged an Israeli warship off the Lebanese coast killing two and leaving two missing on Friday. Israeli officials also said a Hezbollah missile sank a merchant ship with 12 sailors on board.

Last night Israeli rescue services said Hezbollah had fired a second barrage of rockets at the city of Tiberias. Israeli warplanes then destroyed the Beirut office of senior Hamas official Mohammed Nazzal. He was not hurt in the attack.

Blair's fury as Chirac blames Israel TONY BLAIR sparked a new diplomatic row with the French last night over the Middle East crisis.

Mr Blair's spokesman delivered an outspoken attack on French president Jacques Chirac for taking sides in the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians. As the Prime Minister arrived for the G8 meeting of world leaders in St Petersburg, his spokesman slapped down Mr Chirac for describing Israel's actions in South Lebanon as 'completely disproportionate'.

Mr Chirac had claimed to speak on behalf of the whole of Europe when he issued his comments earlier in the week.

But Mr Blair's spokesman said: 'As we have said from the start, the important thing is that the Israeli hostages are returned and the other important thing is that people act with restraint.

'We're not going to get into a fingerpointing-exercise. We're not going to get into the blame game.' In private British officials acknowledge that France and Russia in particular do not see eye-to-eye with the United States and Britain on Middle Eastern matters.

US President George W. Bush went further than Mr Blair, blaming Hezbollah alone for the violence and putting himself at odds with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who was more critical of Israel.

Load-Date: July 16, 2006

CHILDREN KILLED IN AIRSTRIKE MASSACRE; MIDDLE EAST 'JUST DAYS FROM OPEN WAR'

Sunday Mercury
July 16, 2006, Sunday
First Edition

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 694 words

Byline: ROY BAYLISS

Body

A SCHOOLBOY lies dead in the wreckage of a burned-out car - the latest innocent victim of the descent into hell in the Middle East.

The youngster was one of 12 Lebanese villagers, including women and children, who were killed in an Israeli airstrike on a convoy of vehicles.

The massacre happened on the main road in the southern Lebanese community of Ter Harfa, near the Israel border. All the dead were civilians.

Last night, the latest spark to the powder-keg in the troubled region threatened to escalate into all-out war as both sides fired missiles at cities.

There were fears that the conflict could spiral out of control with talk of 'open war' being only days away.

The crisis began when Israeli soldier Corporal Gilad Shalit was seized by Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip last month. In retaliation, Israeli tanks drove into Gaza and air strikes were launched against Hamas targets.

Meanwhile, to the north of Israel, more than 70 Lebanese people died in a bid to put pressure on Hezbollah guerillas.

The tit-for-tat campaign escalated when two Israeli soldiers were captured by Hezbollah and four Israeli sailors were missing after an explosion on a naval vessel off the coast.

It is believed that the blast was caused by a radar-guided missile fired from 60 miles away..

Yesterday, Israeli warplanes repeatedly blasted Beirut's southern suburbs for the second day running.

Hezbollah launched retaliatory cross-border rocket attacks on Israel, killing a grandmother and a child in a house, and last night hitting the city of Tiberias.

CHILDREN KILLED IN AIRSTRIKE MASSACRE MIDDLE EAST 'JUST DAYS FROM OPEN WAR'

Intelligence reports say the militants have missiles with the range to reach major cities, including Tel Aviv, and families in the north of Israel have taken to bomb shelters or have fled. **Hezbollah** leader Hassan Nasrallah has vowed to wage open war on Israel after his offices in Beirut, the Lebanese capital, were bombed on Friday.

There is major concern in the international community that the whole of the Middle East could implode, dragging in other countries including Syria and Iran. Meanwhile, foreigners in Lebanon are trapped because Israel has bombed the runway at Beirut International Airport.

Yesterday, 15 Irish citizens managed to travel out of the country in an Italian convoy, en route to Cyprus. But many others remained stranded in what was increasingly becoming a war zone.

Former Tory defence minister Nicholas Soames has accused Israel of 'disproportionate, dangerous and destructive' behaviour and called on the British Government to make a statement on the crisis.

He said that Israel was acting 'like a rogue state'.

Prime Minister Tony Blair arrived in St Petersburg yesterday for a G8 Summit being held in the shadow of the Middle East crisis.

The gathering of world leaders will seek to focus on an official agenda of global energy, security, education and the fight against infectious diseases including AIDS.

But the escalating Israel-Lebanon conflict will inevitably dominate discussions as Russia hosts its first G8 since joining the club of the world's leading industrialised democracies.

Mr Blair's official spokesman said there was now a 'very serious situation' in the Middle East adding: "The implications are very serious and we need to address it with urgency."

SundayMercury@mrn.co.uk

...NOW BRITAIN GETS INVOLVED

BRITISH aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious was last night being readied to sail for the Middle East as the conflict sucked more nations into the turmoil.

The ship is likely to be used as part of any multi-national security force drafted in to calm the situation, and could also help evacuate stranded Britons.

The move came as the Arab League said the Middle East peace process had failed - and called on the UN Security Council to intervene to stop

escalating violence in the region.

Earlier, it had emerged that a **Hezbollah** missile had accidentally sunk an Egyptian merchant ship, and 12 crewmen were missing, feared drowned after the incident.

The tragedy came during a guided-missile attack on an Israeli warship off the coast of Beirut -boasted about by **Hezbollah** leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah during a television interview.

"The surprises that I had promised you start now," he said.

Graphic

CHILDREN KILLED IN AIRSTRIKE MASSACRE MIDDLE EAST 'JUST DAYS FROM OPEN WAR'

HORROR: death and destruction near the Lebanese town of Ter Harfa

Load-Date: July 16, 2006

End of Document

Inside the hell of a city under siege

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 The Federal Capital Press of Australia PTY Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: A; Pg. 1

Length: 938 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

You could see the Israeli missiles coming through the clouds of smoke, hurtling like thunderbolts on to the apartment blocks of Ghobeiri, the crack of the explosions so loud that my ears are still ringing hours later as I write this report.

Yes, I suppose you could call this a "terrorist" target, for here in these mean, fearful streets is - or rather was - the **Hezbollah** headquarters.

Even the movement's propaganda television station, Al Manar, lay a pancaked ruin in the street, its broadcasts transmitting from the station's bunker deep beneath the rubble. But what of the tens of thousands of people who live here?

The few who were not lying in their basements ran shrieking through the streets - not gunmen, but **women** with screaming children, families holding suitcases, desperate to leave the heaps of broken buildings, entire apartment blocks smashed to bits, the roadways covered in smashed balconies and torn electrical wires.

"You don't have to help the resistance," the **Hezbollah** leader, Sayed Hassan Nasrallah, told the Lebanese on television last night.

"The resistance is on the front line and the Lebanese are behind them."

Untrue, of course. By Sunday night, it is the Lebanese - and their 130 dead, almost all civilians - who were also on the front line. In Israel, 23 have been killed, 15 of them civilians. So the exchange rate for death in this filthy war is now about one Israeli to five Lebanese. So many Lebanese have now fled Beirut for Tripoli in the north of Lebanon or for the Bekaa Valley in the east - or to Syria - that Beirut, where one and a half million people live, was yesterday a ghost city, its remaining residents sitting in their homes amid the hopelessness of all those who believed that this country was at last emerging from the shadows of its 15-year civil war. It was Nasrallah who said that there are "more surprises to come", and the Lebanese fear that the Israelis have more surprises, too.

I watched one of these from my sea-front balcony at dusk on Saturday, an American-made Apache helicopter turning three times over the Mediterranean which then fired a single missile - perfectly visible, with smoke pouring from the tail - that smacked into Beirut's brand-new lighthouse on the Corniche in a cloud of brown muck. So what was this for?

Inside the hell of a city under siege

Another "terrorist" target, I suppose. Like the gas stations bombed in the Bekaa Valley. Like the convoy of 20 civilians incinerated in an Israeli air raid on Saturday after being ordered - by the Israelis themselves - to leave their home village on the border.

Last night, Hezbollah's missiles - after killing 10 Israelis in Haifa - were falling on the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, setting the forests alight, and on the Israeli city of Acre.

The Syrians warned of an "unlimited" response if Israel attacked them - the Israelis have been saying, untruthfully, that Syrian troops and Iranians are in Lebanon, helping the Hezbollah in their battle - and the preposterous response of the G8 summit was greeted with despair.

Tony Blair believes Syria and Iran are behind the original Hezbollah attack. He is right. But it is to Damascus that the West will have to go to switch this dirty war off.

Certainly, the powerless Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora cannot do so. With his Government accused by Israel of responsibility for Wednesday's capture of two Israeli soldiers - a claim as preposterous as it is wrong - he went on television in tears to appeal to the United Nations to arrange a ceasefire for his "disaster-stricken nation". The Lebanese appreciated the tears but those tears are unlikely to have had US President George Bush shaking in his boots. Churchill in 1940, Siniora - a sincere, good man, uncorrupted by Lebanese politics - is not. "If our Prime Minister is crying," one Lebanese woman astutely pointed out to me yesterday, "what is the civilian population of our country supposed to do?"

But where are the other supposed political titans of Lebanon? What is Saad Hariri, son of the assassinated ex-prime minister Rafiq Hariri - who rebuilt the Lebanon which Israel is now destroying - doing in Kuwait, chatting to the Kuwaitis about his country's predicament? Why isn't Hariri the son on his private jet to the G8 summit in Saint Petersburg to demand of Mr Bush that he protect the democratically elected government and the nation he praised for its "Cedar Revolution" last year? Or doesn't democracy matter when Israel is smashing Lebanon?

Answer: no, it doesn't.

UN Security Council Resolution 1559 demanded a Syrian retreat from Lebanon - which was accomplished - but it also demanded the disarming of Hezbollah, which was definitely not accomplished. Many here suspected that 1559, designed by the French and the Americans, was intended to weaken Lebanon and prepare it for a peace treaty with Israel. Well, not any more.

It was Lebanese President Emile Lahoud, who still cravenly follows Syria's line, who said yesterday that Lebanon "will never surrender".

Nasrallah meanwhile told the Israelis that "if you do not want to play by rules, we can do the same."

It was a grim threat obviously meant to counter Ehud Olmert's equally grim threat that there would be "far-reaching consequences" for the missile attack on Haifa.

Nasrallah's televised argument - that the Hezbollah originally wished to confine all casualties to the military - may encourage those many Lebanese who were originally outraged by Hezbollah's attack across the border on Wednesday, only to be silenced by the cruelty of Israel's response. "This is the last struggle of the 'umma'," Nasrallah said, the "umma" being the Arab "homeland". - The Independent

Load-Date: October 11, 2011

Annan's Double Standard On Laying the Blame

New York Sun (Archive)

July 31, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 The New York Sun, Two SL, LLC All Rights Reserved

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 Khiyam, 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

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

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

Evacuees back in Britain as Lebanon rescue stepped up

Yorkshire Post

July 20, 2006

Copyright 2006 JPIMedia Publishing Ltd All Rights Reserved

Length: 713 words

Body

James Reed

THE first flight bringing rescued Britons home from Cyprus landed at Gatwick last night as the evacuation from Lebanon was stepped up.

The Royal Navy destroyer HMS Gloucester arrived in Cyprus yesterday carrying a first sea-borne wave of 180 evacuees, mainly women and children, from the Lebanese capital Beirut.

A charter flight carrying them back to the UK left Cyprus in the afternoon as HMS Gloucester and her sister ship, HMS York, returned to Lebanon to ferry more British citizens to safety.

Four more Royal Navy ships, including the giant aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious and the commando assault ship HMS Bulwark, will arrive off the Lebanese coast today to support the evacuation effort.

The remaining British nationals still wanting to leave have been told to register at the port in Beirut at 9.30am this morning and leave behind all but a small bag of possessions.

The eighth day of fighting saw a rocket fired by Hezbollah guerillas destroy a building in the town of Nazareth, killing three people including two children.

Israeli troops clashed with Hezbollah fighters on the Lebanese side of the border while warplanes flattened buildings and killed at least 20 people.

Military officials said Israeli troops had crossed the border in search of tunnels and weapons. Hezbollah claimed to have "repelled" Israeli forces near the coastal border town of Naqoura. Casualties were reported on both sides.

Speaking in the Commons, Prime Minister Tony Blair put the onus for bringing the hostilities to an end on Hezbollah.

He said: "Of course it is important that the response of Israel is proportionate and it does its best to minimise civilian casualties. But I have to say this would stop now if the soldiers that were kidnapped wrongly, when Hezbollah crossed the United Nations blue line, were released.

"It would stop now if the rockets stopped coming into Haifa. If those two things happened I would be the first person out there telling Israel to stop these things."

Mr Blair had been challenged by Liberal Democrat leader Sir Menzies Campbell to condemn Israel's "disproportionate" actions and call for an immediate ceasefire.

Evacuees back in Britain as Lebanon rescue stepped up

MPs are due to discuss the Middle East crisis further as part of a Commons debate on international affairs today.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, added his voice to those condemning the violence in the Middle East in a letter to churches in Lebanon published yesterday.

Dr Williams said he was alarmed at the spiral of violence and the "vicious circle of attack and retaliation" between Hezbollah militants in Lebanon and the Israeli military.

His prayers and sympathy were with the principal victims, the innocent civilians on both sides of the border, he said.

"The distress felt at the destruction not only of life but also the infrastructure so painstakingly rebuilt after years of conflict will, I know, be acute, and reinforce the sense of helplessness at being caught up in a wider regional struggle.

"My condemnation of this resort to violence is unequivocal."

Foreign Office minister Lord Triesman will travel to Cyprus today to review the continuing evacuation of British citizens from Lebanon, the Foreign Office said last night.

Lord Triesman said: "The evacuation is well under way. By the end of today we will have evacuated over 1,000 people from Beirut.

"Our priority continues to be to get those most in need out first, as safely as possible."

Lord Triesman also recorded his thanks for the "excellent cooperation" which had been given by authorities in Lebanon and in Cyprus.

In Cyprus, he plans to meet some of those evacuated, as well as meeting some of those helping them, including Foreign Office staff, immigration officials, the Red Cross and members of the armed forces.

Last night the Foreign Office advised British passport-holders wishing to leave Lebanon to gather at the Beirut Forum with their immediate family from 9.30am local time today.

The department said Royal Navy ships would be conducting evacuations today.

Those wishing to leave were told to bring travel documents, cash and credit cards and hand luggage but warned not to try to take suitcases or pets on board.

Non-immediate family or friends who are not British citizens would not be allowed on the ships under any circumstances, it added.

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

Israeli air strike kills 27 sleeping children

Western Daily Press

July 31, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

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: October 29, 2006

Fire rains down in endless war

The Toronto Star
July 23, 2006 Sunday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: OPINION; Pg. A17

Length: 647 words

Body

There is one thing everyone in northern Israel knows at this time: how to get to a bomb shelter within one minute once the warning siren sounds. That's the amount of time to spare before a Hezbollah rocket lands, somewhere. And there is one thing no one knows: when and how it will all end.

Israel's military chiefs have set the limits of their military campaign to "as long as necessary." Some days that means weeks. Some days they speak of months. But two other clocks are also ticking. When does international pressure, the rising crescendo of alarm and anger over Lebanon being "torn to shreds," become impossible to resist as Israel pursues its "very clear goals" to stop Hezbollah rockets and mortars from raining on Israel and to eliminate this very threat? And then there's what Israel calls the Home Front - the Israeli public, including residents in the north who have been in and out of bomb shelters, or "safe rooms" of reinforced concrete in their homes, for nearly two weeks?

Aside from rare voices of dissent, opinion polls show a solid majority of Israelis backs their leaders' military drive to end this once and for all. But what does "the end" mean in a conflict where, as Prime Minister Ehud Olmert sees it, Hezbollah and the Palestinian militant group Hamas are simply subcontractors for Syria and Iran? What constitutes "victory?" Israeli leaders no longer speak of crushing Hezbollah, which they know has real grassroots support in Lebanon's Shiite community, seats in Parliament and ministries in government. What will Hezbollah be, "the day after," whenever that is?

There is unusual confidence in Israel that, now, they have more time because they have set this battle at the front line of other battles being waged from Washington and other Western and indeed some Arab capitals. This is the Middle East post 9/11, in the full flow of George Bush's "war on terror." Mr. Olmert gave his own axis of evil speech when he spoke of Tehran-Damascus-Beirut-Gaza. But, in some eyes, this is another of the asymmetrical battles Israel has often fought with its Arab neighbours, which end up creating more problems in their wake, not to mention another armed conflagration somewhere down the line.

Every Israeli government minister I interviewed during this crisis insisted they know this won't be solved by force alone. Israel is judging how much it can achieve militarily before it turns, or is made to turn, to the international community, and what is left of the Lebanese government, to achieve the rest. Does there have to be a ground offensive to root out Hezbollah's well-entrenched network of tunnels and towers? For now, Israel's generals say no, while they mass their formidable firepower along the border and conduct limited forays inside. Israel's first invasion of Lebanon in 1978, which led to a costly occupation that only ended in 2000, is still etched in Israel's national conscience, and is a painful chapter in Lebanon's own tortured history.

Fire rains down in endless war

As Condoleezza Rice heads to the region talking of the "birth pangs of a new Middle East," some of it feels very much like the region of old. The towns on Israel's border, a land of breathtaking beauty in clear sight of Lebanon, are virtually deserted. Lebanese towns straddling the rolling hills on the other side are under constant fire but that still hasn't stopped mortars and katyushas from flying across. Some Israelis rarely leave their bomb shelters. But a bit further south, some now rarely go in, emboldened by almost two weeks of survival.

"Where is the bomb shelter when the siren sounds?" we asked two elderly women sitting quietly on their balcony in Haifa, knitting calmly, at a centre for holocaust survivors. "My dear, we just put our fingers in our ears." Such is the home front.

Canadian journalist Lyse Doucet is a world news presenter and foreign correspondent for BBC Television in Haifa.

Load-Date: July 23, 2006

End of Document

Rally boosts pro-Syrian forces

The Toronto Star

March 9, 2005 Wednesday

Copyright 2005 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A03

Length: 628 words

Byline: Hassan Fattah, REUTERS NEWS AGENCY; NEW YORK TIMES

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

Shouting anti-American and anti-Israeli slogans, hundreds of thousands of Lebanese poured into central Beirut yesterday in a show of strength by the militant Muslim Shiite party *Hezbollah*, which opposes the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon.

The enormous crowd, in which many had been bused in from the Shiite slums of southern Beirut, was far larger than the anti-Syrian demonstrations of recent weeks that have drawn broad international support. It offered a defiant challenge to the anti-Syrian forces and their foreign backers and exposed fault lines of class and ideology.

"Today, you decide the future of your nation and your country; today you answer the world," *Hezbollah* leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said in a rare and surprise appearance. Banners held aloft read: "No to American-Zionist intervention. Yes to Lebanese-Syrian brotherhood."

Lebanese President Emile Lahoud, buoyed by the huge rally in support of his Syrian backers, holds talks with parliamentary deputies today after which he is expected to name a pro-Syrian prime minister.

Syrian troops continued to redeploy overnight to eastern Lebanon in the first stage of a two-phase pullout, security sources told .

The participants at yesterday's demonstration here were, by and large, a very different Lebanon from the educated, better-off Christians and Sunni Muslims who have captured the world's attention since Rafik Hariri, the former prime minister, was assassinated Feb. 14 by a huge car bomb.

While the anti-Syrian opposition movement has been called the Cedar revolution, after the Lebanese national tree, it has also been called the BMW revolution. Yesterday's demonstration included far more *women* with covered heads and men in traditional dress.

Imad Moustapha, Syria's ambassador to the United Nations, bristled yesterday when CNN's Wolf Blitzer suggested the protest was orchestrated by Syria, saying Syria "doesn't have a single soldier in Beirut."

In fact, thousands of Syrians attended the Beirut rally, many of them spirited across the border in buses. But the stage-managing efforts of Damascus accounted for only a fraction of the enormous turnout, diplomatic sources in the Syrian capital told the Toronto Star's Mitch Potter.

Rally boosts pro- Syrian forces

"Here in Damascus they'll see the march as a triumph and a vindication - but they won't go back on the deal to withdraw their troops," said a Western diplomatic source. "Damascus knows that cancelling the pullout would be a disaster. But they want rallies such as this to show the international community that Lebanon really is the can of worms they've been talking about all along."

Since the killing of Hariri, a billionaire who resigned as prime minister to protest Syrian domination of Lebanon, many Lebanese parties have called for the complete withdrawal of Syrian troops, which have been here since 1976. Backers of the withdrawal have taken to the streets in demonstrations reminiscent of the events in November in Ukraine, where a rigged election was overturned partly through popular rallies.

Hezbollah, which means the Party of God, had remained quiet until yesterday despite invitations by the opposition to join.

The opposition has been struggling to demonstrate that it is the voice of the majority while becoming a favourite cause of the Bush administration.

"Freedom will prevail in Lebanon," U.S. President George W. Bush said in Washington yesterday. "The American people are on your side. Millions across the Earth are on your side."

A prominent Syrian political analyst, speaking to the Star on condition of anonymity, said that despite the numbers, the **Hezbollah** rally has no bearing on the inevitable Syrian pullout.

"What has changed is that **Hezbollah** has finally played its card, and it is the last card on the table," the analyst said.

Graphic

HUSSEIN MALLA ap Up to 500,000 pro-Syrian demonstrators gather in downtown Beirut yesterday for a rally put on by militant group **Hezbollah**. The protest was meant to counter almost daily anti-Syrian protests in Lebanon.

Load-Date: March 9, 2005

Israel in the wrong

Western Mail

July 27, 2006, Thursday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

Section: FEATURES; Pg. 25

Length: 389 words

Body

SIR - I applaud Denise Robertson's excellent column in Tuesday's Western Mail. She is absolutely right that the issue in the present conflict has now turned from a complex political one to a simple moral one.

Israel is now the schoolyard bully of the Middle East. It is true that when the country was first formed it was vulnerable and outnumbered; but now it is armed to the teeth and enjoys the unflinching support of the US and sadly, I have to say, Britain.

It is hard to imagine any other country being allowed to carry on in this way without being censured on all sides.

It possesses the hi-tech weapons to target Hezbollah military installations, and the military intelligence to make pinpoint attacks, but prefers instead to wreak widespread misery on an innocent population. It appears the Israelis do not care how many they maim and kill, or whether or not these are innocents. The present invasion of Lebanon is described cutely as an 'incursion' - to me it looks more like a D-Day sized assault.

Hezbollah are, of course, in many ways the creation of the Israelis and their past mistakes. Their reckless invasion of Lebanon in 1982 left Muslims in the south exposed. The South Lebanese Army and the Christian militias were Israeli-sponsored forces which perpetrated the massacres at Sabra and Shatila refugee camps when the PLO was forced to leave. This slaughter of defenceless women, children and the elderly led directly to the formation of a guerrilla force we now know as Hezbollah. The Muslims put their trust in Hezbollah because they don't trust the hapless and divided Lebanese army.

Our selective reading of the history of Israel makes a huge contribution to allowing the present wrongs to continue. The cold-blooded Sabra and Shatila massacres are forgotten in the West. The fact the Israelis themselves committed the single largest act of terrorism that has ever occurred in that area - the bombing of the King David Hotel, which killed 28 Britons and 63 others exactly 60 years ago - is never mentioned.

I believe Bush and his yes-man Blair call themselves Christians, which implies a moral dimension to their political lives. Israel has massively over reacted, and got the whole thing wrong. They mustn't be able to get away with it.

NIGEL GABRIEL

Former deputy editor, Gulf Mirror, Bahrain, Romilly Park Road, Barry

Load-Date: July 27, 2006

Israel in the wrong

End of Document

LETTERS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 31, 2006 Monday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

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

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

Copyright 2006 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved

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 rows since 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

Evacuated Britons tell of Beirut nightmare

Birmingham Evening Mail

July 19, 2006, Wednesday

Worcs Edition

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 270 words

Body

A MIDLAND woman waiting to be evacuated from Beirut described how the bombs raining down on Lebanon had forced them to flee the city.

As around 100 people, including children and pregnant women, set sail to Cyprus on board HMS Gloucester, some revealed their experiences.

Samantha Bradley, from the West Midlands, told how her car window was smashed by the force of a bomb blast.

The mother-of-two, who said she visited Beirut every summer, said: "When we were leaving Beirut three nights ago and we went into the hills, a bomb went off when we were leaving and it smashed the car."

Carrying one of her children in her arms, she added: "When they were bombing near to the house (the children) were frightened from the noise and then the next two days up in the hills it was quite quiet.

"But last night when they bombed the army base it was really really scary."

Another British man at the port, who was not named, said: "I will be back. This is our country, I love Lebanon.

The first 180 people were delivered safely to Cyprus on HMS Gloucester just after 5.20am today at the southern port of Limassol.

Consular staff, the Foreign Office's rapid deployment team and immigration officials flown over from the UK were there to greet them.

Meanwhile, a senior Israeli army commander said today that air strikes on Hezbollah militants in Lebanon had destroyed about 50per cent of their arsenal.

Hezbollah has rained hundreds of rockets on northern Israel since Israel began striking Hezbollah on July 12 in response to an attack by the militia on Israeli border troops. More than 227 people in Lebanon and 25 Israelis have been killed.

Graphic

Evacuated Britons tell of Beirut nightmare

FLEEING... Britons carry personal possessions on to HMS Gloucester.

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

End of Document

Middle East crisis: Boiling point: Escalating conflict

The Guardian - Final Edition

July 13, 2006 Thursday

Copyright 2006 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: GUARDIAN HOME PAGES; Pg. 5

Length: 219 words

Body

June 25 Palestinian militants tunnel under Gaza border, attacking a border post and a tank. Two Israeli soldiers are killed and a third is taken hostage.

June 26 Israeli forces mobilised to strike Gaza's Palestinian settlements. Ehud Olmert, the Israeli PM rejects negotiations, insisting that the release of Corporal Gilad Shilat be unconditional.

June 28 Israeli tanks roll into Gaza. Bridges destroyed and Gaza's power station is knocked out by missiles.

June 29 Israel rounds up 64 Hamas officials in the West Bank, including one third of the Palestinian cabinet. Israel fires rocket into deserted office of Palestinian PM Ismail Haniyeh.

July 3 Palestinian militant groups holding Cpl Shalit demand release of all women and child prisoners and a further 1,000 inmates. Israeli forces move into northern Gaza.

July 6 17 Palestinians and one Israeli soldier killed as Israeli army consolidates its grip.

July 8 Mr Haniyeh calls for ceasefire, but Israel says militants must first free captured soldier and halt rocket attacks. Death toll rises to over 50.

July 9 UN warns of humanitarian crisis in wake of Israeli incursions into Gaza.

July 12 Israel launches air raid on house of a Hamas militant killing nine members of one family. Hizbullah militants capture two Israeli soldiers and kill seven others on Lebanese border.

Load-Date: July 13, 2006

Run for your life: the rush to flee Israel's air strikes

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 21, 2006 Friday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Pg. 1

Length: 730 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Tyre and Mark Methereil with AAP

Body

THE ancient Lebanese port city of Tyre was emptying of life as thousands of its remaining residents fled the threat of annihilation from the air.

Convoys of terrified people sped towards the outskirts of the town, waving white flags from their windows, after the Israeli Defence Force told all residents of south Lebanon to go north of the Litani River "for their safety".

The threat came as Israeli aircraft circled overhead, and followed days of heavy shelling and bombing in the area which have killed hundreds of civilians, many of them fleeing similar warnings issued by the Israeli army to towns and villages closer to the border.

As the rush to flee Lebanon intensified, Australia announced more than 100 defence and diplomatic officials would be sent to help with evacuations.

The Prime Minister, John Howard, said 29 extra diplomatic staff were being sent to Beirut and embassies in neighbouring Cyprus and Turkey.

This followed the earlier announcement that 84 Australian military personnel would help organise the evacuations.

Mr Howard spoke to listeners on Arabic radio in Sydney yesterday to defend the Government's record on getting Australians out of Lebanon. "We have not abandoned them and any suggestion we have is unfair and I reject it totally, completely."

The Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, said the Government had contracted for about six ship movements to take 6000 people from Beirut to Cyprus beginning today.

In Tyre, the Israeli Air Force appears to have introduced a new method to get people to flee southern Lebanon. Many residents said yesterday they had received phone calls from an Israeli auto-dialer, playing a taped message warning them to go.

Raymond Salha, a hotelier, said the Arabic message was: "To the people of south Lebanon, for your safety leave now north of the Litani. Don't use motorbikes, trucks or buses, only cars, otherwise you will be a target. From the state of Israel."

Run for your life: the rush to flee Israel 's air strikes

After nine days of conflict the civilian death toll from Israeli attacks in Lebanon has reached 300, while the deaths of two Israeli-Arab children in Nazareth brought the number of Israeli civilian dead to 15. With no diplomatic end in sight Israeli fire continued to pound roads, villages and hillsides south of Tyre in a bid to force Hezbollah to release two captured soldiers and to stop launching long-range rockets at Israeli towns.

But Hezbollah missiles - visible at night as bright sparks darting up into the sky - again struck across northern Israel, again hitting Haifa and falling for the first time on the mainly Arab city of Nazareth, where two children were killed.

News agencies reported that 63 Lebanese civilians and one Hezbollah militant died on Wednesday - the worst day of killing so far - as Israeli forces struck targets which included homes and fleeing refugees.

The United Nations human rights chief, Louise Arbour, warned that the "scale and predictability" of the civilian casualties could indicate a war crime, although she did not single out either Israel or Hezbollah for blame.

Two Israeli soldiers were killed in fighting as their tank force crossed a short way into Lebanon. A total of 14 Israeli combat personnel have been killed since the conflict erupted last week, while Hezbollah says only five of its militants have died.

More than 20 members of the non-engaged Lebanese government army have also been killed despite their efforts to stay out of the conflict. The worst of the civilian slaughter has occurred south of Tyre, the main launching ground for Hezbollah attacks against Israel.

In Cyprus, some of the first Australians to escape Lebanon by sea have arrived in darkness aboard a British warship.

An estimated 100 Australians were lucky enough to find room aboard the destroyer HMS Gloucester, which arrived in Limassol to unload a cargo of tired parents and children, pregnant women and the elderly.

Many had been up for nearly 24 hours, after waking in Beirut early to board a Turkish ferry to safety.

But with Israeli bombs falling, hope turned to confusion as Australia discovered the Turkish ship had been booked by someone else.

There was more anguish for hundreds of Australians when a Greek warship was forced to sail without them. Only 45 Australians made it on to the vessel before an Israeli curfew. Australian officials begged Britain to evacuate priority cases, and it was those lucky ones who arrived in Cyprus.

Graphic

PHOTO: Going home ... Australians prepare to leave Beirut. Photo: Kate Geraghty

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

UN chief slams 'cowardly' militants over civilian deaths - MIDDLE EAST IN CRISIS

The Australian (Australia)

July 26, 2006 Wednesday

All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2006 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 8

Length: 282 words

Body

AFP

LARNACA, Cyprus: UN relief chief Jan Egeland launched a scathing attack on Hezbollah yesterday, branding the Shia militants cowards for boasting that Lebanese civilians were enduring the Israeli bombardments.

"Some believe I spoke only about excessive use of force by Israel there (in Beirut)," he said in Cyprus after arriving from Lebanon en route to Israel.

"However, consistently from Hezbollah heartlands my message was, 'Hezbollah -- stop this cowardly blending-in among women and children'.

"I heard there was a statement they were proud they had lost very few fighters, and that it was the civilians bearing the brunt of this. I don't think you want to be proud of having many more children and women than armed men (killed)."

In Beirut, as Mr Egeland toured areas devastated by Israeli air strikes, he called the campaign "a violation of humanitarian law".

Yesterday, he repeated that the devastation caused by the Israeli bombardment of Beirut was "truly horrific" and said he was "surprised" after seeing the level of destruction first-hand.

Mr Egeland said his message to the Israelis would be similar to the one he made repeatedly in Lebanon.

"We need a cessation of hostilities because this is a war where the civilians are paying the price," he said.

Asked if he believed Israel would heed his call, he said: "Yes, I think they will listen. I think the Israelis are right when they say they do not want to unnecessarily hurt the civilian population, and I believe I will get a final breakthrough on the humanitarian corridors."

Mr Egeland said the first UN convoy of trucks carrying emergency humanitarian aid would leave Beirut for the southern port city of Tyre overnight.

Load-Date: July 25, 2006

UN chief slams 'cowardly' militants over civilian deaths - MIDDLE EAST IN CRISIS

End of Document

Arab Majority May Not Stay Forever Silent

New York Sun (Archive)

July 17, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 The New York Sun, Two SL, LLC All Rights Reserved

Section: FRONT PAGE; Pg. 1

Length: 742 words

Byline: Youssef Ibrahim

Body

Yes, world, there is a silent Arab majority that believes that seventh-century Islam is not fit for 21st-century challenges. That women do not have to look like walking black tents. That men do not have to wear beards and robes, act like lunatics, and run around blowing themselves up in order to enjoy 72 virgins in paradise. And that secular laws, not Islamic Shariah, should rule our day-to-day lives.

And yes, we, the silent Arab majority, do not believe that writers, secular or otherwise, should be killed or banned for expressing their views. Or that the rest of our creative elite - from moviemakers to playwrights, actors, painters, sculptors, and fashion models - should be vetted by Neanderthal Muslim imams who have never read a book in their dim, miserable lives.

Nor do we believe that little men with head wraps and disheveled beards can run amok in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Iraq making decisions on our behalf, dragging us to war whenever they please, confiscating our rights to be adults, and flogging us for not praying five times a day or even for not believing in God.

More important, we are not silent any longer.

Rarely have I seen such an uprising, indeed an intifada, against those little turbaned, bearded men across the Muslim landscape as the one that took place last week. The leader of Hezbollah, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, received a resounding "no" to pulling 350 million Arabs into a war with Israel on his clerical coattails.

The collective "nyet" was spoken by presidents, emirs, and kings at the highest level of government in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain, Qatar, Jordan, Morocco, and at the Arab League's meeting of 22 foreign ministers in Cairo on Saturday. But it was even louder from pundits and ordinary people.

Perhaps the most remarkable and unexpected reaction came from Saudi Arabia, whose foreign minister, Prince Saud Al-Faisal, said bluntly and publicly that Hezbollah's decision to cross the Lebanese border, attack Israel, and kidnap its soldiers has left the Shiite group on its own to face Israel. The unspoken message here was, "We hope they blow you away."

The Arab League put it succinctly in its final communique in Cairo, declaring that "behavior undertaken by some groups [read: Hezbollah and Hamas] in apparent safeguarding of Arab interests does in fact harm those interests, allowing Israel and other parties from outside the Arab world [read: Iran] to wreck havoc with the security and safety of all Arab countries."

Arab Majority May Not Stay Forever Silent

As for Hezbollah and its few sup porters, who have pushed for an emergency Arab summit meeting, the response could not have been a bigger slap in the face. Take a listen:

* Abdul Rahman al-Rashed, the general manager of Al-Arabiya, possibly the most influential Arab opinion-maker today, was categorical yesterday: "We have lost most of our causes and the largest portions of our lands following fiery speeches and empty promises of struggle coupled with hallucinating, drug-induced political fantasies." As for joining Hezbollah in its quest, his answer was basically, "you broke it, you own it."

* Tariq Alhomayed, editor in chief of the Arab daily Asharq al-Awsat, stuck the dagger in deeper: "Mr. Nasrallah bombastically announced he consulted no one when he decided to attack Israel, nor did he measure Lebanon's need for security, prosperity, and the safety of its people. He said he needs no one's help but God's to fight the fight." Mr. Alhomayed's punch line was, in so many words: Go with God, Sheik Nasrallah, but count the rest of us out.

Several other Arab pundits, not necessarily coordinating their commentary, noted that today Sheik Nasrallah has been reduced to Osama bin Laden status, a fugitive from Israeli justice, sending out his tapes from unknown locations to, invariably, Al-Jazeera, the prime purveyor of Mr. bin Laden's communications.

All in all, it seems that when Israel decided to go to war against the priestly mafia of Hamas and Hezbollah, it opened a whole new chapter in the Greater Middle East discourse. And Israel is finding, to its surprise, that a vast, not-so-silent majority of Arabs agrees that enough is enough. To be sure, beneath the hostility toward Sheik Nasrallah in Sunni Muslim states lies the deep and bitter heritage of a 14-century Sunni-Shiite divide, propelled to greater heights now by fears of an ascendant Shiite "arc of menace" rising out of Iran and peddled in the Sunni world by Syria.

The sooner this is settled the better.

Load-Date: July 18, 2006

UN chief slams 'cowardly' militants over civilian deaths

The Australian (Australia)

July 26, 2006 Wednesday

All-round First Edition

Copyright 2006 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 8

Length: 284 words

Body

AFP

LARNACA, Cyprus: UN humanitarian relief chief Jan Egeland launched a scathing attack on Hezbollah yesterday, branding the Shia militants cowards for boasting that Lebanese civilians were enduring the Israeli bombardments.

"Some believe I spoke only about excessive use of force by Israel there (in Beirut)," he said in Cyprus after arriving from Lebanon en route to Israel.

"However, consistently from Hezbollah heartlands my message was, 'Hezbollah -- stop this cowardly blending-in among women and children'.

"I heard there was a statement they were proud they had lost very few fighters, and that it was the civilians bearing the brunt of this. I don't think you want to be proud of having many more children and women than armed men (killed)."

In Beirut, as Mr Egeland toured areas devastated by Israeli air strikes, he called the campaign "a violation of humanitarian law".

Yesterday, he repeated that the devastation caused by the Israeli bombardment of Beirut was "truly horrific" and said he was "surprised" after seeing the level of destruction first-hand.

Mr Egeland said his message to the Israelis would be similar to the one he made repeatedly in Lebanon. "We need a cessation of hostilities because this is a war where the civilians are paying the price," he said.

Asked if he believed Israel would heed his call, he said: "Yes, I think they will listen. I think the Israelis are right when they say they do not want to unnecessarily hurt the civilian population, and I believe I will get a final breakthrough on the humanitarian corridors."

Mr Egeland said the first UN convoy of trucks carrying emergency humanitarian aid would leave Beirut for the southern port city of Tyre overnight.

Load-Date: July 25, 2006

UN chief slams 'cowardly' militants over civilian deaths

End of Document

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

The International Herald Tribune

July 31, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 International Herald Tribune All Rights Reserved

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

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

U.S. evacuations nearly complete

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

July 25, 2006 Tuesday

0 Edition

Copyright 2006 Times Publishing Company All Rights Reserved

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 4A

Length: 424 words

Body

Evacuations of Americans from Lebanon were wrapping up, with about 11,700 brought safely out as of Monday, the State Department said, but a group of 300 believed trapped in the south may have been left behind. The 300 Americans had been in villages south of Tyre, unable to get out, said Erik Rattat, a German official involved in the evacuation operation. A Canadian ship was due in Tyre today to evacuate more people, officials said. U.S. Consul William Gill said most Americans who wanted to leave Lebanon had done so by Sunday, and he urged anyone considering leaving to make up their minds quickly as fighting between Israel and Lebanon-based Hezbollah guerrillas showed no sign of waning.

U.N. pleads for aid, U.S. pledges help

The U.N. humanitarian chief issued an emergency appeal Monday for \$150-million dollars in aid to help Lebanon through the next three months following the damage caused by Israel's bombardment of the country. Jan Egeland said in Beirut that the money was needed to pay for food, health care, water and sanitation over the next three months in key areas. The White House announced Monday that President Bush ordered \$30-million in humanitarian aid, mostly in goods, sent to Lebanon starting today, according to White House press secretary Tony Snow and Assistant Secretary of State David Welch. Egeland said he was asking Israel for safe passage for aid ships to enter the Lebanese ports of Tripoli and Tyre and to guarantee safe passage throughout Lebanon. The United Nations estimates 500,000 to 800,000 people have been affected by the conflict, some of whom have been displaced or become refugees.

What they're saying

"I am deeply concerned about the Lebanese people and what they are enduring. I am obviously concerned about the humanitarian situation."

- Condoleezza Rice, U.S. secretary of state

"Consistently, from the Hezbollah heartland, my message was that Hezbollah must stop this cowardly blending ... among women and children. I heard they were proud because they lost very few fighters and that it was the civilians bearing the brunt of this. I don't think anyone should be proud of having many more children and women dead than armed men."

- Jan Egeland, head of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

U.S. evacuations nearly complete

"**Hezbollah** is a national resistance movement fighting for its - for the sovereignty of Lebanon, for getting back the occupied Lebanese territory, for getting back 10,000 Arab prisoners in the Israeli jails. These people are fighting the same way George Washington did it 200 years ago."

Graphic

PHOTO, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Load-Date: July 25, 2006

End of Document

First British evacuees dock safely after fleeing Lebanon

Evening News (Edinburgh)

July 19, 2006, Wednesday

1 Edition

Copyright 2006 The Scotsman Publications Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: Pg. 2

Length: 593 words

Body

ALMOST 200 Britons arrived safely in Cyprus today on board a Royal Navy warship after fleeing Beirut.

They are among the first of an anticipated 5000 Britons being evacuated from Lebanon, where civilian casualties continue to mount as Israeli warplanes blast targets on the southern edge of the capital and elsewhere.

Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert has claimed Iran was behind Hezbollah's capture of Israeli soldiers, engineering the crisis to distract the attention of the world and the G8 summit from the Iranian nuclear programme.

"To my regret, Iran's trick succeeded," he said. "Everybody remembers the G8 decision on the subject of Lebanon and they are not dealing with the Iranian issue."

Meanwhile, there were reports today that America was giving Israel a window of a week to inflict maximum damage on Hezbollah before adding its weight to international calls for a ceasefire.

US President George Bush, backed by Britain, has so far blocked United Nations moves to seek an immediate halt to the fighting.

A senior European official was quoted saying: "It's clear the Americans have given the Israeli the green light. They will be allowed to go on longer, perhaps for another week."

The Israeli air strikes against Lebanon were continuing today.

A five-member household was wiped out by a missile that struck the southern market town of Nabatiyeh. The intended target was the office of a firm belonging to Hezbollah.

Meanwhile, Israeli troops and Hezbollah fighters clashed on the Lebanese side of the border today, and reports said two soldiers had been killed.

Air strikes also destroyed 15 houses in the village of Srifa, near the southern city of Tyre. The village head said 25 to 30 people were in the houses.

At least 242 people have been killed in Lebanon and 25 in Israel since the fighting broke out on July 12 following Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers.

First British evacuees dock safely after fleeing Lebanon

The first sea-bound wave of British evacuees, mainly women and children, looked tired but relieved as they disembarked from HMS Gloucester in Cyprus just before 7.20am local time.

The ship's sailors formed a human chain, passing their luggage down the gang-plank and into a waiting army truck.

The evacuees are expected to board a Foreign Office-chartered flight from Cyprus later today to bring them to the UK.

A mother of five-month-old triplets described told how they slept through the bombings in Lebanon before being evacuated.

Elise Mazegi, 32, from Brighton, arrived in Cyprus this morning after sailing for 11 hours from Beirut with Isabella, Yasmin and Joey as well as her three-year-old son Dany.

After stepping off HMS Gloucester, she said "I'm exhausted but I'm very glad to be out.

"The crew on the ship were amazing, they really helped me out a lot."

But there was anger from some evacuees who felt Britain had responded too slowly.

Maya Kaaki, 30, from Wilmslow, Cheshire, said she was disappointed with the British Embassy in Lebanon.

"If it hadn't been for me calling 20 to 30 times a day, me, my son and my husband would still be in Lebanon," she said.

A second warship, HMS York, is expected to bring more from Lebanon to Cyprus later today.

There are up to 12,000 British nationals and a further 10,000 dual nationals currently living in Lebanon.

The High Commissioner defended the time it had taken to start the sea evacuation.

Peter Millet said "We did not want to rush bringing out British citizens until we knew we could do it safely."

Mr Millet said HMS Gloucester and its sister ship, HMS York, would sail back and forth between Cyprus and Beirut as long as they were needed.

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

In sermon, leading imam of Egypt assails terrorism People who kill innocents in the name of Islam are "liars and charlatans," he tells worshippers.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

July 30, 2005 Saturday

FIVE STAR LATE LIFT EDITION

Copyright 2005 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 568 words

Byline: BY LEE KEATH The Associated Press

Dateline: CAIRO, Egypt

Body

Egypt's top Islamic cleric delivered a fierce sermon Friday against terrorism.

The cleric spoke at the main mosque in Sharm el-Sheik, the Red Sea resort struck by deadly bombings a week ago. He is Mohammed Sayyed Tantawi, grand imam of Al-Azhar -- one of the Sunni world's most prestigious institutions.

Even the Lebanese guerrilla group Hezbollah says Muslim clerics have to act to curb extremism.

After the continuing bloodshed in Iraq and this month's London bombings, the Sharm el-Sheik attack has deepened what has been a growing debate among Muslims about how Islam should deal with terrorists who act in its name.

Tantawi delivered the sermon at Friday prayers in Sharm el-Sheik's "Peace Mosque." It was packed with hundreds of worshippers still stunned by the bombings, which killed scores of Egyptians and foreign tourists on July 23.

Tantawi told worshippers that "even polytheists who come to Egypt to see its civilization, who didn't come to harm you -- you have to protect them and treat them in a good way."

The cleric used the Arabic word mushrikin -- "polytheists," or those who worship more than one god. In Islam, the term is heavy with negative connotations. The Quran, Islam's holy book, repeatedly denounces mushrikin. It accepts Jews and Christians as fellow monotheists -- worshippers of one god.

Those who killed dozens of innocents "have no justification," Tantawi said. If they claim to be obeying orders of Islam, he said, "They are liars, liars and charlatans, and Islam disavows them."

He said, "The aggressors who blow up themselves, their cars and bombs against innocent men, women and children, will not be given any mercy by God."

Tantawi has emerged as a strong voice against terrorism. Early this month, he condemned Islamic insurgents in Iraq, saying all Iraqis and Arabs should unite to purge Iraq of "their filth and viciousness."

In sermon, leading imam of Egypt assails terrorism People who kill innocents in the name of Islam are "liars and charlatans," he tells worshippers.

Egyptian investigators have been focusing on the likelihood that homegrown Islamic militant cells in the Sinai Peninsula carried out the Sharm el-Sheik bombings. The official death toll stands at 64, but hospitals say bodies still uncounted could bring it to 88.

With every terrorist attack, Arabs and Muslims have been struggling to strike a balance between condemning bloodshed and charging that U.S. policies in Iraq and Israel fuel Islamic militant violence. Debate has focused on whether reform is needed to purge extremist teachings.

In Lebanon, the militant Shiite Muslim Hezbollah said immediately after the Sharm el-Sheik bombings that attacks against innocent people "require a decisive stance by clerics" against violence.

Hezbollah is considered a terrorist organization by the United States, which accuses it of supporting Palestinian militants against Israel. But in Lebanon, Hezbollah is seen as a nationalist force after its long fight against the Israeli soldiers who occupied southern Lebanon until 2000.

The group's stance on violence is becoming more nuanced. It opposes the U.S. military presence in Iraq. But as more of its Iraqi Shiite brethren fall victim in bombings, Hezbollah has grown more vocal in condemning the insurgency in Iraq.

Lebanon's most senior Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, said after the Sharm el-Sheik attacks that all Muslims must condemn such attacks. But in his sermon Friday, he said the "evil phenomenon" of terrorism "stems from the policy of arrogance" by the U.S. and Israel.

Load-Date: July 31, 2005

Middle East crisis: Just war of self-defence or slaughter of the innocent - one conflict through different eyes: Two weeks of violence in Lebanon have seen an estimated 616 people killed and hundreds of thousands displaced. Suzanne Goldenberg and Rory McCarthy speak to some of those caught in the conflict on both sides

The Guardian - Final Edition

July 29, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: GUARDIAN HOME PAGES; Pg. 4

Length: 1297 words

Byline: Suzanne Goldenberg and Rory McCarthy

Body

The Lebanese victim Riaz Juma'a

The monotony is a comfort. For the last 11 days, Riaz Juma'a has risen regularly at 8.30am in his makeshift bedroom in the cardiology ward of Jabal Amal hospital. He spends the next 12 hours watching the wounded and the dead come through the hospital gates. It makes him feel a little less alone, he says. "I feel like they are all my family, and that I am not by myself."

Riaz's real family was destroyed on the afternoon of July 17 when his wife and two young daughters were killed by an Israeli air attack, which flattened their house in the village of Hosh, outside Tyre. A Nigerian member of Unifil, the UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon, and his wife also died. Riaz had stepped out a few minutes earlier.

In the rubble of what was once a handsome two-storey villa, UN crews this week pulled out a few leaves from the family photo album. Riaz's wife, Rayan, looks out from the front page, blue eyes lit up in a smile. She was 24 years old. Riaz looks happy.

In those days, he ran a shop across the road from the hospital offering a wide selection of chocolates. The shop remains open, but hospital orderlies now congregate around the till.

Riaz is at the hospital, hiding his grief behind dark sunglasses and clouds of cigarette smoke at the desk of the public health officer on the ground floor. He plays solitaire on the computer, and boils Arabic coffee. Sometimes relatives appear to ask for directions. Riaz says he can't be bothered to help.

He has not been to his home in suburban Tyre since his family was killed, and he has not visited his in-laws' house in Hosh, where they died. His parents want him to come to Beirut, but he does not want to go there either. "Too many memories," he says.

Amid all this pain, he has found a refuge at the hospital, where the doctors are respectful of his grief. "The director of the hospital is like my family," he says. "The hospital is my second home."

Middle East crisis: Just war of self-defence or slaughter of the innocent - one conflict through different eyes:
Two weeks of violence in Lebanon have seen an e....

Yesterday, giant bulldozers pulled Rayan's body from the rubble. The bodies of Riaz's children, Alice, six, and Celine, two, were also recovered. Riaz could not bear to be there, or even contemplate holding a funeral. He will bury his family after the war, he says.

SG

The Israeli soldier Sgt Dori, 21

When the conflict broke out Sergeant Dori, 21, an Israeli from Modi'in, had only six months to go in his three-year compulsory military service. He was ordered straight to the front in one of the combat engineer units that has been leading ground operations into southern Lebanon, attacking and destroying Hizbullah positions. Since then he has crossed into Lebanon six times.

"It was nothing like we trained for, but when you are inside you don't think about it. You just do your job," he says. Since joining the army he has already fought in several operations in Gaza, when it was still occupied. Lebanon, he says, is very different.

"This is a total war. With the operations in Gaza you go in for one operation and come out. Here you have helicopters, armoured corps, artillery. It's much more intense."

Now he is with the rest of his unit, resting in the shade near the Israeli border and waiting for their next operation. Ultra-religious Jews wander through the crowds of soldiers offering cookies, and an ice-cream van passes by.

Dori says he has heard criticisms from abroad about the high toll of Lebanese civilian casualties, but insists Israel's war is legitimate. "We don't (kill civilians) on purpose. We could go in with planes and kill everybody but we don't do that. We go in by land, we do it surgically," he says. "Hizbullah's main goal is to get us out of here, to conquer Israel, like every terrorist. So I feel proud of what we're doing."

Dori has shot and killed people during the fighting, but feels unmoved. "I don't feel any regret. I don't feel sorry for the loss of those lives because I know I am defending many other lives. I feel I'm doing my mission, which is to save my people and that's why I became a combat soldier in the army."

When his military service is up, he plans a long holiday. "I'm thinking Thailand, maybe South Africa. Something to clear my mind." RM

The Lebanese refugee Naila Awada, 57

Her brother left, fleeing the Israeli air attacks around the villages of south Lebanon for the relative safety of Beirut. The neighbours left, and soon Naila Awada was reduced to begging anyone leaving the village to for space in their car. The problem was there were two of them: Naila, and her mother, Zeinab. At 90, Zeinab has been incapacitated by a stroke, and has been bedridden for years. Naila, 57, has never married. She has spent a lifetime caring for her mother - and her father before he died.

Propped up on her cot, Zeinab is agitated. She rocks back and forth, and tries to speak, although her words are not easily intelligible. Naila does her best to calm her, patting the corner of her mother's blue headscarf. She scrabbles around for the plastic carrier bag where she keeps her mother's medications. There are about two days' supply left.

Naila last set foot in Beirut during Israel's Grapes of Wrath campaign in 1996, and now she is desperate to escape. But there is no way out. One brother emigrated to Germany years ago; another lives in Beirut. A third brother, the last male relative in Bazuriya, managed to find a place in a car for himself, but not for his sister and mother. "We asked a lot. The people said no," she says. "We just couldn't find a car."

Nowadays, there are several hundred people left in Bazuriya, east of Tyre, which normally has a population of 12,000. Like the Awadas, most are too elderly or infirm, or too poor, to leave.

Middle East crisis: Just war of self-defence or slaughter of the innocent - one conflict through different eyes:
Two weeks of violence in Lebanon have seen an e....

As the possibilities of flight recede, Naila focuses her energies on keeping her mother alive. "I can't die now," she says. A neighbour, before departing, offered the women the use of his house: a formidable stone building that offers better shelter from Israeli missiles. Does she think she will at last get her mother out of here? "God only knows." SG

The Israeli victim Tamim Swaid, 24

Tamim Swaid was preparing for exams in the prestigious Haifa Technical College when the conflict broke out. His father was so unnerved by the waves of Hizbullah rockets that he persuaded his son to leave his studies and come home to his village, Pki'in, a mainly Arab Druze community in the rolling hills of the north. So Tamim, an electrical engineering student, packed up and went home. He was happy to be back. "My village is the most beautiful place in the whole world. I love it," he said.

The next day Tamim and a friend were pulling up in a car outside his father's house. As he opened the door and stepped out, a Katyusha rocket thundered into the ground barely 20 metres away from him, hurling him into the air.

"It landed just behind me. I can't tell you what it was like when it hit, but I knew immediately what it was. What else could it be?" he said. "I was so scared, I was dying of fear."

He fell to the floor, his back and leg torn apart with dozens of shards of shrapnel. Two weeks and several operations later, Tamim is sitting in slippers and a pair of purple pyjamas by his hospital bed, weak but out of danger, and chatting to his friends and parents. A small plastic tube runs discreetly from his abdomen to a medical container beneath his chair, the last of several tubes inserted during the operations.

Doctors have told him he might be home within a week, although there are still many months of rehabilitation ahead. He has a slice of shrapnel the size of a coin lodged in his liver, which surgeons are reluctant to remove. The attack has left him wishing for the war to end. "It is such a bad situation," he said. "I don't know what Hizbullah want, I don't know what they are doing. I just want it to stop. It is not a way for human beings to behave." RM

Load-Date: July 29, 2006

Two sides, one question: Why?: 'This is war. If we are not strong, it will go on forever.'

Ottawa Citizen

July 14, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 Ottawa Citizen, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 802 words

Byline: Stephen Farrell, and Delphine Matthieussent, The Times, London and The Associated Press

Dateline: NAHARIYA; SAFED

Body

Monica Lerer died just after 7 a.m. yesterday, as she sat in a plastic chair on her fifth-floor balcony in the northern Israeli town of Nahariya, savouring the cool of the early morning and the breeze off the Mediterranean.

A Katyusha rocket fired by **Hezbollah** militants from across the Lebanese border about 10 kilometres to the north smashed through two storeys of her modern apartment block on Nightingale Street. It destroyed her balcony, sending it crashing down to the floor below.

Moments earlier, police had told residents to get in their shelters. Most of Mrs. Lerer's neighbours dutifully descended to their fortified bunkers before the arrival of the first **Hezbollah** missiles. Why the 40-year-old Argentine immigrant stayed put is a mystery.

"We saw her lying on the balcony one floor down," said Moshe Arad, her neighbour. "It looked like a direct hit on her."

Mrs. Lerer arrived in Israel three years ago with a wave of Jewish immigrants who fled Argentina's economic crisis. Her husband was away from home at the time of her death, as were two of her three children.

"We have to go into Lebanon and hit them very, very hard," declared Edward Zorkin, 57, a neighbour. "We have to kill all the Arabs there."

Elsewhere, hotels in northern Israel sent guests packing. Hospitals moved patients to the basement. Schools shut down. And residents of Haifa, Israel's third-largest city, were warned to stay near bomb shelters.

More than 120 **Hezbollah** rockets and mortars slammed into cities and towns across a wide swath of northern Israel yesterday, triggering widespread anxiety in the usually tranquil region.

Two people, including Mrs. Lerer, were killed and about 50 wounded.

After threatening to attack Haifa for the first time, **Hezbollah** followed through within hours, hitting the city of 270,000 with two rockets. The attack caused no injuries but may have had the deepest impact on Israelis, leaving many fearing that nowhere was safe.

Two sides, one question: Why?: 'This is war. If we are not strong, it will go on forever.'

"We're living in a war zone," said Herut Tamari, 66, who runs a pottery business and guest house in the border town of Metulla.

It was the heaviest barrage of northern Israel in decades. Guerrilla rockets travelled farther than before to hit regions, previously out of range, inhabited by half a million Israelis. One rocket even hit the headquarters of the Israeli army's northern command.

"I am sure the residents of the north all know that all citizens, in these difficult hours, are praying for them and worrying about them," President Moshe Katsav said during a tour of Nahariya, which was hit repeatedly.

As Mr. Katsav walked through the town, another volley of rockets landed nearby amid a group of journalists, lightly wounding one. Mr. Katsav's security detail rushed him into a nearby building.

Safed, the home of Judaism's mystical Kabbalah sect and the centre of life in the region, became a ghost town after seven Katyusha rockets hit, killing one person and wounding eight others. The last time an Israeli civilian was killed near the border was in anti-aircraft fire in August 2003.

Shops shut down and the winding cobblestone streets of the old city were deserted. The sound of rockets exploding could be heard in the background.

Broken glass covered the street in the centre of Safed, a city of about 30,000. A small crowd gathered to gawk at a damaged furniture shop. An immigrants' centre and a college were also hit.

The only open store in the area was a grocery whose owner, Alain Bensadoun, said the current barrage was worse than previous attacks in the 1980s. He said his niece fainted and was taken to the hospital when a rocket exploded nearby.

"I'm not scared. I'm not scared of Hezbollah or anyone. If God wants to call me, he will anyway," he said. "This is war. ... If we are not strong, it will go on forever."

The violence started on Wednesday when Hezbollah guerrillas captured two Israeli soldiers and killed eight in attacks on Israel's northern border.

In response, Israel hit southern Lebanon with waves of airstrikes, blasting Beirut's airport and army bases in its heaviest air campaign against its neighbour in 24 years.

In Nahariya, cars with suitcases tied to the roofs headed south after Israel's Home Front Command ordered hotels and guest houses to shut down.

Nahariya Hospital was on high alert, and the deputy director, Moshe Daniel, said all elective surgeries were cancelled. Doctors evacuated the top floor and moved the patients, most of them children, to the basement, along with dozens of women in the maternity ward.

One of the basement rooms was packed with about 30 new mothers. Doctors rushed back and forth and babies cried. Golan Elbachli, 31, stood with his wife looking into a crib at their second child.

"This doesn't affect her. She's sleeping like a queen," Mr. Elbachli said of his newborn daughter. "Her mother, it affects."

Graphic

Photo: Ariel Schalit, the Associated Press; More than 120 Hezbollah rockets and mortars slammed into cities and towns across a wide swath of northern Israel yesterday, triggering widespread anxiety in the usually tranquil region.

Two sides, one question: Why?: 'This is war. If we are not strong, it will go on forever.'

Above, Israeli police officers rush to a bombing site in the resort town of Nahariya, where at least one woman died.;
Map: Map of area

Load-Date: July 14, 2006

End of Document

This is the devastation rained on Beirut. But as this dispatch reveals, Israel remains utterly defiant in the face of global censure

Daily Mail (London)

July 15, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 8

Length: 2195 words

Byline: RICHARD PENDLEBURY

Body

THE first rocket exploded just two blocks from where I stood. The concussion from the blast shook windows and set off a cacophony of car alarms.

A telltale plume of grey smoke rose overhead, marking the place where another Katyusha rocket had hit downtown Nahariya shortly after 7.30pm.

I reached the scene before the emergency services, passing an old woman who was dragging her husband uphill, limping and protesting, away from the carnage.

Fire was already raging at the Hamayasdim Street crossroads. A bagel shop burned and flames rose the height of an electricity pylon on the junction, which was a field of broken glass.

The rocket had not exploded on the street, as it first appeared, but in the top floor of an apartment block above, blowing out the corner walls of what might have been a bedroom, spilling fire onto the pavement below.

It was too hot to approach and check what had happened to the residents.

Please God, that they, like so many others, had already fled, or taken to a bomb shelter.

This previously jolly seaside town of 50,000 people just five miles south of the border with Lebanon is now in the frontline, because Israel is at war - again.

Reservists have been called up and Beirut and southern Lebanon are being pounded by its aircraft.

An all-out invasion, like the one of 1982 in which Israel sought to destroy the PLO, cannot be ruled out.

In short, the Middle East teeters on the brink of a new catastrophe.

Even in a country born in blood and hardened by perpetual conflict, what is happening now along Israel's northern border is something more than a skirmish; far more frightening or portentous than the regular pinpricks by Palestinian insurgents or the sudden outrages of the suicide bombers.

It began on Wednesday when a well-planned ambush by ***Hezbollah*** guerillas, operating from south Lebanon, killed eight Israeli Defence Force soldiers, wounded several more and destroyed a tank.

This is the devastation rained on Beirut. But as this dispatch reveals, Israel remains utterly defiant in the face of global censure

Two Israeli soldiers were also taken hostage, pawns for a possible prisoner swap, like Corporal Galid Shalit who was seized by Palestinian militants in Gaza last month, sparking a major Israeli incursion there. Now Tel Aviv has another military confrontation.

By itself the **Hezbollah** ambush and kidnap would have caused Israeli outrage and massive retaliation. But, from early Thursday morning, they have kept up the attack by firing volleys of Sovietdesigned Katyusha rockets into northern Israel from Lebanese territory. So far, 160 rockets have been fired killing two civilians and wounding more than 100.

The Israeli response has been swift and fierce: a major bombardment of the southern Lebanon towns and villages from which **Hezbollah** launch their rockets; backed up with attacks on the capital crippling the airport and forcing a mass exodus from the city.

More than 50 people have been killed in Lebanon and the south of the country is virtually severed from the north as Israel's harshest campaign of air and artillery bombardments in ten years has destroyed many of the bridges across the Litani river.

It is an extraordinary - some would say excessive - response but the people of Israel believe it is fully justified. Visiting the towns in northern Israel I could understand the sense of vulnerability they feel.

Nahariya has been hit by three rocket barrages and it's here that the first Israeli civilian was killed.

It is also the home town of Ohad Goldwasser, one of the two Israeli soldiers captured by **Hezbollah**.

The rockets come suddenly without warning from a clear blue sky and as the sabbath approaches, the dusty roads south are packed with cars full of hot, frightened and tired Israeli families fleeing the barrage with what belongings they can

carry. Border communities have become ghost towns and those that stay have been ordered to remain in their shelters.

Nothing like this has been experienced since Saddam Hussein launched missile strikes against Israel during the 1991 Gulf War.

'It is all out war, by any definition,' said one commentator on Israeli radio as news of another rocket attack came through.

Hezbollah escalated matters further when, for the first time ever, the northern city of Haifa, 25 miles from the Lebanese border was hit by a long-range Katyusha. One and a half million Israelis are now within range.

The people of Israel are aware of the human cost on both sides of the border. But for them, this is not a question of an internal terrorist campaign.

They see it as a matter of a sovereign state being attacked by terrorists operating quite freely from inside another sovereign state, using weapons supplied by other sovereign states.

As far as Israel is concerned, a line has been crossed. They call it 'the new reality'.

In northern Israel the people and politicians whom I have met and spoken to in the past few days - including the Israeli president himself - repeatedly invoked not only the name of Lebanon, the terror group's base, but that of Syria, its weapon supplier, and Iran, **Hezbollah**'s spiritual guide.

Six years have passed since Israel withdrew its forces from southern Lebanon and the United Nations redrew the mutual border along the so-called 'Blue Line'.

This is the devastation rained on Beirut. But as this dispatch reveals, Israel remains utterly defiant in the face of global censure

Under a UN resolution, the Lebanese government was supposed to deploy its army to fill the vacuum. Yet it failed to do so, say the Israelis.

Instead, Hezbollah forces were allowed to set up bases and operate in the area, using the country as a launch-pad for attacks on Israel.

This week the organisation launched its blitz. And in return, a punishment of Old Testament ferocity is to be visited upon Lebanon for so long the puppet or punchbag of the regional powers by its powerful southern neighbour.

The endgame has begun.

Defence minister Amir Peretz has promised that Hezbollah will never be allowed to return to its southern Lebanese bases.

It will be purged forever.

These are not empty threats.

Blood must be paid in blood, many have said to me here.

Enough is enough.

One of the first Katyusha rockets fired at Nahariya on Wednesday passed by a miracle through a 10ft gap between two residential apartment blocks filled with breakfasting families.

It buried itself three feet deep in the concrete courtyard of a coffee house, just off the town's main boulevard. The explosion blew out windows and sprayed shrapnel 40ft up the sides of the buildings.

Danny, the owner of the cafe, had stepped out of his door when the missile struck.

A mangled training shoe still lay on a stretch of bloodsmeared lino.

Shrapnel had taken off part of his leg, residents told me.

Standing amid the debris, Effy Eitam, a Rightwing opposition MP and former Israeli army general, said: 'This is a moment of truth.

'The Lebanese government has to decide if it wants Lebanon without Hezbollah or Hezbollah without Lebanon. It has failed to fulfil its obligations. We were wrong to leave Lebanon so quietly. Now our civilians are being killed, as you can see.' But more civilians are being killed north of the border, in the parts of Lebanon now under attack by Israel.

The feeling here is that Lebanon has only itself to blame for the situation.

Mr Eitam added: 'Hezbollah must be destroyed once and for all by very aggressive action and a message must be sent out to Syria and Iran, who are the line of supply for these rockets.

'Firepower is the only answer.

After we have cleaned them out then we can sit down and make the political negotiations with the Lebanese.' Such views found a sympathetic audience a couple of miles away at Hazamir No 5, an apartment block on the edge of the town, where another rocket fell.

At that moment many of the residents were already preparing to leave for their shelters, having heard the sound of the rocket strikes in the town centre.

This is the devastation rained on Beirut. But as this dispatch reveals, Israel remains utterly defiant in the face of global censure

'I had got my baby and a bag of belongings then, my God, the explosion! My head still aches,' said 26-year-old Margarita Lakin, who came to Israel from the Russian Far East seven years ago.

The Katyusha hit her block on the floor above, punched through a flat roof and detonated on the balcony of the flat next to her own.

Unfortunately its 40-year-old Argentine-born owner, Monica Lerer, was having breakfast there when it struck. The rocket killed her instantly and blew her body onto the balcony below.

'Those bastards have rockets with a range of 100km,' raged Meir Baruchi, a 50-year-old seaman standing outside the apartment block.

'If they see we are weak soon they will have rockets with a range of 300km and Tel Aviv will be hit. In Beirut the Lebanese, who allowed this to happen, sit in their cafes and drink coffee like it was Paris while we have to hide in our bunkers. For too long you could see Hezbollah flags on the other side of the Lebanese border, flaunting their presence.

'Now is the time for power not politics. If the Lebanese want to return to the days of destruction then so be it. It is their fault for doing nothing.'

A man next to him said the Shi'ite Hezbollah were no different to the Sunnis of the Gaza strip and West Bank.

'I am sorry for the way people have to live in Gaza,' he said, referring to the narrow strip of land alongside the Mediterranean in southern Israel where 1.4million Palestinians live in squalid conditions and where unemployment and poverty are widespread.

'But they had a choice between Fatah and Hamas in their elections and they chose Hamas. They voted for blood.' By the late afternoon Nahariya is all but empty save for police and army.

All the shops are closed and the citizens in their bunkers or fleeing south, as directed by the government.

In the lobby of the the municipal headquarters volunteers from the army and youth groups pack thousands of loaves of bread into bags to be distributed to the bomb shelters.

They are hard at work when, without any fanfare the Israeli president's motorcade arrives.

These are difficult times for Moshe Katsav. He is about to be impeached for the alleged sexual harassment of five young women in his office.

Perhaps that is why he arrives on this unscheduled visit with his rather dumpy wife on his arm.

Perched on a sofa in a small office upstairs he says he has come 'to show solidarity with Nahariya and the North'.

Just like the people in the street outside he names the culprits he believes responsible for the attack on his country. 'Syria is behind Hezbollah,' says President Katsav. 'All its military equipment comes from Damascus.

'But the Lebanese government is also responsible for this.

It is up to them to avoid a serious escalation which will set them back scores of years.' Later, as the afternoon shadows lengthen my translator and I stop at the large, concrete beachfront Sol Marin hotel, next to the pleasure gardens.

The hotel should be jammed with holidaying Israelis on a day like this.

It is empty of guests and staff, save one solitary young Arab who sits behind the reception desk. 'Yes, there have been some cancellations,' he admits ruefully.

This is the devastation rained on Beirut. But as this dispatch reveals, Israel remains utterly defiant in the face of global censure

We sympathise, then buy two choc ices from the freezer beside him and stroll outside again to eat them and watch two Israeli attack helicopters.

Picked out by the setting sun, they hovered only a few miles further north, firing their cannon on targets along the Lebanese border.

Nearby stands the family home of Ohad Goldwasser, the local soldier captured by Hezbollah.

Neighbours say that he is 31 years old and married last October. His wife is pregnant.

Private Goldwasser's wounded comrades are being treated, along with civilian victims of the rocket attacks, at the West Galilee hospital on the edge of town.

Here too there is fear. The top floor had been evacuated and 30 new mothers from the maternity ward transferred to the basement; windows are crisscrossed with anti-blast tape.

I am talking to the soldier on guard at the gate when there were three almost simultaneous detonations close by.

'Katyusha,' says the soldier, unstrapping his helmet from his belt. The evening barrage has begun.

As we drive into town there are more explosions. Two of them are very close, clearly in the centre of Nahariya; acrid smoke begins to drift across the roof tops as sirens wail.

Terror has come to urban Galilee. More people were leaving Nahariya yesterday and similar scenes were being enacted across the border in Lebanon.

International condemnation about the severity of the Israeli response has been swift. In many eyes it is totally disproportionate to what the country has so far suffered at the hands of Hezbollah.

Just as refugee centres are now springing up in Israel for those fleeing the rockets, so thousands of innocent Lebanese civilians, who have only recently discovered something akin to peace and even prosperity after decades of civil war and destruction are suffering once again.

But all I can report is what I have seen on the Israeli side of this seemingly intractable, ongoing conflict: the fear, the suffering and the desire for revenge.

It is a response born of decades surrounded by enemies, and the belief that one has to fight, fight, fight, simply in order to survive.

When will it stop? And who will be sucked in?

Israel's abiding fear of an Iran equipped with a nuclear warhead, has not been lessened by the events of the last few days.

For the moment the missiles are conventional and being fired by Tehran's proxies.

But a line has been crossed.

Graphic

SHOCK AND AWE: A LEBANESE SOLDIER STANDS NEXT TO A CRATER LEFT BY AN ISRAELI STRIKE ON BEIRUT YESTERDAY ;DIRECT HIT: THE SPECTACULAR SIGHT OF DEBRIS FLYING UP INTO THE AIR

This is the devastation rained on Beirut. But as this dispatch reveals, Israel remains utterly defiant in the face of global censure

AFTER ISRAELI JETS SLAMMED MISSILES INTO A BRIDGE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON YESTERDAY IN A SERIES OF PRECISION RAIDS ;KEY TARGET: BEIRUT'S MAIN AIRPORT COMES UNDER ATTACK ;DESTROYED: THE MISSILES FLATTENED THIS FLYOVER IN BEIRUT ;INFERNO: BLOWN-UP FUEL TANKS CAST A PALL OVER THE CITY

Load-Date: July 15, 2006

End of Document

Rice sent packing after Israeli missiles kill 60 in shelter

Western Mail

July 31, 2006, Monday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 Reach PLC All Rights Reserved

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

Dead are left to rot in the rubble as airstrikes make rescue impossible

The Times (London)

July 20, 2006, Thursday

Copyright 2006 Times Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 797 words

Byline: Nicholas Blanford in Tyre

Body

The few wounded who make it to an overstretched hospital are the fortunate ones, reports Nicholas Blanford in Tyre

Yelling for people to move aside, medics burst into the emergency room of the Jabel Amel hospital in Tyre carrying a woman, her head lolling and her body daubed in blood.

"Allahu akbar," moans the latest victim of Israel's onslaught on southern Lebanon.

The woman was one of five people -four **women** and one young man -whose car had been targeted by an Israeli jet on a road near Bourgheliyyeh, a tiny, ramshackle village off the coastal road four miles north of Tyre. "Two bombs fell next to each other 15 metres in front of the car," Jihad Daoud, 22, said as he watched his relatives being treated by doctors.

The woman was fortunate. She made it to the hospital. But out in the hinterlands between the Israeli border and the Litani River, the heart of the war zone where the bombardment is most relentless, witnesses say casualties are dying untreated.

UN armoured convoys cannot retrieve the dead and wounded for fear of being shelled themselves and because the roads are so badly cratered. The dead are being left to rot beneath the rubble of their homes. Nor can the UN force, Unifil, deliver food, water and other basic supplies to either its own observation posts near the border, or to scores of Lebanese villages cut off by the fighting. Unifil is unable even to retrieve its own casualties. Two civilian staff members, a husband and wife from Nigeria, are thought to have been killed in an Israeli raid on Horsh, just south of Tyre, on Tuesday. A convoy of Chinese engineers was unable to reach the scene that day because of Israeli shelling. Yesterday Unifil could not send out any armoured convoys because of the intensity of the shelling and air raids around Tyre.

Ahmad Mrowe, director of the Jabel Amel hospital, said that one casualty who arrived yesterday had been ferried from the village of Siddiqine by eight cars, each driving from one crater to the next. It took eight hours to cover a distance that usually takes 20 minutes.

In the hospital's intensive care unit lay Alia Alieddine, 30, one of only two casualties to reach the hospital from the village of Srifa, ten miles east of Tyre. Israeli jets flattened four homes there overnight. Villagers recovered ten bodies but another twenty-five are thought to be under the rubble.

Dead are left to rot in the rubble as airstrikes make rescue impossible

Connected to breathing tubes and her head heavily bandaged, Ms Alieddine stared blankly at the ceiling. "She suffered major head wounds. Her arm is broken and she lost a lot of blood," Abdullah Abbas, a doctor, said. "Her chances are not good."

It is in God's hands."

With Tyre almost cut off from the north, the hospital is running short of supplies. Dr Mrowe said: "We only have enough food and drinking water to last another five or six days. We will stay anyway."

We'll never leave."

The Israeli military has broadcast warnings before its raids and hundreds of villagers fled before the shells and missiles struck. The Israelis are also hitting targets that they believe have links to Hezbollah.

But among the refugees in the Rest House hotel in Tyre, few blamed Hezbollah for their misery. When the TV said that Haifa had been struck again by the group's rockets yesterday, one man said to general assent: "Let them suffer as we are suffering."

Matthew Parris, page 19 timesonline.co.uk/mideast Latest news on evacuations and bombings

THE CONFLICT YESTERDAY

- * On the eighth day of conflict in Lebanon Israeli jets bomb a bunker in southern Beirut, the army saying that it suspected senior Hezbollah members were there
- * Sixty-three civilians and one Hezbollah fighter are killed, as well as two Israeli soldiers -the highest daily death toll yet
- * 500,000 people are thought to have been displaced in Lebanon
- * An airstrike on the southern Lebanese village of Srifa kills at least 17 people, including children
- * More than 70 rockets are fired from Lebanon, hitting Haifa and Karmiel, as well as Nahariya. Two Israeli Arab brothers, aged 3 and 9, are killed by rockets in Nazareth. Eighteen others injured
- * Israeli helicopters fire rockets at a Christian district in Beirut. The base of the Syrian-backed Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in the Bekaa Valley is also bombed
- * Israeli tanks move into the Maghazi refugee camp in Gaza, killing 13 and wounding 60, including 10 children
- * Israeli authorities say that they have destroyed half the 12,000 rockets that Hezbollah claimed to have possessed before the conflict began

READERS' VIEWS

'Israel is surrounded by governments and factions which, as never before, are determined to remove it from the map'

'In 2000 Israel pulled back from every inch of Lebanon. The result: continuous shelling from Hezbollah and the killing and kidnapping of Israeli soldiers' Letters, page 17

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

Missiles and ridicule demoralise the UN

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 29, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

Copyright 2006 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 15

Length: 809 words

Byline: James Button Herald Correspondent in London

Body

AS AN international summit in Rome discussed putting a United Nations force into Lebanon, the killing of four peacekeepers by an Israeli bomb reminded the world of something it might have forgotten: the UN has been in Lebanon for a long time.

Peacekeepers arrived in 1978, supposedly for a few months, and have stayed so long some soldiers have married local women. Now numbering 2000 troops, including Chinese, Irish, Ghanaians and French, they are supposed to enforce UN resolutions by helping the Lebanese Army take control of southern Lebanon and disarm Hezbollah.

They have not done that. Instead, they have been scorned by the Israelis and shelled by Hezbollah. Under their watch, Hezbollah built up its rocket stores and command posts, enabling it to fire rockets at will into Israel in the past few weeks.

More than 250 peacekeepers have died since 1978, the greatest casualty count in the history of UN peacekeeping, and the UN itself admits the mission has been a disaster.

But it is not fair to blame the peacekeepers. Rather, their failure reflects confusion over the goals of their mission, divisions in the UN Security Council over how to reinforce its own resolutions, and the declining authority of the world body itself.

To the American author David Rieff, who has written widely on peacekeeping, the morass of Lebanon exposes the malaise of the world order. "You have the UN marginalised as never before and at the same time being asked to decide on questions of war and great power," he says.

"It comes up against the hard political reality - the international system is bust."

On Wednesday, Rome fiddled while Lebanon burned. The conference agreed to the formation of a peacekeeping force under a UN mandate, but little else. On one side, the UN, France, Germany and a range of Arab countries pushed for an immediate ceasefire. On the other, the US and Britain backed Israel's vow not to stop fighting until it had gravely weakened Hezbollah.

If the groupings sound familiar, think of March 2003, just before the Iraq War. In 1999, the UN staged two successful peacekeeping operations - in East Timor and Sierra Leone - while NATO invaded Kosovo to stop Serbs

Missiles and ridicule demoralise the UN

murdering Muslims. Tony Blair gave his "doctrine of the international community" speech in Chicago, outlining when it was justified to intervene in the affairs of other nations.

"It was the high-water point of humanitarian intervention," says Carne Ross, a British former diplomat who held a senior post at the UN mission in Kosovo. "But that prospect has receded massively thanks to the war in Iraq."

Peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention are not the same. The first involves inserting UN soldiers to keep or enforce ceasefires and peace agreements.

The second argues there are times when sovereignty can be violated to stop massacres. But both reflect the internationalism that created the UN in 1945. Both, says Ross, are damaged by the rifts and failures of the Iraq war.

Peacekeeping flourished at the end of the Cold War, along with hopes that a new multilateralism and a revived UN could replace a world run by two hostile superpowers. Within years peacekeepers were in Mozambique, El Salvador, Somalia. But the optimism soured fast. UN soldiers stood helpless while Hutus massacred Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994, and Serbs slaughtered Muslims at Srebrenica in 1995.

In this new, savage world, the absurdity was revealed: why have soldiers who cannot fight?

Something had to be done: peacekeeping became peace enforcement and, by the time General Peter Cosgrove led the East Timor mission in 1999, he had the authority to shoot back.

But such power brings problems. Peace enforcement requires a good army, with well-trained soldiers and an integrated command, Rieff says.

Ross agrees. "It is not politically correct to say this at the UN, but they know they need seriously militarily capable forces ... you can't have a bunch of Fijians in Land Rovers doing it."

UN missions are often stitched together from countries observing different rules of engagement. And European armies are often overstretched. As a result, Rieff says, "the main forces you have available are from countries not particularly competent militarily".

Specialists say 20,000 troops would be needed for Lebanon. Most likely they would be a combination of French, Italian, Turkish and perhaps Egyptian soldiers. But Hezbollah rejects the US plan for the deployment of a UN force in tandem with the Lebanese Army and the removal of Hezbollah weapons from the buffer zone. The Shiite party's backers, Iran and Syria, were not even at the Rome conference.

Under the circumstances, the force may not be formed at all. It requires not just troops and money but international will.

"I personally think we are in the endgame of the 1945 system," Rieff says. "And I don't think anyone has a clue what is going to replace it."

Graphic

PHOTO: Destroyed ... the UN observer post in south Lebanon. Photo: Reuters/UN

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

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

Copyright 2006 International Herald Tribune All Rights Reserved

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

End of Document

Across the Middle East, Sermons Critical of the U.S.

The New York Times

July 22, 2006 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 8; TURMOIL IN THE MIDEAST: IN THE MOSQUES

Length: 930 words

Byline: By NEIL MacFARQUHAR

Dateline: DAMASCUS, Syria, July 21

Body

In mosques from Mecca to Marrakesh, sermons at Friday Prayer services underscored both the David-versus-Goliath glamour many Arabs associate with Hezbollah's fight against Israel and their antipathy toward the United States and its allies in the region for doing so little to stop yet another Arab country from collapsing into bloodshed.

"Our brothers are being killed in Lebanon and no one is responding to their cries for help," said Sheik Hazzaa al-Maswari, an Islamist member of Yemen's Parliament, in his Friday sermon at the Mujahid Mosque in Sana, the country's capital.

"Where are the Arab leaders?" he said. "Do they have any skill other than begging for a fake peace outside the White House? We don't want leaders who bow to the White House."

The tone of the sermons suggests that the fighting in Lebanon is further tarnishing the image of the United States in the Arab world as being solely concerned with Israel's welfare and making its allied governments look increasingly like puppets.

"What is creating radicalism in the region is not authoritarian regimes," said Mustafa Hamarneh, director of the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan. "Mainly it is American policy in the region -- survey after survey shows that."

The attacks against Arab leaders from the pulpit were all the more surprising because so many governments have exerted some manner of control over sermons in recent years. Dictating the content of the weekly themes is one means of preventing prayer leaders from launching into the kind of political discussions that could inspire extremists.

Here in Damascus, where the Syrian government has been trying to keep a low profile as the fighting in Lebanon surges, prominent prayer leaders focused on the need to donate generously to help tens of thousands of Lebanese refugees pouring over the border. But they also took other Arab countries to task -- although without mentioning by name such critics of Hezbollah as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan.

"What gives us pain is the Arab position," said Mohamed al-Habash, a cleric who serves in Syria's Parliament, speaking from the pulpit of Al Zahra Mosque. "They are entering a conspiracy against the Arabs, their brothers."

Across the Middle East, Sermons Critical of the U.S.

In an interview, the cleric said the United States was helping religious extremists by encouraging the Israelis to continue their onslaught. By not working harder to stop the deaths of scores of Lebanese women and children, he said, the United States is abetting the recruiting efforts of the likes of Osama bin Laden and the late Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

"The United States is creating more Zarqawis, more bin Ladens in the Mideast every day," Mr. Habash said.

The United States, for its part, blames Syrian support for groups like Hezbollah and Hamas as being among the root causes of such extremism.

The Saudi government has taken a strong public position against Hezbollah's having brought on the crisis by capturing two Israeli soldiers, last week condemning the organization's "uncalculated adventures." Washington has leaned heavily on that and similar statements in explaining its own position.

Yet the senior Saudi imam delivering the sermon from Islam's holiest mosque in Mecca, broadcast live, presented a rare if discreet criticism of Saudi royal policy.

The Muslim world should be proud of the bravery shown by the Palestinians and the Lebanese confronting Israel, said Sheik Abdul Rahman al-Sudais, who pointedly urged Muslim leaders to return to "sound reason and unify their ranks."

He took an indirect swipe at the United States for claiming to promote human rights while leaving the mounting deaths of civilians all but unmentioned. "Where are those who filled the world with slogans of freedom and democracy?" he asked. "Don't they fear that history will condemn them for their double standards?"

In Egypt, Sheik Khalid Saoudi at the Sayyida Hafsa Mosque in the well-to-do Cairo suburb of Heliopolis, criticized the Saudis and the Arab League for trying to rely on international intervention.

"Every time we rely on the 'big guys,' we get slapped," he told the gathered worshipers, suggesting that Islam was under assault around the world, with conflicts raging in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and the Palestinian territories.

In downtown Cairo, police officers in riot gear prevented several thousand chanting worshipers at sprawling Al Azhar Mosque near the city's main bazaar from taking their protest out into the streets, while thousands marched after sermons in other capitals including Amman, Jordan.

The Iranian government -- whose support of Hezbollah and Hamas as a means of widening the reach of its Islamic revolution is causing worry in some other Middle Eastern capitals -- also took the opportunity to condemn Arab leaders.

Former president Hashemi Rafsanjani of Iran, speaking at the main Friday Prayer sermon in downtown Tehran, said Arab and Islamic countries "do not even bother to condemn the fact that Muslims are being butchered by nonbelievers."

"This is a historic catastrophe," said Mr. Rafsanjani, who is a Shiite cleric.

He went on to say that all Hezbollah fighters should be considered heroes, according to Reuters. The most radical Shiite cleric in neighboring Iraq, Moktada al-Sadr, also spoke out in support of Hezbollah.

In mosques across the region, virtually every prayer leader used the traditional call-and-response period after the main sermon to ask God to grant a victory to the Muslims. "Amen," responded the congregations in one voice.

Graphic

Photos: In Amman, Jordan, protesters shouted anti-American and anti-Israeli slogans during a rally in solidarity with Lebanon and the Palestinians. (Photo by Ali Jarekji/Reuters)

Outside Al Azhar Mosque in Cairo, a boy waved a Lebanese flag. (Photo by Khaled Desouki/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images)

Load-Date: July 22, 2006

End of Document

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

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

At least seven Canadians killed in Lebanon

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

July 17, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

Copyright 2006 The Star Phoenix, a division of Canwest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 699 words

Byline: Michelle Lalonde in MontrealJanice Tibbetts in Ottawaand Matthew Fisher in Jerusalem, CanWest News Service

Body

The raging conflict in the Middle East killed at least seven Canadians as the federal government scrambled Sunday to work out plans to evacuate citizens from Lebanon.

The Canadians visiting the country, all members of a Montreal family, were killed Sunday in the bombing of Aitaroun, a village in southern Lebanon, according to family members in Montreal, who said four children between the ages of one and eight were among the dead.

Family members had initially said eight had died, but Foreign Affairs could only confirm the deaths of seven Canadians.

Family members in Montreal received the devastating news by cellphone while they were taking part in a demonstration against the Israeli attacks on Lebanon.

Weeping women, teenaged girls and children embraced each other on the sidewalk, while several young men called other family members on cellphones.

"My cousin just called me to say my father is dead, my mother is in hospital, two of my aunts, my uncle and his son and his grandson . . . they are all martyrs," said Hassan El-Akhras, 31.

Later in the afternoon, El-Akhras received another call from his cousin in Lebanon confirming that his father, Ali El-Akhras, 70, his uncle Ahmad Al-Akhras, 60, his aunt Haniya Al-Akhras, his cousin's wife Amira Al-Akhras, 23, and their four children, Saja, 8, Zeinab, 6, Ahmad, 4, and Salam, 1, were dead.

Five days of violence in the Middle East escalated Sunday when Israel responded to an unprecedented and deadly Hezbollah rocket attack on the main train station in the northern city of Haifa with a ferocious bombardment of more than 130 targets in Lebanon.

The conflict was triggered by Hezbollah's kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers on Israeli soil last Wednesday.

There are an estimated 40,000 Canadians in Lebanon, but only 16,000 were registered with the embassy as of Sunday.

At least seven Canadians killed in Lebanon

Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay said the government has hired vessels to pick up Canadian evacuees off the coast, and was considering helicopters to airlift other Canadians out of Lebanon.

The government will seek to remove everyone who wants to leave, MacKay said.

The government faced criticism that it should have acted faster instead of mulling over evacuation prospects over the weekend while several other countries went ahead and lined up transportation to remove their citizens.

For the third time in four days, Israeli aircraft attacked the Beirut airport. Other aircraft hit a main power station earlier in the day, causing widespread electricity outages in the capital and spreading huge black clouds across the city.

"Nothing will deter us, whatever far-reaching ramifications regarding our relations on the northern border and in the region may be," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told his cabinet after the Haifa attack by Hezbollah, which killed eight Israeli railway workers and wounded 20 others.

The attack on Israel's third largest city was made using about 10 220 mm Syrian-made rockets with a much larger warhead and a much greater range than any previous missile had. Their use represented another significant escalation in the conflict.

A total of 24 Israelis have been killed in the fighting since last week, including 12 civilians. Hundreds have been wounded.

Meanwhile, Israel's campaign in Lebanon has killed 145 people, all but four of them civilians.

Israel's Home Front Command responded to the attack on Haifa, which is 30 kilometres south of the Lebanese border, by extending a special alert as far south as Tel Aviv, which gives the authorities powers to close schools and businesses and order citizens to take refuge in bomb shelters.

World leaders meeting in St. Petersburg, Russia, overcame significant differences to unanimously denounce Hezbollah and Hamas terrorists while urging Israel to exercise restraint in its military assault on Lebanon.

The G-8 leaders produced their strongly worded statement Sunday after a marathon day of talks on the Israel-Lebanon crisis, demanding Hezbollah terrorists abandon shelling attacks on Israel and to join with Hamas in Gaza in freeing three Israeli soldiers captured by the two groups.

The G8 also called on Israel to "exercise utmost restraint" in its five-day-old military campaign against Lebanon.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

Middle East Crisis - UN in ceasefire call as women and children die in Israeli raid

Irish News

July 31, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 The Irish News Limited All Rights Reserved

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

**Deep in the crater of death, they shook their fists at the sky; AS MISSILES
TERRORISE TYRE, A MOUNTING TOLL OF GRIEF ACROSS THE BORDER**

Daily Mail (London)

July 27, 2006 Thursday

Copyright 2006 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 10

Length: 623 words

Byline: RICHARD PENDLEBURY

Body

ONE of the few unalloyed pleasures left to those who remain in Tyre is an early evening swim in the sea.

Until now in this war it has been perhaps the most peaceful time of a day usually punctuated by regular Israeli air attacks.

That small moment of peace was shattered at 6.50pm local time yesterday when two missiles streaked in low over the swimmers and crashed into a residential apartment block in the centre of the port.

It left a huge plume of oily brown smoke marking the spot. When Mail photographer Jamie Wiseman and I reached the scene a couple of minutes later we were faced with utter devastation.

The missiles had book-ended a seven-storey apartment block on Mustafa Kadies Street, reducing it to a heap of burning rubble and severely damaging the residential buildings which surrounded it.

Groups of people, many of them in tears, were running away because the sky was still filled with the sound of reconnaissance drones and jet fighters. No one could be sure that the Israelis had finished the job to their satisfaction.

And what precise and very terrible work they had made of it.

I was told that Nabil Kaouk, Hezbollah's leader in Tyre, and his family were living in the block and the organisation had an office in the building.

There were 13 other apartments there as well as a clothes shop, a garage, a perfumery and a men's hairdresser on the ground floor.

The block was said to have been largely emptied before the attack, but there were casualties in the buildings around.

A jungle of twisted electricity and telephone cables made it difficult to approach the ruins and glass covered the street for hundreds of yards around.

Fire crews were trying to get to the seat of the blaze and we noticed that a number of men with walkie-talkies who were obviously Hezbollah officials, were battling with the emergency services to control the scene.

Deep in the crater of death, they shook their fists at the sky AS MISSILES TERRORISE TYRE, A MOUNTING TOLL OF GRIEF ACROSS THE BORDER

Amid the choking dust, sometimes you notice little details which stay with you.

On this occasion it was a dead canary in a cage on an apartment balcony only a few yards from where one of the missiles had hit.

The hunt for human casualties proceeded, with the crowd gripped by something approaching hysteria-Many of the young men began chanting Hezbollah slogans and waving their fists at the sky.

Through the gap created by the building's collapse could now be seen a large mosque in the street behind it, which was silhouetted against the setting sun.

GHASSAN Mlige, a 32-yearold car valet, said he had been asleep in his apartment across the street when the Israelis struck.

'I was awoken by this tremendous boom and then the sound of falling debris,' he said.

'I don't know how many people were left in the building and how many of its residents had already fled Tyre, but it was largely residential.' One local added: 'All of that street is Hezbollah and every few months they close it for big demonstrations.' As I watched, only minutes after the strike, tearful women and children clutching small bags of belongings, were already starting to leave their homes next to the site.

They had held out for 16 days, but this was clearly enough.

The Israelis struck only a few hours after the arrival in Tyre of the first UN food and medical supply convoy. It carried 90tons of food, which should feed 50,000 people for three months.

The Princess Marissa, a ferry chartered to deliver more supplies, had left the harbour a few hundred yards from where the missile struck a little more than half an hour before.

The blast cut off the electricity supply to the centre of Tyre.

A Red Cross team pulled one casualty from the rubble, but it was unclear whether there were more.

Foreign media had to leave the area as large groups of very angry young men chanting Hezbollah slogans began to threaten them.

Graphic

FLATTENED: THE SEARCH FOR SURVIVORS AMID THE REMAINS OF THE TYRE APARTMENT BLOCK 'BOOK-ENDED' BY ISRAELI MISSILES

Load-Date: July 27, 2006

ISRAEL SUSPENDING LEBANON AIR RAIDS AFTER DOZENS DIE

The New York Times

July 31, 2006 Monday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

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

End of Document