

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:28:00AM EEST

Job Number: 223498504

Documents (100)

1. [Go Bak to your hole](#)

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. [Canada praised for fighting Taliban: Clinton weighs in on Mideast troubles](#)

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. [Israel 's foes ready 'to strap explosives to our 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

4. [Middle East four are shown the carrot and stick](#)

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. [Israel started the fire](#)

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. [*Two faces of 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

7. [*Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

9. [*Death and destruction in an ancient land THE HUMAN COST OF A DO-OR-DIE CAMPAIGN*](#)

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. [*'We'll be back,' refugees vow: fleeing lebanese defiant Want revenge for Israeli attacks*](#)

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

12. [Conflict jars life 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

13. [Inline of fire](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

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

14. [War may engulf region, warns envoy DIPLOMACY; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

15. [Israel offers 3-point peace plan: 210 Lebanese and 24 Israelis killed after 6 days of fighting](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

16. [*Militants disagree on Gaza ceasefire*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

17. [*Abduction that led to 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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

19. [*Many children among dead and injured after strikes on Tyre*](#)

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. [*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

21. [U.S. has wool pulled over its own eyes](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

22. [Islamists assail U.S. and its 'puppets' MIDDLE EAST CRISIS / Blaming U.S. policy for rising radicalism](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

23. [First British evacuees dock safely after fleeing Lebanon](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

26. [Backstory: The few and fortunate who escaped 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

27. [Trapped in a vengeful machismo](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

28. [West can't relate as tribes fight in the name of God Letters to the Editor>letters.editor@canberratimes.com.au](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

30. [Democracy and its consequences](#)

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. [City protest calls for halt to israeli action in Lebanon and gaza](#)

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. [Viokence, opposition and democracy](#)

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. [A precarious peace shattered](#)

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. [The first Britons to flee Lebanon arrive in Cyprus NAVY SHIP DELIVERS 170 OF THE 'MOST NEEDY' REFUGEES TO SAFETY](#)

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. [Threats to Jews](#)

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

37. [*No room for restraint*](#)

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. [*THE SUFFERING OF TWO NATIONS*](#)

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. [*U.N. , Rights Groups Accuse Israel of Possible War Crimes*](#)

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

41. [Deadly Israeli attack derails peace effort](#)

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

42. [Standing firm](#)

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

43. [U. Michigan campus stage for anti-violence rally](#)

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

44. [Israel was forged through assassination and kidnap . . . of the British IN THIS PERSONAL COMMENTARY. AN HISTORIAN DRAWS SOME UNCOMFORTABLE PARALLELS](#)

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

45. [READERS WRITE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

46. [Escape from the beirut cauldron](#)

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. [RECORDVIEW: KILLINGS ARE ON OUR CONSCIENCE](#)

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. [Mirror, mirror, on the world's wall](#)

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. [Israel is also part of the violence in the Mideast](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

50. [Grim proof ordinary folk are dying in the killing zone HOSPITAL HORROR; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

51. [Pro-Israel groups rally support for Lieberman Connecticut senator faces stiff opposition from Ned Lamont, who is critical of Lieberman's support of the Iraq war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

52. [World powers express 'shock, dismay': China threatens repercussions over statement on Israeli strike on UN post](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

53. [UK fears return to the bad old days in Iran : Ahmadinejad's victory spells trouble for nuclear talks, western engagement, and women's rights, say diplomats: Hardline at home and abroad](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

54. [World powers express 'shock, distress': China threatens repercussions over statement on Israeli strike on UN post](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

55. [Deadly double standards sow terror](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

56. [Lebanon is back on U.S. radar Divisions, threats lie beneath shiny surface of re-emerging nation](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

57. [Blast disrupts Israeli calm; 1st suicide attack since Nov.](#)

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. [Civilians killed as Israelis target ambulances](#)

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. [BRIT NAVY LAUNCH BEIRUT RESCUE BID MIDDLE EAST EXODUS DESTROYER IS SENT TO FETCH UK CITIZENS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

60. [Middle Eastern Freedom](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

61. [FIRST BRITONS FLEE WAR-TORN LEBANON LEBANON EXODUS DESTROYER IS SENT TO FETCH UK CITIZENS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

62. [Hope in captivity: How kidnapped journalists coped](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

63. [Hamas condemns arrest of government ministers](#)

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. [Refugees wash up at hospital, wretched and bloodied](#)

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. [Headlines you might have missed this week](#)

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. [Israelis pull out of Gaza - but they'll be back](#)

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. [Stop it now](#)

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

68. [Exodus](#)

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

69. ['They found them huddled together': Israel calls off air strikes after raid on Lebanese town kills more than 60 people, including 34 children](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

70. [Irrational exuberance?](#)

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

71. [Tories seem to understand the crisis](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

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

72. [*One face obscures the vast profile of a tragedy*](#)

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. [*Tories seem to understand 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

74. [*Can fever cure the jihadi?*](#)

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. [*Harper gov't response to crisis strikes right tone*](#)

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. [*Villagers flee the bombs, but still there is no escape*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

77. [Everybody out - fast: Lebanese , Israelis and tourists flee](#)

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. [The Fever Is Winning](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

79. [The unintended consequences of exporting democracy](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

80. [LETTERS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

81. [Unfashionably late to leave](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

82. [SAFE BACK FROM HELL Evacuation of Beirut Britons starts but Blair attacked for snail's pace operation](#)

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. [Dummies' guide to west asia](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

84. [Three weeks ago, the city pulsed with giddy fun: Israeli bombs shows things are slow to change in Mideast](#)

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. [Carnage: At a building in Qana, 34 of 56 victims were 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

86. [QUARTET: ABBAS MUST DISARM TERRORISTS](#)

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. [US evacuees angry at ferocity of Israel 's military 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

88. [Hezbollah no protector](#)

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. [We need to remind ourselves how rare it is that war is the lesser evil](#)

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. [DIGEST](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

91. [WORLD IN BRIEF](#)

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. [Shiite muscle flexing is not just for the West's enlightenment](#)

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. [Even in death, mothers hugged 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

94. [Israel suspends air attacks in wake of strike killing 56](#)

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. [Expat tales](#)

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. [Struggle to reach wounded - 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

97. [Captured soldier's father begs for crisis to end: 'What good will come of it?' Shalit pleads](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

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

98. [Seven Canadians die in airstrike: nMontreal family was visiting Lebanese village where grandfather was born; Relative says family got 'no response' when they contacted embassy; Relatives fear 'more bad news' after at least 3 other family members hurt](#)

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. [Focus: 'Diceman' Olmert on the spot over new Israeli 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

100. [Seven Canadians die in airstrike: Montreal family was visiting Lebanese village where grandfather was born; Relative says family got 'no response' when they contacted embassy; Relatives fear 'more bad news' after at least 3 other family members hurt](#)

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

Go Bak to your hole

The Sun (England)

July 22, 2006 Saturday

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Section: PATHETIC BLEATS OF HATE PREACHER

Length: 457 words

Byline: Nick Parker, Chief Foreign Correspondent In Aley, East Beirut

Body

Scared cleric flees to the hills * He blasts UK over escape bid

SPINELESS hate preacher Omar Bakri fled to the hills yesterday after Britain rejected his pathetic plea to escape the war.

The Muslim cleric, who ran away from Britain last year, had tried to board a ship full of women and children but was turned away.

He scurried to the mountain town of Aley, above Beirut, yesterday after Israeli missiles fell two miles from his his luxury flat.

The repulsive fanatic -who hailed suicide bombers as "magnificent martyrs" but called for an Israeli-Hezbollah ceasefire yesterday -clearly had no intention of laying down his life.

From the safety of the town's swish Highland Hotel, Bakri, 46, launched into his familiar rant against Britain and Tony Blair.

He later nodded at morning prayers at the local mosque as the imam urged all Muslims to fight to the death for Hezbollah. I confronted the former dole scrounger as he left and asked why he was not willing to be a Hezbollah martyr.

He replied nonsensically: "You will not force your views on me."

Then he ranted: "What has this fight got to do with me? I am Lebanese. If you are British your Government treats you like a human being but if you are not British you are treated like an animal."

Bakri, a father of six and grandfather of four, left his family in Britain living on dole handouts.

His bid at Beirut port on Thursday morning to get on any British vessel ferrying evacuees to Cyprus was blocked by officials.

Predictably, Bakri blasted Britain for not letting him in, even though he has only a Lebanese passport. He said: "The embassy told me we are not dealing with visit applications, only British citizens who want to get out on a ship."

Go Bak to your hole

"I said, 'What about my children in the UK who are concerned about their father? I don't care what you think about me'. But they wouldn't listen because I'm not a British citizen any more.

"I left Britain of my own free will and have never been charged with any offence.

This has happened because I support the Palestinians, Iraq and Lebanon. All Muslims should unite and call for a ceasefire -but Tony Blair doesn't want that.

He wants bombing."

Bakri left his family last August and went to Lebanon after a Sun campaign to kick him out. Charles Clarke, then Home Secretary, revoked his indefinite leave to remain in the UK.

In March he boasted: "When I left England I bought a one-way ticket out. I never want to see it again."

But he changed his tune as soon as the Hezbollah guerillas he supports sparked the Israeli attacks.

In 22 years in the UK, Bakri sponged £ 300,000 in benefits. He preached violence and called the 9/11 terrorists the Magnificent 19. His preachings are thought to have encouraged British suicide bombers Omar Sharif and Asif Hanif.

Load-Date: July 22, 2006

End of Document

Canada praised for fighting Taliban: Clinton weighs in on Mideast troubles

Ottawa Citizen

July 27, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A4

Length: 426 words

Byline: Richard Foot, The Ottawa Citizen

Dateline: HALIFAX

Body

HALIFAX - Canada is "absolutely" right to be fighting in Afghanistan, and the consequence of abandoning the war against the Taliban would turn out to be far more serious than the continued loss of Canadian lives if we stay, says former U.S. president Bill Clinton.

"I think your people have done an astounding job there," he said during a speech last night in downtown Halifax.

Mr. Clinton acknowledged the war in Afghanistan is "becoming less popular" in Canada, partly because of the stream of dead and injured soldiers coming home from Kandahar.

"But you can't go there without casualties," he said.

If Canada and other NATO nations pull their armies out, he said, "the price we'll pay in the long run, including the lives of our military personnel, would be greater. As awful as this is, it's not nearly as awful as things would become if we left."

Mr. Clinton was brought to Halifax by Frank McKenna, the former New Brunswick premier and former Canadian ambassador to Washington.

Following his speech, Mr. Clinton sat in a leather armchair on an expansive stage, answering at length questions put to him by Mr. McKenna.

Asked if Canada should continue its mission in Kandahar, Mr. Clinton said because of the dangerous work of U.S., Canadian and other forces -- including special forces and intelligence agents and "people you don't know" -- al-Qaeda has "nowhere near the operational solidity it did at the time of 9/11.

"Afghanistan is tough," he added. "But it would be a travesty if a genuine Muslim democracy were allowed to collapse and the Taliban were allowed to re-establish its control, particularly over women and girls, and al-Qaeda were allowed to come back in.

"We don't have enough bodies there. There are 40,000 (U.S. and NATO) troops in Afghanistan and about 120,000 in Iraq. That's the fundamental problem there."

Canada praised for fighting Taliban: Clinton weighs in on Mideast troubles

Asked what he makes of Israel's military strikes on Lebanon and Hezbollah, Mr. Clinton reminded the audience that many Arab and Persian Gulf states have not criticized Israeli military action in recent days, because they, too, fear Hezbollah and Shia extremism in the region.

Mr. Clinton echoed calls for a ceasefire, and an international force to be brought into the area. But he made it clear that he believes the fault of the current crisis lies with Hezbollah.

"We've got to get these forces -- Hezbollah and Hamas --to decide if they're going to play politics, or play war.

"The Israelis aren't perfect, but they're in a tough neighbourhood," he said. "They gave up the Golan and Gaza, and every time they give, they get bashed."

Graphic

Photo: Christian LaForce, The Halifax Chronicle Herald; Former U.S. president Bill Clinton told an audience in Halifax last night that if coalition troops were to leave Afghanistan before completing their mission 'the price we'll pay in the long run, including the lives of our military personnel, would be greater.'

Load-Date: July 27, 2006

Israel's foes ready 'to strap explosives to our children'

Ottawa Citizen
July 30, 2006 Sunday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A5

Length: 311 words

Byline: Colin Freeman, The Sunday Telegraph

Dateline: TYRE, Lebanon

Body

TYRE, Lebanon - Nayfa Muhanna's childbearing days are long over, but after Israeli helicopter missiles destroyed her family's 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 this southern Lebanese city, where all 19 family members arrived two weeks 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." Ms. Muhanna, 47, proudly says her brother "disappeared" the other day -- a coded way of stating he has slipped off to join Hezbollah's forces.

And should he be killed, there is 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, 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 new generation of youngsters like Mahdi is being groomed to follow in their uncle's footsteps.

"We are ready to strap explosives to our children and send them to Israel," said Naim Mussalmani, 35. "My brother exploded himself against the Israelis in 1998. Our women and children are ready to go out and fight if needs be."

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 organization to look after them.

"We do not ask Hezbollah for medicine or help," Mr. Mussalmani said. "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."

Load-Date: July 30, 2006

Israel 's foes ready 'to strap explosives to our children'

End of Document

Middle East four are shown the carrot and stick

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition

February 4, 2005

Copyright 2005 Guardian Newspapers Limited

Section: Guardian Foreign Pages, Pg. 17

Length: 679 words

Body

Four Middle East countries were singled out by Mr Bush in his state of the union speech. Two, Iran and Syria, were criticised for their terrorist connections, and two, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, were urged to make greater progress towards democracy. Brian Whitaker looks at what lies behind the comments

Iran

"Iran remains the world's primary state sponsor of terror - pursuing nuclear weapons while depriving its people of the freedom they seek and deserve"

Iran could be the next target for US military action, mainly because of suspicions that it is trying to develop nuclear weapons. Along with Syria, Iran provides support for Hizbullah, the militant Shia organisation in Lebanon. The US is also unhappy about its influence on Shia Muslims in neighbouring Iraq.

Although dominated by hardline clergy, Iran has developed a form of Islamic democracy where elections are fiercely contested. It is one of the few countries in the Middle East where voters have changed the political complexion of a parliament.

As it was for prewar Iraq, the Bush administration's policy is partly driven by exiled opposition groups in the US and Israeli security concerns. Neoconservatives have long claimed that Iran is ripe for a popular insurrection. This may explain Mr Bush's message to the Iranian people in his speech: "As you stand for your own liberty, America stands with you."

Syria

"Syria still allows its territory, and parts of Lebanon, to be used by terrorists who seek to destroy every chance of peace in the region"

Syria is a co-sponsor of Hizbullah and hosts a number of radical Palestinian groups, particularly those who share Syria's dislike of the late Yasser Arafat. Syrian support for these groups is motivated largely by continuing Israeli occupation of its territory in the Golan Heights - a factor rarely acknowledged in American rhetoric.

Syria has also been accused by the US of complicating the situation in neighbouring Iraq by helping insurgents - or at least turning a blind eye to their activities by failing to control the border effectively.

Middle East four are shown the carrot and stick

Syrian forces helped bring stability to Lebanon after the civil war but about 14,000 soldiers remain, and many Lebanese believe they have outstayed their welcome. Syria also meddles in Lebanese politics and persuaded its parliament to extend the term of President Emile Lahoud, an ally of Damascus.

Saudi Arabia

"The government of Saudi Arabia can demonstrate its leadership in the region by expanding the role of its people in determining their future"

A gentle nudge from Mr Bush for the kingdom that sits on a quarter of the world's known oil reserves and obligingly turns its taps on and off to help stabilise prices. Saudi cooperation against al-Qaida is also vital.

The kingdom grants few rights to women and has one of the worst human rights records in the Middle East. In the past its leadership role has included spreading the reactionary Wahhabi brand of Islam to nearby countries.

Crown Prince Abdullah, the de facto ruler, has urged reform but progress is slow in the face of resistance from ultra-conservatives, especially the clerics. The first elections for 40 years, for municipal councils, are due to start next week.

Egypt

"The great and proud nation of Egypt, which showed the way toward peace in the Middle East, can now show the way toward democracy in the Middle East"

Egypt was the first Arab country to make peace with Israel and is now playing a crucial role in smoothing the way for Israel's withdrawal from Gaza. It therefore qualifies for carrot rather than stick. Egypt also gets credit on the anti-terrorism front for waging a long battle against Islamist militants, often with scant regard for human rights.

President Hosni Mubarak, who is 76 and has been in power for 23 years, is expected to seek a fifth term this year in a yes-or-no referendum. Many Egyptians believe his son, Gamal, is being groomed as his eventual successor. Egyptian parliamentary elections have often been marred by allegations of ballot box stuffing and intervention by the security forces.

Leader comment, page 25

Load-Date: February 4, 2005

Israel started the fire

University Wire

July 17, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Daily Texan via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 853 words

Byline: By Colin Kalmbacher, Daily Texan; **SOURCE:** U. Texas

Dateline: AUSTIN, Texas

Body

In a predictably despicable turn of events, Israel decided to once again flex its muscle by a relentless and indiscriminate air and sea offensive on Lebanon following the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers.

Their code name for the invasion is "Just Reward," a name as cruel as the military operations, which have, to date, killed more than 90 Lebanese civilians.

Let's outline some facts: Israel has, since 1967, engaged in a full-on military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Occupied Territories, littered with illegal Israeli settlements comprised of cruel religious fundamentalists, have been subject to every manner of brutality, humiliation and oppression possible. That is, the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza have borne the brunt of the most illegal and immoral occupation before U.S. forces invaded and seized Iraq in 2003.

Israel, though making many waves with the Gaza pull-out still retains control of Gaza's borders, sea and air.

Israel has more than 9,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails, at least 1,000 of whom are under administrative detention. That is, they are jailed without ever having been subject to charge or trial. And if you think Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo are bad, then you're in for quite a ride if you ever find yourself detained by the SHABAQ, Israel's internal intelligence agency, infamous for its reprehensible torture tactics. Many of these administrative detainees - held with absolute disregard for international law - are elderly, women and children.

And one last point: During "Operation Grapes of Wrath" in 1996, Israel kidnapped Hezbollah leaders directly from Lebanese territory and stated that the aim in doing so was to use them as bargaining chips for hostage negotiations. This tactic was upheld by Israel's high court at the time, though this decision was reversed in 2000.

Hezbollah, a resistance movement comprised of people who fought for little more than an end to occupation by a foreign force, has reacted to Israel's illegal detention of Lebanese nationals and their "Palestinian brothers" by a similar act: it took hostages of its own.

Israel and Hezbollah were, for one brief moment, on one tiny issue, morally equivalent in their tactics. Israel illegally holds Palestinians, Lebanese and other Arabs in administrative detention, detainees often captured in raids. In response, Hezbollah kidnapped two Israeli soldiers in a guerrilla raid.

Israel started the fire

For the actions of freedom fighters that resulted in the kidnapping of two soldiers willfully protecting the existence of an occupying power, the entire of Lebanon is blamed, and if Israel can muster the moral perversion, it is quite capable of and has in large supply, then Lebanon will burn.

The Israeli Defense Force's Chief of Staff has threatened that "[Israel] will turn Lebanon's clock back 20 years." Israel's Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert has promised a "very painful and far-reaching" attack on Lebanon.

And for what?

For what reason is Rafiq Hariri International Airport bombed? Lebanon's only international airport, a sophisticated, beautiful and efficient launch pad that puts DFW, O'Hare and Heathrow to shame.

Why on Earth would Israel wish to revisit the internationally (and domestically) deplored invasion of 1982, in which more than 17,000 Lebanese were killed and Israel's own lovable Sharon oversaw the massacre of thousands of unarmed and innocent Palestinian civilians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila? For the lives of two Israeli soldiers held captive, and because Hezbollah had the tenacity to act in a similar fashion as the official policies of the official state of Israel?

The facts do not bear this excuse out.

The Lebanese incursion is a concurrent replay of the crisis in Gaza.

Goodbye electricity, water and bridges, hello sonic booms and air-raids. Not to mention massacre after massacre of innocent civilians.

Rabbi Yaacov Perrin, an unequivocal supporter of Israel, summed up his nation's attitudes toward Arabs in general and Palestinians in particular in 1994: "One million Arabs are not worth a Jewish fingernail."

What we are seeing now is the real political and military expression of that attitude, with the unflinching support of President Bush, with bullets, bombs and F-16s straight from Washington.

The United States supports Israel to the tune of more than \$3 billion per year, on average. But soon that support could become even more pronounced if Israel gets her way.

This completely irrational response to Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers would, ideally for Israel, draw the U.S. directly into what has now escalated into "open war." This coming at a time when the U.S. military is already neck-deep in two other wars is especially insane.

As citizens and taxpayers, as moral citizens of the world, we have a duty to call the fouls on the real culprits, to pull the red cards on the truly guilty. As the facts would have it, Israel is at fault.

For ignoring their own history and launching an irresponsible siege on Lebanon they should stand accused by anyone with a modicum of commitment to justice, compassion or sanity.

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Load-Date: July 17, 2006

Two faces of protest

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

March 9, 2005, Wednesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 07

Length: 676 words

Byline: By Frances Z. Brown

Highlight: After days of demonstrations by a young urban crowd, a pro-Syrian throng answers in force.

Body

Four layers of Lebanese troops surround Beirut's Martyrs' Square. Inside their shield are the urbane young Lebanese whose nine days of passionate anti-Syria protest have galvanized world attention.

But Tuesday, on the other side of those troops, the protesters were answered. At least half a million demonstrators heeded the call of militant Hizbullah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and demonstrated in support of Syria's influence, if not its troops.

The throng - bused in en masse from southern Lebanon, Baalbek, the Bekaa Valley, and reportedly Syria - waved Lebanon's cedar. Like their Martyrs Square counterparts, they carried signs proclaiming "We want the truth" (about former prime minister Rafik Hariri's death).

But beyond these trappings of solidarity, the cultural gap is immense.

The Martyrs Square protesters might feel at home in Greenwich Village. In Riad el Sol Square the hijab of the women speaks to the crowd's conservative roots. While the young protesters in Martyrs Square articulate - in fluent English or French - the revolutionary influences of Ukraine, the crowds outside speak exclusively Arabic, out of pride and necessity.

To an American observer, well-versed in the language of red state and blue state, the four police barriers around Martyr's Square highlight the immense divide between two Lebanons.

Outside the barricades, Nasser Hussein carries a sign in Arabic: "Thanks Syria and Assad." A weak economy is his concern. "Syria gives stability," he says. Thousands traveled from Baalbek, he says, because the sheikh gave the word, and "we love that man."

Just a short distance away, inside the barricades, Rony Chidiac, a Christian student organizer, insists dialogue is possible. Still, he says, "[Those other protests are] stupid. They're busing people in from Syria. It will blow over."

For the past few days, life inside Martyrs Square has been business as usual. The tent city still stands. Guitars strum and coffee sellers call. Protesters chat over newspapers and agree one thing: No one is satisfied with Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad's promises.

The protesters are skeptical that Saturday's speech vowing to withdraw from Lebanon signified real news. They have no more faith in the vague pledges their own president, Emile Lahoud. And so each day there are new

Two faces of protest

immigrants, more blue tarp riggings for shelter, more kak stalls for crunchy bread, and more tents distributing "independence" stickers.

Today, I dodge a remote-controlled toy car carrying a small Lebanese flag, whose driver could be any one of the hordes of children with families, walking by Hariri's grave site, or borrowing pens from me to write patriotic grafitti on the walls of the square.

Each evening, a dance party erupts. People of all ages, carrying Lebanese flags of all sizes, stream into the square. Convertibles swarm by, honking horns, as I chat with new acquaintances. After two years in Lebanon, I analyze the family name and hometown of new friends to determine whether they are Maronite, Orthodox, Sunni, or Druze. Nearly everyone _ except Shiites - seems to be represented. The Lebanese national Anthem comes on - kulohnah lil-wataan - "the country belongs to all of us"-and for once, I believe it.

By daybreak, the crowd shrinks to its core, young people who wear dreadlocks, nose rings, and tattoos. They quote Pink Floyd. These students have, improbably, become the country's most stalwart activists and patriots. They vow to continue sleeping in the square until all Syrian troops withdraw. But the Hizbullah demonstration makes them wary; there's anxiety that Lebanon's famous tinderbox could again ignite.

Just before the demonstration, four trucks filled with Lebanese soldiers drive by. In this country that is tired of soldiers, the Bohemian-looking students put down their guitars and cheer.

Outside, however, the country currently belongs to Nasrallah: The crowd roars as he begins to speak and seethes as he shouts anti-Israeli slogans. For the crowd outside, Syria isn't the problem.

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Load-Date: March 8, 2005

Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols

Daily Mail (London)

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 15

Length: 1491 words

Byline: PETER MCKAY

Body

WHY can't there be a ceasefire in Lebanon?

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice backtracks and now says it's time to have one, but she remains vague about the details.

Our government takes the line developed by the Israelis and the Americans that it's no good having a temporary ceasefire because only a permanent one is worth having.

This sounds sensible enough until you think about it. A temporary ceasefire would have saved the lives of more than 50 Lebanese souls - half of them children - who died in an Israeli air strike over the weekend.

The 'we need a permanent solution' line is bogus. What our leaders agreed was for Israel to inflict as much death and destruction on Lebanon as it saw fit in the hope this would curb Hezbollah fighters.

I have not heard a single Israeli spokesman, military or civilian, say their onslaught on Lebanon, creating over 500,000 refugees and killing hundreds of innocent men, women and children, would finish off Hezbollah. Indeed, some Middle East experts say ten recruits replace each fallen Hezbollah militant.

Is this bloodbath really all about Hezbollah rockets fired into Israel? Or might there be other motives for destroying Lebanon?

The Israelis are able to secure the most up-to-date military equipment from the U.S. Can't they pinpoint exactly where Hezbollah rockets are coming from - even when they're fired from mobile platforms? Locating and destroying such platforms would have been a 'proportionate' response to Hezbollah attacks.

ATTACKING apartment blocks, airports, electricity stations, sewage works, schools, hospitals, TV stations, rural villages and people fleeing from Israeli jet bombers is surely 'disproportionate'.

Is the Israeli purpose to smash Lebanon so completely that its people turn upon the Hezbollah supporters who brought this wrath upon them?

If so, there are no early signs this strategy is working. On the contrary, TV and newspaper reports suggest a seething hatred of Israel and growing support for Hezbollah.

Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols

Why don't the Lebanese, generally, see Hezbollah as brutal terrorists whose ambition to destroy Israel - backed by Iran and Syria - is being paid for in innocent Lebanese lives?

Because that's not what it looks like to them. To most Lebanese, Hezbollah is fighting Israel over the latter's occupation of Palestinian territories.

Until that issue is resolved, there won't be peace.

Terry Waite pointed this out last week on Newsnight. He knows what he's talking about, having spent five years as a prisoner of Islamic militants.

But there's no enthusiasm in Bush's administration for diplomacy to create a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine. Instead, this dispute has been incorporated into Bush's 'war on terror'.

Where do we stand in all this? In the most unfortunate position of all - as the despised lapdog of America. In an attempt to offset this damage, Bush told Blair in front of reporters last week: 'You tell me what you think.'

Imagine! A Prime Minister dares to tell an American President what he thinks.

And the President admits it publicly.

Can we feel anything other than bottomless contempt for this squalid little public relations stunt?

Her Majesty's Opposition offers little more. Yesterday, Tory shadow minister Dr Liam Fox appeared on TV and was asked by Peter Sissons if it was true that the Conservatives were reluctant to criticise Israel for fear of antagonising Jewish potential donors to the party. He called this a 'really offensive idea'.

What's really offensive to most of us, I'd say, is the cowardice and idleness of our politicians at a time of maximum danger in the Middle East.

Isn't it contemptible of Blair to swan off to California in order to grease up to media tycoon Rupert Murdoch and thereafter on another freebie holiday?

A ceasefire can be delayed indefinitely, it seems, but a Prime Ministerial job-seeking trip followed by a holiday must take place now.

WHO invented the Sixties supermodel Twiggy, still doing great business for Marks & Spencer? 'He did not make me,' she says of her former manager Justin de Villeneuve, now 66. He says: 'We were a double act and the fact that she now denies this is farcical.' He is right, I'm afraid. Twiggy (pictured with de Villeneuve in 1970) is mainly responsible for her own great success, but she is foolish to deny his role in getting her started. It wouldn't hurt her to be more generous. Apparent sweetness of character was one of her great attractions in a bitchy, selfish industry.

Kicking over the Traceys

CIVIL servant Tracey Temple, 43, is on 'secondment' to a new job outside the Palace of Westminster so she won't bump into Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, who used her for sexual relief while she was his diary secretary.

Miss Temple is working in personnel at Westminster University, but her Pounds 30,000 salary is paid for by the Government. A cabinet office spokesman says: 'We often second civil servants to other organisations to gain experience.' Perhaps they'll 'second' Prescott to the House of Lords after he's run the country on behalf of holidaying Blair for the tenth successive year, then shameful Tracey can resume her career at the Palace of Westminster.

Wonderful world, isn't it?

THANKS to the Great European Heatwave, yields of some vegetable varieties are down by 20per cent. So prices will rise.

Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols

'Margins are too tight, after years of bludgeoning by supermarkets, to withstand a bad year like this,' says a spokesman for the Processed Vegetable Growers' Association.

The great Scottish economist Adam Smith said no group of businessmen ever met without the agenda being to rig prices. He might have added that no variety of weather exists that cannot be used for the same purpose.

FORMER Tony Blair flatmate Charlie Falconer - Baron Falconer, Lord Chancellor, these days, if you please - appears on TV to support the Government.

Explaining why U.S. jets carrying bombs for Israel are still refuelling in Scotland en route to the Middle East - after 'Foreign Secretary' Margaret Beckett apologised for this lapse - he calls it 'a process that has been going on for some time... this is not the time to change the rules'.

Falconer's real role is to tidy up behind the circus elephant with diarrhoea that is Her Majesty's Government. He seems happy in his work, doesn't he?

Strangers in the night

POP singer George Michael rings a TV show to justify cruising for homosexual encounters on Hampstead Heath.

Later, his case is debated sympathetically on Newsnight.

Over the weekend, Radio 4's Any Questions addressed the matter.

Having sex with strangers on Hampstead Heath or any other public place is hardly respectable.

No one enjoys a 'right' to do it.

Nor, surely, is it a fit subject for discussion on anything but the most stupid TV or radio show.

Pretending it's an appropriate issue for grownup debate is childishy perverse.

Those with out-of-the-ordinary sexual tastes used to accept that indulging them could lead to ridicule and sometimes prosecution. But they preferred taking a risk rather than campaigning for total licence.

They dared to be different and took their punishment like men.

George Michael's a cry-baby.

A RENEWED burst of publicity suggests that the divorce of Sir Paul and Lady McCartney might be nasty.

There's talk of the latter taking the former 'to the cleaners' in pursuit of a bigger share of his Pounds 800million fortune.

Let's hope not. It's only money and not worth the bitterness.

Sir Paul, in his pop lyrics, was always adept at suggesting kindly responses to human problems. If he was writing a song about a mega-rich pop singer facing the loss of millions to an ex-wife, what line would he take?

Fight her bitterly in court or settle generously with a smile? The latter, I suggest. So that, surely, is the way to go.

Will wife Gail be a 'fragrant' asset to Tommy?

TODAY, Scottish politician Thomas Sheridan, acting as his own lawyer, is due to question his wife Gail at Edinburgh's Court of Session.

Ceasefire? No, Tony's off on hols

Socialist Sheridan, who is suing the News of the World for libel and claiming damages of Pounds 200,000, has been presenting himself as a boring, stay-at-home type who likes Scrabble and sun beds. The News of the World alleges he enjoys cocaine, champagne and group sex.

So the evidence of Mrs Sheridan, a former air stewardess, is regarded as crucial.

I can think of no previous occasion when a politician accused of lubricious behaviour has called his wife as a witness for the defence, while acting as his own lawyer.

Mary Archer famously spoke up for Jeffrey - and was described as 'fragrant' by the judge - but the Tory MP didn't quiz her personally.

So it's standing room only to hear bonny Gail Sheridan. Will the case settle anything?

Those who like Sheridan will think he was lied about and stitched up if he loses.

Those who hate him will rejoice in the same circumstances. If he wins, friends will celebrate and enemies will seethe with anger.

The bottom line is this: no one expects others to be truthful when it comes to sex.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

Ottawa Citizen

July 31, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 2110 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, With Files From Eric Beauchesne, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from Citizen News Services; Reuters

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

BEIRUT - Israel responded late yesterday to the international outcry over an air raid that killed as many as 60 Lebanese civilians -- including 37 children -- by announcing a 48-hour suspension of its aerial bombardment of southern Lebanon.

Israel said it will also co-ordinate a 24-hour window with the United Nations to get civilians out of the area before it resumes military activity, although the suspension will not apply to other parts of Lebanon, nor diminish ground operations under way along the Israeli-Lebanese border.

U.S. State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said Israel's decision to suspend the bombardment was to allow for an investigation into the Qana attack -- the most lethal so far of the Israel-Hezbollah conflict -- but he made it clear that Israel had the right to "take action against targets preparing attacks against it," reiterating U.S. policy that Israel has the right to defend itself against attacks.

The deadly airstrike in Qana -- which Israel calls a "hotbed of Hezbollah," about 20 kilometres east of the Mediterranean Sea -- led to new calls for a swift resolution to the crisis and caused the abrupt cancellation of a peacemaking trip to the Lebanese capital by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"We scream out to the world community to stand united in the face of Israel's war criminals," Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora said in an English-language declaration that appeared to be aimed at Ms. Rice. "There is no place on this sad morning for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and an international investigation into the Israeli massacres."

Ms. Rice called the bombing "awful" and said she wanted "a ceasefire as soon as possible." It appeared to be her first real call for a quick end to the bloodshed.

Still, U.S. President George W. Bush repeated his call for a "sustainable peace" and said the United States "mourns the loss of innocent life, those tragic occasions when innocent people are killed."

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

And despite expressing "deep sorrow" for the attack, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert vowed earlier that the war with Hezbollah would go on.

"We will not blink ... and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances," Mr. Olmert was quoted by Israeli media as telling ministers during the meeting, convened shortly after the strike. "It is the right thing to do."

Earlier, Mr. Olmert told Ms. Rice that Israel would need up to two weeks to accomplish its goals.

Hezbollah countered on its Al-Manar television channel that it will retaliate, vowing, "The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered."

It hit northern Israel yesterday with 157 rockets -- the highest one-day total during the offensive -- with one Israeli moderately wounded and 12 others lightly hurt, medics said.

Last night, the UN Security Council approved a statement expressing "extreme shock and distress" over the bombing but stopped short of condemning the attack.

The presidential statement, adopted unanimously by the 15-member council in an emergency session, softened language in an earlier draft which said the council "strongly deplores this loss of innocent life and the killing of civilians in the present conflict."

The final statement called for the council to work without delay to adopt a resolution for a lasting settlement of the crisis.

"The Security Council expresses its extreme shock and distress at the shelling by the Israeli Defence Forces of a residential building in Qana, in southern Lebanon, which has caused the killing of dozens of civilians, mostly children, and injured many others," it said. The statement did not call for an immediate truce, but said the council would work "for a lasting settlement of the crisis."

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan had earlier urged the council to call for an immediate end to the fighting.

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

The French government, the current president of the Security Council, yesterday circulated a separate draft resolution calling for a ceasefire, the release of two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah and "the settlement of the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel."

The French proposal also endorsed putting a UN-mandated international peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon. Debate on that draft may begin as early as today.

Israel insisted that its forces were unaware of the civilians in Qana and said villagers had been repeatedly warned to flee.

"We are trying our best to prevent civilians from being located in targets hit by us, but there is no certainty here," Brig.-Gen. Amir Eshel, the deputy air force chief of staff, told reporters in Tel Aviv. "We didn't think there were civilians in this particular building."

As word of the attacks spread across Beirut, a mob of several thousand -- including some waving yellow and green Hezbollah flags and burning U.S. flags -- marched on the lightly guarded UN headquarters in the heart of the city.

Several hundred men ransacked offices while UN employees hid in the basement, before backing off as large numbers of Lebanese troops and police arrived. There was a similar, angry demonstration at UN headquarters in Gaza, where more than 100 Palestinians have died in recent fighting with Israeli forces.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

Throughout yesterday, Arab-language TV stations across the Middle East repeatedly transmitted graphic images of the carnage at Qana, attempts to recover the bodies there by using heavy machinery to remove rubble, and the riot in Beirut.

Israel countered with video apparently taken from a spy drone which it said showed rockets being launched from Qana and **Hezbollah** fighters hiding there among civilians.

Villagers said the attack lasted from midnight until a little past dawn. Shells landed on the building where 63 people were sheltered at about 1 a.m. Another shell struck between five and 15 minutes later, they said.

The village bore the signs of the assault: rubble was strewn through the street and several buildings had collapsed. The red-tiled roof of a large villa was peeled off. Wires hung from utility poles, one of them bent in half. A remnant of a weapon was tossed in front of the house. It read, "For use on MK-84, Guided Bomb BSU-37/B (ASSY) 96214-700922-6."

The Israeli military has not yet said what type of munitions were used in the attack, but according to the website globalsecurity.org, a clearinghouse of military information, an MK-84 is a 2,000-pound bomb.

Red Cross drivers said they tried to approach the village at 6:30 a.m. but turned away three times because Israeli shells were falling in streets ahead of them. Later, rescue workers in orange jumpsuits dug through the rubble, pulling out the bodies of men, **women** and children. Most of the victims were in the basement of one building, where they had gone for safety when a pair of airstrikes hit the village beginning at 1 a.m., witnesses said.

"Americans cannot think this is right," said Amalia Farhad, who attended the Beirut demonstration with her young son. "People are here now because they are motivated by what has happened. This was something against humanity."

Nadia Khouri, a Beirut high school teacher, said she felt compelled to attend the demonstration because although **Hezbollah** had committed a crime by kidnapping the Israeli soldiers, "the Israeli response is reprehensible. This has nothing to do with the kidnapping. It's simply cowboy behaviour."

President Husni Mubarak of Egypt, a close U.S. ally, swiftly condemned the bombing as "irresponsible."

King Abdullah of Jordan, another U.S. ally, called it "an ugly crime."

And President Jacques Chirac of France, who has been pushing hard for an immediate ceasefire, described it as an "unjustifiable action" that underlined the need for the shooting to stop.

The bombing occurred as Ms. Rice was in Jerusalem for meetings with Mr. Olmert to discuss ways to end the conflict, which started when **Hezbollah** took two Israeli soldiers hostage on July 12 and has claimed the lives of more than 500 Lebanese people, mainly civilians. Fifty-one Israelis have been killed.

Ms. Rice will now fly to Washington, where she will attempt to keep a slowly developing U.S. peace plan on track at the UN, despite the outrage caused by the attack on Qana.

The U.S. is seeking a resolution endorsing a package Ms. Rice has been preparing during her travels to Israel, Lebanon and Rome. A key provision would seek Lebanese government agreement to disarm **Hezbollah**.

The U.S. package also calls for creating an international force of at least 10,000 troops to deploy in Lebanon to back up the government, beef up its army, and help secure the south, its borders, airport and port to ensure **Hezbollah** is unable to rearm.

Mr. Olmert told Ms. Rice at least 10,000 combat-ready foreign troops should be stationed along the border and in southern Beirut, according to a senior Israeli official.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

In Ottawa, a foreign affairs official said Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay "reiterate" their repeated calls for "the immediate implementation of the G-8 statement on the Middle East."

That statement demanded an end to Israeli military operations in Lebanon and Gaza, as well as a halt to the shelling of Israeli territory by Hezbollah "extremists."

Meanwhile, Allan Rock, Canada's former ambassador to the UN, suggested the Harper government should support calls for an immediate ceasefire.

"That conflict could go on for an awful long time, with the deaths of a lot of innocent people, without coming to a decisive end," he warned on CTV's Question Period yesterday. "There has to be a diplomatic solution."

"I do believe that Canada should join with others seeking an end to the hostilities so we can get humanitarian workers in, so we can lay the foundation for an international force and so we can protect lives."

Text of the UN Security Council statement on yesterday's attack in Qana, Lebanon

- The Security Council expresses its extreme shock and distress at the shelling by the Israeli Defence Forces of a residential building in Qana, in southern Lebanon, which has caused the killing of dozens of civilians, mostly children, and injured many others. The Security Council sends its deepest condolences to the families of the victims and to the Lebanese people.
- The Security Council strongly deplores this loss of innocent lives and the killing of civilians in the present conflict and requests the Secretary General (Kofi Annan) to report to it within one week on the circumstances of this tragic incident.
- The Security Council expresses its concern at the threat of escalation of violence with further grave consequences for the humanitarian situation, calls for an end to violence, and underscores the urgency of securing a lasting, permanent and sustainable ceasefire.
- The Security Council expresses again its utmost concern at the Lebanese and Israeli civilian casualties and human suffering, the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, and the increased number of internally displaced persons.
- The Security Council urges all parties to grant immediate and unlimited access to humanitarian assistance.
- The Security Council deplores any action against United Nations personnel and calls for full respect for the safety and security of all United Nations personnel and premises.
- The Security Council affirms its determination to work without any further delay to adopt a resolution for a lasting settlement of the crisis, drawing on diplomatic efforts under way.
- The Security Council remains seized of the matter.

Latest Developments in the Middle East

On the 20th day of Israel's bombardment of Lebanon:

- Israel agrees to suspend aerial activities in south Lebanon for 48 hours, after a raid kills at least 54 Lebanese civilians, including 37 children, in southern village of Qana.
- Israel also to co-ordinate with the United Nations to allow a 24-hour window for residents of southern Lebanon to leave the area if they wish.
- World leaders condemn Qana attack, and Lebanon says U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice unwelcome in Beirut for talks. France, Jordan, Egypt, EU and others call for immediate ceasefire.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: Suspension to last 48 hours; Won't affect ground troops; UN expresses 'shock, distress'

- UN Security Council holds emergency session, Annan urges it to condemn attack on Qana, call for end to hostilities now.
- U.S. urges Israel to take more care to avoid civilian casualties in Lebanon, does not call for immediate ceasefire.
- Protesters smash their way into the UN headquarters in Beirut. Gunmen also storm UN compound in Gaza City.
- About 146 Hezbollah rockets hit northern Israel, wounding six people. At least three slam into the city of Haifa.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Daniel Barry, Bloomberg News; Rescuers dig for survivors in the ruins of a house in Qana, Lebanon, where civilians had gathered for shelter from air attacks. An Israeli jet dropped two bombs on the house.;

Photo: Ben Curtis, The Associated Press; Lebanese hold a candlelight vigil in Beirut in memory of as many as 60 people -- more than half of them children -- who were killed yesterday in an Israeli airstrike that crushed a building in the southern Lebanese village of Qana.

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End of Document

Death and destruction in an ancient land; THE HUMAN COST OF A DO-OR-DIE CAMPAIGN

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 22, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; News Review; Pg. 26

Length: 1589 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin

Body

Despite the latest weapons, it is civilians who are dying in alarming numbers, writes Ed O'Loughlin in southern Lebanon.

IT WAS noon and on the edge of town three young men, farmhands from the hills above, were watching the empty street from the shade of a shuttered shopfront.

Every couple of minutes the stillness would be broken as a car came into view, screeching around the bend half a kilometre off. Most were so overloaded that they were still clawing their way through the speed limit as they screamed past the three friends. The car windows framed the faces of frightened women and children, turned to the sky, and white flags cracked in their slipstreams.

It didn't look like anyone would be stopping, but the tallest of the three friends, his forearm decorated with a homemade tattoo of a girl's face, seemed philosophical.

"Normally you'd pay only 2000 livres [\$1.70] for a seat in a taxi from here but first it went up to 50,000 livres and now they are asking \$US100 [\$133]," says Hussein Akasha, 22. "If I'd had the money I'd have left a long time ago. I'm going to Mount Lebanon, Beirut, it doesn't matter - anywhere where there's no war. Even the dogs here are scared."

That was on Thursday, the day that the Israeli Defence Force told the people of south Lebanon by broadcast, aerial leaflets and auto-dialled taped phone calls that "for their own safety" they should flee north across the Litani River.

The local Red Cross estimated that by the end of that day 35,000 people had fled the city of Tyre and its district. Many more had already left in previous days, driven out by the heavy bombardment which has so far killed more than 320 Lebanese civilians and wounded hundreds more.

By Thursday night, the Red Cross reckoned, only 12,000 of Tyre's 80,000 people were still hunkered down in one of the ancient world's most famous cities, a designated world heritage site and an archeological jewel.

Among those staying put was the president of the town council, Abdul Musa Hussein, 70, who remained in his downtown office with a swarm of policemen, aides and civil defence volunteers. "I would rather die with dignity and honour in my own home than die fleeing on the road," he said.

Death and destruction in an ancient land THE HUMAN COST OF A DO-OR-DIE CAMPAIGN

"This is much worse than in 1982. Then they attacked the Palestinians, Syrians, fighting men. Now they are just targeting civilians."

Several families from outlying areas had taken up residence in the building's basement, spreading mattresses and household carpets on the grimy concrete floor. "We've been living down here because we are afraid of the Israeli bombs," says Zohra Dumyata, a woman of 20.

"We've been here now for nine days, since it all started. We'll stay here until it's safe to go home again."

Sabah Safiabddin, 45, shouted: "The Israelis are treating us like meat in a butcher's shop."

As earlier reported, by Tuesday the refrigerated truck parked outside Tyre's general hospital already contained the bodies of 91 civilians, including 55 children, stacked about a third of the way to the roof.

The job of loading that truck and of supplying work to Tyre's six casualty wards belongs mainly to the local Red Cross Society, whose young volunteers put on orange suits and flak jackets and white helmets, and drive out into the barrage in their flimsy, thin-skinned ambulances to bring out the dead and the injured.

On Thursday afternoon 20 volunteers were lounging on sofas in the Red Cross depot, taking advantage of a lull in the bombing. Others were loading medical supplies, anticipating the onslaught to come.

"The problem we have is that when we want to go and help injured people, most of the roads are closed by bombs and the planes also bomb very close to the ambulances," says Khassam Ghalan, a senior volunteer.

"Two of our volunteers have been wounded so far. It's made us very frightened but it hasn't stopped us. If we have to die, we die. If we have to live, we live. But it puts a lot of stress on us when people call us asking for help and we can't get to them."

At Jabal Amel Hospital, too, it was a quite afternoon. Doctors were loading ambulances with patients fit enough to move and sending them off towards Beirut, clearing the wards for action.

An old Volvo station wagon, converted into an ambulance by an Islamic charity, came skidding up to unload a young man, his face and upper body peppered with shrapnel, what was left of his right leg a shapeless lump of meat.

His eyes stared at the ceiling, deep into shock. A doctor, taking a break outside for a cigarette, watched and shook his head.

"There's a guy in here you should talk to," someone suggested brightly. "He's a medical aide. His entire family was wiped out by a bomb a couple of days ago and he came into work the next day."

And all the day long the F-16 jets moaned high overhead, the Apache helicopters chopped the air and the drones buzzed like lawnmowers in the sky. Then night came, and with it more bombs.

IT IS 69 years since the Luftwaffe destroyed the Basque town of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War, showcasing a brave new era of unrestricted aerial warfare against civilian populations.

Technologically, much has changed since then, and the Israeli Air Force can fairly boast to be at the cutting edge of that progress.

In the West Bank and Gaza it has shown that its US-made assault helicopters - and more recently its unmanned drones - can attack individual targets with remarkable precision, killing selected militants with little "collateral damage" - often none at all - even when the victims are moving through crowded streets.

Proud Israelis boast of their air force's ability to shoot a guided missile through an open window from several kilometres away. It is, they say, one of the things which separates them from the terrorists. Terrorists kill anyone they can, including women and children, but Israelis are selective.

Death and destruction in an ancient land THE HUMAN COST OF A DO-OR-DIE CAMPAIGN

Lately, though, something has been going wrong. Before the Lebanon crisis broke out, even before the June 25 Palestinian militant attack which captured an Israeli soldier, military operations in Gaza had begun to reap a growing harvest of innocent lives.

In June at least 30 civilians died during Israeli bombardments.

The most famous incident - because the immediate aftermath was shown on global television - was the killing of eight members of the Ghalia family as they picnicked on a beach. The Israeli Defence Force had been shelling the area around the same time but denied it was responsible. Other and worse incidents were to follow in Gaza, some disputed, some not.

It hardly matters now. Recent Israeli operations in Gaza and Lebanon have destroyed crowded homes and slaughtered entire fleeing families.

On Tuesday, a day after Israeli forces killed 48 civilians in Lebanon, the news digest Israeli News Today carried transcripts of pieces by 13 senior journalists and commentators about the campaign to force Hezbollah to free its two captured Israeli soldiers and stop firing rockets into Israel. Not one mentioned that foreign civilians were dying.

Israel's declared target, the Shiite Hezbollah militia which ignited this conflict with its July 12 border raid, has so far admitted to losing only a handful of its guerillas, compared with at least 18 Israeli combat fatalities and 15 Israeli civilians killed by long-range Hezbollah fire.

On Thursday night the Israeli Defence Force put out one of its regular press releases with details of that day's aerial campaign. Among the targets which had been attacked, it said, were 16 "structures, bases and headquarters of Hezbollah", as well as "more than 100 access routes, used by the Hezbollah" and "21 vehicles which served Hezbollah terrorists for the launching of rockets at Israel".

There was no mention of civilians.

LEBANON'S BLOODY HISTORY

Population: 3.7m (2004 estimate)

Beirut Population: 1.5m (1998 estimate)

Religion: 56.6% Muslim (34.7% Shiite & 21.8% Sunni)

36% Christian (mainly Maronite)

7.4% Druze

Jan 1944 Independence from France and Britain

1948-1949 Lebanon participates in the Arab League's war against Israel

1967 Arab-Israeli war

1968 Israeli commandos attack Beirut Airport in response to an attack on an Israeli civilian plane in Athens

1970-71 PLO moves its base to Lebanon where it carries out raids on Israel

Mar 1975 Civil war between opposing militia groups for next 15 years

Mar 1978 Israeli invasion of Lebanon following Palestinian attack inside Israel. UN Security Council passes a resolution for immediate withdrawal. A 19-kilometre security zone is established to protect Israel from attack.

Jun 1982 Israel invades Lebanon as far as Beirut, after terrorist attacks at its northern fronts

Death and destruction in an ancient land THE HUMAN COST OF A DO-OR-DIE CAMPAIGN

1985 Israel withdraws from most of Lebanon, maintaining a 'security zone' along the border

1990 The Lebanese civil war officially ends

May 2000 Israel completes its withdrawal from southern Lebanon. The UN establishes the "Blue Line" between the two countries

Feb 2005 Former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri is assassinated. Pressure builds on Syria to withdraw its remaining troops from Lebanon. It withdraws in April

Jul 2006 **Hezbollah** crosses into Israel, killing three Israeli soldiers and kidnapping two others. It tries to negotiate a prisoner exchange, which Israel rejects. Five more Israeli soldiers are killed. Israel instigates a naval blockade and bombs hundreds of targets in Lebanon, including Beirut Airport and the **Hezbollah** headquarters. **Hezbollah** fires rockets at northern Israeli cities.

CASUALTIES

Lebanese civilians: 340

Israeli civilians: 15

Israeli combatants: 18

Hezbollah operatives: 5

Lebanese army: 20

Refugees: 500,000

Graphic

MAP: MIDDLE EAST - Lebanon, Golan Heights, Israel, Jordan.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

'We'll be back,' refugees vow: fleeing lebanese defiant Want revenge for Israeli attacks

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 26, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A4

Length: 478 words

Byline: MATTHEW FISHER, CanWest News Service

Dateline: AIN EN-HELWE, Lebanon

Body

Sawsan Yassine is one of dozens of so-called double refugees of the latest violence in the Middle East.

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 kilometres to the south, Yassine, 28, 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 her.

"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."

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 July 12.

Most of the evacuees 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 kilometres 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.

'We'll be back,' refugees vow: fleeing lebanese defiant Want revenge for Israeli attacks

"I not only intend to return home," she said. "I want to continue on to Jerusalem."

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."

There was adequate food, medicine and medical care, said Sulieman, who organized volunteers to meet the newcomers with signs bearing words of welcome. However, there was not enough bedding for the families who continue to arrive in large numbers every day, she said.

The big question, Sulieman and others said, is how long the fighting will last and whether the 700,000 people who fled would be allowed to return to their homes.

Graphic

Photo: FATIH SARIBAS, REUTERS; Relatives hug evacuees from Lebanon on the Turkish navy ship TCG Iskenderun at the port of Mersin in Turkey yesterday.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel: Town is terror 'hotbed'

Ottawa Citizen
July 31, 2006 Monday
EARLY Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 2116 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, With Files From Eric Beauchesne, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from Citizen News Services; Reuters

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

BEIRUT - Israel responded late yesterday to the international outcry over an air raid that killed as many as 60 Lebanese civilians -- including 37 children -- by announcing a 48-hour suspension of its aerial bombardment of southern Lebanon.

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The deadly airstrike in Qana -- which Israel calls a "hotbed of Hezbollah," about 20 kilometres east of the Mediterranean Sea -- led to new calls for a swift resolution to the crisis and caused the abrupt cancellation of a peacemaking trip to the Lebanese capital by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"We scream out to the world community to stand united in the face of Israel's war criminals," Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora said in an English-language declaration that appeared to be aimed at Ms. Rice. "There is no place on this sad morning for any discussion other than an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and an international investigation into the Israeli massacres."

Ms. Rice called the bombing "awful" and said she wanted "a ceasefire as soon as possible." It appeared to be her first real call for a quick end to the bloodshed.

Still, U.S. President George W. Bush repeated his call for a "sustainable peace" and said the United States "mourns the loss of innocent life, those tragic occasions when innocent people are killed."

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel : Town is terror 'hotbed'

And despite expressing "deep sorrow" for the attack, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert vowed earlier that the war with Hezbollah would go on.

"We will not blink ... and we will not stop the offensive despite the difficult circumstances," Mr. Olmert was quoted by Israeli media as telling ministers during the meeting, convened shortly after the strike. "It is the right thing to do."

Earlier, Mr. Olmert told Ms. Rice that Israel would need up to two weeks to accomplish its goals.

Hezbollah countered on its Al-Manar television channel that it will retaliate, vowing, "The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered."

It hit northern Israel yesterday with 157 rockets -- the highest one-day total during the offensive -- with one Israeli moderately wounded and 12 others lightly hurt, medics said.

Last night, the UN Security Council approved a statement expressing "extreme shock and distress" over the bombing but stopped short of condemning the attack.

The presidential statement, adopted unanimously by the 15-member council in an emergency session, softened language in an earlier draft which said the council "strongly deplores this loss of innocent life and the killing of civilians in the present conflict."

The final statement called for the council to work without delay to adopt a resolution for a lasting settlement of the crisis.

"The Security Council expresses its extreme shock and distress at the shelling by the Israeli Defence Forces of a residential building in Qana, in southern Lebanon, which has caused the killing of dozens of civilians, mostly children, and injured many others," it said. The statement did not call for an immediate truce, but said the council would work "for a lasting settlement of the crisis."

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan had earlier urged the council to call for an immediate end to the fighting.

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

The French government, the current president of the Security Council, yesterday circulated a separate draft resolution calling for a ceasefire, the release of two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah and "the settlement of the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel."

The French proposal also endorsed putting a UN-mandated international peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon. Debate on that draft may begin as early as today.

Israel insisted that its forces were unaware of the civilians in Qana and said villagers had been repeatedly warned to flee.

"We are trying our best to prevent civilians from being located in targets hit by us, but there is no certainty here," Brig.-Gen. Amir Eshel, the deputy air force chief of staff, told reporters in Tel Aviv. "We didn't think there were civilians in this particular building."

As word of the attacks spread across Beirut, a mob of several thousand -- including some waving yellow and green Hezbollah flags and burning U.S. flags -- marched on the lightly guarded UN headquarters in the heart of the city.

Several hundred men ransacked offices while UN employees hid in the basement, before backing off as large numbers of Lebanese troops and police arrived. There was a similar, angry demonstration at UN headquarters in Gaza, where more than 100 Palestinians have died in recent fighting with Israeli forces.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel : Town is terror 'hotbed'

Throughout yesterday, Arab-language TV stations across the Middle East repeatedly transmitted graphic images of the carnage at Qana, attempts to recover the bodies there by using heavy machinery to remove rubble, and the riot in Beirut.

Israel countered with video apparently taken from a spy drone which it said showed rockets being launched from Qana and **Hezbollah** fighters hiding there among civilians.

Villagers said the attack lasted from midnight until a little past dawn. Shells landed on the building where 63 people were sheltered at about 1 a.m. Another shell struck between five and 15 minutes later, they said.

The village bore the signs of the assault: rubble was strewn through the street and several buildings had collapsed. The red-tiled roof of a large villa was peeled off. Wires hung from utility poles, one of them bent in half. A remnant of a weapon was tossed in front of the house. It read, "For use on MK-84, Guided Bomb BSU-37/B (ASSY) 96214-700922-6."

The Israeli military has not yet said what type of munitions were used in the attack, but according to the website globalsecurity.org, a clearinghouse of military information, an MK-84 is a 2,000-pound bomb.

Red Cross drivers said they tried to approach the village at 6:30 a.m. but turned away three times because Israeli shells were falling in streets ahead of them. Later, rescue workers in orange jumpsuits dug through the rubble, pulling out the bodies of men, **women** and children. Most of the victims were in the basement of one building, where they had gone for safety when a pair of airstrikes hit the village beginning at 1 a.m., witnesses said.

"Americans cannot think this is right," said Amalia Farhad, who attended the Beirut demonstration with her young son. "People are here now because they are motivated by what has happened. This was something against humanity."

Nadia Khouri, a history teacher at a Beirut high school, said she felt compelled to attend the demonstration because although **Hezbollah** had committed a crime by kidnapping the Israeli soldiers, "the Israeli response is reprehensible. This has nothing to do with the kidnapping. It's simply cowboy behaviour."

President Husni Mubarak of Egypt, a close U.S. ally, swiftly condemned the bombing as "irresponsible."

King Abdullah of Jordan, another U.S. ally, called it "an ugly crime."

And President Jacques Chirac of France, who has been pushing hard for an immediate ceasefire, described it as an "unjustifiable action" that underlined the need for the shooting to stop.

The bombing occurred as Ms. Rice was in Jerusalem for meetings with Mr. Olmert to discuss ways to end the conflict, which started when **Hezbollah** took two Israeli soldiers hostage on July 12 and has claimed the lives of more than 500 Lebanese people, mainly civilians. Fifty-one Israelis have been killed.

Ms. Rice will now fly to Washington, where she will attempt to keep a slowly developing U.S. peace plan on track at the UN, despite the outrage caused by the attack on Qana.

The U.S. is seeking a resolution endorsing a package Ms. Rice has been preparing during her travels to Israel, Lebanon and Rome. A key provision would seek Lebanese government agreement to disarm **Hezbollah**.

The U.S. package also calls for creating an international force of at least 10,000 troops to deploy in Lebanon to back up the government, beef up its army, and help secure the south, its borders, airport and port to ensure **Hezbollah** is unable to rearm.

Mr. Olmert told Ms. Rice at least 10,000 combat-ready foreign troops should be stationed along the border and in southern Beirut, according to a senior Israeli official.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel : Town is terror 'hotbed'

In Ottawa, a foreign affairs official said Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay "reiterate" their repeated calls for "the immediate implementation of the G-8 statement on the Middle East."

That statement demanded an end to Israeli military operations in Lebanon and Gaza, as well as a halt to the shelling of Israeli territory by Hezbollah "extremists."

Meanwhile, Allan Rock, Canada's former ambassador to the UN and a former Liberal cabinet minister, suggested the Harper government should support calls for an immediate ceasefire.

"That conflict could go on for an awful long time, with the deaths of a lot of innocent people, without coming to a decisive end," he warned on CTV's Question Period yesterday. "There has to be a diplomatic solution."

"I do believe that Canada should join with others seeking an end to the hostilities so we can get humanitarian workers in, so we can lay the foundation for an international force and so we can protect lives."

Text of the UN Security Council Statement on Yesterday's Attack in Qana, Lebanon

- The Security Council expresses its extreme shock and distress at the shelling by the Israeli Defence Forces of a residential building in Qana, in southern Lebanon, which has caused the killing of dozens of civilians, mostly children, and injured many others. The Security Council sends its deepest condolences to the families of the victims and to the Lebanese people.
- The Security Council strongly deplores this loss of innocent lives and the killing of civilians in the present conflict and requests the Secretary General (Kofi Annan) to report to it within one week on the circumstances of this tragic incident.
- The Security Council expresses its concern at the threat of escalation of violence with further grave consequences for the humanitarian situation, calls for an end to violence, and underscores the urgency of securing a lasting, permanent and sustainable ceasefire.
- The Security Council expresses again its utmost concern at the Lebanese and Israeli civilian casualties and human suffering, the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, and the increased number of internally displaced persons.
- The Security Council urges all parties to grant immediate and unlimited access to humanitarian assistance.
- The Security Council deplores any action against United Nations personnel and calls for full respect for the safety and security of all United Nations personnel and premises.
- The Security Council affirms its determination to work without any further delay to adopt a resolution for a lasting settlement of the crisis, drawing on diplomatic efforts under way.
- The Security Council remains seized of the matter.

Latest Developments in the Middle East

On the 20th day of Israel's bombardment of Lebanon:

- Israel agrees to suspend aerial activities in south Lebanon for 48 hours, after a raid kills at least 54 Lebanese civilians, including 37 children, in southern village of Qana.
- Israel also to co-ordinate with the United Nations to allow a 24-hour window for residents of southern Lebanon to leave the area if they wish.
- World leaders condemn Qana attack, and Lebanon says U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice unwelcome in Beirut for talks. France, Jordan, Egypt, EU and others call for immediate ceasefire.

Israel agrees to halt bombing: 37 children among 60 dead; Civilians given 24 hours to flee; Israel : Town is terror 'hotbed'

- UN Security Council holds emergency session, Annan urges it to condemn attack on Qana, call for end to hostilities now.
- U.S. urges Israel to take more care to avoid civilian casualties in Lebanon, does not call for immediate ceasefire.
- Protesters smash their way into the UN headquarters in Beirut. Gunmen also storm UN compound in Gaza City.
- About 146 Hezbollah rockets hit northern Israel, wounding six people. At least three slam into the city of Haifa.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Daniel Barry, Bloomberg News; Rescuers dig for survivors in the ruins of a house in Qana, Lebanon, where civilians had gathered for shelter from air attacks. An Israeli jet dropped two bombs on the house.;

Photo: Ben Curtis, The Associated Press; Lebanese hold a candlelight vigil in Beirut in memory of as many as 60 people -- more than half of them children -- who were killed yesterday in an Israeli airstrike that crushed a building in the southern Lebanese village of Qana.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Conflict jars life on both sides

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

July 14, 2006 Friday

0 Edition

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 10A

Length: 528 words

Body

On both sides of the Israel-Lebanon border, residents caught in the cross-fire of an international crisis did their best to escape or stay hidden.

In the summer, Israelis normally flock to Nahariya and other towns in northern Israel for vacations in the rolling hills of Galilee. But the resort was perhaps the hardest hit Thursday by Hezbollah guerrilla rockets from Lebanon, and the traffic on the main roads was almost all headed south, as residents sought to move out of rocket range.

It is also tourist season for Beirut, but the streets of Lebanon's capital were largely empty Thursday, as tourists and locals alike tried to flee. At one bank, the employees who decided to show up were distracted by TV images of Israel shelling Lebanese villages on the second day of Israel's bombardment, triggered by Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers on Wednesday.

Lebanese hoping to be reunited with family members who live abroad, as they do every summer, were bitterly disappointed when the airport closed because of Israeli airstrikes.

"We're weeping inside," Muhammad Abed said as he puffed on a pipe outside his store that sells traditional artifacts to tourists. "It wasn't the right time for such an operation," he said of Hezbollah snatching the Israeli soldiers. Hezbollah is a militant Shiite faction which has a free hand in southern Lebanon and also holds seats in Parliament.

"Business was just picking up. We were hoping for an excellent summer, but now look at this," added Abed, pointing to hotel porters across the street loading the luggage of Persian Gulf tourists into two cars.

In Lebanon, the only places besides the Lebanon-Syrian border that saw crowds were supermarkets, where mobs of shoppers stocked up on canned food, water and bread, and gas stations, where lines stacked up amid rumors of fuel shortages.

Those who remained in northern Israel moved into bomb shelters, creating a ghost town atmosphere. Clouds of smoke rose on the horizon in several places, the result of a cluster of rockets that ignited fires.

In the Israeli Arab village of Majdel Krum, a few miles to the south and east of Nahariya, a resident, Farhat Farhat, 23, said, "I was walking next door to my cousin's house when I heard this tremendous explosion.

"When I looked up," he continued, "it seemed like my whole house was flying through the air - the roof, the glass, even the water heater."

Conflict jars life on both sides

Seconds later, he said, a second rocket slammed into his cousin's house. Farhat suffered minor cuts to his left hand and left leg, and no one in either house suffered serious injuries.

At the hospital in Nahariya, the patients were moved into underground rooms as a precaution. In the emergency ward, a steady stream of wailing women and sobbing children filled the chaotic hallways.

Dr. Jack Stolerio, who runs the emergency room, has been coping with rockets out of nearby Lebanon for three decades, and Thursday was one of the roughest days he has seen.

"I've never been an optimist," said Stolerio, 57, smoking a cigarette during a brief lull between rocket attacks on Thursday afternoon. "We've had a period of calm for a few years, but I always thought we would see more trouble."

Graphic

PHOTO, GETTY IMAGES

Load-Date: July 14, 2006

End of Document

Inline of fire

Evening Gazette

July 18, 2006, Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS LOCAL; Pg. 12

Length: 360 words

Byline: Audrey Forbes

Body

Safa's fears for family in war zone

A Lebanese man who sought refuge on Teesside has told of his fears for his family caught up in air strikes on his homeland.

Safa Ali has lived in Middlesbrough for six years since fleeing his country to escape the troubles.

Now the voluntary worker at an asylum residents' centre is desperately worried his family may be among innocent people killed in a series of Israeli attacks.

His mother, father, four brothers and sister, along with his extended family of aunts, uncles and cousins, all live in south Lebanon, where villages have been hit.

The 30-year-old's frantic attempts to get through by phone have proved futile because the signal is down.

"My family back home cannot go anywhere as they have blown up the bridges and petrol stations.

"There is nowhere safe in Lebanon now. I am very worried as I don't know if people will survive."

The Israeli raids began on Wednesday after Hezbollah militants seized two of its soldiers.

More than 60 Lebanese have been killed in the past four days as they try to flee. Petrol stations and bridges are being bombed to cut them off.

Lebanon's international airport has been hit twice as Israel continues its attacks by land, sea and air.

"I want the people in Middlesbrough and the North-east to know what is happening", said Safa.

"The people who are dying are innocent. The civilians are just living their own lives."

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has said the offensive will continue until Hezbollah releases the two captured soldiers and stops firing rockets at Israel.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has promised "war on every level" against Israel after his offices were bombed.

Inline of fire

Safa said: "I'm very surprised that this has happened so quickly.

"It has flared up in two days just because of the two Israeli soldiers.

"But Israel has hundreds of Lebanese prisoners including women and children in its prisons."

Now Mr Ali is calling on the British Government to take action to stop more innocent blood being shed.

"Innocent people have a human right in the world.

"There is no peace in Lebanon as we have always had troubles.

"I am asking the government if they can do anything about it."

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

End of Document

War may engulf region, warns envoy; DIPLOMACY; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 7

Length: 355 words

Byline: Craig Skehan

Body

SYRIA'S ambassador to Canberra has warned of a danger of a massive war engulfing the entire Middle East as a result of the worsening conflict in Lebanon.

Tammam Sulaiman said Syria had resisted provocation but it would be "fairly normal" for Israel to try to expand the conflict.

"Then, of course, they could involve not just Syria and Iran but the whole region in a mess - a massive, total war," he said yesterday.

Mr Sulaiman pointed to graphic images on satellite television of Lebanese children wounded by Israeli air strikes.

However, Israel's ambassador, Naftali Tamir, a few hours earlier told the Herald Syria had provided military and other assistance to Hezbollah "terrorists", who were using missiles to kill Israeli civilians.

Mr Tamir said that for the past six years Hezbollah had been a proxy for Syria and Iran "with terrorism as an outlet for an ideology calling for the destruction of Israel".

Both Mr Sulaiman and Mr Tamir said they believed a majority of Australians sympathised with the respective viewpoints of their governments.

While Mr Sulaiman accused Canberra of bias towards Israel, Mr Tamir said he welcomed what he described as supportive statements from Australian Government and Opposition leaders.

The Syrian diplomat said countries such as his own and Iran were right to support groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas, which were fighting to regain land "stolen by Israel".

The Israeli Ambassador said: "We are not looking for an all-out war." However, the Israeli military continued to "consider all options" for action against Syria and Iran over the alleged sponsoring of terrorism.

Mr Tamir said he hoped there would be no ceasefire before the Israeli military was able to destroy "terrorist infrastructure" in Lebanon. He insisted that Israel tried to avoid civilian casualties.

"When we hit with air power - guided missiles, targeted missiles - we warn the civilian population beforehand that we are doing so, then letting them leave," he said. "And then we bombard empty houses."

War may engulf region, warns envoy DIPLOMACY; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

But Mr Sulaiman said of more than 200 people killed in Lebanon by Israeli shelling and air strikes, many were women and children.

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: Tammam Sulaiman ... total war3. Naftali Tamir ... civilians avoided.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Israel offers 3-point peace plan: 210 Lebanese and 24 Israelis killed after 6 days of fighting

The Vancouver Province (British Columbia)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A8

Length: 627 words

Byline: News Services

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM -- Prime Minister Ehud Olmert vowed yesterday that Israel would not suspend air and artillery strikes on Gaza and Lebanon until three kidnapped soldiers are returned, Hezbollah's ability to fire missiles into Israel has been eliminated and the Lebanese army has taken control of areas in southern Lebanon now dominated by the terrorist group.

"Israel will not be held hostage -- not by terror gangs or by a terrorist authority or by any sovereign state," Olmert said in a speech in the Knesset that was broadcast live across Israel.

"We are at a national moment of truth. Will we consent to living under the threat of this Axis of Evil [Syria and Lebanon] or will we mobilize our inner strength and show determination and equanimity? Our answer is clear to every Israeli, and it echoes today throughout the entire region. Israel will not agree to live in the shadow of missiles or rockets against its residents."

Israel's promise to continue the conflict came amid the first signs of diplomatic initiatives to prevent the crisis from escalating. As a United Nations delegation visited Lebanon and Israel to try to mediate the violent dispute, the UN, Britain and France said they would support sending a "stabilization force" to southern Lebanon.

After meetings in Syria, Iran's foreign minister said the best way to resolve the crisis was to have "a ceasefire followed by a prisoner swap" of the three kidnapped Israeli soldiers and prisoners that Israel is holding. Israel has repeatedly said it would not agree to such a deal.

As many as 100 Israeli warplanes ranged over Lebanon for the sixth day yesterday, hitting for the first time army bases in the north and a gas tank farm in northern Beirut. The aircraft, which have flown more than 2,000 sorties since last Wednesday without any casualties, also returned to attack old targets, pounding the port of Beirut and destroying the last two functioning tanks containing jet fuel at the Beirut airport. Gas stations were also targeted again across the country.

Hezbollah fired a fresh volley of rockets deep into Israeli territory along the Mediterranean coast and in the Galilee yesterday. Fighting also broke out again in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Nablus where an Israeli

Israel offers 3-point peace plan: 210 Lebanese and 24 Israelis killed after 6 days of fighting

soldier was killed and six others were wounded when an explosive device was thrown at them as they tried to arrest a member of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades.

Air-raid sirens sounded at least a dozen times in the Israeli port city of Haifa. Most of the Hezbollah rockets fired at Israel's third-largest city missed their mark, but a Katyusha rocket destroyed part of an apartment building, wounding 11 Israelis.

As the UN warned of an impending humanitarian crisis in Lebanon, 25,000 displaced people crowded into the port town of Tyre and more than 100,000 others fled the fighting by crossing over from Lebanon to Syria -- a trek complicated by the fact that Israeli warplanes had destroyed many bridges along the way.

IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

- Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered condolences yesterday to the families of Canadians killed in Lebanon, but has not asked Israel for an explanation for their deaths.

Harper also did not back down from his earlier comment that Israel's bombing of Lebanon was a "measured" response to the Hezbollah kidnapping of Israeli soldiers, a characterization that has angered Canada's Arab community.

- By last night, 210 Lebanese have been reported killed and 410 injured. At least 24 Israelis have died and 303 wounded in the six days of fighting.

- Canadian officials said six chartered cruise ships will be positioned off the coast of Lebanon beginning today to evacuate up to 4,500 trapped Canadians a day and transport them to Cyprus where planes are standing by to fly them home.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Agence France-Presse; A photo showing two Lebanese women is seen on the ground following an Israeli air strike on a house in the southern city of Tyre yesterday.;

Colour Photo: The Associated Press; An Israeli rescue worker yesterday helps a seriously injured man from a three-storey building that took a direct hit by rockets fired by Hezbollah guerrillas from Lebanon into the northern Israeli city of Haifa. Ten other people were also wounded.

Load-Date: July 18, 2006

Militants disagree on Gaza ceasefire

The Australian (Australia)

July 24, 2006 Monday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 394 words

Byline: Abraham Rabinovich

Body

MATP

SENIOR Fatah sources said at the weekend that Hamas and other militant Palestinian factions had agreed to unilaterally stop firing rockets into Israel as the first stage of a process leading to the release of prisoners by both sides and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip.

The ceasefire was to have gone into effect at midnight on Saturday but three rockets were fired into Israel yesterday morning after several militant factions said they did not accept a ceasefire.

Nevertheless, the initiative, which the Hamas political leadership in Gaza had accepted, could be a significant indication of moderation in the Palestinian camp in the wake of unrelenting Israeli pressure on the Gaza Strip.

In addition, Israel's fierce response to the challenge from Hezbollah on the Lebanese border may be strengthening the hand of those Palestinians who want to end the fighting with Israel and dimming the hopes of militants who believed Israel was being worn down.

The latest initiative came from Egypt, which has been playing a major role as an intermediary between Israel and the Palestinians. It calls for the unilateral Palestinian ceasefire to be followed by a halt in Israeli military operations.

Negotiations would then be undertaken for the release of the Israeli corporal, Gilad Shalit, captured last month by Palestinian militants. Israel would pledge to release, at a later date, a number of Palestinian prisoners.

These would be chosen from among prisoners who have been held for 20 years or more as well as female prisoners. In the final stage, Israeli troops would pull back from the Gaza Strip.

It is not clear whether the proposal will be sanctioned by Khaled Meshaal, the political leader of Hamas who operates out of Damascus and takes a harder line than the Hamas leaders in the Gaza Strip.

Without Meshaal's approval, the proposal is unlikely to be implemented. An Israeli official, reacting to the reported initiative, said "what matters are results, not talk".

The head of the Hamas faction in the Palestinian parliament, Salah al-Bardwil, said yesterday that Hamas had no intention of linking negotiations for the release of Corporal Shalit with the release by Hezbollah of the two Israeli soldiers it is holding.

Militants disagree on Gaza ceasefire

"**Hezbollah** entered the picture after Hamas," he said. "They want their prisoners (being held by Israel) and we want ours."

Load-Date: July 23, 2006

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Abduction that led to chaos

Sunday Express
July 16, 2006 Sunday
U.K. 1st Edition

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Section: NEWS; 10

Length: 204 words

Body

JUNE 25: Gaza militants snatch Israeli soldier Cpl Gilad Shalit.

JUNE 26: Militants demand release of all Palestinian women and children held in Israeli prisons in return for information about the soldier.

JUNE 27: Israeli troops move into southern Gaza and warplanes blast bridges and Gaza's power station.

JULY 4: Militants launch a homemade rocket into the heart of the Israeli city of Ashkelon.

JULY 5: Israeli tanks and troops move into the northern Gaza Strip and occupy residential areas.

JULY 8: Israel broadens Gaza offensive, sending troops and 15 tanks into eastern part of the strip.

Hamas government calls for a cease-fire but fails to offer Shalit's release.

Israel refuses.

JULY 12: Lebanese Hezbollah guerrillas snatch two Israeli soldiers and kill eight others in a raid on Israel's northern border.

Israel responds with an air assault and a ground thrust into southern Lebanon.

JULY 12: Israeli air force drops a quarter-ton bomb on a home in an attempt to assassinate top Hamas fugitives.

Nine members of a Palestinian family, including seven children, are killed.

JULY 13: Israeli forces blockade Lebanese ports and bomb runways at Beirut airport. Hezbollah guerillas fire rockets at three Israeli towns including Haifa.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

WILL THIS BE THE TIPPING POINT?

Daily Mail (London)

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 1

Length: 911 words

Byline: RICHARD PENDLEBURY; KIRSTY WALKER

Body

GRIEF and bewilderment in his eyes, a father carries a little girl from the ruins of a shattered village.

This was one of the heartrending scenes yesterday in Qana, southern Lebanon, after Israeli missiles claimed more than 60 lives.

At least 37 children including a day-old baby were killed in the deadliest strike of the conflict so far. Despite defiant messages from Israel and Hezbollah, there were hopes that the carnage of Qana might be the tipping point that could lead to a longed-for ceasefire.

Last night, after urgent telephone discussions, Tony Blair issued a joint statement with German Chancellor Angela Merkel saying Qana 'underlines the urgency of the need for a ceasefire as soon as possible'. The pair said work should start at the UN to establish the 'preconditions' to a ceasefire.

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

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

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

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora reacted by denouncing Israel's 'heinous crimes against civilians' and refusing to meet U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for talks.

The diplomatic crisis deepened as events gathered pace on both sides of the Atlantic.

In a series of developments: Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned he was in no hurry to end the conflict and told Miss Rice he wanted at least ten more days of bombing to smash Hezbollah.

Both Hezbollah and Hamas warned of retaliation against Israel.

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

WILL THIS BE THE TIPPING POINT?

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

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

The Pope said: 'In the name of God, I call on all those responsible for this spiral of violence so that weapons are immediately laid down on all sides.' Israel yesterday said it regretted the incident but added that civilians had been warned to flee the village.

In California, the Prime Minister said he had spent the day talking to world leaders including Mr Siniora and Mr Bush and urged for diplomatic efforts to be stepped up. In signs of a Cabinet split in policy over the crisis, Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett went further than Mr Blair by describing the Qana attack as 'absolutely dreadful'.

Urging Israel to review its tactics, she said: 'It's quite appalling.

Undoubtedly today's events will make things worse at least in the short term.

We have repeatedly urged Israel to act proportionately.' Miss Rice, who was in Jerusalem for talks to find a way through the crisis, said she was 'deeply saddened by the terrible loss of innocent life. We are also pushing for an urgent end to the current hostilities, but the views of the parties on how to achieve this are different.

She also denied that she had been ordered not to come to Lebanon by Mr Siniora.

She said: 'I called him and told him that I was not coming today, because I felt very strongly that my work toward a ceasefire is really here, today.'

The White House described the incident as 'terrible and tragic' and urged the Israeli government to exercise the 'utmost care so as to avoid any civilian casualties,' but significantly did not condemn America's Middle East ally or demand an immediate ceasefire.

Ehud Olmert said Israel would 'continue to act with no hesitation against Hezbollah', which has been firing rockets into Israel from southern Lebanon.

He told his Cabinet yesterday that he privately told Miss Rice that he wanted to continue attacks on Lebanon for up to two more weeks. Israeli officials also described Qana as a 'hub of Hezbollah'.

Kofi Annan yesterday called an emergency UN meeting to discuss the crisis.

He told it: 'Action is needed now before many more children, women and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control.

'I'm deeply dismayed that my earlier calls for immediate cessation of hostilities were not heard, with the result that innocent lives continue to be taken and innocent civilians continue to suffer.' Britain's ambassador to the UN, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, called the events in Qana 'unacceptable'. He added: 'It reinforces the need for the violence to end, and to end now.

'That will be achieved by a Security Council resolution embodying the immediate cessation of hostilities and the political basis for resolving the crisis on a longer-term basis.' But Israel's ambassador to the United Nations warned the meeting that Hezbollah was trying to con the world.

Daniel Gillerman said: 'They want you to react the way you are. I know these are harsh words but I believe them with all my heart and I am beseeching you not to play into their hands, not to provide them with what they are seeking whilst sacrificing their own people as human shields and as victims.' Comment Page 12

WILL THIS BE THE TIPPING POINT?

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Many children among dead and injured after strikes on Tyre

The Irish Times
July 18, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 10

Length: 717 words

Byline: Clancy Chassay in Tyre

Body

MIDDLE EAST: Twelve-year-old Nour lay heavily bandaged and fighting for her life in a hospital in the southern Lebanese city of Tyre. She is one of many children killed and injured in Israeli air strikes on this Mediterranean port in recent days.

"We are praying for her," said Fatima, a laboratory technician doubling as a nurse at Jabal Amal hospital, which is now crowded with the victims of the air strikes.

Ali, the doctor treating Nour, said yesterday he did not know whether she would survive.

"She has large burns all over her body; she is losing a lot of fluids. She probably won't live; her life is now in God's hands."

More ambulances streamed into the hospital and doctors hurried to treat the victims of the latest bombing.

Whatever the Israelis' intended target, the bomb fell on a small canal next to the Qasmia refugee camp, home to about 500 Palestinians. Its victims were 11 children taking an afternoon swim.

The first blast left a crater nearly four metres deep, burying many of the swimmers deep under the orange earth. Seven of the children were injured, three critically. Three others have not been found.

The scene was littered with small plastic sandals, several caked in blood.

Ismael, the father of one of the children, sat on the edge of the crater, his head in his hands weeping.

"Children! Children!" he roared through his tears, "Children here! My son here."

He stood and looked down into the crater: "Is Hizbullah here? Only children here," he said.

Another man staggered around behind Ismael, also unable to control his grief.

The children were taken to the intensive care unit, many caked in earth, having been buried deep in the ground. The victims of the blast joined scores of injured from previous attacks across the south of the country.

Ahmed Mrouwe, the hospital's director, said more than 200 wounded people had been brought into the hospital, one of three in the area.

Many children among dead and injured after strikes on Tyre

"We have received 196 wounded and 25 dead; the majority of them are children and women."

Yesterday was the one of the bloodiest days so far in Lebanon with 42 dead.

In Sidon, 25 miles south of Beirut, an Israeli air strike on a road bridge hit two vehicles, killing 10 civilians and wounding at least seven, medical sources told Reuters. They said both vehicles had been crossing the Rmeileh bridge, heading from the south towards Beirut.

Leaflets dropped from Israeli planes have been urging residents in Hizbullah-controlled areas of the south to leave.

Nine of the dead were in one vehicle. A woman died in the other vehicle and six members of her family were wounded.

Canada has said seven of its nationals were killed in an Israeli strike while holidaying at the southern Lebanese village of Aitaroun.

Early morning attacks left two men dead in the port of Beirut, and eight Lebanese soldiers were killed in a rocket attack on an army position near Tripoli in the north of the country.

An annex of the hospital in Tyre had been bombed the day before. The attack came as doctors were tending to victims of a strike on a 12-storey residential building, which also housed the civil defence offices, in Tyre. That attack left 21 dead, including several children.

Dr Mrouwe said nine people in one family had been killed; only the father had survived.

At the site of the strike rubble lay strewn hundreds of metres from the building. The face of the building had been ripped off, revealing the insides of homes. Furniture dangled out over the charred wreckage of a truck flipped on its side. Huge chunks of cement lay scattered between crumpled cars.

One resident, Mohammed, said he had seen the blast from his house nearby. Amal, his sister's friend, had been killed in the attack; she had just turned five.

At the hospital small children were grouped in clusters throughout its corridors, many displaced by the strikes on their homes.

In one room a 50-year-old woman lay motionless in her bed, burns covering much of her body. She had narrowly survived the attack on the building. She did not know it yet but her son had died in the operating theatre that morning.

Asked how it compared to 1996 when Israel launched an attack on the south, killing scores of civilians, Dr Mrouwe said: "It's incomparable, incomparable. In 1996 the majority [of casualties] were fighters. This time we have yet to receive any fighters."

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

Crisis in the Middle East

The Irish Times
July 18, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 15

Length: 1281 words

Body

Madam, - George Bush has been supportive of Israel's actions in Lebanon. This does not surprise many people, but on examination it is a huge contradiction in American foreign policy.

On the one hand the Americans argue that Israel has a right to defend itself, but they seem to have forgotten they also have an interest in a successful Lebanon. Since the end of the civil war there, Lebanon has been on its way to becoming an unprecedented success story in cross party co-operation. This is George Bush's dream scenario for Iraq and now it is being threatened because Israel doesn't want to be outsmarted.

It was obvious from the start that Hizbullah's attack on the Israeli border post was a tactical move and did not really represent the reopening of a Lebanese front. It was designed to support the people of Gaza. Instead of attempting to negotiate the release of their soldiers, Israel decided to make the Lebanese people pay. How are the Lebanese people supposed to respond to that? They don't have any option. To attempt to disarm Hizbullah would start another civil war.

The only benefit Israel gains by this action is to make the Israeli public feel good about themselves, to show that Israel's hand cannot be forced. For this, 100 Lebanese had to die, and the power-sharing arrangement in Lebanon is put under enormous stress. How can the US support that?

Lebanon is the model for Iraq. Why is a transient Israeli tactical advantage more important than the success of Lebanon or Iraq? George Bush should realise that US interests in the Middle East are not being served by the continuing Israeli actions. - Yours, etc,

MICHAEL BERMINGHAM.

Droichead na Dothra,

Baile Átha Cliath 4.

Madam, - Why does the civilised world stand idly by while Israel murders large numbers of innocent civilians in Gaza and Lebanon?

I do not condone the taking of Israeli troops as hostages, but the response has been way over the top. To date more than 100 innocent civilians have been killed by Israeli action in Gaza and Lebanon.

Crisis in the Middle East

In addition, can anyone explain why it is necessary to deprive innocent citizens of their basic right to electricity, water and sanitary services, the destruction of which appear to serve no useful purpose whatsoever? Similarly, the attack on Beirut International Airport and the blockading of the country's ports are needless and pointless.

When are democratic governments going to condemn what the Israelis are doing? On a personal level, I absolutely refuse, and have done for many years, to purchase any Israeli-produced goods. - Yours, etc,

WE SHEPHERD,

Blackwater,

Co Wexford.

Madam, - As Senator Brendan Ryan well knows when he refers to "the murder of innocent civilians, many of them children" (July 15th), murder is the deliberate, premeditated unlawful killing of another human being. Israel has not "murdered" any civilians.

The civilians killed in the Israeli retaliation against Gaza and Lebanon for the respective invasions by Hamas and Hizbullah were not targeted by Israel.

Israel aims to hit only military targets and infrastructure that helps the military. Civilians have never been targeted, but they are killed collaterally, and often because Islamicist fighters purposely choose to hide and fight from among civilians, or pretend to be civilians.

Islamicist fighters (including Palestinians), on the other hand, deliberately and openly target Israeli civilians, in schools, shops, restaurants, nightclubs, buses, etc, with no military target in sight.

The death statistics for the period October 2000 to December 2003 show this up: for every Palestinian combatant killed by Israelis, 0.7 non-combatants were killed. For every Israeli combatant killed, 3.6 non-combatants were killed. - Yours etc,

TONY ALLWRIGHT,

Killiney,

Co Dublin.

Madam, - So the prevailing moral imperative in the Middle East is Israel's "right to defend herself", according to bully boys Blair and Bush. What, one may ask, is then left to the Lebanese and Palestinian civilians, men, women and children? Merely the "right" to be incinerated in the Israeli blitzkrieg? How reassuring, how moral, how Christian. - Yours, etc,

Senator DAVID NORRIS,

Seanad Éireann,

Dublin 2.

Madam, - Paul Scanlon (July 14th) claims that the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza was part of a broader political strategy and may have been some sort of diversion from the construction of the wall between the West Bank and pre-1967 Israel. Working on that premise, perhaps Israel's most recent incursion into Lebanon was a calculated ploy to divert attention from hostilities in Gaza.

Crisis in the Middle East

Nobody is denying that Palestinians have suffered greatly during the intifada, as have many Israelis. However, no matter how blunt it may appear, if an electorate votes in politicians that have openly campaigned for the destruction of Israel while "driving the Jews into the sea", then it must be prepared to face the consequences. Israel has a right to defend itself and has been doing so since its creation in 1947.

Mr Scanlon accuses Israel of trampling on Palestinian human rights and ignoring international law. As usual, not only he, but the Irish media at large pay scant attention to the sufferings of thousands of Israelis who have been the victims of terrorist campaigns that have always defied not only international law, but basic human decency. Blowing up buses full of innocents is not a convincing method of Palestinians defending themselves. It only incurs further wrath from a nation that has had to contend with such awful attacks since its inception. Is Mr Scanlon aware that Israelis have suffered terribly at the hands of terrorism? Does he know that "suffering" has been second nature to the Jewish people since the time of Abraham?

Little mention is made of the fact that Israel is a democratic society founded on similar principles to our State, but has had to remain on a permanent war footing because of Arab and Palestinian hostility. Most Israelis would prefer not to have to do army service to defend their country against those who campaign for its destruction. Sadly, the status quo will remain so long as Israel has to defend itself against constant terrorist incursions that so many in the media have failed to condemn. Until the Palestinian nation accepts that Israel will never give in to those that want to destroy her, the future is indeed bleak.

Regrettably, suffering on both sides will continue until the Palestinian people elect leaders who are willing to come to the negotiating table after ceasing all hostilities and acknowledge that there is room for two nations to co-exist peacefully. So to answer Scanlon's final question, yes these are the actions of a democratic country. - Yours, etc,

DAVID PETER FINE,

St Pappin's Road,

Dublin 11.

Madam, - Few things educate better than experience. After completing a 2,000-mile journey by bicycle to the Holy Land and spending a week there I have returned a newly educated person.

To see at first hand the wall that separates the Palestinians from the Israelis is saddening in the extreme. My visit brought me to Bethlehem, which the locals rightly describe as an open prison. They are cut off from employment and economic opportunities. They are cut off from their own land and even their own families. They do not have control over their own water or electricity supplies.

Passing through the checkpoint controls into the town, I felt humiliated, intimidated and fundamentally disrespected. Fortunately for me, I only had that experience twice; Palestinians "lucky" enough to have permits into Israel are subjected to the experience twice daily.

It is clear who are the oppressors and who the oppressed. - Yours, etc,

ELEANOR DUNN,

Chapelizod,

Dublin 20.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

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U.S. has wool pulled over its own eyes

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

July 27, 2006 Thursday

Main Edition

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**The Atlanta
Journal-Constitution**

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 19A

Length: 761 words

Byline: JAY BOOKMAN

Staff

Body

Back in the giddy days before reality exposed their naivete for what it is, advocates of invading Iraq liked to argue that "the road to peace in the Middle East goes through Baghdad," as Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz and others put it.

After removing Saddam Hussein, the story went, we would create a pro-American, pro-Israeli democracy that other countries would emulate, making the Middle East a more friendly place for both Israel and the United States.

Today, though, Arabs horrified by the slaughter in Iraq are now far less eager to experiment with democracy. And as recent events make clear, a democratic Iraq is no more friendly to Israel than Saddam's Iraq had been.

Just last week, Iraq's Parliament condemned what it called Israel's "criminal aggression" in responding to attacks by Hezbollah. Cleric Muqtada al Sadr talked of sending his fighters to aid Hezbollah --- something Saddam would never tolerate --- and the speaker of Iraq's Parliament, Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, even blamed Iraq's internal violence on the Jews.

"I am sure that he who does this is a Jew and the son of a Jew," al-Mashhadani said, claiming Zionists "are using Iraqi money and oil to frustrate the Islamic movement in Iraq."

Yet President Bush continues to cling to the notion that democracy is the cure.

"The terrorists are afraid of democracies," he said this week. "And what you've witnessed in Israel, in my judgment, is the act of a terrorist organization trying to stop the advance of democracy in the region."

Hezbollah, however, attacked Israel, not democracy, and in fact is a full and ardent participant in Lebanon's democracy, to the point that it holds seats in its Parliament. The same holds true in the West Bank and Gaza, where free elections have given power to Hamas, another terror group dedicated to Israel's destruction. While

U.S. has wool pulled over its own eyes

democracy is a wonderful thing, it produces a tolerant, peaceful government only if it's elected by a tolerant, peaceful people.

But unfortunately, the naivete of this administration is armor-plated and can't be penetrated, and not just on the question of democracy.

Our invasion of Iraq, for example, was motivated by an equally naive faith in the transforming power of violence. It may seem odd to think of it that way --- it is usually the pacifist, not the aggressor, who gets tagged with the label of naive --- but the term is accurate nonetheless. It is just as easy to have a foolish, simplistic faith in the power of force as to have a similar foolish faith in the power of pacifism.

Answering violence with even more violence does offer a powerful emotional gratification. After the outrage of Sept. 11, 2001, Americans sought --- and for a short time got --- emotional gratification out of invading Iraq. But we've also paid a heavy price for that.

Israel offers another case study. Using airpower and excessive force to crush Hezbollah may feel good, but as a strategy that approach violates every tenet of counterinsurgency warfare. For every 10 guerrillas you kill that way, you risk creating 100, and in the long term the mathematics of that will ruin you.

Israel ought to understand that by now. A generation ago, it invaded Lebanon, all but leveling Beirut in the process, trying to teach its enemies a lesson. In the process it ended up radicalizing the Shiites of southern Lebanon and creating Hezbollah, the very group now firing missiles at Israeli cities and killing Israeli soldiers.

That invasion had consequences for others as well.

"The events that affected me directly were that of 1982, and the events that followed, when America allowed the Israelis to invade Lebanon, helped by the U.S. 6th Fleet," Osama bin Laden recalled two years ago. "As I watched the destroyed towers in Lebanon, it occurred to me to punish the unjust the same way [and] to destroy towers in America so it could taste some of what we are tasting and to stop killing our children and women."

To some, questioning the effectiveness of brute force is akin to advocating appeasement. That too is naive. You do not --- must never --- surrender to or appease terrorists. You must defeat them, but you do so first by understanding that however good it might feel, indulging in vengeance is weakness, not strength, and harms your cause more than that of your enemy.

You use your military power to kill your enemy, but only your enemy. And you understand that all the military power in the world cannot beat anger and hatred out of people.

* Jay Bookman is the deputy editorial page editor. His column appears Thursdays and Mondays.

jbookman@ajc.com

Load-Date: July 27, 2006

Islamists assail U.S. and its 'puppets'; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS / Blaming U.S. policy for rising radicalism

The International Herald Tribune

July 22, 2006 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 630 words

Byline: Neil MacFarquhar

Dateline: DAMASCUS

Body

The main weekly prayer sermons in mosques from Mecca to Marrakesh, Morocco, on Friday underscored the sharp contrast between the swelling David-versus-Goliath glamour Arabs associate with Hezbollah's fight and the utter antipathy toward the United States and its regional allies 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 Hazza'a al-Maswari, an Islamist member of Parliament, in his Friday sermon at the Mujahid mosque in Sanaa, the Yemeni capital. "Where are the Arab leaders? 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 underscored how the lack of a cease-fire in Lebanon is both further tarnishing the image of the United States in the Arab world as being solely concerned with Israel's welfare and making its allied regimes look increasingly like puppets.

"What is creating radicalism in the region is not authoritarian regimes, mainly it is American policy in the region survey after survey shows that," said Mustafa Hamarneh, director of the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan, whose polls have charted the steady decline of America's image among Arabs.

The pervasive attacks against Arab leaders from the pulpit were all the more surprising because so many regimes have exerted some manner of central government 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 inspire extremists.

In Damascus, for example, where the government has been trying to keep a low profile as the fighting surges, leading prayer leaders focused on the need to donate generously to help Lebanese refugees pouring over the border. But they also slipped in criticism of neighbors, although critics of Hezbollah, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan, were not mentioned by name.

"What gives us pain is the Arab position," said Muhammed al-Habash, a cleric who serves in Syria's Parliament, speaking at Al Zahra Mosque. "They are entering a conspiracy against the Arabs, their brothers."

Islamists assail U.S. and its 'puppets' MIDDLE EAST CRISIS / Blaming U.S. policy for rising radicalism

In an interview, the cleric said that by encouraging the Israelis to continue their onslaught, the United States was only helping religious extremists. By not working harder to stop the deaths of scores of Lebanese women and children, the United States "is creating more Zargawis, more bin Ladens in the Mideast every day," Habash said.

The United States blames Syrian support for groups like Hezbollah and Hamas as being a cause of extremism.

The Saudi government also took a particularly strong public position against Hezbollah provoking the crisis by capturing two Israeli soldiers, issuing a statement last week condemning the organization's "uncalculated adventures." Washington has leaned heavily on this 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 royal policy.

The entire Muslim nation should be proud of the bravery shown by both the Palestinians and the Lebanese confronting Israel, said Sheik Abdul Rahman al-Sudais, while pointedly addressing Muslim leaders directly, urging them to return to "sound reason and unify their ranks."

He also took an indirect swipe at the United States for pretending to push 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 said. "They don't fear that history will condemn them for their policy of double standards?"

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

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First British evacuees dock safely after fleeing Lebanon

Evening News (Edinburgh)

July 19, 2006, Wednesday

Home Edition

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Section: Pg. 2

Length: 570 words

Byline: Ian Swanson

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.

United States 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.

Airstrikes also destroyed 15 houses in the village of Srifa, near the southern city of Tyre. The village head said 25 to 30 people were believed to have been in the houses.

By this morning, at least 242 people had been killed in Lebanon and 25 in Israel since the fighting broke out on July 12 following Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers.

The first sea-bound wave of British evacuees, mainly women and children, looked tired but relieved as they disembarked from the Type 42 destroyer HMS Gloucester in Cyprus just before 7.20am local time (5.20am BST).

First British evacuees dock safely after fleeing Lebanon

Consular staff, the Foreign Office's rapid deployment team and immigration officials flown over from the UK were waiting on the dockside at the southern port of Limassol to greet the 180 evacuees.

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 at RAF Akrotiri on Cyprus later today to bring them to the UK.

And a second Type 42 destroyer, 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, amid accusations that the British have been slow to respond in comparison with countries like France and Italy.

Peter Millet said that there were far more British people in Lebanon than many other nationalities.

"This is an effort that has been based on safety and security," he said. "We have a duty of care towards our citizens. 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.

The aircraft carrier Illustrious is also preparing to bring British evacuees out of Lebanon and can carry more than 1000 people if needed.

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

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**THERE ARE SO MANY DEAD CHILDREN... WE JUST KEEP FINDING THEM;
34 KIDS AMONG 56 CIVILIANS KILLED AS LEBANON SINKS DEEPER INTO
HELL RESCUER SOBS AT AIR STRIKE CARNAGE**

Daily Record

July 31, 2006, Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 1096 words

Byline: By John Clements in Beirut

Body

FOR hour after hour, Abu Shadi Jradi helped dig out corpses from the ruins the Israeli air strike left behind.

Then he walked away, threw himself to the ground under a tree and began to sob.

"There are so many children," the rescue worker wept. "We just keep pulling out children and more children."

At least 34 kids were killed in the Lebanese village of Qana when a missile destroyed the house where they were hiding.

The total death toll was at least 56 - five more than Israel has lost in the entire conflict. And Lebanese officials said 11 more dead children could be buried under the rubble.

The victims all came from two extended families, the Shalhoub and the Hashims. The adults killed were mainly women and old men.

Many had come into Qana from the surrounding area, hoping to escape the fighting. They huddled together in one house for comfort, and were asleep in a cellar when the air raid began at 1am yesterday.

Locals said dozens of bombs blasted the village. The three storey building where the families were sheltering was flattened.

Long after dawn broke, rescuers were still recovering bodies.

A little girl's gold ear-rings glinted in the sunshine as her remains were loaded into an ambulance. Another tiny victim lay lifeless at her feet.

The corpse of a boy of 10 or 11 could be seen in the rubble nearby. He was rigid, his face disfigured.

One survivor, Mohamed Shalhoub, lost all five of his children, including a two-year-old. His wife, sister and aunt also died.

Mohamed was one of only a dozen people to get out alive. Recalling the explosion, he said: "I felt as if I was turning around, and the earth was going up and I was going into the earth."

THERE ARE SO MANY DEAD CHILDREN... WE JUST KEEP FINDING THEM 34 KIDS AMONG 56 CIVILIANS KILLED AS LEBANON SINKS DEEPER INTO HELL RESCUER SOBS AT AIR STRIKE CARN....

Another family member, Khalil Shalhoub, joined the rescue - and saw that his brother was among the dead. He threw himself on top of the body and screamed: "Why are they killing us? What have we done?"

Rescuers dug into the rubble with their hands until a bulldozer arrived in the afternoon.

The bodies were wrapped in plastic sheeting and laid out nearby. Local people placed flowers on each of them.

Recovery work continued as darkness fell. Everyone expected to find more dead.

Qana sits to the east of the city of Tyre, in the heart of the war zone.

Israel had used radio broadcasts and leaflet drops to repeatedly warn local people to flee. But at the same time, Israeli jets constantly bombed the only route to safety.

The road into Qana from Tyre is littered with bomb craters and burned-out cars. Survivors of the air raid said they were too afraid to try to escape.

Thousands of civilians are still trapped in southern Lebanon. But despite the horror of Qana, Israel remained determined to continue its onslaught against the Hezbollah militants who provoked the conflict.

Prime minister Ehud Olmert said: "I express great sorrow over the deaths of Lebanese civilians in Qana. There is nothing further from our thoughts and our interests than striking civilians.

"When we strike civilians, the world understands this is an exceptional case that does not represent how we act."

But Olmert added: "We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning. We will continue and, if necessary, it will be broadened without hesitation."

Olmert said Hezbollah were to blame for the deaths because they chose to launch rocket attacks on Israel from Lebanese villages.

Israeli officials said "hundreds of rockets" had been fired from Qana during the conflict and 40 were launched from the area immediately before the air strike.

They denied deliberately hitting the house where the children died. A government spokeswoman said: "The building was next to the rocket-launcher sites we were targeting. This was a mistake and we will have a full investigation."

Israel's words of regret did nothing to ease anger in Lebanon.

A crowd of 5000 briefly stormed the United Nations headquarters in Beirut to protest, before being driven back by the Lebanese army.

Lebanese prime minister Fuad Siniora was due to meet American secretary of state Condoleezza Rice in Beirut yesterday.

But in the wake of the Qana attack, Lebanese officials told Rice she was not welcome.

Siniora denounced Israel's "heinous crimes against civilians" and refused to hold any more talks without "an immediate and unconditional ceasefire".

George Bush and Tony Blair have refused to call for an immediate end to the fighting, or to criticise Israeli tactics.

They insist there can only be a lasting peace if, as Israel wants, Hezbollah are disarmed and driven back from the border.

Rice stuck to the official line yesterday, while insisting that she was the one who decided to call off the meeting with Siniora.

THERE ARE SO MANY DEAD CHILDREN... WE JUST KEEP FINDING THEM 34 KIDS AMONG 56 CIVILIANS KILLED AS LEBANON SINKS DEEPER INTO HELL RESCUER SOBS AT AIR STRIKE CARN....

Speaking from Jerusalem, where she had talks with Olmert at the weekend, she said she was deeply saddened by "the terrible loss of innocent life" in Qana.

But she added: "We all recognise that this kind of warfare is extremely difficult.

"It unfortunately has awful consequences sometimes."

Critics of Bush and Blair have accused them of giving Israel free rein to carry on the war.

And according to one Israeli official, Olmert told Rice he needed 10 to 12 more days to finish the offensive. Olmert's office denied the report.

Bush and Blair were looking more isolated than ever last night.

At an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council, secretary general Kofi Annan urged all members to strongly condemn the Qana attack. Annan also repeated his call for an immediate ceasefire, saying: "Action is needed now, before many more children, women and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control."

Earlier, French president Jacques Chirac condemned the Qana attack as "unjustifiable".

And Pope Benedict XVI called for all those responsible for the violence to "immediately put down their arms". He stressed the word "immediately".

The fighting in Lebanon began on July 12, after Hezbollah militants crossed into Israel, kidnapped two soldiers and killed eight more. Since then, a huge Israeli air bombardment has devastated large areas of the country and hundreds of Hezbollah rockets have crashed down on northern Israel.

Israeli and Hezbollah troops have also fought for control of key strong points on the ground.

The killings in Qana took the official Lebanese death toll in the fighting to 514, including at least 403 civilians. The Beirut government claims that more than 200 more bodies could still be lying undiscovered in the rubble.

Fifty-one Israelis, 33 of them soldiers, have been killed.

RECORD VIEW: Page 8

'I felt as if I was turning around and the earth was going up and I was going into the earth'

Graphic

STORMING IN: Hezbollah supporters smash their way into the UN headquarters in Beirut' DIGGING IN: Rescue workers and soldiers search for victims in Qana. Inset, bodies are lined up outside a hospital EPA/ALIHAIDE

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

**CHILDREN ARE EVERYWHERE.. WE'RE PULLING OUT MORE AND MORE
BODIES; 34 KIDS KILLED AS SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS
ESCALATES IN LEBANON 56 DIE IN ISRAELI AIR STRIKE CARNAGE**

Daily Record

July 31, 2006, Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 1080 words

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Mohamed was one of only a dozen people to get out alive. Recalling the explosion, he said: "I felt as if I was turning around, and the earth was going up and I was going into the earth."

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

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The bodies were wrapped in plastic sheeting and laid out nearby. Local people placed flowers on each of them.

Recovery work continued as darkness fell. Everyone expected to find more dead.

Qana sits to the east of the city of Tyre, in the heart of the war zone.

Israel had used radio broadcasts and leaflet drops to repeatedly warn local people to flee. But at the same time, Israeli jets constantly bombed the only route to safety.

The road into Qana from Tyre is littered with bomb craters and burned-out cars. Survivors of the air raid said they were too afraid to try to escape.

Thousands of civilians are still trapped in southern Lebanon. But despite the horror of Qana, Israel remained determined to continue its onslaught against the Hezbollah militants who provoked the conflict.

Prime minister Ehud Olmert said: "I express great sorrow over the deaths of Lebanese civilians in Qana. There is nothing further from our thoughts and our interests than striking civilians.

"When we strike civilians, the world understands this is an exceptional case that does not represent how we act."

But Olmert added: "We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning. We will continue and, if necessary, it will be broadened without hesitation."

Olmert said Hezbollah were to blame for the deaths because they chose to launch rocket attacks on Israel from Lebanese villages.

Israeli officials said "hundreds of rockets" had been fired from Qana during the conflict and 40 were launched from the area immediately before the air strike.

They denied deliberately hitting the house where the children died. A government spokeswoman said: "The building was next to the rocket-launcher sites we were targeting. This was a mistake and we will have a full investigation."

Israel's words of regret did nothing to ease anger in Lebanon.

A crowd of 5000 briefly stormed the United Nations headquarters in Beirut to protest, before being driven back by the Lebanese army.

Lebanese prime minister Fuad Siniora was due to meet American secretary of state Condoleezza Rice in Beirut yesterday.

But in the wake of the Qana attack, Lebanese officials told Rice she was not welcome.

Siniora denounced Israel's "heinous crimes against civilians" and refused to hold any more talks without "an immediate and unconditional ceasefire".

George Bush and Tony Blair have refused to call for an immediate end to the fighting, or to criticise Israeli tactics.

They insist there can only be a lasting peace if, as Israel wants, Hezbollah are disarmed and driven back from the border.

Rice stuck to the official line yesterday, while insisting that she was the one who decided to call off the meeting with Siniora.

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

Speaking from Jerusalem, where she had talks with Olmert at the weekend, she said she was deeply saddened by "the terrible loss of innocent life" in Qana.

But she added: "We all recognize that this kind of warfare is extremely difficult.

"It unfortunately has awful consequences sometimes."

Critics of Bush and Blair have accused them of giving Israel free rein to carry on the war.

And according to one Israeli official, Olmert told Rice he needed 10 to 12 more days to finish the offensive. Olmert's office denied the report.

Bush and Blair were looking more isolated than ever last night.

At an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council, secretary general Kofi Annan urged all members to strongly condemn the Qana attack. Annan also repeated his call for an immediate ceasefire, saying: "Action is needed now, before many more children, women and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control."

Earlier, French president Jacques Chirac condemned the Qana attack as "unjustifiable".

And Pope Benedict XVI called for all those responsible for the violence to "immediately put down their arms". He stressed the word "immediately".

The fighting in Lebanon began on July 12, after Hezbollah militants crossed into Israel, kidnapped two soldiers and killed eight more. Since then, a huge Israeli air bombardment has devastated large areas of the country and hundreds of Hezbollah rockets have crashed down on northern Israel.

Israeli and Hezbollah troops have also fought for control of key strongpoints on the ground.

The killings in Qana took the official Lebanese death toll in the fighting to 514, including at least 403 civilians. The Beirut government claims that more than 200 more bodies could still be lying undiscovered in the rubble.

Fifty-one Israelis, 33 of them soldiers, have been killed.

RECORD VIEW: Page 8

Graphic

STORMING IN: Hezbollah supporters smash their way into the UN headquarters in Beirut' DIGGING IN: Rescue workers and soldiers search for victims in Qana. Inset, bodies are lined up outside a hospital

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Backstory: The few and fortunate who escaped Beirut

Christian Science Monitor

July 26, 2006, Wednesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 20

Length: 1128 words

Byline: Nicole Itano Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: BEIRUT, LEBANON; AND LARNACA, CYPRUS

Body

The open-air landing craft listed suddenly sideways, sending children tumbling into their mothers. Bags fell over. A salty wave splashed over the side, drenching those on one side.

But as the US military boat pushed away from the pebble shore on the outskirts of Beirut, bearing hundreds of American citizens away from the growing crisis in Lebanon and toward safety, the relief of those on board was evident. A few laughed nervously, while others waved to US Marines onshore or pulled out cameras to snap mementos of their departure.

Packed in among those headed to the USS Trenton, a warship just offshore, were 23-year-old Rana Zayek and her new husband, Nassar Sokhn, from San Francisco. When the Lebanese-American couple had planned their wedding at the flashy Casino du Liban, outside Beirut, they thought it would be fun to introduce American friends to the cosmopolitan capital of the country their families are from. Hundreds were invited, including at least 20 who planned to come from California, where Ms. Zayek works with foster children and Mr. Sokhn is a software engineer.

But two days before their July 14 wedding, **Hizbullah**, the Lebanese Islamist group, staged a raid into Israel, killing eight soldiers and capturing two. Israel's response was immediate and sustained, raining bombs on Lebanon. And with **Hizbullah** launching rockets into northern Israel and Israeli troops engaging **Hizbullah** guerrillas on the ground, the couple found their wedding coinciding with war.

They went ahead with the wedding, but it wasn't the event they'd planned. None of their San Francisco friends made it (the Beirut airport was bombed). While 147 Lebanese family and friends came, "half of the guests left by dinner," Zayek said sadly, her new ring twinkling in the Mediterranean sun.

A week later, the young couple was waiting for evacuation near a beach outside Beirut with thousands of other American citizens. Twenty-five thousand Americans were trapped in Lebanon when the fighting erupted, along with tens of thousands of other foreign citizens.

"We only had a honeymoon for one day," Sokhn laughed. "Then we decided we better try to get out. We called the embassy again and again, but no one could tell us what was going on."

They were told they'd be contacted when a concrete evacuation plan had been arranged. But no one ever called. Meanwhile, rumors were flying: one said the US government was charging \$4,000 to get out (in fact, the evacuations were free). Eventually the local news said that Americans were to meet at the Dbayeh Bridge in Beirut.

Backstory: The few and fortunate who escaped Beirut

They went and were sent away because the boats were full that day. Last Friday, a week after their wedding, the couple and some of their American relatives returned at 4:30 in the morning.

"We were afraid they were going to send us away again," said Zayek, exhausted after hours of standing in a chaotic line for evacuation registration. "We were right on the bridge and people were pushing and shoving. We were like animals," she recalled after being processed and awaiting to board the landing craft.

"Until the marines came," her husband chimed in, gesturing to soldiers in desert fatigues handing out military rations - known as MREs or meals ready-to-eat - and water. "They were much better. They were very patient, very polite. But outside it was bad."

By the time Sokhn and Zayek boarded the USS Trenton, it was packed. The Trenton, which has a normal capacity of 800, was carrying more than 1,500 evacuees, plus crew.

Inside, sailors helped passengers carry bags through narrow corridors and up steep metal staircases. Children slept on mattresses stuffed into tiny nooks. Before the ship even left Lebanon, the trash cans in the bathrooms were overflowing and water covered the floor, but the crew was unfailingly polite and cooks dished up plates of fried chicken in the mess hall.

"Did you actually see any bombs?" one stocky teenage boy in a baggy sport jersey asked another as they stood in line waiting for dinner.

"Nah," said the other, with evident disappointment. "But I heard them."

Up on deck, Hala Abinader, a 27-year-old Lebanese-American who recently moved from Manhattan to London, was fortunate to have boarded early. She found a cot overlooking the clear blue sea, and lay reading a paperback novel.

If smoke hadn't been rising from the cityscape on the horizon, and her right foot hadn't been in a cast, she might have been on a pleasant holiday cruise. As it was, she was fleeing the place where she'd gone to spend a pleasant vacation with friends. She broke her foot, she admitted, running from the sound of a falling bomb. It fell miles into the ocean, and no one else had panicked. But never having heard a bomb before, she'd been terrified nonetheless.

She was angry, tired, and worried. "The embassy has done the worst job," she grouched. "They've been treating us like cattle. I've been sitting outside for hours.... They had no priorities. It should've been women and children first. All they said was anyone who had four kids could go ahead," she laughed. "Who has four kids?"

She grew suddenly somber, thinking of friends and family left behind with no way out and no foreign government to help them. "I think this time it's going to be really bad. The economy isn't strong enough to sustain something like this. It's such a shame, because people there don't want this."

The USS Trenton steamed northwest through 120 miles of calm seas before docking in the Cypriot port of Limassol early Saturday. Its tired passengers were shuttled by bus to the International Fair Grounds in the capital, Nicosia.

There they joined hundreds of other Americans among bright-orange cots set out in a florescent-lit exhibition hall. After days of waiting, here was another wait: this time for flights home.

Mohamad Rawas and his 4-year-old daughter, Samar, spent 24 hours at the camp in Nicosia. That was after 17 hours on the MS Ramah, a US-hired Saudi passenger ship which had mechanical troubles en route. He and his daughter had been scheduled to fly home to Los Angeles the day bombs destroyed the Beirut airport - and they witnessed the bombing as they drove there.

"When [Samar] heard the bombs, she jumped," he recalled. "And I tell her it's just fireworks."

Backstory: The few and fortunate who escaped Beirut

By Sunday, Mr. Rawas and his daughter, remarkably clean and neat in head-to-toe pink, had finally made it to the Larnaca airport. They were to board a military plane bound for Newark, N.J. How they'd get from there to their home in L.A., he wasn't yet sure. But he was relieved to be out of Lebanon, where he'd gone to visit his sick mother.

"Thank God she hasn't been giving me a hard time," he sighed, looking at his daughter playing with another child. "We've still got a long way to go."

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Load-Date: July 25, 2006

End of Document

Trapped in a vengeful machismo

The Toronto Star

July 28, 2006 Friday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. A21

Length: 889 words

Body

At one level, the fight between *Hezbollah* and Israel is guided by rational considerations of tactics, strategy, and politics. Israel hopes to restructure the Lebanese balance of power, while *Hezbollah* seeks to preserve influence and military prowess.

At a deeper level, however, the struggle is about wounded national and masculine pride. As the casualties mount, vengeful publics on both sides support redoubled efforts to physically pummel the other.

Fear of humiliation drives the conflict in multiple ways. Many Israelis feared the *Hezbollah* attacks, along with earlier attacks by Hamas, challenged their identity as proud, capable Jewish fighters, exposing them as wimps incapable of defending their borders.

Thus, the massively disproportionate Israeli barrage can be seen as a strange form of therapy. With each explosion north of the border, Jewish humiliation is mollified, if only until the next *Hezbollah* rocket strikes.

Many Palestinians and Lebanese are also enraged by these and previous attacks, motivating their support for attacks on Israeli civilians and cities. Given that Arabs have long suffered from Jewish bullets and shells, the ability of some Muslim fighters to blow up Jewish bodies must be gratifying to some.

Fascination with heroic images of warrior derring-do also played a role in the *Hezbollah* kidnapping of Israeli soldiers that sparked this latest round of war. The group's otherwise puzzling commitment to militancy six years after Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon could also be usefully understood in this light.

Toxic macho urges lurk deep in the collective psyche of entire societies, nurtured by periodic displays of state-led pageantry, sober commentary on past heroism, and crudely sensationalist movies.

Although machismo and wounded pride may not trigger conflict on their own, they do help make it more likely when other conditions apply. For example, countries affected by particularly potent strains of machismo are more likely to overreact when challenged, as did the U.S. after 9/11.

Canada is not immune. As casualties mount in Afghanistan, the grim-lipped pseudo-heroism of our leaders easily lends itself to a culture of mindless militarism, allowing the size of our guns, planes, and armoured vehicles to assume centre stage in national debates.

Machismo is a sickness that strikes many young males - and some *females* - in their teens and early 20s. In peacetime, it expresses itself through hazing rituals, excessive interest in violent entertainment and an obsession with loud engines and competitive sports.

Trapped in a vengeful machismo

In politically tense regions, machismo can be expressed in more overtly violent ways, including the cult of the gun that has spread throughout much of the Middle East. Israeli settlers and soldiers march through occupied lands with their rifles at the ready; some young Palestinian males mimic their opponents, parading about with guns and explosive belts in deeply disturbing ways.

As we age, most of us leave the worst forms of machismo behind. Traces of the illness, however, linger in our psyches for years, emerging full-blown at times of perceived national crisis.

I know first-hand how deadly this sickness can be, since I was once ensnared in its grasp. As a young boy growing up in Israel during the late 1970s and early '80s, I learned that physical prowess was crucial to gaining peer respect. When drafted at the age of 18, my disgust with army life was tempered by secret delight at the unlimited access provided to the essential props of masculinity, including guns, explosives and large vehicles. Few of my peers enjoyed their three years of military life, but most took at least some pleasure in the opportunity to drive aggressively and make things go boom.

By some uncanny stroke of luck, I saw only limited combat in the mid-1980s, sandwiched as my time was between Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, and the 1988 Palestinian uprising. Yet we constantly trained for violence, and every day was a new celebration of hyper-masculinity.

Small group dynamics in the military were toxic, including relentless hazing and stigmatization of some for wimpish behaviour. Dominant figures had more physical endurance and technical prowess, but compassion, tolerance, and maturity were in short supply.

I'm now approaching 40, and most of my North American age cohort has long lost interest in posturing and aggression. In war-torn regions such as the Middle East, however, a young male culture predominates, trapping even older and wiser folk in a deadly narrative of humiliation, rage, and revenge.

In the coming weeks, diplomats will probably engineer a ceasefire across the Lebanese-Israeli border. There will be no lasting peace, however, until these powerful sentiments are not calmed. More violence, no matter how proportionate or justified, will not help, but beyond that, the way forward remains obscure.

Personally, I have little hope that the country I left 13 years ago will change in my lifetime. The patterns of vengeful machismo, I fear, are too deeply engrained on all sides.

James Ron is associate professor at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University. He previously held the Canada Research Chair in Conflict and Human Rights at McGill University and is author of *Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Israel*.

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

**West can't relate as tribes fight in the name of God; Letters to the
Editor>letters.editor@canberratimes.com.au**

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 29, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. B06

Length: 621 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

I refer to the recent spate of letters and opinion pieces on the situation in Palestine, Israel and Lebanon.

We will get nowhere near appreciating the nationalist and political loyalties of the inhabitants of those countries until we become instinctively aware of the meaning of the following terms.

Hezbollah Party of God; Israel he who troubles God; and Hamas Enthusiasm.

(HAMAS is an acronym for Harakat Al-Muqawama Al Islamiyya, ie, Islamic Resistance Movement.)

In other words centuries of cultural, social and religious history are epitomised in these simple names.

There is no equivalent nomenclature in Western democratic nation states.

Getting to know one another and to be able to deal with one another is going to take a long, long time.

It is certainly going to take more than the gung-ho pronouncements of some Western leaders to bring peace and stability to the Middle East.

We need to try to see the world from a Middle Eastern perspective.

A start would be to try to appreciate what resonance every day words like "**Hezbollah**" and "Hamas" have for citizens of the Arab world.

Joseph P. Quigley, Tomakin, NSW The article by Robert Fisk ("Cry, the beloved city", July 22, ppB1-B2), was masterful.

Robert Fisk presented the stark truth that this war is a fight between David and Goliath - David, of course, being the sovereign country of Lebanon.

That we are seeing ordinary men, **women** and children, killed in their hundreds in Lebanon - I understand the present count as of July 27 is 443 - is shameful.

That the US appears to be supporting such a war is obscene.

West can't relate as tribes fight in the name of God Letters to the Editor>letters.editor@canberratimes.com.au

We are indeed crying for not only Beirut but for the whole of Lebanon, a ruined country.

Beryl Legge-Wilkinson, Campbell Condoleezza Rice has declared that it is not yet time for a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah.

Translated, this means she has declared that not enough people have been killed yet to force Hezbollah into submitting to the Israeli view of peace.

Will Condoleezza Rice also dictate how many more must be killed? Will she select which mother must see her infant child's body disembowelled by flying shrapnel? Will she nominate the number of Lebanese civilians v Israeli civilians, the number of Israeli conscripts or UN observers that must be killed in order for the time for ceasefire to have been reached? I think not.

But the truth is that in her voicing America's support for this war she has already done so. And so too, I am ashamed to say, has Australia's Government. While ever one combatant refuses to put down their gun there can be no peace.

David Grant, Murrumbateman, NSW And so the calls for the US to step in and hammer out some solution in the Middle East are heard loudly around the world, again ("US needs to get seriously involved in Middle East crisis", July 25, p13).

Just like in the Balkans. Just like most places that get nasty. (Rwanda and the Sudan missed out.) Why the US? We don't really buy that Wall Street/Zionist conspiracy mantra, do we? If the US is the Great Satan, the capitalist-imperialist aggressor, the root of all evil, why shouldn't it sit this one out like all the rest of us? Like all the hear/see/speak-no-evil gun makers of the world - the French, Russians, British, Germans - they can of course, continue to supply whoever has cash or credit, but surely this is one for the UN to resolve.

Why would it be a US responsibility to step in? But, I hear you say, the UN can't organise a piss-up in a brewery, is a veto-immobilised, committee that can't get meaningful resolutions passed and only has Third World, work-for-the-dole soldiers on tap.

This needs real drive and resources.

So apparently it has to be the US; the old (hated) global policeman, to do the job again.

Down with Uncle Sam!

Tom Waring, Ainslie

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

Air truce after 54 die in Israeli strike

Yorkshire Post

July 31, 2006

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Length: 656 words

Body

Tel Aviv bows to pressure and agrees to 48-hour ceasefire after attack on village kills 34 children

David Hogg

ISRAEL bowed to international pressure last night and agreed to a 48-hour suspension of its aerial bombardment of southern Lebanon after an airstrike killed more than 50 civilians.

Under the conditions of the ceasefire, announced by the US administration, Tel Aviv will stop all flights in the area but will be able to hit targets if intelligence suggests that attacks imminent.

The announcement came only hours after an emergency meeting of the United Nations made fresh demands for a ceasefire.

Announcing the truce,

US State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said Israel had "reserved the right to attack targets" to pre-empt rocket strikes from the militant group **Hezbollah**.

"The US welcomes this decision and hopes that it will help relieve the suffering of the children and families of southern Lebanon," Mr Ereli told reporters who had been travelling with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Mr Ereli said Israel would co-ordinate with the United Nations to allow a 24-hour period of safe passage for all residents of south Lebanon who wanted to leave the region.

"We expect that Israel will implement these decisions so as to significantly speed and improve the flow of humanitarian aid," he added.

An Israeli government official confirmed prime minister Ehud Olmert had agreed to the 48-hour suspension.

Earlier in the day Secretary-General Kofi Annan had demanded an immediate halt to violence between Israel and **Hezbollah** as he condemned a deadly attack that left at least 54 people dead - including 34 children - as they hid in the basement of a building in the village of Qana.

At the meeting of the UN in New York Mr Annan said: "We meet at a moment of extreme gravity - first and foremost for the people of the Middle East - but also for the authority of this organisation and especially this council," he added. "Action is needed now before many more children, **women** and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control."

Air truce after 54 die in Israeli strike

A US State Department official said Ms Rice had been working on a ceasefire agreement for some time before the attack on Qana.

This was despite the fact that Lebanon's prime minister had denounced "Israeli war criminals" and cancelled talks with her as she was due to fly into Beirut in the next few days.

US President George W Bush yesterday renewed his call for a "sustainable peace" in the region while his administration urged Israel to avoid civilian casualties.

The conflict was triggered nearly three weeks ago by the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah near the Israeli-Lebanon border.

Looking pale and slightly shocked by the news from Qana, Prime Minister Tony Blair told a hastily-convened press conference in San Francisco, where he is on an official trip, there was "absolutely no basis for hostilities to continue". He said: "We have to speed this entire process up, get a resolution now, and on the passing an agreement of that resolution, then the hostilities have got to stop, and stop on all sides."

But the Prime Minister has been widely criticised for failing to oppose America's unwavering support of Israeli tactics. From within his own administration, Foreign Office minister Kim Howells has called on the Israelis to "go for Hezbollah... don't go for the whole Lebanese nation".

Former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw called the Israeli response "disproportionate" and "hard to understand". He said Israeli strikes had not been "surgical... but have instead caused death and misery amongst innocent civilians".

His successor as Foreign Secretary, Margaret Beckett, has avoided outright criticism of Israel, calling only for an "urgent" cessation of hostilities .

Anti-war protesters in Scotland claimed a victory last night after two US flights carrying suspected weapons were diverted from Prestwick Airport in Ayrshire for refuelling.

david.hogg@ypn.co.uk

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Democracy and its consequences

The Philadelphia Inquirer

MARCH 9, 2005 Wednesday CITY-D EDITION

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A19

Length: 731 words

Byline: Trudy Rubin

Body

The contrasting television scenes from the Middle East yesterday were riveting. CNN showed hundreds of thousands of demonstrators pouring into Beirut streets just as President Bush delivered another impassioned call for democracy in the Middle East.

But this biggest Beirut demonstration so far didn't echo the President's call for Syria to leave the country. These were Lebanese Shiite supporters of the militant group Hezbollah, and they opposed a swift Syrian pullout or any intervention in Lebanon by the United States or Israel.

In these contradictory TV scenes lies an important caution about the march to democracy in the Middle East.

Yes, it is thrilling to imagine that this democracy-averse region is finally getting the message that change is needed. Yes, the President deserves full credit for pushing democracy, especially after January's Iraqi elections, when he seems to have decided to press longtime Arab authoritarian allies such as Egypt.

But the contrasting TV images should serve warning that Mideast elections won't always produce pro-American governments or advance peace.

In yesterday's speech, President Bush insisted "the Lebanese people have the right to determine their future, free from domination by a foreign power." He meant Syria, of course, which has more than 14,000 troops and thousands of intelligence agents occupying their smaller neighbor.

Yesterday's demonstrators, however, were challenging U.S. domination. If Lebanese elections are held on schedule this spring, the Islamist, anti-Israel Hezbollah - labeled a terrorist group by the United States - will no doubt be one of the major winners.

Lebanese Shiites - the largest of the country's religious and ethnic groups - aren't against democracy, nor do they necessarily want a long-term Syrian presence. But they admire Hezbollah for its charitable role and for forcing Israeli troops out of Lebanon.

Democracy and its consequences

The demonstrators made clear that Hezbollah will play a major role in Lebanon's politics, whether the United States likes it or not. The other Lebanese groups that have been demonstrating - for democracy - will accept this.

If promoting Mideast democracy is to be the major Bush theme, it is crucial that the administration - and the U.S. public - not harbor illusions about what lies ahead.

Until now, U.S. support for Mideast elections seemed limited to those in which the results would not challenge U.S. interests.

The classic case occurred in 1991 in Algeria, where the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was on the verge of winning parliamentary elections. Algerians were convulsed over whether the FIS would respect democratic rules or use the elections to impose an Islamic state. They never found out; the Algerian military made a coup, which the United States supported, and a decade of civil war followed.

During the 1990s, fear lingered that Mideast democracy would produce anti-American Islamic states. Authoritarian regimes were seen as a necessary bulwark against terrorism, especially after 9/11.

Iraq was thought to be a convenient exception: The Bush team expected to find a secular, middle-class society. When these expectations proved wrong, U.S. officials repeatedly postponed direct elections from fear of a Shiite Islamist victory, until pressure from Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani forced them to set a date for a ballot.

Moderate Shiite religious parties did indeed win a majority, raising questions about the future role of Islam in Iraqi society and about women's rights. But in Iraq, Shiite religious parties aren't calling for an Islamic state, and secular parties will balance the religious trend.

But would the President accept election results in other Arab countries if anti-American Islamists prove to be a strong political force? Liberal democrats are a marginal group in most Mideast countries, and Islamists have strong public support in countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia - and Syria.

Representative Arab politics will evolve only when those societies work through their own political contradictions and all factions accept democratic rules. This will not happen soon, and the process may not be pretty. Arab publics will be watching to see whether President Bush lives up to his own message and accepts the path of Arab democracy - wherever it leads.

Contact columnist Trudy Rubin at 215-854-5823 or trubin@phillynews.com. Read her recent work at <http://go.philly.com/trudyrubin>.

Notes

Worldview

Graphic

CARTOON;
(PAUL LACHINE)

Load-Date: September 8, 2005

End of Document

City protest calls for halt to israeli action in Lebanon and gaza

Express and Echo (Exeter)

July 24, 2006 Monday

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Section: Pg. 30

Length: 450 words

Body

Around 100 people turned out to take part in a public demonstration in the centre of Exeter over the crisis in the Middle East at the weekend.

The peace campaigners at the protest on Saturday called on Israel to end its military action in Lebanon and Gaza.

The demonstration was one of 11 to be organised across the country by groups such as the Stop The War Coalition.

Placard-waving protestors held a rally in Bedford Square before marching down the High Street and into Cathedral Yard.

One of those at the demonstration was peace activist Roy Ratcliffe, 65, from Crediton, who three years ago put his life on the line to become a human shield for former Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

The former history teacher said: "There should be an immediate ceasefire to prevent any more bloodshed and loss of life. Innocent women, men and children are getting killed.

"I am angry that our Government seems to have ignored what has happened. When I was a teacher, I taught Holocaust studies and I am not anti-Jewish in any shape or form, but it is saddening to see what is happening."

Jude Taylorson, 52, of St David's, Exeter, said: "I just feel so frustrated that this is going on and yet nothing is being done about it. That was why I wanted to take part in this protest."

Caroline Sheehan, 39, of Exwick in Exeter, said: "I cannot understand why our Prime Minister Tony Blair has been so silent on this problem when it has become such a crisis."

And Terry Timlett, 68, of South Zeal, near Okehampton, said: "I am partly Jewish and I just want to see peace in the region and an end to the violence. The international community has to act."

But a 19-year-old Exeter woman who is half-Israeli and asked not to be named, challenged one of the protesters as the march entered Cathedral Yard. She said: "The Israelis are trying to defend themselves.

"They are facing a situation where rockets are being fired into their country and innocent Israelis are dying because of it. I would like to visit Israel myself, but I can't because of the danger from the militants."

City protest calls for halt to israeli action in Lebanon and gaza

The Israeli government says its attacks against targets in Lebanon are aimed at hitting **Hezbollah** terrorists who are firing rockets into their country from southern Lebanon. The Israelis argue that they withdrew their forces from the area in 2000 but they have been plagued by rocket attacks ever since.

Israel also claims that **Hezbollah** militants sparked the crisis by capturing two of its soldiers.

The Lebanese Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, says that 330 Lebanese have been killed since the crisis started more than 10 days ago.

More than 30 Israelis have died, with 15 civilians being killed by rockets that **Hezbollah** has fired into Israel.

Load-Date: July 25, 2006

End of Document

Violence, opposition and democracy

The Guardian - Final Edition

February 17, 2006 Friday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 16

Length: 333 words

Byline: Brian Whitaker

Body

Muslim Brotherhood (Egypt)

Founded in 1928, it has at various times been outlawed or grudgingly tolerated. It is the most popular opposition group in Egypt and its candidates (officially standing as independents) won 20% of the seats in last year's parliamentary election.

Muslim Brotherhood (Syria)

An offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, it waged an armed struggle against the Ba'athist regime until it was defeated in 1982. It has since renounced violence and called for a democratic system in Syria.

Hizbullah (Lebanon)

A Shia organisation backed by Iran and Syria, which retained its weapons after the Lebanese civil war. A UN security resolution calls for it to be disarmed. A military wing engages in sporadic conflict with Israel. Politically, it is an increasingly important player in Lebanon, winning 23 seats (out of 128) in last year's parliamentary election.

Hamas (Palestinian territories)

Highly controversial because of its suicide attacks and its non-recognition of Israel. Its victory in the Palestinian elections last month has posed a major dilemma for western countries.

Islamic Salvation Front (Algeria)

In 1991 the front won the first round of parliamentary elections which were then cancelled by the government, triggering a long and bloody conflict.

Justice and Development party (Turkey)

A nominally Islamist but primarily conservative party which won an election in 2002. Fears that it would try to Islamise Turkey, one of the most secular of Muslim states, proved generally unfounded.

Justice and Development party (Morocco)

Legalised last summer and allowed into mainstream politics after changing its name and moderating its Islamist stance. It is represented in parliament and has six women MPs.

Violence, opposition and democracy

Islamic party of Malaysia

An Islamist party engaged in mainstream politics. It won 27 seats in Malaysia's 1999 election but dropped back to seven seats in 2004.

Jamaat-e-Islami (Pakistan)

Founded in 1941, it professing to be a legitimate political party, but has links with terrorism.

Load-Date: February 17, 2006

End of Document

A precarious peace shattered

The Toronto Star
July 14, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A08

Length: 893 words

Byline: Olivia Ward, Toronto Star

Body

In the spider's web of backstreets in Beirut's southern suburbs sits a featureless concrete building, one of hundreds that have sprung up since the deadly 15-year civil war that atomized the once-thriving city until 1990.

The inhabitants of the building, like the city itself, are reconstructed from scar tissue.

They are people who have looked into the abyss of annihilation and, miraculously, survived.

Men, and occasional women, who are blind, limbless, paralyzed, sit at tables focusing through their pain on the task at hand: to learn new, marketable skills and move on in the post-war era.

This is daily life in the War Wounded Association, funded by Hezbollah - condemned as a terrorist group, but to the Shiite residents of south Beirut, the de facto administrators of the district, where the benefits of the civic boom have made a sharp detour.

Across town, in the smart French-patterned boulevards that radiate from the central Place d'Etoile, many of Hezbollah's political enemies are also reconstructing their lives. The denizens of the new downtown are designer-suited businessmen and crowds of young, achingly hip Beirut trendies who rejoice in a gleaming milieu that seems to thumb its nose at the catastrophic past.

But the first barrages of Israeli bombs that landed yesterday - a response to Hezbollah's cross-border attack and kidnapping of three soldiers - may shatter their veneer of prosperous sophistication, along with the fragile hopes of the handicapped and impoverished slum dwellers.

The damage to Lebanon's equally fragile politics and patched-together society is yet unknown - but all too easily imagined.

For the country that snatched fragments of life from the jaws of death knows all too well what could lie ahead.

Brinksmanship has been a way of life in this tiny slip of a country, which has endured centuries of invasion, conquest, occupation, looting and bombing by its neighbours, culminating in a civil war unparalleled for its ruthless slaughter of civilians.

The end of the civil war left Lebanon in Syria's steely embrace, Iran's paternal hand on its shoulder and Israel's shadow on its border.

A precarious peace shattered

Nevertheless the country began a chaotic spree of reconstruction that heaved up buildings throughout Beirut and other cities, often in defiance of any planning code, but demonstrating sheer determination to put the destruction of the war behind them.

More cautiously, a new government formed, dividing power among Christians, Sunni Muslims and Shiites, who are in the majority in Lebanon.

The uneasy union held until the "cedar revolution" that broke out in February 2005, after the assassination of popular former prime minister Rafik Hariri. Then, massive demonstrations against Syrian influence began, culminating in the disbanding of the pro-Syrian government, a parliamentary election and the withdrawal of Syrian troops.

The elections that followed, however, reinforced the Syrian and Iranian-allied Hezbollah in power, giving its coalition with the Shiite Amal party 35 out of 128 seats, the second-highest total in the parliament. Hezbollah gained two seats in government. Its success caused speculation that it would distance itself from its military wing - a hope that was to be dampened.

Much of the world cheered with the Lebanese as a new era of freedom and democracy was proclaimed. But a wave of bombings and killings was a bitter reminder of how easily the balance could be upset.

A walk through the hot, dusty streets of Beirut to the seafront is an object lesson in how the city, and the country, have forged a precarious peace, drawing in the numerous political, ideological and religious factions that once brought them to the brink of extermination.

Meandering through the tangle of downward-sloping streets, you pass a hodgepodge of thrusting modern buildings, giving way to blackened and bullet-scarred hulks that are earmarked for demolition. And just as suddenly, a swath of resort hotels staking renewed claim to a tourist industry that once made Beirut the Paris of the Middle East.

Now the sea is all but hidden by the wall of new construction, and only the combined smells of salt air, fast food stands and unchecked pollution lead the way through the traffic-clogged streets and alleyways.

The huge seafront boulevard is a tableau of city life: black-draped women gliding gracefully alongside 20-somethings in skimpy spandex, their expensively streaked hair swinging behind them as they jog past.

Young jeans-clad couples hold hands and kiss without fear of censure, while grandparents in bright Floridian colours watch dotingly as their tiny grandchildren veer along the walkway on plastic tricycles.

In the distance, a mullah calls the faithful to prayer, and clerics in flowing robes cast longing glances at the bakery cart, selling warmly fragrant bread. Meanwhile across the street, the Hard Rock Cafe spews jangling music into the street, hardly noticed by a cluster of elderly women sending up gentle streams of perfumed smoke from their hubble-bubble pipe.

Tolerance, or perhaps exhaustion, is the order of the day here. And few stop to question whether the city's cracked glass is half full or half empty.

Now a new threat is pounding the perimeters of Beirut's uneasy peace. And another dusk descends on the city as it has for untold centuries, spreading the vivid colours of a gathering, unpredictable night.

Graphic

A precarious peace shattered

SAMER HUSSEINI ap Vehicles clog the road to the Masnaa border crossing between Lebanon and Syria yesterday as tourists and locals try to get out of Lebanon. The country has endured centuries of invasion, conquest and looting.

Load-Date: July 14, 2006

End of Document

**The first Britons to flee Lebanon arrive in Cyprus; NAVY SHIP DELIVERS 170
OF THE 'MOST NEEDED' REFUGEES TO SAFETY**

The Evening Standard (London)

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

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**London
Evening
Standard**

Section: LSE 04; Pg. 7

Length: 230 words

Byline: JASON BEATTIE

Body

BRITONS today spoke of their relief after being rescued by the Royal Navy from the terror of Beirut. HMS Gloucester docked in Cyprus this morning with 170 of the "most needy" evacuees.

Most were **women** and children, who were led down the gangplank or carried by their parents.

Among them was Elise Mazegi, a mother of five-month old triplets. "I'm exhausted but I'm very glad to be out. The trip was long but okay.

The crew on the ship were amazing," she said.

Another Briton, Maria Noujeim from Portsmouth added: "My concern was the children, they were watching the bombing. We have left my husband's family, including his mother who is on her own. It has been quite emotional."

Up to 5,000 UK nationals are expected to be ferried to safety by six Navy ships this week.

Gloucester's captain, Commander Mike Patterson, said the evacuees had been "buoyant".

On arrival they were taken to the RAF base at Akrotiri and will be flown to the UK later today.

The sea rescue came as Israel stepped up its bombardment of the **Hezbollah** strongholds in Lebanon. The attacks resulted in 10 killings overnight, according to the authorities, bringing the death toll in the past week to 245 Lebanese and 25 Israelis.

Today Israeli troops have crossed into southern Lebanon on foot to attack **Hezbollah** outposts.

Israeli forces insist the assaults were "pinpoint attacks" that minimised civilian casualties.

The first Britons to flee Lebanon arrive in Cyprus NAVY SHIP DELIVERS 170 OF THE 'MOST NEEDY'
REFUGEES TO SAFETY

Graphic

THE SMALLEST REFUGEE: A BABY IS CARRIED ABOARD HMS GLOUCESTER WHAT THEY LEFT BEHIND:
THE RUINED STREETS OF BEIRUT GETTING OUT: REFUGEES BOARD THE RESCUE SHIP

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

End of Document

Threats to Jews

Western Mail

July 29, 2006, Saturday

First Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 21

Length: 250 words

Body

SIR - What a topsy turvy world some people live in! Israel has not pledged to annihilate any of her neighbours but both Hamas and Hezbollah, proxies of Iran and Syria, have pledged to wipe out every Jew from the world, not just Israel.

And there are those in Wales who are happy for that to happen!

Would Ms White like the UN force to be composed of Iranians, Libyans, Saudis and the rest of the absolute monarchs and dictators that form the majority in any UN vote. They have never voted against Palestinian suicide bombers or against China for Tiananmen Square!

Yes Lebanon and the UN are culpable. There were UN observers, did they tell Mr Annan about the weekly plane loads of weaponry from Iran via Syria into Lebanese- controlled airports? The thousands of dollars the Hamas personnel are spending on weapons and not on helping their people in Gaza is also unreported

Why don't Hezbollah and Hamas come out and fight like a proper army instead of hiding behind women and children? This condemned even by the UN.

I know many Israeli soldiers and their parents; some I taught in Cardiff High School. None wants to be fighting a war, but the chilling fact is their neighbours don't want Israel to have 1% of the land in the Middle East and live in peace.

Israel occupies none of Lebanon and none of Gaza which has open borders with Egypt to receive all the aid it could from the oil-rich Arab countries.

Please fellow Welsh people don't be a party to finish what Hitler began.

JEAN A EVANS

Llanedeyrn, Cardiff

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

***We did not know about civilians, Israel says; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS,
Reaction***

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 31, 2006 Monday

Fourth Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 6

Length: 493 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin in Qana and agencies

Body

ISRAEL'S air force was unaware that civilians were sheltering in a building it bombed in the southern Lebanese village of Qana yesterday, killing 54 people, the military chief said.

"We did not know of the whereabouts of civilians in the village," Lieutenant-General Dan Halutz was quoted as saying by the NRG Maariv website after meeting President Moshe Katsav.

A senior air force commander said a precision-guided bomb was dropped on a home in Qana on the assumption that it was sheltering **Hezbollah** crews that had fired several volleys of missiles into northern Israel.

"Had we known there were that many civilians inside, especially **women** and children, we certainly would not have attacked it," the commander told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

Asked how Israel's intelligence services could know about missile launches from Qana but not about the presence of dozens of civilians, the commander said: "We are capable of detecting missile launches because they are very dynamic."

By contrast, he said the civilians appeared to have been holed up in the building for days, and were therefore almost impossible for aerial surveillance systems to discern.

According to the officer, **Hezbollah** launched scores of missiles from Qana into Israel, including one that hit a hospital. He said several of the launches took place within a few dozens metres of the house that was bombed.

General Halutz indicated that despite international outcry over the killings, Israel would pursue its campaign against **Hezbollah** until the cross-border missiles ended.

"We will continue to fight and residents of northern [Israel] will receive quiet and calm. It will take more time but it will happen," NRG quoted him as saying.

Meanwhile the US President, George Bush, has apologised to the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, after London complained Washington had not followed correct procedures for sending bombs to Israel via a British airport.

We did not know about civilians, Israel says MIDDLE EAST CRISIS, Reaction

Mr Blair's spokesman told reporters travelling with him that Mr Bush raised the issue briefly at the start of his meeting with Mr Blair at the White House.

"President Bush did apologise for the fact that proper procedures were not followed," the spokesman said.

Last week the US used Prestwick Airport in Scotland to rush a new consignment of precision-guided bombs and missiles to Israel, which had exhausted its own stocks in its onslaught against Lebanon.

Last week Israel bombed and shelled a UN observer post for several hours, despite protests, until an aerial bomb smashed a bunker in which international military observers were sheltering, killing all four.

Israeli aircraft have also attacked Red Cross ambulances and civilian vehicles attempting to comply with Israel's orders to flee their homes. In the worst such incident 20 people were killed in a single air strike on a convoy fleeing the village of Marwaheen.

Lebanon's Health Minister, Mohammad Khalifeh, said yesterday that the death toll from Israeli strikes was about 750.

Graphic

Tony Blair and George Bush in Washington on Friday.Photo: AP

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

No room for restraint

University Wire

July 17, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Daily Texan via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 679 words

Byline: By Frankie Shulkin, Daily Texan; **SOURCE:** U. Texas

Dateline: AUSTIN, Texas

Body

The world fails to understand that the United States and her allies, including Israel, are in a fight to the death against Islamic Jihadists leaving no room for peace talks.

Likewise, the media fails to label the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as part of the War on Terror, and the time has come to treat it as such. One must not see it as only a conflict of military might and land disputes, but rather one must analyze it as a clash of ideologies.

One ideology calls for peace and security, a policy which has allowed Israel to utterly thrive in fields of art, science and technology. Israel's way of life allows it to exist as a beacon of light in a dark Middle East dominated by despots.

The other is an ideology that our own nation saw on Sept. 11, an ideology we continue to deal with in Iraq, and an ideology that seeks the destruction of those living differently and democratically.

This is all that the current situation is about - a clash of right and wrong.

Israel's yearn for tranquility is right. The waging of Jihad is wrong.

Label the Palestinian government of Hamas what it really is: a radical Jihadist group seeking the annihilation of the Jews. Read it for yourself in its charter. Remember that the Axis of Evil, including Syria and Iran, hope not only for the destruction of Israel but for America's as well. And if this truly is World War III, the civilized, democratic world cannot hold back in taking direct action against these evil regimes.

Israel regrets that they do take civilian casualties, and as a result, the nation continuously bends over backward to be one of the most civilized and humane armies in existence. In Lebanon this past week, about an hour before Israel destroyed Hezbollah's headquarters, Israeli warplanes dropped leaflets stating their plans to destroy the building, instructing civilians to leave.

Blame not Israel for the deaths of the innocent, but blame the radical leaders Israel targets who surround themselves with women and children as human shields.

No room for restraint

I have much sympathy for Palestinians who suffer. I only wish that they valued my existence as I value their lives. And perhaps next time, Palestinians should think twice about electing a terrorist regime and sending their children to train as suicide bombers.

The media fails to bring attention to the innocent Jewish lives taken, and I doubt The New York Times would show an Israeli child dying in the arms of his mother. We never hear of a U.N. Resolution condemning the evil tactics used by Hamas and Hezbollah. However, each time Israel defends herself, her actions are questioned.

In recent days, many world leaders with the exception of our brave president, have called for Israel to use restraint. But restraint is not an option when the world faces an ideology that seeks the extinction of an entire people.

Hamas, Hezbollah, Syria and Iran do not want to end nor even win the conflict. They want an end to the Jewish line of history.

In 1948, surrounding nations and Arabs in the Middle East sought not only to get back the land that Israelis cultivated themselves, but also to finish off what Hitler started.

So is there even a "cycle of violence"? I emphatically declare no.

It was Hamas that entered Israel and took an Israeli hostage. It is Hezbollah, using some of Iran's 12,000 missiles, that fires rockets at Israeli citizens. Year after year, Israel responds in acts of self-defense after Jihadists perpetuate the violence.

Israel simply seeks to eradicate terrorists who make life worse for all.

Israel's battles are key in the world's War on Terror. We must understand the true nature of this conflict. We find ourselves in a fight against genocide, and we must recognize that Israel's battle is the same fight America wages with al-Qaeda.

If world leaders cower now, Western submission to the Jihadist threat is inevitable. If we stand up, as Israel is boldly doing, to address Iran, Syria and other nations seeking both Jewish and Western elimination, we can ensure that a worldwide Holocaust does not occur.

Restraint is not an option.

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Load-Date: July 17, 2006

THE SUFFERING OF TWO NATIONS

Daily Mail (London)

July 17, 2006 Monday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 11

Length: 698 words

Byline: RICHARD PENDLEBURY

Body

HAIFA, Israel's largest seaport, was a virtual ghost town yesterday after a barrage of 20 rockets crashed into the city centre. At least eight people were killed and over a dozen wounded Israel's worst civilian toll since the rocket barrage began four days ago.

The **Hezbollah** strike took the Middle East crisis to new levels of violence.

One missile smashed through the roof of an Israel Railways maintenance shed near the seafront (above). Thirty mechanics and engineers had just started their first shift of the week when the rocket detonated in their midst.

The results were horrible. The carnage left a large, oily pool of blood outside the doors of the massive repair shed while its corrugated metal facade flapped in the coastal breeze.

Inside, a gaping, fire-blackened hole in the roof showed where the rocket had entered. 'I heard the explosion and ran down to the shed,' said Tony Karm, an Arab Christian who lives close by.

'There were two bodies outside and three others on the platforms inside. One was still alive but died a minute or two later.' He added: 'This is a terrible thing. In Haifa we have a good dual existence between Jew and Arab.

When I left the house to come here, my Arab mother and Jewish sister-in-law were hiding under the table together.' Yonah Ifakov, 43, a maintenance worker who works near the train depot, said the attack caught Haifa residents off guard even though a rocket hit the city last Thursday. 'It was awful. It was terrifying. There were explosions in all directions,' he said.

Osama Hajir, 51, a resident of an Arab neighbourhood, looked panicked as he snatched food from a shop to take back to his family.

'They have to put **Hezbollah** in its place,' he said. 'Here the missiles are falling on Jews and Arabs alike.' After the attacks the streets of this normally bustling industrial city of 270,000 people emptied and Haifa sunk into an eerie silence. Some of the loudest sounds were birds chirping.

Authorities ordered nearly half a million people everyone from Haifa northward indoors and into shelters.

But many packed their bags and headed south on the coast road towards Tel Aviv, whose own residents had been put on increased alert.

THE SUFFERING OF TWO NATIONS

The rail line between the two cities, which carries tens of thousands of people every day on 300 scheduled trains, had been closed by the attack.

Hezbollah claimed it had intentionally avoided hitting petrochemical installations in Haifa, but warned: 'The next time, we will not spare anything in Haifa and its surroundings.' At lunchtime Transport Minister Shaul Mofaz arrived to view the scene. For the benefit of the foreign media he likened Hezbollah to Al Qaeda and its leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah to Osama Bin Laden.

Of course, there was no talk of restraint or negotiation as Mr Mofaz and a scrum of TV crews stood in the blood of the dead.

Not everyone in Haifa wanted more blood for blood, however. Outside the rail yard a small knot of brave women, Jewish and Arab

peace activists, were holding placards which condemned the fighting.

They were harangued by one of the gate guards who screamed: 'Because of people like you six million Jews died'.

Abeer Kopty, a young Arab woman, shrugged off the abuse.

'We are Arab and Jew together and we believe another way is possible,' she said. 'There should be a ceasefire and negotiations.' Her elderly Jewish colleague, Iris Bar agreed. She said: 'It is not about losing soldiers any more. It is about a war being fought against innocent people.' 'You weren't here when the Katyusha landed,' an onlooker shouted, pointing at the angry gate guards. 'They were.' 'Yes I was,' retorted Mrs Bar. 'Look, I live just over there. It is not an excuse.' In Israel today, tempers are frayed by fear and anger, whether you are a hawk or in the small minority of doves.

As we drove along the seafront, the air raid sirens began to moan once again. We came to halt under a railway bridge where two families had stopped their cars to shelter, blocking the road. 'Alert, alert,' one of the men, frightened and harrassed, shouted to us, gesturing for his children to get out of their car.

This is everyday life now for innocent civilians on both sides of the Israeli-Lebanese border.

Graphic

RELATIVE COLLAPSES IN GRIEF AT HOSPITAL IN HAIFA

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

U.N., Rights Groups Accuse Israel of Possible War Crimes

The Forward

July 28, 2006

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Section: News; Pg. 9

Length: 1078 words

Byline: Marc Perelman

Body

With more than 400 Lebanese civilians killed in recent weeks, the United Nations and leading human rights organizations are stepping up their criticism of Israel, suggesting Jerusalem could face legal consequences for its military actions.

Even before four U.N. observers were killed in an Israeli strike Tuesday, senior officials from the world body were warning Israel and Hezbollah that both sides may have violated international law and committed war crimes. Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, told the Forward that it was "quite possible" that Israeli soldiers or commanders could face war crimes charges for attacking civilian objects, firing indiscriminately in civilian areas or taking inadequate precautions to avoid civilian casualties.

The warnings drew harsh rebukes from Israel and its supporters. Israel insists that its military actions constitute a "proportionate" response to the threat posed by Hezbollah and that the civilian casualties are largely due to the fact that the Shiite militia is deliberately hiding its operatives and weaponry in civilian areas.

As part of its effort to fend off the mounting criticism, Israel sent Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, to Europe this week.

Jan Egeland, the top U.N. humanitarian affairs official, did condemn Hezbollah fighters this week for situating themselves among women and children. But that comment was seen by some observers as an attempt to balance Egeland's assertion a day earlier that Israel had conducted "disproportionate" strikes against civilians.

On Sunday, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour told CNN that Israel's actions in Lebanon could lead to the prosecution of its military commanders. She issued a statement last week suggesting that the failure of both sides to spare civilians was a violation of international criminal law.

Although she was careful not to name the parties, Arbour said last week saying that senior civilian and military officials could be brought to justice. "The scale of the killings in the region, and their predictability, could engage the personal criminal responsibility of those involved, particularly those in a position of command and control," she said. Her comments prompted a vivid rebuke from Israel's ambassador to Canada, Alan Baker, and Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, who penned an opinion article titled "Arbour Must Go" in the National Post.

The already simmering tensions between Israel and the U.N. exploded Tuesday, after Israel dropped a bomb on a U.N. outpost in south Lebanon, killing four observers. U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan quickly accused

U.N. , Rights Groups Accuse Israel of Possible War Crimes

Jerusalem of intentionally targeting the outpost - an allegation that Israeli officials angrily denied, insisting the incident was not deliberate.

Annan had already been receiving bitter complaints from Jewish groups that were upset over his failure to mention the issue of terrorism in his initial statements about the Lebanese crisis.

Human Rights Watch also alleged that Israel may be guilty of war crimes. Roth pointed to the destruction of about 60% of a nine square blocks area of southern Beirut composed mostly of apartment buildings and the extensive damage to its infrastructure. He also cited Israeli attacks on the village of Srifa, in which 10 houses were destroyed and at least 42 civilians killed, and on a vehicle of villagers fleeing Marwaheen, in which 16 civilians were killed, which took place despite the alleged absence of legitimate military target in sight.

The venue for such prosecutions could be national courts under universal jurisdiction statutes or the recently created International Criminal Court, which has worldwide jurisdiction for war crimes. Lebanon has yet to ratify the treaty and Israel is not a signatory, which means the court could only become involved if the U.N. Security Council refers the matter - an unlikely prospect - or if Lebanon invites the court in to investigate. In that case, Hezbollah would also be subject to its jurisdiction.

Human Rights Watch lobbed more accusations at Israel in a statement claiming that Israeli forces were using artillery-fired cluster munitions in populated areas of Lebanon, a possible violation of the prohibition under international law against indiscriminate attacks.

The Israeli military counters that the use of such weaponry is legal under international law.

Human Rights Watch said its investigators confirmed that a cluster munitions attack on the village of Blida on July 19 had killed one and wounded at least 12 civilians, including seven children, and that they had photographed such munitions in the arsenal of Israeli military artillery teams stationed on the Israeli-Lebanese border during a visit four days later. Roth said that such munitions were inaccurate and their high failure rate caused further danger to civilians. He told the Forward that the organization was reviewing additional pictures showing different types of cluster munitions being deployed by Israeli artillery teams.

Israel and Human Rights Watch have been at loggerheads over their contradictory account of an incident last month in Gaza, during which a Palestinian family was killed. While the Israeli military has maintained that its artillery shelling did not cause the deaths and refused an independent investigation, Human Rights Watch has claimed that the facts are murkier and that an impartial probe is needed.

Lebanese security forces have also accused Israel of using cluster munitions in assaults on Blida and other Lebanese border villages, and earlier this year during fighting with Hezbollah around the disputed Shebaa Farms area. In addition, Lebanese President Emile Lahoud and doctors in hospitals in southern Lebanon said this week that they suspected some of the wounds sustained by civilians were caused by phosphorous bombs. The Geneva Conventions ban the use of white phosphorous as an incendiary weapon against civilian populations and in air attacks against military forces in civilian areas.

Israel says that it is investigating the incidents and a military spokeswoman was quoted by Reuters as saying that the weapons used by the army in Lebanon did not contravene international norms.

Amnesty International, for its part, has denounced "blatant" violations of international law and called on the U.N. to deploy an immediate fact-finding mission to investigate attacks against civilians and other breaches of international law.

Graphic

U.N. , Rights Groups Accuse Israel of Possible War Crimes

IMAGE

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

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**To the gods of war, a sacrifice; MORE THAN 60 KILLED AS ISRAELI
MISSILES RAIN DOWN ON THE VILLAGE WHERE JESUS TURNED WATER
INTO WINE**

Daily Mail (London)

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 8

Length: 830 words

Byline: RICHARD PENDLEBURY

Body

A TEENAGE mother clutches her two month-old baby to her chest. Both are dead and mutilated. Beneath them, in what has become their concrete and steel tomb, are dozens more; body after broken young body, tangled and as yet unreachable in the ruin of a single house.

This was Qana, where more than 60 civilians, mostly women and children, are thought to have been killed in an Israeli missile strike in the early hours.

Such horror, such pitiless ruination, with the only consolation that the death toll and the shocking images beamed around the world should indeed could bring an end to this squalid and bloody conflict.

Call it a blood sacrifice from the children and mothers of Qana, paid to the gods of war those politicians and military commanders from Israel and Hezbollah who have so far killed hundreds of civilians in less than three weeks.

The guidebooks tell you that Qana is probably the New Testament Cana in Galilee, where Jesus performed his first miracle turning water into wine at a wedding feast.

Yesterday there was only blood and the miracle was that some survived the impact of two very large bombs. The official Israeli line is that Qana and the house it struck was being used by Hezbollah to fire rockets into Israel, little more than five miles away.

Nobody should decry Israel's right to defend itself. But this was a ghastly error at best, a war crime the phrase used by the Lebanese president and most of his furious people at worst.

'Why have they attacked one and two-year-old children and defenceless women?' asked one bereaved man, Mohamed Samai, as the bodies, wrapped in plastic sheets, were assembled under an awning with flowers placed on the corpses.

Lebanese prime minister Fouad Siniora said that among the victims of the attack was a day-old baby.

Last week Daily Mail photographer Jamie Wiseman and I had paid an uncomfortable visit to Qana, buzzed by Israeli F-15 fighter bombers. When we returned yesterday it was clear that the village had undergone a terrible battering.

To the gods of war, a sacrifice MORE THAN 60 KILLED AS ISRAELI MISSILES RAIN DOWN ON THE
VILLAGE WHERE JESUS TURNED WATER INTO WINE

The house, the charnel house, was on the very edge of the village, overlooking an arid valley of stones and olive trees which cannot have changed much since the time of Jesus. We passed a line of Red Cross volunteers sheltering in the shadow of a stone wall, one woman weeping for what she had just seen.

Most of the houses in the lane were destroyed. But most of them had been empty when the missiles struck. Not the home of tobacco farmer Mohammed Hachem. His three-storey home was safe, he had said, or at least safer. It was on the very edge of the village and a taller building next door but further up the hill protected it from the trajectory of Israeli artillery shells.

That is why more than 60 people, largely from the Hachem and Chaloob families, had been sheltering there since the war began.

THEY were there on Saturday night, gathered in two basement rooms, when the Israeli air force began a sustained attack on the village at around 7pm.

According to those present, the Hachem house was struck by two missiles at approximately 1.15am yesterday morning.

'The explosions destroyed the windows and doors of my home,' said Abu Ali Hakeem, another tobacco farmer, who lives 300 yards away.

'We could do nothing until 6am because the bombardment was so intense.' Mr Hakeem said that for two hours the villagers of Qana rallied, trying to extract the dead and the living using their bare hands.

The villagers pulled out 17 corpses and six injured, two seriously, before the Red Cross arrived at 8am, he said. Then they worked together.

By late afternoon an excavator was tearing at the ruins of the house. This was not a rescue mission now but a recovery of bodies.

The scraping of the shovel masked the constant sound overhead of Israeli jets, unmanned drones and explosions in nearby villages.

As each bucket load was moved one expected, and feared, to see a small hand or limb flapping amid the earth and rubble. You did not need to be a parent to be moved by this, but if you were, as I am, the emotion was acute. At 5.20pm came a shout and the digger stopped. A rescue worker could see another body. The crowd braced itself for a new tranche of dead.

Qana knows suffering. In Israel's 1996 'Grapes of Wrath' offensive 800 civilians were sheltering in the UN compound in the village when it was hit by artillery fire. Some 102 were killed and 120 wounded. The scandal halted the Israeli offensive.

Mohammed Ismail, a carpenter wearing a Hezbollah T-shirt, said that Qana was cursed.

'Why Qana? I will tell you why.

Because here Christian and Muslim live together as friends side by side, visiting each other. They do not like that.' They are the Americans and the Israelis. Far from snuffing out Hezbollah, this war is radicalising the Lebanese people, of all faiths, and boosting Hezbollah's popularity. Qana might be the tipping point for a ceasefire. Killing dozens of children does not play well in Main Street USA.

That is scant consolation for those left in this hellish place.

Graphic

To the gods of war, a sacrifice MORE THAN 60 KILLED AS ISRAELI MISSILES RAIN DOWN ON THE
VILLAGE WHERE JESUS TURNED WATER INTO WINE

(1) A RUINED LANDSCAPE: THE SCENES OF DESTRUCTION IN THE VILLAGE OF QANA IN SOUTHERN LEBANON ARE CLEAR FOR THE WHOLE WORLD TO SEE AFTER AN ISRAELI AIR STRIKE IN THE EARLY HOURS OF YESTERDAY (2) HORROR: THE BODIES OF SOME OF THE VICTIMS, WRAPPED IN PLASTIC, AT A TEMPORARY MORGUE (3) RESCUE MISSION: LEBANESE SOLDIERS AND RED CROSS WORKERS LOOK FOR VICTIMS IN A COLLAPSED BUILDING AFTER THE ISRAELI AIR STRIKE

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

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Deadly Israeli attack derails peace effort

The Guardian (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island)

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. B7

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Byline: AP

Body

Israel agreed Sunday to halt air attacks on south Lebanon for 48 hours in the face of widespread outrage over an air strike that killed at least 56 Lebanese, mostly women and children, when it levelled a building where they had taken shelter.

The announcement of the pause in overflights - made by State Department spokesman Adam Ereli - appeared to reflect American pressure on Israel. Ereli, who was in Israel with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, said Israel reserved the right to hit targets if it learns that attacks are being prepared against them.

An Israeli government official confirmed Prime Minister Ehud Olmert agreed to a 48-hour halt in air strikes on Lebanon. The official was speaking on condition of anonymity since he was not authorized to talk to reporters.

The stunning bloodshed in Lebanon earlier on Sunday prompted Rice to cut short her Mideast mission and intensified world demands on Washington to back an immediate end to the fighting.

The attack in the village of Qana brought Lebanon's death toll to more than 510 and pushed American peace efforts to a crucial juncture, as fury at the United States flared in Lebanon. The Beirut government said it would no longer negotiate over a U.S. peace package without an unconditional ceasefire. UN chief Kofi Annan sharply criticized world leaders - implicitly Washington - for ignoring his previous calls for a stop.

In Qana, workers pulled dirt-covered bodies of young boys and girls - dressed in the shorts and T-shirts they had been sleeping in - out of the mangled wreckage of the three-storey building. Bodies were carried in blankets.

Israel apologized for the deaths but blamed Hezbollah guerrillas, saying they had fired rockets into northern Israel from near the building. Before Ereli's announcement, Olmert said the campaign to crush Hezbollah would continue, telling Rice it could last up to two weeks more.

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

The UN Security Council held an emergency meeting to debate a resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire - a step Washington has stood nearly alone at the council in refusing until the disarmament of Hezbollah is assured.

In a jab at the United States, Annan told the council in unusually frank terms that he was "deeply dismayed" his previous calls for a halt were ignored. "Action is needed now before many more children, women and men become casualties of a conflict over which they have no control," he said.

Deadly Israeli attack derails peace effort

After news of the deaths emerged, Rice telephoned Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora and said she would stay in Jerusalem to continue work on a peace package, rather than make a planned Sunday visit to Beirut.

Saniora said he told her not to come.

Rice decided to cut her Mideast trip short and return to Washington on Monday morning.

In Beirut, some 5,000 protesters gathered in downtown Beirut, at one point attacking a UN building and burning American flags. Another protest by about 50 people on a road leading to the U.S. Embassy forced security forces to close the road there.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

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Standing firm

Guardian.com

July 18, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 868 words

Highlight: Comment: Confront Iran now, or face nuclear consequences, Ed Vaizey warns.

Body

The current crisis engulfing the Middle East is of global concern. Since the conflict began, I have made clear my support for Israel, and her right to defend herself against attacks which have been going on for many years. It is quite right that the international community has focused its attention on the actions of Hizbullah, and the two states that sponsor their terrorist actions, Iran and Syria.

Last month, I was part of a parliamentary delegation that went to Iran, the first such delegation since the revolution. Although the visit was, naturally, heavily overseen, it did give us the chance to understand the country and its people - if not its ruling regime - a little better.

To visit Tehran is to take your life in your hands. To say that Tehran's traffic makes Delhi look like Worthing on a sleepy Sunday afternoon would be an understatement. In many ways, the roads are a metaphor for Iranian society. There are rules, but they are fairly impenetrable to the Western eye. Despite the chaos, everyone seems to get to their destination. And the sheer volume points to a society that is vibrant, chaotic and full of energy.

Tehran nestles in a beautiful setting, with soaring mountains providing a spectacular backdrop. But it is not a beautiful city. It is heavily polluted, and there are few landmarks, apart from the futuristic tower that provided a focal point for the revolution more than a quarter of a century ago. This is a young country, with almost three-quarters of the population in their thirties or younger. The Iran-Iraq war took a huge toll, brought home to us by a visit to the Rose Garden of the Martyrs in Isfahan. It is a country that is obsessed with football - we were present just as the World Cup got underway, and shared the sorrow as Iran went down to Mexico. And it is a country with a deep distrust for the British - many times we were blamed for putting the Ayatollahs in power, and many times for toppling the regime in 1953.

The Iranians are a proud people. At one point we met some young Iranians who had spent time in Britain. I asked one what impression he thought the British had of Iran, expecting him to answer something like "they think we're all religious zealots". Instead, quick as a flash and equally affronted, he answered "they think we're all Arabs"! Iranians, of course, are Persians, and that is the first and most important lesson one learns when trying to understand Iran's relationship with the world. Iranians, regardless of their political affiliation, are proud of their country, and are united in not wanting to see it slighted.

Iran's government is complex, with power resting with Ayatollah Khomeini, the supreme leader and Khomeini's successor; the President, Amadinejad, directly elected; the Majlis [parliament]; and the Council of Guardians, which

Standing firm

can veto legislation from the Majlis. At last year's elections, many reform-minded MPs were banned from standing, so the Majlis is made up of conservative-inclined politicians.

Nevertheless, even in this rather restricted format, the Majlis threw up some surprises. Women MPs, perfectly free to speak on issues of concern. And equally importantly, representatives of minorities, including Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians. I was pleased to learn, for example, that the Jewish representative had spoken out against President Amadinejad's disgraceful comments on the Holocaust. The nuclear issue is as high on Iran's agenda as it is on ours. On the day we arrived, Larijani, the main negotiator, was off to garner support from Egypt, and messages of support from Arab states were front-page news while we were there. Straightforward confrontation by the West, it seems to me, is likely to increase support for Amadinejad, who is a shrewd politician determined to bypass the establishment and speak directly to the people. Indeed, Condoleezza Rice's decision to engage America in the negotiations has completely thrown the Iranian regime's calculations. Many Iranians recognise that an Iranian bomb would bring many more problems than it solves. But they still support Iran's right to have the capability (that pride thing again). It seems to me that the Iranian establishment is waiting to see how the cards fall, which means that the West must remain resolute - but not unnecessarily confrontational.

There is little doubt that the Iranian establishment is wary of Amadinejad. There is also little doubt that freedoms are gradually being restricted. One journalist I spoke to told me that for the first time since the revolution, he was being told what to write. At the same time, there is more freedom to criticise the regime than I had expected, and more freedom in the way people dress and go about their business.

Given the current situation, what is the West's best course of action? If international opinion remains resolute against Hizbullah, and against its backers, we will achieve an important and crucial victory. The conflict that is taking place has huge ramifications in how we deal with an Iranian regime that clearly wants a nuclear weapon. To stand up to them and face them down in Lebanon will ensure that we have many more cards to play in the tough negotiations that lie ahead.

Load-Date: July 18, 2006

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U. Michigan campus stage for anti-violence rally

University Wire

July 24, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Michigan Daily via U-Wire

Length: 820 words

Byline: By Kelly Fraser, Michigan Daily; **SOURCE:** U. Michigan

Dateline: ANN ARBOR, Mich.

Body

About 250 community members, students and faculty members gathered on the campus Saturday afternoon in a rally against Israel's military actions in Lebanon.

As speakers began to give personal accounts of relatives in Lebanon, supporters and families wearing red, green and white -- the national colors of Lebanon -- slowly trickled into the crowd.

"It's extremely easy for people to forget about injustices happening oceans away," said Shima Abdelfadeel, an organizer of the rally and political chair of the Muslim Students' Association.

Abdelfadeel said the Lebanese perspective has not been equally covered in the media. "The event was more of an educational demonstration than anything," she said.

Today marks the 13th day of violence between Israeli and Hezbollah forces in Lebanon.

The conflict began when Hezbollah fighters captured two Israeli soldiers.

Calling the action an act of war, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert responded by sending planes to bomb Hezbollah camps in southern Lebanon.

The Washington Post estimates that at least 375 Lebanese, mostly civilians, and 36 Israelis -- including 17 civilians -- have been killed since the conflict began.

President George W. Bush has not called for a cease-fire, saying Israel has the right to defend itself.

Although some spoke and carried signs specifically addressing Israeli's military action in Lebanon, crowd members also chanted against United States involvement in Iraq and escalating conflict in Gaza between Israeli forces and Palestinians.

Abdelfadeel said it's easier to focus on Lebanon because the nation is receiving the most media attention of the countries experiencing conflict in the Middle East -- but that other areas, such as the Gaza Strip, were equally important to organizers.

The rally culminated in a nearly 40-minute march through the Ann Arbor Street Art Fair but city law requires a permit for large groups to march in the streets.

U. Michigan campus stage for anti-violence rally

Due to time constraints, organizers did not apply for a permit, Abdelfadeel said. Instead, the march made two laps on the sidewalks of campus.

Four Department of Public Safety Officers escorted the march.

During the group's second lap, one man screamed back at the demonstrators, causing some adverse reaction from marchers. The instance was quickly broken up by organizers.

American Culture and Women's Studies Prof. Nadine Naber, who spoke at the rally, said the individual was "insignificant" to the event's overall success.

Abdelfadeel said that the biggest misconception onlookers might have of the rally is that "we as a group support Hezbollah or Hamas and that we don't care about the Israel civilian casualties. That's not true at all."

University alum Laurel Federbush and her mother, who are Jewish, marched with signs reading "Real Jews denounce Israel's war crimes."

Federbush said that while the Israeli government often speaks on behalf of Jewish people, she does not support its actions in Lebanon.

Over the past few months Federbush has asked the University's Board of Regents to cut financial ties with Israel twice.

Each time the line passed University President Mary Sue Coleman's residence on South University Avenue, leaders paused to demand that the University divest from Israel.

Activist and University alum Tarek Diya shouted into a bullhorn, "Mary Sue, I told you we'd be back," as police officers monitored the crowd from Coleman's lawn.

"This will be the year of divestment for Ann Arbor," he continued. Abdelfadeel said Students Allied for Freedom and Equality plans to make a push for divestment in the fall.

The Muslim Students' Association has signed a resolution created by SAFE in support of divestment.

This past March, about 140 faculty and students petitioned the University's Board of Regents to cut all financial ties with Israel.

At that time, Regent Laurence Deitch (D-Bingham Farms) told the Daily the board would never support divestment.

Deitch said many regents question whether divestment is an appropriate action for a university to take, even in extreme cases, because it opposes the board's goal of encouraging investment.

The University last divested from the tobacco industry in 2000.

Locally, the rally was sponsored by the Muslim Students' Association, SAFE, the Michigan Congress of Arab American Organizations and the Muslim Community Association of Ann Arbor and Vicinity. Several Toledo-based groups also sponsored the demonstration.

Abdelfadeel said the event was also heavily publicized throughout Dearborn's Muslim community.

She said that although she expected more supporters from out of town, she was impressed by the number of Ann Arbor community members who marched.

This past Tuesday, a similar Dearborn rally attracted nearly 10,000 people.

Israel supporters have also been vocal in the metro Detroit area. In a demonstration of solidarity with Israel last Wednesday, several thousand people filled a synagogue in Southfield.

U. Michigan campus stage for anti-violence rally

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Load-Date: July 24, 2006

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**Israel was forged through assassination and kidnap . . . of the British; IN
THIS PERSONAL COMMENTARY, AN HISTORIAN DRAWS SOME
UNCOMFORTABLE PARALLELS**

Daily Mail (London)

July 21, 2006 Friday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 17

Length: 1338 words

Byline: CORRELLI BARNETT

Body

SEVERAL of my good friends are American, but this does not inhibit me from criticising George W. Bush's catastrophically misguided invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Similarly, I have good friends who are Jewish, but this will not inhibit me from criticising the current 'total war' being waged on Lebanon by the Israeli state.

The fact that some of my Jewish friends will read this article only makes me the more sad that I have to say, as a military historian, that this war is grotesquely out of proportion to the level of casualties and damage previously inflicted on Israel by Hezbollah.

It is likewise grotesquely out of proportion to the taking hostage of two Israeli soldiers - as are the ferocious Israeli attacks inside the Gaza strip in response to the taking hostage of just one soldier.

Certainly, Israel has the right to defend herself today as she has done successfully in the past. But surely her response to Hamas and Hezbollah should have been limited and precisely targeted rather than a version of the 'shock and awe' bombing which opened the American invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The Israeli government should have learned that 'shock and awe' may only be a prelude to a protracted guerilla war.

During the long and bitter struggle against the IRA in Northern Ireland, it never occurred to any British government that the IRA bases and arms dumps within the Irish Republic should be bombed by the Royal Air Force, let alone that whole districts of Irish cities like Drogheda known to harbour IRA terrorists should be destroyed.

Equally, it has never occurred to a Spanish government that it would be right and proper to respond to the lethal, indiscriminate attacks by ETA (the Basque terrorist organisation) by savagely bombing and rocketing San Sebastian and other Basque cities.

WHY SHOULD Israel regard herself as a p r i v i l e g e d exception?

Israel was forged through assassination and kidnap . . . of the British IN THIS PERSONAL COMMENTARY, AN HISTORIAN DRAWS SOME UNCOMFORTABLE PARALLELS

Why should 'the West' in general - and Bush and Blair in particular - also regard her as a privileged exception, rightfully entitled to conduct a savage total war in response to Hezbollah attacks no worse than those of the IRA and ETA?

These questions are the more pertinent because Israel herself was born out of a terrorist struggle in 1945-48 against Britain, which then ruled Palestine under a United Nations mandate. The so-called Stern Gang (after its founder, Abraham Stern) specialised in assassination, its most famous victim being Lord Moyne, the Colonial Secretary, shot in Cairo in 1944.

But by far the most dangerous Jewish terrorist group was the Irgun Zvei Leumi (National Military Organisation) led by Menachem Begin, who after the creation of the state of Israel founded the Likud political party, and even finished up as prime minister.

The group's propaganda stated its political aims with brutal clarity. First, what it called 'the Nazo-British occupation forces' must be driven out of Palestine.

Then a Jewish state would be established embracing the whole of Palestine and Transjordan (as Jordan was then known). Too bad about the native population of Arabs, of course.

The group's logo, displayed on the fly-posters which I myself saw as a soldier in Palestine in 1946-47, showed a crude map of Palestine and Transjordan with an arm holding a rifle splayed across it.

The Irgun's successful attacks included the demolition in August 1946 of the wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem housing the secretariat of the British mandatory government and also the HQ of British troops in Palestine - at a cost of 91 lives, Jewish, Arab and British, most of them civilians.

Another 'success' was the blowing-up of the Officers' Club in Jerusalem in March 1947. I saw the corpses lying on slabs in the morgue, spittle still bubbling out of their mouths.

In combat with a terrorist group perhaps some 3,000 strong, a maximum of 100,000 British troops was deployed in a country about the size of Wales.

There was a lesson here for George W. Bush and Tony Blair before their invasion of Iraq - but of course a lesson unheeded by men with no interest in history.

In July 1947, the Irgun Zvei Leumi kidnapped two British Intelligence Corps sergeants as hostages to trade against the lives of three Irgun terrorists under sentence of death for an attack on Acre jail.

Here is an exact parallel to the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah. But unlike the savage reaction of Ehud Olmert's government today, the British government in 1947 did not seek to apply pressure to the kidnappers by ordering the RAF to destroy large parts of Tel Aviv, and the Royal Artillery to bombard selected Jewish settlements suspected of being bases for the Irgun.

In the event, the three Jewish terrorists were hanged - and the Irgun in turn strung up the two British sergeants from a tree in an orange grove and booby-trapped their bodies.

Yet even then it did not occur to the British authorities to impose the kind of savage collective punishment that Olmert's government is now visiting on the Arabs of Gaza and southern Lebanon.

A notice posted by the Irgun proclaimed that the two sergeants had been hanged because they were 'members of the British criminal-terrorist organisation known as the British Army of Occupation in Palestine', responsible for the murder of men, women, children and prisoners of war.

The so- called 'murdered prisoners of war' were in fact terrorists hanged after due trial.

Israel was forged through assassination and kidnap . . . of the British IN THIS PERSONAL COMMENTARY, AN HISTORIAN DRAWS SOME UNCOMFORTABLE PARALLELS

THIS IRGUN proclamation signed off with the warning: 'We shall revenge the blood of the prisoners of war who have been murdered, by actions of war against the enemy, by blows which we shall inflict on his head.' So blood-thirstily selfrighteous is the language of this long proclamation that it could just as easily have been written today by Hezbollah or Hamas or Al-Qaeda. The sacred cause may be different, but the language and the type of mind behind it remain the same.

In the event, Jewish terrorism against the British finally succeeded. All attempts to negotiate a future for Palestine which balanced Jewish interests against those of the majority Arab population came to nothing.

A project for a single state with Jewish and Arab cantons was rejected by the Arabs. An Arab proposal for a single state based on the existing Arab majority and a limit on future Jewish immigration was rejected by Jewish leaders.

A two- state solution, proposed by a UN commission and favoured by Washington, was in turn rejected by the Labour Government, who rightly feared that it would be British troops who would have to impose the settlement on one side or the other - or perhaps on both.

This, the chiefs of staff warned, would require two extra divisions on top of the two already in Palestine.

With the Irgun campaign of bombing still going on, and the tally of British casualties mounting, Clement Attlee's Cabinet had quite simply had enough.

They refused to impose the UN plan, and instead opted for unconditional withdrawal, even at the cost of (in the words of Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary) 'a period of bloodshed and chaos'.

Another lesson here for Tony Blair in regard to Iraq?

So Britain handed the mandate back to the UN and announced that British rule in Palestine would end in spring 1948. As it duly did.

In the last months of the mandate, the security situation dissolved into three-cornered violence - Jew versus British and Arab; Arab versus Jew and British; British versus both.

By the time the last British force had left, this violence had degenerated into anarchic civil war between Jew and Arab.

It was just the prelude to the full-scale war between the new state of Israel and neighbouring Arab regimes wanting to extinguish it.

The war ended in the successful conquest by Israel of the larger part of Palestine, and a tidal wave of Arab refugees into Lebanon and Jordan.

Here is the origin of today's bitter Arab resentment of Israeli hegemony - a resentment which powers Hamas and Hezbollah as they follow the path of terrorism first mapped out by the Stern Gang and the Irgun Zvei Leumi in the 1940s.

CORRELLI BARNETT is a Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge.

Load-Date: July 21, 2006

READERS WRITE

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

July 17, 2006 Monday

Main Edition

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. 12A

Length: 1262 words

Byline: ROXANE PEYSER, SHAUL LAVAN, FRED BUDIN, RICHARD MITCHELL, SALLY MCDONALD, JOHN MORSE, LINDA WILLIAMS CATTANACH, RON SLADE SR.

For the Journal-Constitution

Body

Middle East: Time to answer Lebanon's cries

As an Atlantan living in Beirut, I am saddened by the many hasty conclusions I have heard some make regarding Lebanon's people and government. After 15 years of energetic rebuilding, the Lebanese deserve more than to have their fragile country be destroyed and its people collectively punished for the actions of a non-state actor --- actions it knew nothing about, did not plan and has denounced.

Israel might be able to cut off the head of the snake, but it will always grow a new head. Moreover, those who might be friends or benign neighbors are antagonized by Israel's middle of the night bombing campaigns and systematic onslaught that terrorize the entire country and create feelings of resentment rather than gratitude. Lebanon's people and government are pleading with the world for its help and no one can afford to be deaf to their pleas.

ROXANE PEYSER

Peyser is a lawyer and doctoral student at Georgia State University.

Hezbollah's actions call for its expulsion

Charles Krauthammer hit the mark. ("To exist, Israel forced to fight," @issue, July 14). **Hezbollah** is an Iranian proxy sworn to Israel's destruction. Israel's dilemma is that **Hezbollah**'s missiles are placed in homes in villages and in densely populated areas. **Hezbollah** scores points when it kills Israelis --- and scores propaganda points when Israeli responses inadvertently kill civilians.

READERS WRITE

Hezbollah, as the only armed militia in Lebanon, has a veto on Lebanese decisions. It should have been disarmed under U.N. resolutions and removed from South Lebanon. With Iran and Syria's backing, it has resisted that. It probably started the current round to distract from Iran's nuclear standoff.

It remains to be seen if the current fighting will seriously dent Hezbollah. Tragically, as long as Iran and Syria stoke the fires, civilians on all sides will suffer.

SHAUL LAVAN, Atlanta

Politics: Gambling bills display misplaced priorities

Gasoline is at \$3 a gallon and going up. Our children are dying in Iraq. We are being invaded by Mexico. Health care costs are skyrocketing. Health insurance is getting harder to afford. Pension funds are failing. Our schools are overcrowded and the graduation rates are down. Our hospital emergency rooms are closing.

So, what does the U.S. House of Representatives do? It passes a bill to stop us from playing online poker ("House deals setback to online gambling," Nation in Brief, July 12, and "Congress to weigh ban on Web bets," Business, July 11). The House doesn't want people to stop gambling altogether. The bill allows bets online on horse racing, sports events and certain lotteries. Could it be that certain people contribute and some don't?

Since when do conservatives believe in so much government interference in our private lives? Are our Republican representatives in the U.S. House really conservatives or just Big Government liberals in Republican clothing, blowing smoke?

FRED BUDIN, Hoschton

Effort against voting act slammed, rightly so

A politician has his pet proposal to drastically change the socio-political fabric of Georgia quashed by a huge majority in the House of Representatives. His response? "Well we only need five votes at the Supreme Court." ("Voting act OK'd in tense House." Page One July 14.)

Is this another case of some "liberal" seeking "activist judges" to thwart the will of the majority? No, it's the response of U.S. Rep. Lynn Westmoreland (R-Ga.), whose attempt to have Georgia exempted from the Voting Rights Act was overwhelmingly rejected.

Is this abject hypocrisy, or has this Republican finally read the Constitution and Federalist Papers and learned that the courts do not exist to rubber stamp whatever the majority of the day wishes to do?

RICHARD MITCHELL, Atlanta

Sadness burns on inside, so don't judge

When I read Beverly Beckham's column, I made a mental note that the friend Beckham described in her column may be clinically depressed ("When gloom rains on a promising soul," @issue, July 6). But I gave it little thought.

Then I read a letter to the editor written in response to Beckham's column that piles on to the argument that people --- usually women --- are expected to "buck up" and put on a happy face regardless of the circumstances ("Some create own joy, some choose misery," Letters, July 10).

I agree that we can choose to be happy, but it's an inside job. For those on the outside, sometimes it's easier to judge than to accept, listen and maybe be there for a friend in real need.

SALLY McDONALD

McDonald, of Chamblee, is a licensed professional counselor.

READERS WRITE

Accident-prone situation worsens

As I write this from my home on Moreland Avenue, I am watching an elderly woman being placed in an ambulance after an accident involving her car and a dump truck. Meanwhile, 18-wheelers are backing up on both sides of this skinny four-lane street that serves as an overused short-cut from I-20 to I-675 and the landfills and trucking companies on south Moreland, all of which could and should be reached via I-285. These enormous trucks are hurting efforts to improve south Moreland Avenue as they slow noncommercial traffic, add noise and pollute. And if you're a pedestrian, good luck: Crosswalks on our street are halfway between a bad joke and a suicide mission.

The situation is not an accident waiting to happen. In fact, it's an accident that happens often and shows no sign of lessening any time soon.

JOHN MORSE, Atlanta

Children significant to our nation's future

At last, some common sense. Columnist Jonathan V. Last points out one significant reason for the perilous decline in the birthrate is that children are no longer an "economic boon" to their parents since those parents will be provided for by Social Security and Medicare ("Culture sends birthrate to point of peril" @issue, July 13). But he also sounds the alarm that the logical consequence of falling fertility rates is that our culture "cannot hope to sustain itself" without the work of young people to fund those very social programs. A culture with no children has no future.

LINDA WILLIAMS CATTANACH, Blairsville

It's always profits over the patients

As a pharmacist with a doctorate who practiced in hospitals for 20 years, I must say that Jay Bookman's column is the best I have seen on the subject --- ever ("Ideology offers way to hide scam," @issue, July 13.).

When I tried to institute a number of reforms in two small-town hospital pharmacies, I wasn't prepared for the political implications of what I was attempting. I was immediately met with resistance by the medical staff and the pharmaceutical companies.

Instituting a bidding process, use of generics, a restrictive formulary and the elimination of physician's orders transcribed by an uneducated and untrained ward clerk were seen as creeping socialism (the drug error rate was astronomical). Any suggested change to the status quo was seen as a threat by groups of right-wing physicians who saw a Communist behind every tree. Of course, the pharmaceutical companies were delighted, and the insurance companies who should have been supportive were strangely silent.

From my perspective, implementation of the Medicare prescription drug plan is a sad joke on the American people and a sop to special interests. By denying Medicare the advantages of the bidding process and disallowing the importation of pharmaceuticals, President Bush has, once again, demonstrated that the so-called free market and competitive free enterprise are good only as long as they result in huge profits for the pharmaceutical companies.

RON SLADE SR., Covington

Graphic

Photo: RAMZI HAIDAR / Agence France-PresseA Lebanese man with two children leaves an area after a bridge was hit in Damur, south of Beirut, during Israeli airstrikes Friday.

Photo: U.S. Rep. Lynn Westmoreland

READERS WRITE

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

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Escape from the beirut cauldron

Daily Mail (London)

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 6

Length: 1482 words

Byline: RICHARD PENDLEBURY

Body

BRITAIN'S biggest maritime evacuation since Dunkirk finally got under way yesterday when the Royal Navy sailed into the battered port of Beirut.

The first 180 of up to 20,000 British passport holders trapped in Lebanon by the weeklong Israeli blitz were taken aboard the destroyer Gloucester last night.

Among them were babes in arms, heavily pregnant women and those suffering from serious medical conditions. They were expected at the Cypriot port of Limassol early this morning after a ten-hour voyage.

As they left, many expressed their anger at the slowness with which the British Government reacted to the crisis. Thousands more British refugees are expected to be evacuated this week.

But so far it has been too dangerous to rescue the 86 Britons still believed to be trapped in southern Lebanon, which is under the most intense round-the-clock Israeli bombardment. The Israelis were firing at any vehicle heading south from Beirut towards the war zone, said Ambassador James Watt, and evacuation had been abandoned for the moment.

'We started the process which we have now stopped because we could not be sure of the safety of our vehicles,' he said.

Tony Blair said a fleet of ships was in the region and ready to take up position. He added: 'We are doing absolutely everything we can to make sure the evacuation happens as swiftly and properly as possible.' Yesterday's operation went ahead only after tough diplomatic negotiations with the blockading Israelis. HMS Gloucester, a Type 42 destroyer with a crew of 300, had made the dash into the port, where two people were killed on Monday by Israeli missiles, amid great secrecy and fears of terrorist attack.

She docked just after 6pm local time, and 90 minutes later the first evacuees boarded from a convoy of coaches. All were tired, frightened and confused after being under a sustained Israeli blitz for almost a week.

But, unlike millions of other civilians caught up in the nightmare that is Lebanon today, they had a British passport. Rachel Terry, a 19-year-old geography student from Canterbury, was on holiday when the war began.

She said: 'It was absolutely terrifying. Bombs were dropping all around and I was almost blown out of my bed by one which fell only 500 metres away.'

Escape from the beirut cauldron

'I couldn't move from where I was for a week and it is such a relief to be getting on board the ship.' Another holidaymaker, 12-year-old Jason Saab, said: 'I'm never coming back here. I can't wait to get out. The bombs were very frightening.' Maria Noujeim, 40, who was accompanied by her Lebanese husband Joseph and children Mario, 12, Jessica, nine, and Michael, five, said: 'I have been very scared. We were very near to a Hezbollah position.'

Maya Kaaki, 30, from Cheshire, who is married to a Lebanese journalist, spoke for many when she said: 'I am not so much angry as appalled by our Government.'

'They should have been so much better prepared and evacuated us earlier. The French, Italians, Greeks and Saudis have already gone.' With her 13-month-old son Aouni asleep on her shoulder, she said: 'We have been under siege.'

We were being bombed and had no water or electricity, but the embassy just told us to stay where we were.' The evacuees were given tea and sandwiches after they boarded.

The crew have given up their beds for them and Gloucester took on extra medical staff before sailing for Beirut.

Up to 4,000 British passport holders and their dependants have so far registered with the embassy in Beirut, with the number increasing every day.

Tens of thousands of citizens of Commonwealth countries such as Canada and Australia could also be evacuated under the British operation.

The aircraft carrier Illustrious is expected off the Lebanese coast today, and the first civilian passenger ship hired by the British Government should arrive in Beirut to pick up hundreds more Britons.

Five other Royal Navy ships are in the region and ready to assist.

Ambassador James Watt had earlier said that the Israelis, who are blockading the port, had been very 'hard-nosed' about the conditions under which the Gloucester could enter Beirut. The ship was told that it had to leave Beirut last night before darkness fell.

'There was a very small window,' he said. He added: 'The fact that we are employing naval assets shows that we consider this to be a dangerous environment. It is a war zone.' He added: 'The military planners have real concerns about exposure to terrorist attacks.' Reacting to criticism from the expats that the Foreign Office had been slow to begin the evacuation, in comparison to the French who took off 800 of its citizens on Monday in a civilian ferry, the ambassador said: 'We do not have the French system of total registration of its citizens here.'

'We have a policy of concentrating on the most vulnerable categories first.'

We wanted to take the ones who cannot cope with the stress first. After that we will do it in more volume.' Other countries have launched their own evacuation operations, as tens of thousands of foreigners packed their bags.

A Greek frigate took off hundreds of that country's nationals as HMS Gloucester docked. A car ferry full of Americans also left.

The Israelis held their fire. But once the Gloucester weighed anchor the port would become a target once again. Those lucky enough to be on board would leave behind a situation which was summed up by a local newspaper front page headline. It simply said: 'Ruin of a Nation.'

Iran is pulling the strings, says Blair

TONY Blair yesterday tried to link the crisis in the Middle East to the Iraq war by accusing Iran of supplying weapons to militants in both conflicts.

Escape from the Beirut cauldron

In a statement in the Commons, the Prime Minister said that the kidnapping of three Israeli soldiers in Gaza and on the Lebanese border had been deliberately designed to provoke a backlash by the Israelis. And last night the Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert accused Iran of planning the abduction of the Israeli soldiers last week with Hezbollah.

Mr Blair told MPs: 'Hezbollah is supported by Iran and Syria, by the former in weapons, by the former in weapons incidentally very similar if not identical to those used against British troops in Basra; by the latter, in many different ways, and by both financially. We urge Syria to take the action it could take in relation to Hezbollah if it wanted to do so.' Mr Blair made his claims despite the fact Hezbollah are firing rockets into Israel, while Iraqi insurgents favour roadside or suicide bombs. Meanwhile the Tory leader David Cameron warned that the world wanted to see 'concerted action' from world leaders.

Under growing international pressure to step up U.S. diplomatic efforts, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said there should be a ceasefire 'as soon as possible when conditions are conducive to do so'.

But Israel warned its offensive in Lebanon could last several weeks. While UN Secretary General Kofi Annan pressed ahead with his plan for a UN peacekeeping force to be sent into southern Lebanon, Major General Udi Adam, the head of the Israeli army's northern command, said the blitz of Hezbollah fighters from the air and sea would continue undiminished. 'I think that we should assume that it will take a few more weeks,' he said. The army's deputy chief of staff, Major General Moshe Kaplinski, stressed Israel had not ruled out deploying 'massive ground forces into Lebanon'.

As Britain began the evacuation of stranded citizens, Israeli warplanes yesterday continued their attacks in Beirut's southern suburbs and to the north of the Lebanese capital.

At least 30 people were killed in the attacks, including nine members of one family. Another air strike on a Lebanese barracks east of Beirut killed 11 soldiers.

Israel pointed to fewer rockets being fired by Hezbollah as an indication of the mounting effectiveness of its air campaign, but an attack on the northern Israeli town of Nahariya killed one civilian.

Petrol tax frozen as pump prices soar

CHANCELLOR Gordon Brown froze petrol duty yesterday as the Middle East crisis threatened to leave motorists paying record amounts.

Fuel tax will stay at 213.8p a gallon in September, as pump prices soar towards Pounds 5 a gallon.

The decision came as the conflict in Lebanon pushed average pump prices to 97.51p a litre, or Pounds 4.43 a gallon. Analysts warned further increases lie ahead. The Chancellor last year earned Pounds 23.3billion in fuel taxes, excluding VAT, taking 62 per cent of the money motorists spend on fuel.

Britons pay more at the pump than any major economy. The Treasury said the decision will be reviewed at the end of the year, adding: 'Oil has been trading in a range of \$66-\$78 per barrel.

'The risk of oil price volatility remains high, and the Government will not go ahead with the planned inflation-only increase in duties on September 1.'

A full-blown Middle East war could push crude oil to \$100 a barrel, compared to its \$78.40 record.

Graphic

Escape from the beirut cauldron

(1) OUT OF THE LINE OF FIRE: CARRYING LUGGAGE AND CRADLING CHILDREN, BRITISH FAMILIES SHOW THEIR RELIEF AT LEAVING LEBANON AS THEY WALK ACROSS THE DOCKS TO BOARD THE GLOUCESTER (2) HOLDING HANDS: THE CHILDREN (3) SMILING AND WAVING: THE YOUNG ONES (4) SAILING IN: THE GLOUCESTER ARRIVES IN BEIRUT

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

End of Document

RECORDVIEW: KILLINGS ARE ON OUR CONSCIENCE

Daily Record

July 31, 2006, Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 8

Length: 336 words

Body

LEBANON'S children murdered with British help - the protest banner screamed its message of outrage loud and clear at Prestwick Airport yesterday.

Hundreds joined the protest against the Americans using Scottish soil as a staging post for the delivery of bombs to Israel.

News coverage of the demonstration should have made uncomfortable reading for the Prime Minister.

Tony Blair has so far turned a deaf ear to calls for a complete ceasefire.

Indeed, last night's temporary truce announced by Israel only came about as a result of global outrage at the worst slaughter so far in the 19-day conflict.

The numbers at Prestwick were swelled by many who had been shocked by the early morning television footage of the bombings which killed so many defenceless men, women and children in an Israeli airstrike on the town of Qana.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert expressed his "great sorrow" for the loss of civilian life and defended the strike, claiming the villagers were being used as human shields by Hezbollah to fire rockets at Israel.

Olmert said: "Everyone understands this. When we strike civilians, the world understands this is an exceptional case that does not represent how we act."

But most of the world does not understand.

The horrific images of the bombing of Qana may yet prove to be the turning point in the latest bout of apparently interminable violence in the Middle East.

The Israelis are now faced with almost unprecedented worldwide condemnation and criticism at their disproportionate military response to Hezbollah incursions.

When he spoke yesterday of the Middle East crisis, Pope Benedict XVI demanded an immediate cessation of violence, in the name of God.

But it is already too late for the little children of Qana...

Or the other 500-plus victims who have perished in the last three weeks.

RECORDVIEW: KILLINGS ARE ON OUR CONSCIENCE

Their deaths are on our collective conscience.

And, in the name of humanity, it can only be a matter of time before the shamed leaders of the US and Britain insist and ensure that Israel stop all military action.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Mirror, mirror, on the world's wall

University Wire

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 Minnesota Daily via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 564 words

Byline: By Adri Mehra, Minnesota Daily; **SOURCE:** U. Minnesota

Dateline: MINNEAPOLIS

Body

I heard a phrase recently that's been bandied about the water cooler and the radio dial alike this past week.

Is it another terse Trump aping of "You're fired"? Perhaps the under-due renaissance of MTV's self-styled "wardrobe malfunction"?

I can only wish this one was generated by the usual suspect, reality television.

Nope. The folks of Lake Wobegons everywhere have been talking about "World War III," and it ain't pretty.

Of course, there are a number of reasons for intoning a set of words better reserved for a Philip K. Dick or Frank Herbert novel (hell, I'd even give Tom Clancy naming rights in exchange for peace on Earth).

For one, we see an endgame version of our beloved Bush administration clutching at whatever hawkish straws are left in the burning barn of its failed crotch-grabbing, hyper-ambitious "cowboy diplomacy" tack.

While 2,986 people died in the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the British Medical Journal estimates 100,000 innocent Iraqi men, women and children killed by the three-year-old American occupation of their country.

More than 2,500 Americans have lost their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom - a number that is added to nearly every day - and between 20,000 and 50,000 soldiers have been injured, many of them permanently disfigured, to say nothing of the lifelong psychological damage of combat.

And now what? The United States is readying the rest of the Middle East for a proxy war with Israel in its place.

For all of the purported "saber-rattling" on the parts of Hezbollah and North Korea (which, according to the United States, is out to build the next nuclear bomb), this is really the sound of one hand clapping, and it's ours.

Now in its second week, Israel has pounded the Lebanese capital Beirut, with relentless shelling and airstrikes that already have killed nearly 200 people.

Israel's prolonged and merciless action, which included the bombing of a Beirut power station that left millions of families without power and access to fresh water for days, is supposedly in response to Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers earlier this month.

Mirror, mirror, on the world's wall

But everyone knows this is just the tripwire set in place by an increasingly isolated Judeo-American dynasty in its last throes.

Flanked by rising oceans separating it from an extremely prosperous South Asia and an unsympathetic but largely unified Western Europe, the U.S. is in the home stretch of what may be its swansong power play as the world's biggest bully - with Israel as its only friend.

While our schools, libraries and young minds are disintegrating from seven years of neglect, our leaders find themselves running out of cash, oil and that most precious and nonrenewable of commodities: time.

Just like the previous two incarnations of its namesake, World War III soon could be on our doorstep - and we'll have no choice but to sacrifice our livelihoods, and eventually our lives, for the wars of our government.

So every time you hear about Hezbollah or Hamas or Kim Jong-il, remember this: These people have no beef with you. They're just stooges in conflicts that have been co-opted by Uncle Sam in your name.

Because when your government's bottom line is synonymous with the military-industrial complex, you need a lot of enemies to make those arms contracts pay off.

World War III. The final installment in a series that may be our last renewable resource.

(C) 2006 Minnesota Daily via U-WIRE

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

Israel is also part of the violence in the Mideast

University Wire
July 17, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Daily Evergreen via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 586 words

Byline: By Amelia Veneziano, Daily Evergreen; **SOURCE:** Washington State U.

Dateline: PULLMAN, Wash.

Body

Headlines reading "Mideast in crisis!" are nothing unusual.

Also regular is President George W. Bush making pandering and forgiving statements to Israel, emphasizing their rights, rather than their responsibilities, to the Middle East.

But the last seven days strayed from the time-tested path of Israeli victimization. Israel has launched a series of very aggressive attacks on their neighbor to the north, Lebanon, and on **Hezbollah**, an Islamic terrorist group who resides in the nation.

Israel responded to **Hezbollah**'s kidnapping of two soldiers not with diplomacy, but with bombs. Across the planet, leaders and politicians are condemning Israel's aggression in the attacks on a nation that has been fairly westernized and liberated, unlike some of their Islamic neighbors.

The United States is on fairly good terms with Lebanon and many students come from across the world to study there.

Many Lebanese students come here as well, as one did during my senior year in high school. Her name is Fallouk and immediately after hearing of the bombings, I e-mailed her to make sure she was OK. So far, so good, she responded. As a Lebanese teenage girl, Fallouk has higher expectations of herself than many American high school students, and is very unlike the mistaken conceptions of Muslim **women**. She has career goals and would never dream of submitting to the burka.

Her family is not part of a terrorist group. Muslim, yes, but contrary to popular Western myth, not all Muslims are evil.

North of the current hot spot, Bush and other leaders from the free world are deep in discussion of powerful issues at the G-8 summit in Saint Petersburg, Russia, The New York Times reported. While surrounded by all this diplomacy in action, Bush can't help but be himself, clearly favoring Israel.

His most explicit and damning statement yet was reported at Yahoo! News: "Our message to Israel is, look, defend yourself, but as you do so, be mindful of the consequences. And so we've urged restraint."

Israel is also part of the violence in the Mideast

The article continues: "The United States refused to endorse calls for a cease-fire, saying that must be accompanied by constraints on Hezbollah, Hamas, Syria and Iran."

What about Israel? Will no one ever say, wait, Israel, too, is part of the violence? Many claim Israel is merely defending itself from the blood thirst of their neighboring nations.

Bush has certainly accepted this as truth. Bush's presidency has been the most pro-Israeli presidency in history. According to the Media Monitors Network, "In terms of letting Israelis commit atrocities and engage in acts of self-destruction with impunity, he's right. No other president has allowed Israel to terrorize the entire region"

Israel is in no way an innocent victim in the Middle East. Israel has launched its share of missiles and has more than a few drops of blood on her hands.

We have stood behind Israel and supplied them with weapons, when the rest of the world has asked Israel to step down. The rest of the world has avoided involvement. The U.S., especially in the last six years, has justified and validated Israel's claims on the region and supported their attempts at wars and walls. We have aligned with Israel, for better or for worse. Now, we can just hold on.

Today, Fallouk and her countrymen bunker down in various towns across Lebanon, fearing for their lives and homes, trying to survive the night.

All the while, Bush does nothing and Israel continues to bomb a nation for the acts of one renegade terrorist group.

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Load-Date: July 17, 2006

**Grim proof ordinary folk are dying in the killing zone; HOSPITAL HORROR;
MIDDLE EAST CRISIS**

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 20, 2006 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 8

Length: 552 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin

Body

PARKED outside the small Sour general hospital in Tyre is a badly refrigerated lorry container in which are stacked the bodies of 91 Lebanese civilians, 55 of them children.

The bodies have been placed inside black plastic rubbish bags and labelled in anticipation of the time, days or weeks from now, when their surviving relatives - if any - can come to collect them.

"It's a disaster. It's making me cry," said the hospital's director, Dr Salman Zeineddine. "We can't move them anywhere else. Since the attacks came I've been trying to get wounded out of Beit Jbeil and I can't. How could I get critical patients to Beirut, much less move dead people?"

Since Israel began bombing and shelling south Lebanon last Wednesday, about 380 patients have passed through this 65-bed hospital, plus the 91 dead.

Not one of the victims, he says, has been a member of **Hezbollah**, the militia group that triggered Israel's onslaught with a border raid last week.

"The army and **Hezbollah** - I don't care if they kill all of them," he said. "But the civilians - it's very hard. Everyone who has come in here has been a civilian."

Even as he spoke, another volley of ordnance - perhaps shells fired from a ship, perhaps missiles from a helicopter - was crashing to earth a block away. Tyre, with the whole of south Lebanon, has become a killing zone.

While the Israeli Defence Force claims that it does its best to avoid harming civilians, it insists on its right to attack the terrorists who, it says, are using the population as "human shields". Its list of self-declared legitimate targets expanded yesterday to include all trucks south of the Litani River and all "structures used by terrorists".

Yesterday morning aircraft even attacked two trucks in the heart of Christian east Beirut that were reportedly carrying well-digging equipment.

Judging by the list of actual targets hit so far, what Israeli security experts term "the target bank" includes, in practice, civilian homes, minibuses and cars, as whole terrified families try to run away.

Grim proof ordinary folk are dying in the killing zone HOSPITAL HORROR; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

No one in south Lebanon feels safe. Streets and roads are almost deserted, and the few cars still daring to flee north out of Tyre career towards Beirut at breakneck speed, filled with frightened women and children waving white rags at the sky.

Bombing intensified yesterday morning - massive aerial bombs working up and down among the houses on a ridge line to the south, while closer to town sporadic bombs and rockets sent up clouds of debris and plumes of smoke.

There was no answering fire: Tyre is too far north to be a suitable launch site for Hezbollah missiles targeting Israel, and the city has no defence against air attack.

The bombs always strike without warning. The constant sound of jets and unmanned drones overhead, out of sight in the hazy sky, makes it impossible to know an attack has been launched until the earth suddenly convulses and - a moment or two later - the concussion strikes.

Yesterday the Israelis dropped leaflets across the region to "ensure the safety of Lebanese civilian population". A statement said: "The leaflets are intended to warn the Lebanese public to stay clear of areas from which rockets are launched against Israel, as these will be targeted by the [Israeli Defence Force] and civilians present in those areas are endangering their lives."

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Pro-Israel groups rally support for Lieberman; Connecticut senator faces stiff opposition from Ned Lamont, who is critical of Lieberman's support of the Iraq war

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

July 21, 2006 Friday

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Section: NATIONAL/WORLD; Pg. c18

Length: 609 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: HARTFORD, Conn.

Body

Pro-Israel groups, afraid of losing one of their staunchest supporters in Congress, are pouring money into beleaguered Sen. Joe Lieberman's campaign as he tries to fend off a tougher-than-expected primary challenge.

The three-term lawmaker is struggling to dispatch millionaire businessman Ned Lamont in the Aug. 8 primary. Lamont's fierce criticism of Lieberman's backing of the Iraq war and perceived closeness to President Bush has won him followers among hard-core Democrats.

The primary is Aug. 8 and Lieberman has said he will run as an independent if he loses.

Pro-Israel political action committees have donated to the Connecticut senator's campaign and have urged their national membership to give generously now and later, if Lieberman is forced to run as an unaffiliated candidate.

"Joe Lieberman, without exception, no conditions ... is the No. 1 pro-Israel advocate and leader in Congress," said Mark Vogel, chairman of the National Action Committee, a pro-Israel political action committee. "There is nobody who does more on behalf of Israel than Joe Lieberman. That is why he is incredibly important to the pro-Israel community."

An Orthodox Jew who never campaigned on Saturday, the Sabbath, because of his religious beliefs, Lieberman has been consistent in his support for Israel during his 17 years in the Senate.

In a recent interview with The Associated Press, Lieberman said Israel had a right to launch offensives in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon after two Israeli soldiers were kidnapped. He added that if Arab countries urged restraint by **Hezbollah** and Hamas, it "will allow the Israelis to cool down."

Lamont, who is Episcopalian, has said the United States must "unambiguously stand with our ally," but urged Bush to work on a peace settlement. He opposes negotiating with Hamas or **Hezbollah**.

Israel's war with **Hezbollah** militants could result in an increase in donations to Lieberman, Vogel said.

"When there's turmoil, people don't like change," he said.

Pro-Israel groups rally support for Lieberman Connecticut senator faces stiff opposition from Ned Lamont, who is critical of Lieberman's support of the Iraq war

According to The Center for Responsive Politics, Lieberman currently ranks fourth on the list of candidates receiving money from pro-Israel PACs in 2006. As of July 10, the most recent figures available, Lieberman had received \$66,500 for the PACs out of \$8.5 million raised.

Fourteen of the 32 PACs identified as pro-Israel by the Center have contributed to Lieberman's campaign, including \$10,000 from the Women's Alliance for Israel PAC, \$5,000 from the Florida-based Sun PAC and \$2,000 from the New York-based Hudson Valley PAC.

Vogel's group is reaching out to thousands of supporters in more than 35 states. For the first time, National Action Committee is inserting a separate flyer urging contributions to Lieberman in an invitation for an upcoming fundraiser.

In 2000, Lieberman received \$83,000 from pro-Israel PACs when he ran for his Senate seat, according to the Center. He also was the Democratic vice presidential candidate later that year.

Morris Amitay, founder of the pro-Israel Washington PAC, said increasing numbers around the country who support Lieberman's pro-Israel stance are giving to his campaign because of the primary. Supporters also are volunteering to travel to Connecticut to help.

"It's become such a big story and I think the polls have shown the race could be growing close and of course there's concern," Amitay said.

Lieberman's campaign has been reaching out to pro-Israel supporters. Michael Kassen, a Westport, Conn., businessman who contributes to pro-Israel causes and various candidates, said the campaign has been in touch.

"This is a group that he can turn to," said Kassen, who gave Lieberman \$1,000 in 2005, according to campaign finance records.

Load-Date: July 21, 2006

World powers express 'shock, dismay': China threatens repercussions over statement on Israeli strike on UN post

Ottawa Citizen

July 28, 2006 Friday

EARLY Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 965 words

Byline: Steven Edwards and Sheldon Alberts, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from The Associated Press

Dateline: UNITED NATIONS

Body

UNITED NATIONS - The diplomatic divide over the war in Lebanon threatened to spread to other international crises yesterday, after China expressed anger that the United States "watered down" a United Nations Security Council statement on the deadly Israeli strike on a UN observer mission.

Released after two days of back-room negotiations, the statement expressed "shock and distress" at the bombing, but fell short of China's demand that council members "condemn any deliberate attack against UN personnel."

The U.S. also opposed China's call for the council to demand that Israel allow the UN to join the Israeli inquiry into the incident.

All 15 council members agreed on the watered-down statement, the first by the Security Council since fighting began July 12 between Israel and Lebanon's ***Hezbollah*** guerrillas.

Despite the final statement being "watered down," China's UN ambassador, Wang Guangya, said the council "is not only doing justice to the victims and their families, but also, more important ... to tens of thousands of ***women*** and men who are working for this organization all over the world."

But Mr. Wang told reporters he remains frustrated at the difficult negotiations on such an important issue, and said this would definitely affect "working relations" in the council on other issues, including Iran.

While a Canadian was among the four observers killed in the Tuesday strike, so too was a serviceman from China, which holds a permanent veto-bearing seat alongside the U.S. on the Security Council.

It's there that Washington is also pushing for council action that would curb Iran's nuclear ambitions.

"On the issue of Iran, not all member states share the same view," said Mr. Wang.

He said Washington's opposition to a strong statement on the Israeli strike would have a "negative impact" on the Iran talks.

World powers express 'shock, dismay': China threatens repercussions over statement on Israeli strike on UN post

China, joined by Russia, also a permanent council member, have been reluctant to agree to U.S.-led western demands to threaten Iran with sanctions if it does not suspend its uranium enrichment program, which could eventually give Tehran the capability of producing fuel for a nuclear bomb.

But U.S. Ambassador John Bolton has over the past week expressed confidence that both countries, which have trade and political ties with Tehran, were coming around.

Council members were scheduled to discuss Iran's nuclear program today, but it remained unclear yesterday whether the meeting would take place.

The Security Council issued its position on the Israeli strike as a "presidential statement," which goes into the international record, but does not have the legal weight of a "resolution."

The U.S., Israel's closest ally, insisted on dropping any condemnation or allusion to the possibility that Israel deliberately targeted the UN post in the town of Khiam near the Lebanese-Israeli border.

The initial draft proposed by China would have expressed shock and distress at Israel's "apparently deliberate targeting" of the UN base, and condemned "this co-ordinated artillery and aerial attack on a long-established and clearly marked UN post."

That wording was similar to Secretary General Kofi Annan's statement on Tuesday that Israel appeared to have struck the site deliberately, an accusation Israel vehemently denies.

The final text said "the Security Council is deeply shocked and distressed by the firing by the Israeli Defence Forces on a United Nations Observer post in southern Lebanon."

It dropped a call for a joint investigation, but called on Israel to take into account "any relevant material from UN authorities, and to make the results public as soon as possible."

Dan Gillerman, Israel's UN ambassador, called the statement "very fair and balanced." He expressed "deep regret for the tragic accident," repeated Israel's dismay at Mr. Annan's statement, and stressed that "Israel would never, ever target UN personnel."

But on the topic of a joint investigation, he said, "Israel has never agreed to a joint investigation, and I don't think that if anything happened in this country, or in Britain or in Italy or in France, the government of that country would agree to a joint investigation."

Mr. Gillerman was highly critical of the current UN peacekeeping force, deployed in a buffer zone between Israel and Lebanon since 1978, saying its facilities had sometimes been used for cover by Hezbollah militants and that it had not done its job.

"It has never been able to prevent any shelling of Israel, any terrorist attack, any kidnappings," he said. "They either didn't see or didn't know or didn't want to see, but they have been hopeless."

In Washington, President George W. Bush said the U.S. had no interest in seeing a "fake peace" between Israel and Hezbollah, and supported a continuing Israeli military campaign in Lebanon.

"The Middle East is littered with agreements that just did not work," Mr. Bush said following a White House meeting with the president of Romania. "Now is the time to address the root cause of the problem, and the root cause of the problem is terrorist groups trying to stop the advance of democracies."

The U.S. will continue diplomatic efforts aimed at finding "a lasting peace, not a fake peace," Mr. Bush said. "Not circumstances that make us all feel better, and then, sure enough, the problem arises again."

World powers express 'shock, dismay': China threatens repercussions over statement on Israeli strike on UN post

Mr. Bush's pledge of support for Israel came as a new videotape was released from Ayman al-Zawahri, al-Qaeda's second-in-command, urging Muslims worldwide to join the fight against Israel. In a message aired by the Al-Jazeera television network, Mr. al-Zawahri said Muslims have a duty to aid their "brothers" in Gaza and Lebanon.

"These shells and rockets ripping apart Muslim bodies in Gaza and Lebanon are not only Israeli (weapons), but are supplied by all the countries of the crusader coalition," said Mr. al-Zawahri.

Graphic

Photo: Marcos Townsend , The Montreal Gazette; Competing Rallies: Flags of Israel were raised at a rally in Montreal yesterday, while in Ottawa, the Lebanese flag was centre-stage as hundreds of Canadians gathered in both cities to let their voices be heard. (Supporters of Israel react as speakers take the stage at a B'nai Brith Blue and White rally in Montreal's Dominion Square yesterday. A similar pro-Israel rally was held in Toronto a day earlier). A Montreal woman is overcome with emotion as she joined protesters outside the Department of Foreign Affairs building in Ottawa to protest Canada's support of Israel in the conflict with Hezbollah. The woman had just returned to Canada from Lebanon.;

Photo: Chris Mikula, The Ottawa Citizen; Competing Rallies: Flags of Israel were raised at a rally in Montreal yesterday, while in Ottawa, the Lebanese flag was centre-stage as hundreds of Canadians gathered in both cities to let their voices be heard. Supporters of Israel react as speakers take the stage at a B'nai Brith Blue and White rally in Montreal's Dominion Square yesterday. A similar pro-Israel rally was held in Toronto a day earlier. (A Montreal woman is overcome with emotion as she joined protesters outside the Department of Foreign Affairs building in Ottawa to protest Canada's support of Israel in the conflict with Hezbollah. The woman had just returned to Canada from Lebanon.)

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

UK fears return to the bad old days in Iran: Ahmadinejad's victory spells trouble for nuclear talks, western engagement, and women's rights, say diplomats: Hardline at home and abroad

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition

June 27, 2005

Copyright 2005 Guardian Newspapers Limited

Section: Guardian Foreign Pages, Pg. 14

Length: 370 words

Byline: Robert Tait

Body

How much power will the new president have?

Mr Ahmadinejad is subordinate to supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Under the Islamic republic's system of velayat-e faqih (leadership of the supreme jurist), Mr Khamenei, with the constitutional watchdog, the guardian council, has final say in crucial fields, such as foreign policy, the armed forces, intelligence, the judiciary, and police. Unlike outgoing reformist president, Mohammed Khatami, this may not lead to political deadlock. As a religious hardliner, Mr Ahmadinejad is thought to have Mr Khamenei's backing.

Parliament, the Majlis, is run by hardliners, so the legislative and executive arms will run in harmony.

Is Mr Ahmadinejad the staunch anti-reformer his background suggests?

Throughout the campaign, his status as the hardline candidate was never in question. Unlike the liberalising instincts of the reformers, Mr Ahmadinejad is frequently defined by his infamous remark that Iran "did not have a revolution in order to have a democracy".

He has sought to strike a conciliatory note. In the run-up to Friday's poll, his aides insisted there would be no new regulations on private behaviour. Mr Ahmadinejad's popular base, however, is the basij, the hardline volunteers whose members help enforce the nation's Islamic laws.

How will his election affect ties with the US and the wider Middle East?

Renewed ties with America are unlikely. In contrast to his defeated opponent, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who talked of rapprochement, he belongs to a firmly anti-US camp. "Relations with the United States are not a cure for our ills," he has said.

While he is thought to know little about foreign policy, his election could signal a more sharply ideological approach to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, which Iran opposes. US officials also fear a bolstering of Iranian support for groups such as **Hizbullah**.

Will his election affect the dispute over Iran's nuclear programme?

UK fears return to the bad old days in Iran : Ahmadinejad's victory spells trouble for nuclear talks, western engagement, and women's rights, say diplomats: Har....

Mr Khamenei has the final say. But the president-elect is a staunch supporter of a right to nuclear power and it could signal a more belligerent negotiating stance.

Western diplomats also fear he belongs to a hardline faction that believes Iran should have a nuclear bomb.

Load-Date: June 27, 2005

End of Document

World powers express 'shock, distress': China threatens repercussions over statement on Israeli strike on UN post

Ottawa Citizen

July 28, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 965 words

Byline: Steven Edwards and Sheldon Alberts, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from The Associated Press

Dateline: UNITED NATIONS

Body

UNITED NATIONS - The diplomatic divide over the war in Lebanon threatened to spread to other international crises yesterday, after China expressed anger that the United States "watered down" a United Nations Security Council statement on the deadly Israeli strike on a UN observer mission.

Released after two days of back-room negotiations, the statement expressed "shock and distress" at the bombing, but fell short of China's demand that council members "condemn any deliberate attack against UN personnel."

The U.S. also opposed China's call for the council to demand that Israel allow the UN to join the Israeli inquiry into the incident.

All 15 council members agreed on the watered-down statement, the first by the Security Council since fighting began July 12 between Israel and Lebanon's ***Hezbollah*** guerrillas.

Despite the final statement being "watered down," China's UN ambassador, Wang Guangya, said the council "is not only doing justice to the victims and their families, but also, more important ... to tens of thousands of ***women*** and men who are working for this organization all over the world."

But Mr. Wang told reporters he remains frustrated at the difficult negotiations on such an important issue, and said this would definitely affect "working relations" in the council on other issues, including Iran.

While a Canadian was among the four observers killed in the Tuesday strike, so too was a serviceman from China, which holds a permanent veto-bearing seat alongside the U.S. on the Security Council.

It's there that Washington is also pushing for council action that would curb Iran's nuclear ambitions.

"On the issue of Iran, not all member states share the same view," said Mr. Wang.

He said Washington's opposition to a strong statement on the Israeli strike would have a "negative impact" on the Iran talks.

World powers express 'shock, distress': China threatens repercussions over statement on Israeli strike on UN post

China, joined by Russia, also a permanent council member, have been reluctant to agree to U.S.-led western demands to threaten Iran with sanctions if it does not suspend its uranium enrichment program, which could eventually give Tehran the capability of producing fuel for a nuclear bomb.

But U.S. Ambassador John Bolton has over the past week expressed confidence that both countries, which have trade and political ties with Tehran, were coming around.

Council members were scheduled to discuss Iran's nuclear program today, but it remained unclear yesterday whether the meeting would take place.

The Security Council issued its position on the Israeli strike as a "presidential statement," which goes into the international record, but does not have the legal weight of a "resolution."

The U.S., Israel's closest ally, insisted on dropping any condemnation or allusion to the possibility that Israel deliberately targeted the UN post in the town of Khiam near the Lebanese-Israeli border.

The initial draft proposed by China would have expressed shock and distress at Israel's "apparently deliberate targeting" of the UN base, and condemned "this co-ordinated artillery and aerial attack on a long-established and clearly marked UN post."

That wording was similar to Secretary General Kofi Annan's statement on Tuesday that Israel appeared to have struck the site deliberately, an accusation Israel vehemently denies.

The final text said "the Security Council is deeply shocked and distressed by the firing by the Israeli Defence Forces on a United Nations Observer post in southern Lebanon."

It dropped a call for a joint investigation, but called on Israel to take into account "any relevant material from UN authorities, and to make the results public as soon as possible."

Dan Gillerman, Israel's UN ambassador, called the statement "very fair and balanced." He expressed "deep regret for the tragic accident," repeated Israel's dismay at Mr. Annan's statement, and stressed that "Israel would never, ever target UN personnel."

But on the topic of a joint investigation, he said, "Israel has never agreed to a joint investigation, and I don't think that if anything happened in this country, or in Britain or in Italy or in France, the government of that country would agree to a joint investigation."

Mr. Gillerman was highly critical of the current UN peacekeeping force, deployed in a buffer zone between Israel and Lebanon since 1978, saying its facilities had sometimes been used for cover by Hezbollah militants and that it had not done its job.

"It has never been able to prevent any shelling of Israel, any terrorist attack, any kidnappings," he said. "They either didn't see or didn't know or didn't want to see, but they have been hopeless."

In Washington, President George W. Bush said the U.S. had no interest in seeing a "fake peace" between Israel and Hezbollah, and supported a continuing Israeli military campaign in Lebanon.

"The Middle East is littered with agreements that just did not work," Mr. Bush said following a White House meeting with the president of Romania. "Now is the time to address the root cause of the problem, and the root cause of the problem is terrorist groups trying to stop the advance of democracies."

The U.S. will continue diplomatic efforts aimed at finding "a lasting peace, not a fake peace," Mr. Bush said. "Not circumstances that make us all feel better, and then, sure enough, the problem arises again."

World powers express 'shock, distress': China threatens repercussions over statement on Israeli strike on UN post

Mr. Bush's pledge of support for Israel came as a new videotape was released from Ayman al-Zawahri, al-Qaeda's second-in-command, urging Muslims worldwide to join the fight against Israel. In a message aired by the Al-Jazeera television network, Mr. al-Zawahri said Muslims have a duty to aid their "brothers" in Gaza and Lebanon.

"These shells and rockets ripping apart Muslim bodies in Gaza and Lebanon are not only Israeli (weapons), but are supplied by all the countries of the crusader coalition," said Mr. al-Zawahri.

Graphic

Photo: Marcos Townsend, The Montreal Gazette; Competing Rallies: Flags of Israel were raised at a rally in Montreal yesterday, while in Ottawa, the Lebanese flag was centre-stage as hundreds of Canadians gathered in both cities to let their voices be heard. (Supporters of Israel react as speakers take the stage at a B'nai Brith Blue and White rally in Montreal's Dominion Square yesterday. A similar pro-Israel rally was held in Toronto a day earlier.) A Montreal woman is overcome with emotion as she joined protesters outside the Department of Foreign Affairs building in Ottawa to protest Canada's support of Israel in the conflict with Hezbollah. The woman had just returned to Canada from Lebanon.;

Photo: Chris Mikula, The Ottawa Citizen; Competing Rallies: Flags of Israel were raised at a rally in Montreal yesterday, while in Ottawa, the Lebanese flag was centre-stage as hundreds of Canadians gathered in both cities to let their voices be heard. Supporters of Israel react as speakers take the stage at a B'nai Brith Blue and White rally in Montreal's Dominion Square yesterday. A similar pro-Israel rally was held in Toronto a day earlier. (A Montreal woman is overcome with emotion as she joined protesters outside the Department of Foreign Affairs building in Ottawa to protest Canada's support of Israel in the conflict with Hezbollah. The woman had just returned to Canada from Lebanon.)

Load-Date: July 28, 2006

Deadly double standards sow terror

The Australian (Australia)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Opinion / Op Ed; Pg. 12

Length: 971 words

Byline: Antony Loewenstein

Body

MATP

Israel's response to the abduction and killing of its soldiers is disproportionate and counter-productive, warns Antony Loewenstein

ISRAEL is fighting on two fronts and against two forces it helped create. Hamas and Hezbollah gained their political capital by resisting Israeli occupation in Palestine and Lebanon. The past decades have proven that the harder Israel tries to destroy these movements, the greater their credibility and political power.

And what does Israel have to show for countless years of military opposition to terrorism? A region that supports growing Islamic resistance movements and Arab populations that when given the chance vote for them in overwhelming numbers.

Tragically for innocent civilians caught in the ideological crossfire, the escalation in the Middle East has taken a predictable path.

Terrorism is followed by righteous revenge. Israel views itself as the aggrieved party, the victim of unwarranted violence towards its soldiers and citizens. After the abduction of three Israeli officers by Hamas and Hezbollah, the Jewish state, backed by the Bush administration, has unleashed its military might against Palestine and Lebanon.

The ramifications of such disproportionate and illegal force are disturbing and potentially dangerous in this unstable region. In the short term, the moral case for Israel has taken an inevitable battering.

During the past week, civilians have been murdered by Israeli air strikes and artillery. Infrastructure, such as bridges, roads, power plants and airports, has been destroyed.

The Geneva Conventions specifically state that such behaviour is a war crime. Israel and its supporters ignore these legal niceties while demanding enemy forces abide by them. Many Western governments, including Australia, are ignoring this double standard but the Arab world has a long memory, and the stakes are higher than ever in the present geopolitical climate. The US and Israeli response towards the democratically elected Hamas Government in Palestine is clear: no negotiations, no financial support and relentless punishment of the Palestinian people for electing the wrong party.

Deadly double standards sow terror

The recent reoccupation of Gaza -- although Israel never really left, controlling all sea, air and road entries into the territory -- is aimed at destroying the newly elected Palestinian Government. The imprisonment of dozens of Hamas politicians inevitably will radicalise the Palestinian population. Is a siege mentality now endemic to the Israeli national psyche?

For the international community the Middle East is once again a hot spot: the local drama of conflicting national aspirations sits alongside the twin global interests of nuclear power and petro dollars. In this larger context Iran and Syria are volatile players. They are clear ideological soul mates of Hamas and Hezbollah and are using their proxies to battle Israel and the US. Although Arab governments have long used the Palestinians as a convenient political football, support for the Palestinians can only increase as the occupation continues.

After the abduction of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, the Western world was bombarded with information about his background and family. He was humanised. But what of the countless Palestinians imprisoned without trial in Israel jails or the numerous Palestinian women and children regularly taken from their homes in the middle of the night? The Israeli army is a people's army; the Israeli state is founded on the principle of a freed people. By contrast, the Palestinian struggle for freedom is constructed as an illegitimate terrorist plot.

In any other retelling of the imperial-colonial story across the 20th century, the Palestinians' struggle would be an honourable fight for freedom and independence. The suffering of the Palestinians is clearly now not worthy of examination. During the present crisis, it seems as if Israelis are the only victims of terrorism, that Hezbollah rocket attacks are unjustifiable aggression.

The Bush administration's "war on terror" requires us to believe that the West must fight terror in Lebanon, West Bank, Gaza, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Africa, Asia and South America. According to Israeli spin, Lebanon is an "axis of terror" and the Jewish state is "fighting terror on all fronts". The Palestinians are, as always, caught in the crossfire between Israel's view of its place in the region and the Arab world's indifference to their plight.

Israel and the international community are facing a moment of truth. Negotiations are the inevitable conclusion of the present violence, as is the release of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails in exchange for the return of abducted Israeli soldiers. With the UN Security Council becoming a toothless vehicle for the US to stifle any action against Israel, uncomfortable questions need to be asked. The West's blank cheque towards Israel since 1948, primarily due to Holocaust guilt, can no longer excuse, justify and fund a supposed democracy that occupies a neighbouring state and bombs its civilians.

Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh recently wrote in The Washington Post that the American people should open their eyes to Israeli behaviour in the occupied territories. "If Israel will not allow Palestinians to live in peace, dignity and national integrity", he concluded, "Israelis themselves will not be able to enjoy those same rights."

It is now more than ever in Israeli and US interests to ensure a democratic and economically viable Palestine is constructed. For those of us committed to finding a just and peaceful solution, one that honours the legitimate national aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians, this is a matter of urgency.

Antony Loewenstein is the author of My Israel Question, to be released in August by Melbourne University Publishing.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

Lebanon is back on U.S. radar Divisions, threats lie beneath shiny surface of re-emerging nation

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

September 25, 2005 Sunday

FOURTH EDITION

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Section: NEWSWATCH; Pg. B1

Length: 1422 words

Byline: By Jon Sawyer POST-DISPATCH WASHINGTON BUREAU

Dateline: BEIRUT, LEBANON

Body

The scene in New York this past week was carefully choreographed, as the United States, Europe and the United Nations joined to pledge help for Lebanon as it tries to reinvigorate its democracy and shed its quarter-century domination by Syria.

In Beirut, the scene was rather more chaotic.

The leader of the militant **Hezbollah** resistance group declared "open war" against foreign "hegemony."

Politicians across the board assailed the New York meetings as signs of capitulation to foreign pressure, especially on the sensitive issue of disarming **Hezbollah**.

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora continued to press for the immediate resignation of President Emile Lahoud, the pro-Syrian leader whose top aides have been implicated in the assassination last February of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

The outcome of the people-power "Cedar Revolution" that erupted after Hariri's death remains far from clear -- and so, too, the repercussions of deeper U.S. engagement in Lebanon, a country that touches volatile interests from Iran and Syria to Israel and the Palestinian territories.

"They are interfering here, and they are entering again into a minefield," said Sheikh Nabil Kawook, commander of **Hezbollah** forces in southern Lebanon. "They are getting again into the Lebanese quagmire."

The sleek new restaurants of downtown Beirut are far removed from the carnage of the 1970s and 1980s. Christian, Shiite and Sunni militias fought a savage war then that was further complicated by the presence of Palestinian refugees, an Israeli occupying army in the south and, briefly, U.S. troops, who were driven out after a **Hezbollah**-linked attack killing 242 Marines and sailors that marked the debut of suicide bombing as a force in international politics.

Two decades later, Lebanon is a place of promise but also paradox and peril, at once the most Western-oriented of any Middle Eastern country but also subject to its own religious divisions and the often-demonstrated aggression of

Lebanon is back on U.S. radar Divisions, threats lie beneath shiny surface of re-emerging nation

its neighbors. In the impoverished and deeply religious Shiite villages of southern Lebanon, basic government services are provided by Hezbollah, the group designated as terrorist by the U.S. government and credited with driving Israeli occupation forces out of the country in 2000.

North of Beirut, the far more prosperous suburbs hugging the hills above the Mediterranean Sea remain almost exclusively Christian.

A nation divided

In between lies Beirut itself, a welter of contradictions.

Go down to the swank new downtown, built near the no-man's-land that divided Christian and Muslim communities during the war, and you'll find rich Saudi businessmen and stylish women in skin-tight clothes whiling away evenings in sidewalk cafes.

Drive a couple of miles south and the scene abruptly shifts, to teeming neighborhoods of jerry-built apartments patrolled by Hezbollah guards. In the same area, sprawling beyond its initial lines, is the Sabra and Shatila camp for Palestinians. This is where at least 800 residents were slaughtered in 1982 when Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, then defense minister, unleashed an allied Christian militia. Two decades later, some 300,000 Palestinians remain, still denied basic political and civil rights.

Data on the Palestinian population are fairly accurate, thanks to the presence of U.N. relief agencies and Palestinian organizations. The same cannot be said for the country as whole. The population is believed to total some 4 million, but no census has been conducted since 1932.

The division then was roughly 50-50 between Christians and Muslims, and the country's political structure reflects that still, even though independent experts say Christians' share of the population has dropped since to only a third. Seats in the parliament are still evenly divided. Only Christians can be elected president while the job of prime minister is reserved for Sunni Muslims and that of speaker of the parliament goes to Shiites.

The murder of Hariri in February sparked public demonstrations nearly a million strong and demands for both justice and true democracy. Progress since has been substantial: the withdrawal of Syrian troops, election of a reform government, the beginning of a U.N.-backed investigation into Hariri's killing that has already produced the arrests of four senior military and security officials.

"We prefer peace"

How far the reformers would actually go remains much in question.

Listen, for example, to Ghattas Khoury, a leader of the Cedar Revolution and close associate to Saad Hariri, son of the late prime minister. Khoury, a Christian, talks with passion about creating a nonsectarian state where officials are chosen on the basis of "good citizenship" rather than religious faith.

But not anytime soon, he hastens to add.

"Not in 10 years," he says. "Maybe in 30."

Khoury also warned against pressure for faster change from U.S. or other outside interests. "The world should not look at us as an experimental field," he said. "We are not guinea pigs for democracy in the world."

Lebanese also chafe at U.S. talk of developments as part of a grander, pan-Middle East project of democratization. Representatives of most Lebanese factions were always skeptical of such rhetoric; in the wake of the U.S. war on Iraq, such sentiments are broader still.

Lebanon is back on U.S. radar Divisions, threats lie beneath shiny surface of re-emerging nation

Yusuf al-Yemeni, 42, is a Lebanese carpenter who has lived for 15 years in Sabra and Shatila, where he crafts billiard and foosball tables in an open-air shop. He has a brother in Detroit, Palestinian in-laws and a keen sense of vulnerability to events beyond this street.

"I'm involved in politics, as is everyone in this situation," al-Yemeni said. "We've experienced the era of turmoil. We prefer to live in peace."

At first, al-Yemeni offers a show of support to President George W. Bush -- "he chops the head of any tyrant in the world" -- but then adds that "Bush might be a tyrant as well."

On the wall of the shop, he has mounted a poster that shows an American GI holding a wad of Iraqi currency. Underneath, in Arabic, the slogan reads, "They stole the oil -- and the money, too."

Helping bin Laden?

A few blocks from al-Yemeni's shop is the Beirut headquarters of Hamas, the militant Palestinian resistance group that the State Department has designated a terrorist group since 1993.

Usamah Hamdan, the Lebanese representative of Hamas, noted in an interview Thursday that Hamas has recently sought to moderate its stance. Earlier this year, it imposed a pause in attacks on Israelis; it also announced its intent to compete in Palestinian elections for the first time.

Hamdan said that as of March, Hamas also had initiated "an indirect channel" with former U.S. officials aimed at softening Bush administration opposition to a greater Hamas role in the Palestinian government.

"I hope something positive will come of this," Hamdan said. "I believe we have to try, and we are trying hard."

But the task is much harder, he said, in the wake of the U.S.-led war on Iraq -- a war that he said has greatly increased both hostility toward the United States and support for the al-Qaida Islamist organization of Osama bin Laden.

In February 2003, just before the Iraq war, Hamdan told the Post-Dispatch in an interview in Beirut that Hamas renounced bin Laden and his cause. "We think that his actions were more harmful to Muslims than any action by anyone anywhere."

Last week, Hamdan said Hamas' view hadn't changed. The organization publicly denounced the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, he noted, and every attack associated with al-Qaida since.

What has changed, he said, is the attitude of rank-and-file Hamas members, and of the broader Muslim public -- as evidenced, he said, in opposition to Hamas attempts at direct negotiation with American representatives.

"The normal people say 'No, you are talking to the government which is supporting the Israelis, who are killing our people. You are talking to the government which occupies Iraq, which killed 200,000 people. You are talking to the government which is against all the region.'"

Hamdan said that in his view, U.S. policies over the past three years have played into bin Laden's hands.

"They helped him a lot," he said, "in developing his support among the people and in bringing the people closer to believing that there is no way to deal with the Americans except for the Osama bin Laden way."

Reporter Jon Sawyer writes about foreign policy and is the chief of the Post-Dispatch's Washington bureau. He traveled to Lebanon on a reporting trip sponsored by the Reuters and Stanley foundations.

Lebanon is back on U.S. radar Divisions, threats lie beneath shiny surface of re-emerging nation

Notes

Middle East "minefield"?

Graphic

MAP

MAP - MIDDLE EAST MINE FIELD PHOTO BY Jon Sawyer | Post-Dispatch - Yusuf al-Yemeni, 42, puts the finishing touches on a foosball table at his carpentry shop in Sabra and Shatila, the Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut where a number of Lebanese now live as well. Al-Yemeni, like many Lebanese, has mixed view about U.S. policies in the region. PHOTO - Hamdan Hamas representative in Lebanon

Load-Date: September 26, 2005

End of Document

**Blast disrupts Israeli calm;
1st suicide attack since Nov.**

Philadelphia Daily News

FEBRUARY 26, 2005 Saturday 4STAR EDITION

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 05

Length: 689 words

Byline: GAVIN RABINOWITZ Associated Press

Dateline: TEL AVIV, Israel

Body

A Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up in a crowd of young Israelis waiting outside a nightclub near Tel Aviv's beachfront promenade, killing at least four other people, wounding dozens and shattering an informal Mideast truce.

The blast, just before midnight yesterday, ended several weeks of calm and presented the first serious test to the unofficial cease-fire declared by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas on Feb. 8 at a dramatic summit in Egypt.

Israeli officials indicated the attack would not derail the tentative peace efforts. But the bombing put new pressure on Abbas to take action against militants, who have not formally accepted the truce.

The Palestinians must "do much more to prevent such attacks," said Gideon Ezra, the Israeli public security minister. Despite the violence, he said contacts with the Palestinians should continue.

There was no official claim of responsibility. But Palestinian officials and militant leaders said the Lebanese guerrilla group **Hezbollah** had orchestrated the attack.

Abbas pledged to track down those responsible, accusing them of trying to derail the peace process.

"The Palestinian Authority will not stand silent in the face of this act of sabotage," Abbas said in a statement after holding an emergency meeting early today with his security chiefs. "We will follow and track down those responsible and they will be punished accordingly."

Palestinian security officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Israeli army identified the bomber as Abdullah Badran, 21, a university student. Israeli officials arrested five people, the officials said, including two of Badran's brothers and the local imam.

Blast disrupts Israeli calm; 1st suicide attack since Nov.

Israeli troops also imposed a curfew on the West Bank village of Deir al Ghusun today, the apparent home of Badran, the Palestinian officials said.

The Israeli army said troops had carried out an arrest raid and that a curfew had temporarily been imposed but gave no further details.

Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz was to convene a meeting of security chiefs later today to discuss an Israeli response, Israeli Army Radio reported.

In Washington, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice condemned the attack "in the strongest possible terms" and said it is essential that Palestinian leaders take "immediate, credible steps" to find those responsible.

Rice took note of the Palestinian condemnation of the attack. "We now must see actions that send a clear message that terror will not be tolerated," she said.

Hezbollah has emerged as the biggest threat to the fragile Israeli-Palestinian truce, offering West Bank gunmen thousands of dollars to attack Israelis. The group, which is backed by Iran and Syria, has hundreds of West Bank gunmen on its payroll, according to Palestinian security officials.

Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, the largest Palestinian militant groups, all denied involvement, saying they were respecting the recent calm.

However, a senior Al Aqsa commander said one of its members had been recruited by **Hezbollah** to carry out the attack. The commander spoke on condition of anonymity.

The bombing occurred at the Stage, a nightclub located near Tel Aviv's seaside promenade, as about 20 to 30 people were waiting to enter the club. The area was especially busy on a mild weekend night.

Tel Aviv police Chief David Tzur said security guards outside the club spotted the bomber and didn't allow him in. "The impact, if he would have gone inside, would have been tragic," he said.

He said four people were killed and dozens wounded. At least one of the dead was **female**. Israeli police said about 50 people were wounded, more than 10 of them seriously.

Israeli police spokesman Gil Kleiman said the blast was exceptionally powerful.

The explosion ripped off the front of the nightclub, shattering windows of nearby restaurants and blackening cars.

It was the first suicide bombing since the cease-fire declaration, as well as the first such attack since the death of longtime Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Nov. 11. The last suicide bombing killed three people in a Tel Aviv market on Nov. 1. *

Graphic

PHOTO;

Associated Press

Israeli police inspect the scene of an explosion outside a nightclub near Tel Aviv's beach front promenade late last night.

Load-Date: September 7, 2005

Blast disrupts Israeli calm; 1st suicide attack since Nov.

End of Document

Civilians killed as Israelis target ambulances

The Australian (Australia)

July 26, 2006 Wednesday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 671 words

Byline: Martin Chulov

Body

MATP

Tyre

IT is meant to be a universally recognised symbol of neutrality and a guaranteed passage of protection for the victims of armed conflict.

But at least 10 Lebanese ambulances bearing the emblem of the international red cross have instead become targets in Israeli air strikes that have killed more than a dozen civilian passengers being transported to hospitals in the south of the country.

The latest attack occurred on Sunday night near the small village of Quna, where two ambulances travelling in convoy were fired on by an Israeli Apache helicopter as they sped to the besieged port city of Tyre.

One of the Israeli rockets pierced the centre of the large red cross marked on the roof of one of the ambulances, as if it was used as a target.

Both ambulances' roofs were marked with crosses, blue lights flashed above them and giant International Red Cross flags flew from their rear doors. They were carrying members of the Fawaz family, who had been slightly injured during earlier bombing.

The convoy was struck by two rockets fired from an Apache helicopter, just before midnight, severely injuring all six people on board.

Ahmed Mohammed Fawaz lost his leg below his knee and will likely lose the other. His 14-year-old son Ahmed suffered serious wounds to his abdomen and the back of his head. He writhed in semi-conscious pain yesterday in the Jabal Amal hospital in Tyre as his mother, Jamila, lay unconscious nearby, her black hijab draped over stark white sheets and bandages.

In another ward, Qasin Shalin, the driver of the first ambulance, and the only one of six people to have escaped with light injuries, sat upright in bed, surrounded by the orange-clad men of Lebanon's Red Cross, who have come to be known as the country's bravest civil servants.

Civilians killed as Israelis target ambulances

Only two of the region's estimated 60 ambulance crews have refused to turn up to work in the past week. One of the missing crews had narrowly escaped a missile themselves.

Mr Shalin was spared more serious injuries by the armoured vest he was wearing and the driver's canopy that protected him from a direct hit.

He remembers nothing after the flash and bang of the missile then the crunch of the crash as his ambulance veered off road.

Hospital officials in southern Lebanon have accused Israel of violating the Geneva convention by failing to respect the red cross symbol by attacking ambulances on at least 10 occasions in the two-week war that has claimed at least 12 more fire trucks and civil defence vehicles travelling between Tyre and the Israeli border.

Continued -- Page 8

From Page 1

"What is the purpose of targeting ambulances?" asked the hospital's director of nursing, Abdullah Narwaz.

"This is beyond crazy, this is a lack of humanity."

The Israeli Defence Force has not commented about its targeting of ambulances, but in the past has said militants in the West Bank and Gaza had used them to transport weapons and fighters, in contravention of laws governing armed conflict.

Last week a helicopter attacked an ambulance that had just pulled up outside a house in the village of Aitaroun, next door to where a Sydney family had been holidaying.

The ambulance just blew up and both the driver and his co-worker were killed, said eyewitness Hassane Assef, of Sydney, who was holidaying in the area, and who tried to help the victims of both strikes.

The UN yesterday stopped short of accusing Hezbollah of doing the same, but suggested that its tactics of cowardly blending in with civilians had contributed to the terrible toll taken on communities in the south, where the bulk of the 371 Lebanese have been killed.

"Consistently, from the Hezbollah heartland, my message was that Hezbollah must stop this cowardly blending ... among women and children," UN Humanitarian chief Jan Egeland said.

"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."

More reports -- Pages 8,9

Opinion -- Page 12

Load-Date: July 25, 2006

BRIT NAVY LAUNCH BEIRUT RESCUE BID; MIDDLE EAST EXODUS DESTROYER IS SENT TO FETCH UK CITIZENS

Daily Record

July 19, 2006, Wednesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 649 words

Byline: By James Lyons

Body

A FULL-SCALE evacuation of Britons from stricken Lebanon was finally getting under way yesterday amid mounting anger at delays.

HMS Gloucester took out just 180 needy cases in the first UK sea rescue last night. The ship is expected to arrive in Limassol, Cyprus, today.

One passenger, Hussain El Fadel, 12, who was visiting relatives in Lebanon, travelled on his own to Cyprus to meet his father.

He said: "I feel quite upset but, at the same time, I am quite happy for my safety."

But at least 5000 UK passport holders caught in the Israeli attack are clamouring to leave. Many face days more terror before they are helped in what is billed as the biggest evacuation since Dunkirk.

France and Italy have removed 1600 of their people by sea while a ship carrying 1000 Scandinavians was set to leave last night.

The French passengers were seen off by their Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin after he met his Lebanese counterpart.

German families arriving safely home said they wanted to "hug" embassy staff.

But Britain has taken out less than 300 of the most vulnerable by sea and helicopter.

Those left behind complained they were left in the dark as phone lines to the Embassy in the capital Beirut were jammed.

And Jolie Boyle, a DJ from Essex trapped in a Beirut hotel, said: "The British Embassy here in Beirut don't answer the phone.

"It just rings and rings and rings and they don't answer."

Up to 22,000 UK passport holders are thought to be in Lebanon.

BRIT NAVY LAUNCH BEIRUT RESCUE BID MIDDLE EAST EXODUS DESTROYER IS SENT TO FETCH UK CITIZENS

There are hints that defence chiefs have felt frustrated by the Foreign Office.

Tony Blair was forced to defend the operation at a Downing Street press conference.

The PM insisted: "We have acted as quickly as we possibly can."

However, No 10 later pledged a "step change" in the rescue effort.

HMS York has lain offshore for some time while the Illustrious, Bulwark, St Albans and RFA Victoria Fort are due there today.

Israeli forces maintaining a blockade of the ports are said to have agreed to allow in British ships.

A total of 79 UK nationals have been evacuated so far by RAF Chinook helicopters with more expected to be brought out in the next few days.

Wing Commander Carl Scott, chief of staff of Joint Helicopter Command, said that five Chinooks were currently involved in the operation to provide support to the British ambassador in Beirut.

A group of 40 UK nationals, made up of the most vulnerable including the elderly, pregnant women and children, were brought out yesterday on the first flight.

Meanwhile, the US Embassy tried to calm Americans desperate to leave Beirut.

Helicopters flew dozens of US citizens out of the country, but the cruise ship steaming towards Beirut looked unlikely to dock before nightfall - delaying a large-scale American evacuation by another day.

US Ambassador Jeffrey Feldman said a total of 320 Americans were set to leave yesterday - 120 on helicopter and 200 students on a European ship.

About 1000 people would leave each day starting Wednesday, he said.

Israel launched its assault and blockade after Hezbollah militants captured two of its soldiers last Wednesday.

In the latest strikes, 11 Lebanese soldiers were killed at a barracks near Beirut.

Hezbollah has continued to fire volleys of rockets across the border.

About 230 Lebanese people have been killed so far, while 24 Israelis have died.

Meanwhile, Tony Blair has abandoned plans for a visit to the region after it was rebuffed by George Bush at the G8 summit.

The Prime Minister is still pushing for an international peace-keeping force to be sent in despite apparent American reluctance.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan is backing the plan and his representative will report back on the idea tomorrow.

Blair has called for restraint but hit out at Iran and Syria for fuelling the violence.

He told MPs that the rockets fired on Israel by the Hezbollah fighters were "very similar if not identical to those used on British troops based in Basra".

Graphic

BRIT NAVY LAUNCH BEIRUT RESCUE BID MIDDLE EAST EXODUS DESTROYER IS SENT TO FETCH UK
CITIZENS

SAFE: An RAF Chinook lands Britons taken from Lebanon in Cyprus yesterday CPLNIKHOWE / RAF /
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Load-Date: July 19, 2006

End of Document

Middle Eastern Freedom

University Wire

April 29, 2005 Friday

Copyright 2005 Badger Herald via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 709 words

Byline: By Jeff Carnes, Badger Herald; **SOURCE:** U. Wisconsin

Dateline: MADISON, Wis.

Body

With the last Syrian troops pulling out of Lebanon Tuesday, it seems that there is a movement in the Middle East toward democracy. Considering the municipal elections in Saudi Arabia and the Kuwaiti government allowing women to vote in local elections for the first time, democracy may be taking hold in the region. While there is room for hope, these steps toward full democratic movements are only the first tentative steps toward a large-scale expansion of democracy in the Middle East.

The final pullout of Syrian troops signals Lebanon may be on the road to full sovereignty outside the sphere of Syrian influence.

Due to the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and international pressure, Syria pulled out its troops. While the overt presence of Syria troops in the Bekaa Valley and Syrian intelligence in Beirut may be over, it is still unknown what Syria's future intentions are in Lebanon. What will Syria's new role be in Lebanon? Even former Lebanese President Amin Gemayel stated Syria has infiltrated most of the national institutions in Lebanon and that "Syria was creating a creeping annexation policy and it won't be very easy to get rid of the consequences of this hegemony." Syria and Lebanon do not even have formal diplomatic relations.

With the parliamentary elections tentatively scheduled for May 29, there are signs of hope for Lebanon establishing its full sovereignty. The Lebanese opposition, which transcended religious lines, was able to bring international pressure on Syria to withdraw. With the upcoming election in Lebanon, the Lebanese people may be able to free themselves from Syrian control.

In Kuwait, there was another sign of hope for democracy. On April 19, the Kuwaiti parliament voted to allow women to vote and stand in Kuwaiti parliamentary elections. While there is disagreement from some of the Islamist and tribal members of parliament about allowing full suffrage for Kuwaiti women, this is a first step toward democracy in the Middle East.

While there are some definite signs in the Middle East that democracy may take hold, there are also some signs that democracy is only in its infancy. In the first Saudi municipal elections this month, candidates on a "golden list," a group of candidates backed by conservative Muslim clerics, won in landslide victories. Even in Jedda, a city considered to be liberal by Saudi standards, the seven candidates on this list won seats. While the losers in this election claim that clerics gave those on the informally circulated lists illegal support, the elections in Saudi Arabia show how much of a force the religious establishment is in Saudi politics. Even the elections in Saudi were largely

Middle Eastern Freedom

ceremonial: only half of the officials in the municipal governments consist of elected officials (half are appointed officials) and have little real power in the Saudi government.

Even in the upcoming Lebanese elections, the pro-Syrian Hezbollah may take control. There is no guarantee that the Lebanese people will throw off Syrian influence. While the United States considers Hezbollah to be a terrorist group, many Lebanese people consider it to be a legitimate resistance movement. Hezbollah, which the United States accuses of exporting terrorism, may become a genuine governing force in the Middle East.

There is hope for democracy in the Middle East. Due to the tragedy of Hariri's assassination, Lebanon was able to push Syrian troops and intelligence agents out and have the potential to establish its full autonomy. Kuwait has taken the first steps toward women's suffrage. There are also signs that democracy may have negative results. The Muslim clerical establishment of Saudi Arabia was able to get its approved candidates into local government seats, and the parliamentary elections in Lebanon may result in a terrorist organization gaining legitimacy on the international stage. As the Middle East begins to experiment with democracy, there is no guarantee that democracy will take hold, and there are certainly no guarantees that there will be no setbacks. While we in the United States can hope for democracy to take hold, individual countries will have to decide what path they will take in their own futures.

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Load-Date: April 29, 2005

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FIRST BRITONS FLEE WAR-TORN LEBANON; LEBANON EXODUS DESTROYER IS SENT TO FETCH UK CITIZENS

Daily Record

July 19, 2006, Wednesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 619 words

Byline: By James Lyons

Body

A FULL-scale evacuation of Britons from stricken Lebanon was finally getting underway yesterday amid mounting anger at delays.

HMS Gloucester took out just 180 more of the most needy cases in the first UK sea rescue last night.

The ship is expected to arrive in Limassol, Cyprus, today.

But at least 5000 UK passport holders caught up in the Israeli bombardment are clamouring to leave.

Many face days more terror before they are helped in what is billed as the biggest operation since Dunkirk.

France and Italy have evacuated 1600 of their people by sea while a ship carrying 1000 Scandinavians was set to leave last night.

The French passengers were seen off by their Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin after he met his Lebanese counterpart.

German families arriving safely home said they wanted to "hug" embassy staff.

In contrast, Britain had taken out less than 300 of the most vulnerable by sea and helicopter.

Those left behind complained they were left in the dark as phonelines to the Embassy in the capital Beirut jammed.

Jolie Boyle, a DJ from Essex who is trapped in a Beirut hotel, said: "The British Embassy here in Beirut don't answer the phone.

"It just rings and rings and rings and they don't answer."

Up to 22,000 UK passport holders are thought to be in Lebanon.

There have been suggestions that defence chiefs have felt frustrated by the Foreign Office.

Tony Blair was forced to defend the operation at a Downing Street press conference.

The PM insisted: "We have acted as quickly as we possibly can."

FIRST BRITONS FLEE WAR-TORN LEBANON LEBANON EXODUS DESTROYER IS SENT TO FETCH UK CITIZENS

However, No 10 later pledged a "step change" in the rescue effort.

HMS York has been anchored offshore for some time while the Illustrious, Bulwark, St Albans and RFA Victoria Fort are due there today.

Israeli forces maintaining a blockade of the ports are said to have agreed to allow in British ships.

A total of 79 UK nationals have been evacuated so far by RAF Chinook helicopters with more expected to be brought out in the next few days.

Wing Commander Carl Scott, chief of staff of Joint Helicopter Command, said that five Chinooks were currently involved in the operation to provide support to the British ambassador in Beirut.

A group of 40 UK nationals, made up of the most vulnerable including the elderly, pregnant women and children, were brought out yesterday on the first flight.

Meanwhile, the US Embassy tried to calm Americans desperate to leave Beirut.

Helicopters flew dozens of US citizens out of the country, but the cruise ship steaming towards Beirut looked unlikely to dock before nightfall - delaying a large-scale American evacuation by another day.

US Ambassador Jeffrey Feldman said a total of 320 Americans were set to leave yesterday - 120 on helicopter and 200 students on a European ship.

About 1000 people would leave each day starting Wednesday, he said.

Israel launched its assault and blockade after Hezbollah militants captured two of its soldiers last Wednesday.

In the latest strikes, 11 Lebanese soldiers were killed at a barracks near Beirut.

Hezbollah has continued to fire volleys of rockets across the border.

About 230 Lebanese people have been killed so far, while 24 Israelis have died.

Meanwhile, Tony Blair has abandoned plans for a visit to the region after it was rebuffed by George Bush at the G8 summit.

The PM is still pushing for an international peace-keeping force to be sent in despite apparent US reluctance.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan is backing the plan and his representative will report back on the idea tomorrow.

Blair has called for restraint but hit out at Iran and Syria for fuelling the violence.

He told MPs that the rockets fired on Israel by the Hezbollah fighters were "very similar if not identical to those used on British troops based in Basra".

Graphic

SAFE: An RAF Chinook lands Britons taken from Lebanon in Cyprus yesterday CPLNIKHOWE / RAF / CROWNCOPYRIGHT /HANDOUT

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

FIRST BRITONS FLEE WAR-TORN LEBANON LEBANON EXODUS DESTROYER IS SENT TO FETCH UK
CITIZENS

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Hope in captivity: How kidnapped journalists coped

Christian Science Monitor

January 27, 2006, Friday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 1

Length: 937 words

Byline: Peter Ford Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: PARIS

Body

Snatched suddenly into captivity, Western journalists kidnapped in the Middle East and elsewhere often develop survival techniques ranging from prayer to calisthenics, say some who have been released. It is likely, they add, that Jill Carroll has found her own way of braving her ordeal.

"You force yourself to remain positive, calm, and focused," says Micah Garen, a freelance American filmmaker held in Iraq by a Shiite Muslim group for 10 days in 2004. "Most people who go through something like this are surprised they can find the courage and dignity to cope."

There has been no news of Ms. Carroll's whereabouts since her kidnappers released a video 10 days ago showing her looking tired but unhurt. Her captors accompanied the video with a message implying they would kill her unless all **female** Iraqi prisoners in US custody were released within 72 hours. A reporter on assignment for the Monitor, Carroll was seized by unknown gunmen on Jan. 7. Her interpreter, Allan Enwiyah, was killed.

Each hostage's experience is personal and unique, so it's hard to deduce from their stories the conditions under which Carroll is being held.

But reporters who have undergone varying periods of captivity - in conditions ranging from thatched huts in jungle clearings where they were allowed to wander to cramped, dark cellars where they were kept chained and blindfolded - say they overcame bouts of fear and desperation by deliberate effort.

"I was always trying to be combative, to stand up to them [her kidnappers], not to be submissive but to be strong," recalls Giuliana Sgrena, an Italian journalist held hostage in Baghdad for a month in 2005.

Ms. Sgrena said her goal was "to keep my dignity. I was thinking of people who had resisted bad situations before me, people like Nelson Mandela," in prison for 27 years. "When he left he had a lot of dignity."

Comparing his situation with those even less fortunate also helped Roger Auque, a French reporter held in Lebanon by **Hizbullah** for a year in 1987. "I thought a lot about the people who were deported during World War II," he says. "It helped me be stronger, knowing others had suffered more than I."

Others say that they simply accepted their situation and clung to the hope that they would be freed. "I had no stratagems, no tricks," explains Florence Aubenas, a French reporter who was released in June 2005 after nearly six months in captivity. "You are simply obliged to put up with it, you have no choice."

Hope in captivity: How kidnapped journalists coped

Ms. Aubenas says she was fortified by a clear sense of why she had gone to Baghdad despite the risk of being kidnapped.

"I wasn't there for the glory, or more money, or because I had to be there," she says. "I went because dangerous places are the last places journalists should shut the door on.

"Baghdad is at the heart of the major issues of our time. For a foreign correspondent it is a dream to be there," explains Aubenas.

Some hostages have been fortunate enough to have books to read: Mr. Auque's Hizbullah guards gave him a copy of the Bible in English, and in the course of reading it over a year "I traveled a spiritual path and became a believer," Auque recalls.

Others found the enforced idleness difficult. "A lot of it is simply sitting there or lying on your back," Mr. Garen points out.

To cope, he counted the insects that crawled into the outdoor cage where he was held, and tried to remember details about his friends' faces. "You don't want to let your mind go soft," he cautions.

Roland Madura, a sound engineer with French TV who was captured, along with two colleagues, on the Philippine island of Jolo in 2000, says he too played memory games. "We tried to think of five towns beginning with 'A,' or five famous people beginning with 'B.' When you're under stress it's not as easy as you'd think." Simpler, he adds, was his half-hour of morning exercise.

Garen says the two most important qualities during his captivity were endurance and compassion.

"You keep extending the amount of time you think you can endure," he says. "On the first day I didn't think I could handle two days of this. After four days I thought I could manage a month. The hardest part for me was the first day."

Compassion, he adds, was important because "all you can do is try to reach out to the people who have taken you, explain who you are, and try to create some kind of bond with them."

That has been possible to different degrees for different hostages. Some guards have simply delivered food in silence to their prisoners, and accompanied them to the lavatory. Others made conversation.

"They were curious to know me, and I was curious to know them," says Ms. Sgrena of her captors. "We tried to discuss many things" in broken English, Arabic, and French.

At different times, the former hostages say, they found reasons for hope. Aubenas, "optimistic by nature," says "I was convinced that I would get out, that the public, my newspaper, and my government would not abandon me ... I was sure of a happy ending." Sgrena also drew hope from her certainty that "people outside would be mobilizing for my freedom," and Garen says his spirits were lifted when one of his guards said he had seen Garen's sister appealing for his life on Al Jazeera TV.

Carroll's parents have also made appeals on Arabic TV channels, including Al Jazeera, as part of a campaign to win her freedom.

Though "the worst thing about being a hostage is not knowing" what the next moment might bring, says Garen, hostages learn to cope with that uncertainty adds Madura. "It's in difficult situations like that that you discover you actually can hold on."

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Load-Date: January 26, 2006

Hope in captivity: How kidnapped journalists coped

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Hamas condemns arrest of government ministers

The Irish Times
June 30, 2006 Friday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 10

Length: 417 words

Body

MIDDLE EAST: Prime Minister Ismail Haniya has accused the US of giving Israel 'the green light', writes Michael Jansen

Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, whose headquarters are in the West Bank city of Ramallah, remained confined to Gaza yesterday following Tuesday's agreement with Hamas on a document for achieving Palestinian statehood while implicitly recognising Israel.

Prime Minister Ismail Haniya of Hamas accused the US of giving "the green light" to Israel's operations in Gaza and the West Bank and urged the UN and the Arab League to take steps to end the Israeli offensive "before the situation gets complicated and the crisis gets worse".

Hamas legislator Mushir al-Masri condemned the arrest of seven of its ministers, 20 of its parliamentarians and a number of officials as "a pre-planned plot to destroy the [Palestinian] Authority, the government and the parliament and to bring the Palestinian people to their knees".

Hamas ministers expected the detentions - Israel admitted the list had been drawn up several weeks ago and approved by its attorney general on Wednesday.

The Palestinian Authority's chief negotiator, Dr Saeb Erekat, said: "We have no government, we have nothing. They have all been taken.

"This is absolutely unacceptable and we demand their release immediately." Dr Erekat is a confidant of President Mahmoud Abbas.

Abu Ubaida, a spokesman for Hamas's armed wing, said the detentions constituted an attempt to blackmail the group to gain information about the Israeli soldier seized on Sunday.

Hamas is asking for the release of 408 women and minor prisoners in exchange for information about him.

A Hamas member in Gaza called the demand for the release of prisoners "natural". He observed: "Women and children have special significance for us", and insisted that Hamas would not back down on its demand.

Dr Mahdi Abdel Hadi, head of a Palestinian think tank in Jerusalem, asserted: "Israel is executing a well-prepared plan to eliminate Hamas. Its military action is a repeat of Ariel Sharon's 1982 invasion of Lebanon and 2002 reoccupation of the West Bank, which were designed to eliminate Yasser Arafat."

Hamas condemns arrest of government ministers

Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert "is another Sharon", Dr Abdel Hadi said. "Israel cannot afford to see Hamas emerge as a model in the region. Israel does not want to see Hamas become another **Hizbullah**" - the Lebanese Shia fundamentalist group which, after forcing Israel to pull out of Lebanon, has become a powerful mainstream political party in that country.

Load-Date: June 30, 2006

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Refugees wash up at hospital, wretched and bloodied

The Irish Times

July 26, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: WORLD; Middle East Crisis; Pg. 11

Length: 375 words

Byline: Suzanne Goldenberg in Tibnin, Lebanon

Body

It is their feet that tell their story. They are bloody, swollen and bandaged after carrying them over mountains and under rocket barrages as Israel's war against Hizbullah erased the lives behind them.

In their villages lay ancestral houses crushed by bombs, family heirlooms abandoned mid-flight, the elderly and the frail, and of course the dead, their bodies trapped beneath the rubble. All that belonged to the past now.

The awful present was here in Tibnin General Hospital, a modest facility even in ordinary times, whose doors yesterday opened on a vision of hell: as many as 1,600 desperate and terrified refugees caught up in Lebanon's deepening humanitarian crisis.

They were men, women, children and newborn babies, forced to abandon their homes as the frontline drew nearer, and stranded in this hospital for days. There was no running water or electricity, no doctors or medicines, little food and less hope.

They had walked here over hills shuddering beneath Israeli air strikes. Some were barefoot. Others were shell-shocked. Some barely managed to enter this world; five babies have been born prematurely at the hospital since the beginning of the war, the Lebanese Red Cross said.

The hundreds here are the most wretched of this war: too poor or unwilling to flee when the first waves of refugees washed up from south Lebanon.

For Ali Hourani, a stonemason from Bent Jbail, his flight to Tibnin offered the cruellest of choices: his ageing parents or his five children. At 82, his father, who has diabetes, was in no condition to flee, nor was his mother, who is 75. "We spent 10 days under bombs, and it was as if we had died 100 deaths," he said. "No one cared about us. No one asked about us."

Yusuf Baydoun (78) spent 2½ hours walking here over the hills in socks and bath sandals. "They were bombing all the time," he said. "It was very bad. I thought my heart was going to stop."

Mr Baydoun managed to bring out his wife and two daughters. But he too left people behind. In the ruins of his home, hit by the Israeli forces on Monday night, lay the bodies of his two maids: one Ethiopian, one Sri Lankan. The women were asleep when Mr Baydoun's home was attacked. "It is very sad," he said. "It was not their war." - (Guardian service)

Refugees wash up at hospital, wretched and bloodied

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

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Headlines you might have missed this week

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 29, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: TAKE 5; Pg. B8

Length: 422 words

Byline: The Gazette

Body

Soldiers come home

Corporals Franciso Gomez and Jason Patrick Warren, a Montrealer with the Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada, killed in Afghanistan Saturday by a suicide bomber, came home to Canada Thursday in a repatriation ceremony at CFB Trenton. Family members, clutching white roses in their hands, were joined by Governor-General Michaëlle Jean and regimental friends. Among those mourning Warren were his grandfather, D.J. Gagnon, a retired brigadier-general.

LGBT rights conference

More than 1,200 delegates arrived in Montreal for the International Conference on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Human Rights, an event affiliated with the Outgames. The fight for human rights is a universal struggle, said Kim Gandy, of the National Organization of Women, as "sexism and homophobia are one and the same." Other speakers at the conference were Gene Robinson, Episcopal bishop of New Hampshire; and Irshad Manji, author of a controversial book concerning the liberal reformation of Islam.

High-level confab

The Rome conference held to address the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict, led by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, declared an international force "should urgently be authorized under a UN mandate to support the Lebanese armed forces in providing a secure environment." UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said a "political framework" involving Iran and Syria, supporters of Hezbollah, was needed to back whatever decision the Security Council makes.

The \$65,000 web query

Ottawa paid \$65,000 to a polling firm, for a report that basically told them people use such popular search engines as Yahoo and Google to find websites. The apparently obvious information was in a report for Health Canada completed in March which found people preferred typing queries rather than "vanity URLs." Written after 32 discussion groups, the report dismissed the use of addresses such as gosmokefree.ca because people still have trouble remembering them despite their handy handles.

Lawyer skirts issue

Headlines you might have missed this week

A male lawyer who appeared in a New Zealand court dressed in an ankle-length skirt, lace stockings and a diamond brooch said he was protesting against a male bias in the country's justice system. Rob Moodie said he wore the two-piece women's suit because of what he described as a boys' network in the court room during a trial looking into the death of a man in a bridge collapse. Said Moodie: "I'm objecting to the male ethos that is dominating this case and from now on I'm going to be dressing as a girl in my daily life."

Load-Date: July 29, 2006

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Israelis pull out of Gaza - but they'll be back

Birmingham Post

July 29, 2006, Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 399 words

Byline: James Tapsfield, Joe Churcher and Jon Smith

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 Hezbollah guerrillas.

An end to the violence in Gaza did not appear to be in sight, moreover, with Palestinian officials saying 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 19-year-old Israeli Corporal Gilad Shalit, who was captured by Hamas-linked militants in a cross-border raid on June 25.

Hamas has called for Israel's guarantees that it would free women, children and long-serving Palestinian prisoners if Shalit is released.

Dr Salah Bardawil, a senior Hamas official, said Israel's refusal to guarantee that it would release any Palestinian prisoners if Shalit were freed created the stalemate.

Bardawil also denied reports that Hamas and Hezbollah 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 Shalit, who remains in an unknown location in the custody of the Palestinian militant groups.

According to an Associated Press count, Israeli troops have killed 159 Palestinians since they started attacking the Gaza Strip to try to recover Shalit and stop Palestinian militants from firing rockets into Israel.

Most of those killed were militants, but also included a considerable number of civilians.

Israelis pull out of Gaza - but they'll be back

The Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility yesterday for a rocket attack on the southern Israeli town of Zikim that injured two children who were hit by shrapnel.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, in Algeria, said the situation in the Palestinian areas and Lebanon was only likely to get worse after world leaders failed to agree on an immediate ceasefire at a summit in Rome on Wednesday.

"The situation will worsen and the consequences will be very heavy, not only for the region but probably for the entire world," he said.

Load-Date: July 29, 2006

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Stop it now

Evening Gazette

July 31, 2006, Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 422 words

Body

Israel has suspended its air strikes in southern Lebanon for 48 hours following world condemnation of a bombing that killed at least 56 Lebanese, most of them women and children.

Yesterday's bloody attack levelled a building where families had taken shelter from earlier Israeli strikes.

The carnage in the village of Qana escalated international pressure on Washington to back an immediate end to the fighting and prompted US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice to cut short her Middle East mission.

She said she would push for a ceasefire and a "lasting settlement" in the conflict through a United Nations Security Council resolution this week and today an emergency Council session passed a statement expressing "extreme shock and distress".

The announcement of the pause in overflights - first made by the US State Department - appeared to reflect American pressure on Israel to make a concession after the strike.

However, Israeli warplanes struck suspected guerilla positions in eastern Lebanon near the border with Syria half an hour before the start of the suspension.

And officials left open the possibility that they might hit targets to stop imminent attacks on Israel, and that the suspension could last less than 48 hours if the military completed its inquiry and interpretation before then.

They would allow opening of corridors for 24 hours for Lebanese civilians who wanted to leave south Lebanon for the north and would maintain land, sea and air corridors for humanitarian assistance.

The attack on Qana brought Lebanon's death toll to more than 510.

In Qana, workers pulled dirt-covered bodies of young boys and girls - dressed in the shorts and T-shirts they had been sleeping in - out of the wreckage of the three-storey building.

Two extended families, the Shalhoub and the Hashems, had gathered together in the house for shelter from another night of Israeli bombardment in the border area when the strike brought the building down.

"I was so afraid. There was dirt and rocks and I couldn't see. Everything was black," said 13-year-old Noor Hashem, who survived, although her five siblings did not. She was pulled out of the ruins by her uncle, whose wife and five children also died.

Stop it now

Israel apologised for the deaths but blamed **Hezbollah** guerillas, saying they had fired rockets from near the building.

The UN Security Council was holding an emergency meeting to debate a resolution for immediate ceasefire - a step Washington has stood nearly alone at the council in refusing until the assured disarmament of **Hezbollah**.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

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Exodus

The Sun (England)

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: BRITS FLEE LEBANON

Length: 393 words

Byline: Nick Parker, Chief Foreign Correspondent in Beirut

Body

180 head to safety on Navy warship

BRITONS stream on board warship HMS Gloucester yesterday to flee missile-ravaged Lebanon.

The terrified 180 men, women and children -watched over by machinegun-toting troops -were among the first wave of 5,000 set to be rescued this week. They included pregnant women, babies, boys in England shirts and holidaying families caught up in the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah guerillas.

Many told of their terror and relief as they prepared for the 120-mile journey to the safety of Cyprus. Student Rachel Terry, 19, of Canterbury, Kent, was trapped in her holiday apartment for a week. She said: "We never knew if we'd be next to get hit."

With one of her two children in her arms, Samantha Bradley, from the West Midlands, said: "We left Beirut and went into the hills. A bomb went off and smashed the car."

Scot Sarah McDougall boarded HMS Gloucester with her children -born in Lebanon - but had to leave behind her husband. She said: "It's a shame to leave this beautiful country."

"We hope we can come back and get it back on its feet. The people here don't deserve this."

Gloucester's dash into Beirut Port came after Israeli forces gave it a ceasefire "window" of just two hours. It slipped in at 6.15pm local time.

Machine-gunners watched for attacks from Hezbollah missile batteries while the 250 crew gave up their bunks for the ten-hour crossing to Limassol. Commander Mike Patterson said evacuees were "in good spirits".

Type 42 destroyers Gloucester and York, Type 23 frigate St Albans, and supply ship Fort Victoria will secure the "sea bridge" to Cyprus forged by aircraft carrier Illustrious and assault ship Bulwark. More than 600 soldiers, including SAS special forces, are being rushed in to back them up.

Earlier, the first British evacuees landed in Cyprus on a Chinook helicopter. It started the biggest British war zone evacuation since Dunkirk, and will be boosted by three more Chinooks from RAF Odiham, Hants.

They are being stripped down and shoe-horned inside RAF Boeing C17 transporter jets, then assembled again in Cyprus. Each can carry 50 people.

Exodus

Four RAF Sea King choppers from Yeovilton, Somerset, will fly to Cyprus via Nice.

Four task force ships carry smaller Lynx and Merlin helicopters.

But fears are mounting for 86 Brits trapped in Lebanon's paralysed south, pinned down by the risk of air attacks.

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

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'They found them huddled together': Israel calls off air strikes after raid on Lebanese town kills more than 60 people, including 34 children

The Guardian - Final Edition

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: GUARDIAN HOME PAGES; Pg. 1

Length: 1415 words

Body

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

They were wrong. At about one in the morning, as some of the men were making late night tea, an Israeli bomb smashed into the house. Witnesses describe two explosions a few minutes apart, with survivors desperately moving from one side of the building to the other before being hit by the second blast. By last night, more than 60 bodies had been pulled from the rubble, said Lebanese authorities, 34 of them children. There were eight known survivors.

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

The bombing, the bloodiest incident in Israel's 18-day campaign against ***Hizbullah***, drew condemnation from around the world. Late last night Israel announced a suspension of aerial activities in southern Lebanon for 48 hours and said it would coordinate with the UN to allow a 24-hour window for residents in southern Lebanon to leave the area if they wished.

The bombing sparked furious protests outside the UN headquarters in Beirut. Lebanon's prime minister, Fouad Siniora, accused Israel of committing "war crimes" and called off a planned meeting with the US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice. Israel apologised for the loss of life but said it had been responding to rockets fired from the village.

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

"I said: 'Allahu Akbar (God is most great). Don't be scared. I will come.' There was blood on my face. I wiped it and looked for my son but couldn't find him. I took three children out - my four-year-old nephew, a girl and her sister. I went outside and screamed for help and three men came and went back inside. There was shelling everywhere. We heard the planes. I was so exhausted I could not go back inside again."

'They found them huddled together': Israel calls off air strikes after raid on Lebanese town kills more than 60 people, including 34 children

Ibrahim Shalhoub described how he and his cousin had set out to get help after the bombs hit. "It was dark and there was so much smoke. Nobody could do anything till dawn," he said, his eyes still darting around nervously. "I couldn't stop crying, we couldn't help them."

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

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

Rescue workers were pulling bodies from the rubble all morning. They came across the smallest corpses last, many intact but with lungs crushed by the blast wave of the bombing.

"God is great," a policeman muttered as the body of a young boy no older than 10 was carried away on a stretcher. The boy lay on his side, as if asleep, but for the fine dust that coated his body and the blood around his nose and ears.

The house stood at the top of a hillside on the very edge of Qana and its disembowelled remains had spilled down the slope. Bodies were lined up on the ground - a baby, two young girls and two women. The rigid corpse of a young man lay nearby, his arm rising vertically from beneath a blanket, his index finger pointing up to the sky.

"Where are the stretchers, where are the stretchers?" a rescue worker cried as Israeli warplanes roared overhead. Sami Yazbuk, the head of the Red Cross in Tyre said they got the call at 7am, but had to take a detour to Qana because of shelling on the road.

In a nearby ambulance the smallest victims were stacked one on top of the other to make space for the many to come. A boy and girl, both no more than four years old had been placed head to toe. They were still wearing pyjamas.

Family photos - one showing two young children - were scattered in the debris. Mohsen Hachem stared at the images. "They had to have known there were children in that house," he said. "The drones are always overhead, and those children - there were more than 30 - would play outside all day."

Anger at the attack erupted in Beirut, where windows in the UN building were smashed and its lobby invaded by demonstrators furious at the rising Lebanese death toll. After extensive coverage on Lebanese TV of corpses being taken from the remains of the building, thousands turned out in the city's main open square to vent their fury. Likewise, in Gaza crowds clashed with Palestinian police after smashing into a Unesco building.

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

The strike that destroyed the building was a precision-guided bomb dropped from the air, the same kind of bomb that destroyed a UN position in Khiyam last week, killing four UN observers. Writing on an olive green fragment of the munition which appeared to have caused the explosion read: GUIDED BOMB BSU 37/B.

"We don't know what the people were doing in the basement. It is possible they were being used as shields or being used cynically to further Hizbullah's propaganda purposes," the spokesman said. "We apologise. We couldn't be more sorry about the loss of civilian life."

'They found them huddled together': Israel calls off air strikes after raid on Lebanese town kills more than 60 people, including 34 children

More than 750 Lebanese, most of them civilians have been killed since Israel began its strikes in response to the kidnapping of two soldiers. A total of 51 Israelis, 18 of them civilians, have been killed.

For Qana, history has repeated itself. Ten years ago, more than a hundred civilians taking refuge in a UN compound there were killed by Israeli shelling.

At the site of the latest tragedy, a man broke down as another small body was brought out, followed quickly by another. The civil defence workers cradled the corpses before placing them delicately on the bright orange stretchers.

"He was the son of Abu Hachem," said a young man in the crowd outside the house. "They're Ali and Mohammed - they're brothers," a neighbour shouted.

At Tyre hospital, Dr Salman Zaynadeen said the casualties were the worst thing he and colleagues had ever faced. Twenty-two bodies were in a refrigerated lorry serving as the hospital's morgue, 12 of them children. "At least 20 more are expected. They range in age up to 75. They were crushed," he said.

Five dead boys lay in the yard outside. Army staff photographed them for identification purposes.

The youngest, Abbas Mahmoud Hashem, lay on his back with his head turned and his right leg drawn up. A dummy hung on a blue plastic chain round his neck; concrete dust covered his face and hair. He looked about 18 months old.

On a hospital bed, a 13-year-old survivor, Nour Hashem, lay fiddling with her bed sheet, her eyes welling with tears. She had been in the house where so many of her family had been killed but had miraculously escaped with only slight injuries.

"We were all sleeping in the same room, my friend, my sister and my cousin," she said, her voice still shuddering.

"I pulled the rubble off my mother and she took me to another house, then she went looking for my brothers and sisters. But my brothers and sisters didn't come and my mother didn't return."

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Irrational exuberance?

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

March 11, 2005 Friday

FIVE STAR LATE LIFT EDITION

Copyright 2005 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. B8

Length: 392 words

Body

POPULAR OPINION HOLDS that the successful election in Iraq has triggered a wave of democracy in the Middle East not unlike the surge of freedom following the collapse of the Iron Curtain.

Not only is this the view of the neoconservative architects of President George W. Bush's foreign policy, but also of some Democrats in Congress. Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman, D-Conn., told The New York Times, "This moment in the Middle East has the feel of Central and Eastern Europe around the collapse of the Berlin Wall." Mr. Bush himself said his week that "clearly and suddenly, the thaw has begun" in the authoritarian Middle East.

We hope the optimism is justified. No matter what one thinks about the wisdom of the war in Iraq or the realism of Mr. Bush's vision of the Middle East, the success of modern, moderate democratic forces should hasten peace and prosperity in Middle Eastern countries.

Democratic movements that start as a trickle can turn into a wave of change once people realize that their individual actions actually can affect their lives and the direction of their country. Few experts predicted how fast the 1989 democratic revolution in Eastern Europe would sweep away the Iron Curtain.

But the exuberance of the moment in the Middle East has to be tempered by realism. The huge *Hezbollah* counterdemonstration this week followed by the reappointment of a pro-Syrian prime minister demonstrated that the Cedar Revolution is extremely fragile. *Hezbollah*, which is popular in Lebanon because of the perception that it drove Israel out of the country, could be the force best equipped to fill any power vacuum left by departing Syrian troops. That's not an outcome the United States wants.

Certainly, Saudi Arabia and Egypt responded to U.S. pressure in recent feints toward democracy. But women couldn't vote in the Saudi elections, and no one thinks that an election challenger will pose much of a threat to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's one-man rule.

Probably the most significant change in the Middle East is the progress between Israel and the Palestinians. That is largely the result of the death of Yasser Arafat.

People all over the world yearn for freedom. But it is a harder task for democrats and modernists to build free societies in places with few democratic traditions than it is for terrorists with medieval values to tear them down.

Notes

DEMOCRACY

Load-Date: March 11, 2005

End of Document

Tories seem to understand the crisis

The Guardian (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island)

July 19, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A6

Length: 746 words

Byline: Barbara Yaffe

Body

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The rest of his statement provided no indication of where Liberals stand on the confrontation.

The approach is reminiscent of the buffoonish utterance of then-PM Jean Chretien who, while in the ancient Israeli city in 2000, claimed not to know East from West Jerusalem.

By contrast, Conservatives appear to have a good understanding, not only of the ongoing dispute, but its genesis and complexity. And aren't afraid to express a position.

They're clear on the fact that Hamas and Hezbollah are proxy agents of Syria and Iran, from whence all the sophisticated weaponry derives.

Conservatives also appear to understand that the goal of those confronting Israel isn't a Palestinian state. Rather, it's obliteration of the UN-mandated Jewish state which occupies a miniscule slice of terrain in the Arab region.

Israel vacated south Lebanon in 2000, Gaza in 2005. The Olmert government had been planning to vacate the West Bank. In 2000, former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak, in negotiations conducted under U.S. auspices, offered a starting point for a Palestinian state, promptly rejected by Yasser Arafat.

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Palestinians had a chance following Israel's withdrawal from Gaza to demonstrate they could build a state. Instead they used Gaza to launch 700 rockets at Israel, killing a dozen Israelis.

Likewise, in south Lebanon, **Hezbollah**, the Party of God - a terrorist organization - has been operating with the tacit approval of the Lebanese government. Indeed, like Hamas in the Palestinian Territories, **Hezbollah** is part of the Lebanese government, with 23 of 128 seats in the National Assembly.

Israel has suffered as a result. But not as much as the Lebanese and Palestinians, who lag behind Israelis in terms of every conceivable economic and social indicator.

As political analyst Barry Rubin astutely wrote in a column Monday from Tel Aviv, "Who needs peace, stability, economic progress, **women**'s rights, an independent judiciary, an accurately reporting media, controlling corruption, a good educational and health system, free speech or all the rest of that stuff when you can kidnap Israelis?"

By keeping their populations focused on Israel, Arab dictatorships for years have been able to avoid doing the harder work of worthy governments - bettering life for their populations.

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Israel is trying to do this as humanely as possible, dropping leaflets of warning in civilian-occupied areas before dispatching artillery. But war is never a precision game. On the other side, no precautions are taken.

If Canadian soldiers operating on Canadian soil were kidnapped and an adjacent nation was serving, unimpeded, as a staging ground from which terrorists were lobbing missiles into Toronto and Vancouver, what would Canada's government do in response?

It's tough to predict, or even imagine such a circumstance. But this much is clear; based on statements coming out of party headquarters in Ottawa, I'd much rather the Harper government be standing on guard for Canada than the Liberals.

Barbara Yaffe writes for the Vancouver Sun.

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

One face obscures the vast profile of a tragedy

Canberra Times (Australia)

July 15, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. B07

Length: 678 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

WHAT'S in a name?

A couple of days ago, as part of my daily Internet "feed", I read a short item from the Jewish Telegraph Agency reporting that three Palestinian teenagers in Gaza had been killed in an "Israeli airstrike that apparently went awry".

To be honest, I didn't think a lot about this at the time. After all, there was nothing particularly new or newsworthy in the report.

But during the day I kept wondering about this relatively inconsequential piece of news. I reflected on the fact that I knew a great deal about an Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit, who recently had been seized by Palestinian militants.

I knew that Gilad was only 19, that his friends described him as quiet, and that his brother Yoel was named after an uncle killed in war with Israel's Arab neighbours.

On several occasions Gilad's face had stared at me from the newspaper or the computer screen.

On TV I had seen his father make an understandably emotional plea for the safe return of his son.

I knew that the Prime Minister of his country, Ehud Olmert, had assured this father that Israel would do everything to free Gilad.

I knew that, practically applied, this included collective punishment of the Palestinians through the destruction of Gaza's only power generating plant.

Presumably it also included the "by- catch" of three dead Palestinians, obliterated in the Israeli airstrike that "went awry".

I knew that I would probably never learn the names of those teenagers.

Gilad was a human casualty of war but they were merely a statistic. He had a face and a father and a Prime Minister seemingly prepared to play for very high stakes to secure his release.

The Palestinians could be dismissed as being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Surely they should have known better than to be born who they were, to live where they did, and to die as they had.

One face obscures the vast profile of a tragedy

I knew that this is often the way of the appalling conflict between Jew and Palestinian over a land that eventually they will either share or be buried in before their natural time. I knew also that we should all be sick at heart at the way this conflict has dehumanised them, and us. And I knew too that, as much as in the case of Gilad Shalit and the young Palestinians, one side mostly has names and distressed fathers and mothers and outraged countrymen and women that strike a chord with many beyond the shores of Israel.

The other side has seething, mourning masses, mouthing threats and incomprehensible chants that make us anxious and uncomfortable.

Unless they indulge in unspeakable acts of terror we pay little attention to their plight.

And when their acts of indiscriminate, callous violence shatter our evening calm, paradoxically we are reassured in applying the broad brush that dehumanises each and every one of them. They have no names, fathers, mothers, or hopes. They are deservedly non-people.

This spares us from the question that we dare not ask. How is it that a country with such power as Israel, nuclear armed; undefeated in war with its Arab neighbours; backed determinedly by the world's only superpower; touted as a democratic beacon in a sea of tyranny, can act as a law unto itself?

Israel has every right to defend itself and its citizens. It should respond sternly to Hezbollah's opportunistic assaults. But will bombing Beirut airport and destroying roads and bridges really bring quiet to northern Israel?

It's not as though Hezbollah tanks were about to roll across the border.

Lebanon was supposed to be on the path to political recovery and good neighbourliness. The tens of Lebanese civilians killed as Israel tries to send Hezbollah and its Syrian and Iranian backers a tough message will only cement hatred of the Jewish state.

Gilad Shalit's captors will be pleased with these developments. Israel is now pressured on two fronts. Its security as a nation state is not threatened.

But the insecurity of its citizens is once more exposed. At least those citizens, like Gilad Shalit, have a human face. Dead Palestinian teenagers and Lebanese civilians do not.

Peter Rodgers is a former ambassador to Israel.

Load-Date: July 14, 2006

Tories seem to understand Middle East crisis

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A11; Barbara Yaffe

Length: 743 words

Byline: Barbara Yaffe, Vancouver Sun

Body

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Load-Date: July 18, 2006

Can fever cure the jihadi?

The International Herald Tribune

July 21, 2006 Friday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 6

Length: 753 words

Byline: David Brooks

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

It happened just over a year ago in Key West, Florida, of all places. We'd come down for a conference organized by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, and one afternoon two friends, Reuel Gerecht and Jeffrey Goldberg, squared off for a debate on the prospects for democracy in the Middle East.

Gerecht and Goldberg are Americans whose fascination with Islam has taken them to ridiculous places.

Gerecht, a former member of the CIA clandestine service, spends an astonishing amount of time in spare rooms in Middle East backwaters talking fatwas in klatches with bearded fundamentalists.

Goldberg has lived in a madrasa in Pakistan. His magazine pieces from inside *Hezbollah* won a national award. In the fall he has a book coming out, "Prisoners," about his time as a prison guard in the Israeli army and his friendships with the Palestinian detainees.

Having heard many of their stories, I have this image of Goldberg being kidnapped by some terrorist group and when he's thrown into the hideout he finds Gerecht already there schmoozing with the local mullah.

But these two companions disagree utterly about the path to Arab democracy. Gerecht began their debate in Key West by reporting that a genuine wave of democratic thought is sweeping through the region.

It's not only happening among the liberal secularists who are marginal to the Arab mainstream, he said. It's happening among the ayatollahs and the clerics.

The people who will do well in the first elections, Gerecht predicted a year ago, will not be to our liking. They will be anti-American and ferociously anti-Israeli. The first phase of Arab democracy will be extremely bumpy, he warned, with possible attacks on Israel, and crackdowns on *women's* rights.

But it is better, he argued, to go through this phase than to wait for a religious reformation, which will never come. It is better to endure this phase than to preserve the old dictatorships, which feed extremism.

The only way to reform the Middle East, Gerecht concluded, is by changing political institutions and enduring as the spirit of democratic self-government slowly changes society. There will be a period of fever, but the fever will break the disease.

Can fever cure the jihadi?

When it was Goldberg's turn (the transcript is available online at pewforum.org), his first observation was that sometimes fevers break the disease but sometimes they kill the patient.

The only difference, he said, between the terrorists and the "moderate" Islamic supremacists that Gerecht would empower is that the terrorists want to kill all Americans and all Jews whereas the moderates only want to kill all the Jews.

Morally, Goldberg, continued, the United States cannot champion democratic reforms that produce jihadist regimes that attack Israel and wink at the honor killings of teenage girls. And politically, how long are we supposed to endure this period of painful democratic birth? Fifty years? 100?

In Goldberg's view, cultural reform has to precede political reform. The West should continue to champion the Arab world's liberal modernizers, who believe in pluralism and human rights and who may have deeper roots in society than we think.

Fourteen months later, we're in the middle of the fever Gerecht and Goldberg were grappling with. Hezbollah, Hamas and Muktada al-Sadr have indeed benefited.

But, Gerecht points out, so have a lot of real democrats who are resisting the extremists. Goldberg counters that organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah were always jihadi and will always be jihadi, and no amount of democratic participation will change that.

What this debate is really about is the mother of all chicken-and-egg problems. Can we use political reform to spark cultural change, or do we have to wait for cultural reformation before we can change politics?

The Bush administration's position is clear. In some of my best arguments with senior officials, they insist, a la Gerecht, that institutions shape behavior. And to their credit, even in this moment of turmoil they are hanging tough and pushing for more democratic reform.

But the truth is that at the moment neither the Goldberg nor the Gerecht thesis is winning. The fever Gerecht predicted has sent world opinion scurrying off for stability at any cost. World opinion is abandoning both Palestinian-style democratic transformation and the cultural modernizers who are being crushed in places like Egypt.

People are rushing back toward the illusory stability of Mubarak and the House of Saud.

That, Goldberg and Gerecht both agree, is what brought us 9/11.

Load-Date: July 21, 2006

Harper gov't response to crisis strikes right tone

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

July 20, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: FORUM; Pg. A9; Barbara Yaffe

Length: 741 words

Byline: Barbara Yaffe, Vancouver Sun

Body

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Load-Date: July 20, 2006

Villagers flee the bombs, but still there is no escape

The Times (London)

July 26, 2006, Wednesday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 7

Length: 727 words

Byline: Nicholas Blanford from Tibnine

Body

Hundreds are sheltering in a hospital but they are a long way from safety, reports Nicholas Blanford from Tibnine

He is 78 and has walked for 2 terrifying hours in his slippers from his bombed home in the battered village of Kounine to the relative safety of Tibnine. Yussef Beydoun has joined about 1,600 refugees crammed into Tibnine's hospital, all of them having fled from a cluster of Shia hill villages to the south. They are running out of food and water, there is no electricity and they have little prospect of imminent escape.

"All the time there's bombing, all the houses have been hit. It was very bad. I thought my heart would stop," said Mr Beydoun, a slim, stooped man with a white, floppy hat shading his stubbly face. He said that his house had been flattened by Israeli bombing, killing his Sri Lankan and Ethiopian maids. "They are still buried under the rubble."

Tibnine, a mixed Shia and Christian town known for its ruined Crusader fortress, looks south across a shallow valley of stony grassland and tobacco fields that gently rise to a crest, marked yesterday by puffs of grey smoke and dust from shell bursts.

Out of sight on the other side of the ridge is Bint Jbeil, the largest Shia town in the border district and the object of Israel's 13-day onslaught against Hezbollah guerrillas. Bint Jbeil and the surrounding Shia villages, such as Aitaroun, Kounine, Beit Yahoun and Ainatta have borne the brunt of Israel's air and artillery blitz.

"It's very bad in Kounine," said Souad Shibli, 45, an Egyptian nurse whose Lebanese husband is working in Kuwait. "All night there are explosions. We want cars to go to Beirut. Please tell Kofi Annan we must have cars to get us out," she added, her voice becoming desperate and shrill.

Packed into the entrance of the hospital are dozens of refugees -old, rheumy eyed men; small, wide-eyed children; many women, some of them dressed in full length black chadors. They anxiously await news of where the next food is coming from or if a way out of Tibnine has been discovered, the shelling having made the roads too dangerous to travel.

"The taxis are charging \$100 each to take us to Beirut. Who here has \$100?"

screamed Majida Bazzi, her arms flailing wildly in her rage. "There's nowhere to escape the bombing. We have no cars. There's no water in the hospital. Nothing."

Villagers flee the bombs, but still there is no escape

The stairs to the basement are lined with women, clutching small children or babies, talking quietly or just staring blankly in silence. A Lebanese soldier at the hospital said that five babies had been born prematurely in the past few days.

The narrow passageways in the basement are filled with people, some standing, others sitting, having instinctively headed below ground in case Israeli shells strike the hospital. The darkness is barely broken by the feeble glow of candles placed every few yards, shedding just enough light to see the fearful faces of the refugees.

If the Israelis hope that their punishing military campaign will turn Lebanon's Shias against Hezbollah, whose kidnapping of three Israeli soldiers on July 12 provoked the present conflict, then it would appear that they have miscalculated.

"God grant your protection for Nasrallah," the furious refugees chant, referring to Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's leader. "You go to Bush and tell him to come here and you will see what we will do with him," yells Bilal Jumaa, a shopkeeper from Bint Jbeil who has spent the past week in the hospital. The throng gathered around him broke out into loud applause at his words.

The refugees naturally considered the hospital as a haven from artillery barrages and airstrikes, but there have been several near misses. Several days ago a missile fired from an Israeli jet exploded close to the Lebanese Red Cross centre, adjacent to the hospital, causing some damage.

Early yesterday artillery shelling set light to the tinder-dry grass on a steep slope below the Red Cross centre. Thick black smoke wafted in through the broken windows of the building while the crackle of burning brush was punctuated by the ear-splitting sound of more artillery rounds exploding near by.

The Lebanese Red Cross and its counterparts in the International Committee of the Red Cross are almost the only humanitarian workers travelling the deadly roads of south Lebanon. But their ability to help to ferry casualties to hospital is limited.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

Everybody out - fast: Lebanese, Israelis and tourists flee

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 14, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A3

Length: 670 words

Byline: AP; Reuters contributed to this report

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

Michael Frantel had decided it was time to leave less than 24 hours after starting his vacation in Lebanon.

But as he stood at the check-in desk at Beirut's airport, Israeli air strikes smashed the runways outside.

The airport closed and Frantel and his two friends had to return to their hotel yesterday - joining Lebanese in dreading what would come next in Israel's offensive.

"It was a little bit frightening," said Frantel, a 20-year-old student from Ridgewood, N.J.

"The explosions were pretty close and you could feel them."

Beirut streets were largely empty when the capital is usually thriving with tourists and locals packing shops and street cafes. On the Hamra thoroughfare, owners stood bored and worried outside empty shops.

At one bank, the employees who decided to show up were distracted by TV images of Israeli shelling of Lebanese villages on the second day of Israel's bombardment, triggered by Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers Wednesday.

A much-awaited concert that Lebanon's diva Fairouz was to hold in the ancient ruins of Baalbek last night was indefinitely postponed after the city - a Hezbollah stronghold - came under Israeli attack.

The only places that saw crowds were supermarkets - where shoppers mobbed to stock up on canned food, water and bread - and gas stations, where lines stacked up amid rumours of fuel shortages.

Those tourists who could were taking the only way out possible: by land to Syria. Cars belonging to a travel company were seen leaving mountain resorts like Bhamdoun, a favourite with Kuwaitis and Saudis, and heading for the border in droves.

At the Lebanon-Syrian Masnaa border crossing, dozens of cars lined up outside the Lebanese passport control. Many had Kuwaiti and Saudi

licence plates, but most bore Lebanese ones, suggesting some of Lebanon's 4 million people were also fleeing.

Everybody out - fast: Lebanese , Israelis and tourists flee

Hotels that were packed only days before "are being vacated," said Tourism Minister Joe Sarkis. "There's a flight from Lebanon."

But in Damascus, which suffers a shortage of hotel rooms, hotel executives said they had no space to accommodate the extra demand from Lebanon.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah rockets rained down on northern Israel, and Nahariya, a resort in the far northwestern corner, was perhaps hit hardest.

The second day of heavy shooting across the border began early in the morning, when one rocket slammed into an open field just 200 metres from the Western Galilee Hospital, the town's main medical centre. An apartment building took a direct hit and burst into flames.

One woman was killed while on the balcony of her apartment in another building. A man also died in the town of Safad.

In the Israeli Arab village of Majdel Krum, a few kilometres to the south and east of Nahariya, a resident, Farhat Farhat, 23, said: "I was walking next door to my cousin's house when I heard this tremendous explosion.

"When I looked up," he continued, "it seemed like my whole house was flying through the air - the roof, the glass, even the water heater."

Seconds later, he said, a second rocket slammed into his cousin's house. Farhat suffered minor cuts to his left hand and left leg, and no one in either house suffered serious injuries.

In the summer, Israelis normally flock to Nahariya and other towns in the north for vacations in the rolling hills of Galilee. But yesterday, the traffic on the main roads was almost all headed south, as residents sought to move out of rocket range.

Those who remained moved into bomb shelters, creating a ghost town atmosphere across Israel's northern strip. Clouds of smoke rose on the horizon in several places, the result of a cluster of rockets that ignited fires.

At the hospital in Nahariya, the patients, including expectant mothers, were moved into underground rooms as a precaution. In the emergency ward, a steady stream of wailing women and sobbing children filled the chaotic hallways.

The hospital treated more than 30 civilians for injuries, while more than 120 arrived saying they were suffering from shock, many from Majdel Krum.

Graphic

Colour Photo: LEFTERIS PITARAKIS, AP; Lebanese army officers inspect the damage to a bridge that was bombed by Israeli warplanes in Damour, south of Beirut.;

Colour Photo: YONATHAN WEITZMAN, REUTERS; An Israeli army 155-millimetre mobile artillery piece fires into southern Lebanon from a position on the frontier in Zaura yesterday.

Load-Date: July 14, 2006

The Fever Is Winning

The New York Times

July 20, 2006 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 6; Editorial Desk; Pg. 21

Length: 762 words

Byline: By DAVID BROOKS

Body

It happened just over a year ago in Key West, of all places. We'd come down for a conference organized by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, and one afternoon two friends, Reuel Gerecht and Jeffrey Goldberg, squared off for a debate on the prospects for democracy in the Middle East.

Gerecht and Goldberg are Americans whose fascination with Islam has taken them to ridiculous places. Gerecht, a former member of the C.I.A. clandestine service, spends an astonishing amount of time in spare rooms in Middle East backwaters talking fatwas in klatches with bearded fundamentalists.

Goldberg has lived in a madrasa in Pakistan. His pieces from inside Hezbollah won a National Magazine Award for The New Yorker. In the fall he has a book, "Prisoners," coming out about his time as a prison guard in the Israeli Army, and his friendships with the Palestinian detainees.

Having heard many of their stories, I have this image of Goldberg being kidnapped by some terrorist group and when he's thrown into the hide-out he finds Gerecht already there schmoozing with the local mullah.

But these two companions disagree utterly about the path to Arab democracy. Gerecht began their debate in Key West by reporting that a genuine wave of democratic thought is sweeping through the region. It's not only happening among the liberal secularists who are marginal to the Arab mainstream, he said. It's happening among the ayatollahs and the clerics.

The people who will do well in the first elections, Gerecht predicted a year ago, will not be to our liking. They will be anti-American and ferociously anti-Israeli. The first phase of Arab democracy will be extremely bumpy, he warned, with possible attacks on Israel, and crackdowns on women's rights.

But it is better, he argued, to go through this phase than to wait for a religious reformation, which will never come. It is better to endure this phase than to preserve the old dictatorships, which feed extremism.

The only way to reform the Middle East, Gerecht concluded, is by changing political institutions and enduring as the spirit of democratic self-government slowly changes society. There will be a period of fever, but the fever will break the disease.

When it was Goldberg's turn (the transcript is available online at pewforum.org), his first observation was that sometimes fevers break the disease but sometimes they kill the patient. The only difference, he said, between the

The Fever Is Winning

terrorists and the "moderate" Islamic supremacists that Gerecht would empower is that the terrorists want to kill all Americans and all Jews whereas the moderates only want to kill all the Jews.

Morally, Goldberg, continued, the U.S. cannot champion democratic reforms that produce jihadist regimes that attack Israel and wink at the honor killings of teenage girls. And politically, how long are we supposed to endure this period of painful democratic birth? Fifty years? One hundred?

In Goldberg's view, cultural reform has to precede political reform. The West should continue to champion the Arab world's liberal modernizers, who believe in pluralism and human rights and who may have deeper roots in society than we think.

Fourteen months later, we're in the middle of the fever Gerecht and Goldberg were grappling with. Hezbollah, Hamas and Moktada al-Sadr have indeed benefited. But, Gerecht points out, so have a lot of real democrats who are resisting the extremists. Goldberg counters that organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah were always jihadi and will always be jihadi, and no amount of democratic participation will change that.

What this debate is really about is the mother of all chicken-and-egg problems. Can we use political reform to spark cultural change, or do we have to wait for cultural reformation before we can change politics?

The Bush administration's position is clear. In some of my best arguments with senior officials, they insist, a la Gerecht, that institutions shape behavior. And to their credit, even in this moment of turmoil they are hanging tough and pushing for more democratic reform.

But the truth is that at the moment neither the Goldberg nor the Gerecht thesis is winning. The fever Gerecht predicted has sent world opinion scurrying off for stability at any cost. World opinion is abandoning both Palestinian-style democratic transformation and the cultural modernizers who are being crushed in places like Egypt. People are rushing back toward the illusory stability of Mubarak and the House of Saud.

That, Goldberg and Gerecht both agree, is what brought us 9/11.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

The unintended consequences of exporting democracy

The Australian (Australia)

July 21, 2006 Friday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Cut & Paste; Pg. 15

Length: 752 words

Byline: George Will

Body

MATP

Leading US conservative George Will, in The Washington Post, on the Bush White House being mugged by reality

GROTESQUE, was Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's characterisation of the charge that the US invasion of Iraq was responsible for the current Middle East conflagration. She is correct, up to a point. This point: Hezbollah and Hamas were alive and toxic long before March 2003.

Still, it is not perverse to wonder whether the spectacle of America learning a lesson -- one that conservatives should not have to learn on the job -- about the limits of power to subdue an unruly world has emboldened many enemies. Rice called it short-sighted to judge the success of the administration's transformational ambitions by a snapshot of progress "some couple of years" into the transformation. She seems to consider today's turmoil preferable to the Middle East's "false stability" of the past 60 years, during which US policy "turned a blind eye to the absence of the democratic forces".

There is, however, a sense in which that argument creates a blind eye: It makes instability, no matter how pandemic or lethal, necessarily a sign of progress. Violence is vindication: Hamas and Hezbollah have, Rice says, "determined that it is time now to try and arrest the move towards moderate democratic forces in the Middle East".

But there also is democratic movement towards extremism. America's intervention was supposed to democratise Iraq which, by benign infection, would transform the region. Early on in the Iraq occupation Rice argued that democratic institutions do not just spring from a hospitable political culture, they also can help create such a culture. Perhaps.

But elections have transformed Hamas into the Government of the Palestinian territories, and elections have turned Hezbollah into a significant faction in Lebanon's parliament, from which it operates as a state within the state. And as a possible harbinger of future horrors, last year's elections gave the Muslim Brotherhood 19 per cent of the seats in Egypt's parliament.

Miranda Devine, in The Sydney Morning Herald, on the ABC's lament that the NSW Liberal movement is ditching the Left:

The unintended consequences of exporting democracy

BEING openly conservative and displaying any regard for [John] Howard causes egregious offence to leftie types who have dominated student union gatherings for decades ... The pendulum is swinging away from the political correctness and reflexive Left-liberal ideology that has dominated student politics and much of the media, but not yet at the ABC [whose TV programs Stateline, Four Corners and Lateline have recently broadcasted exposes into the Right's takeover of the party]. Thus competition between two groups within the Liberal Party, the Left and the Right, is categorised as "moderates" v "extreme religious Right".

And yet on issues such as heroin injecting rooms, lowering the age of homosexual consent, compulsory student unionism, affirmative action, same-sex marriage and removing censorship of pornography, the Right better reflects the feelings of Liberal voters and, indeed, the broader community. So who are the extremists?

The Left has controlled the NSW Liberal Party for more than two decades and always regarded the Young Liberals as its personal breeding ground. But with the coming of age of the Howard generation, conservatives now dominate the Young Liberals, the women's council and, most recently, the state executive. As the pendulum swings back from the extremes of political correctness which made the state party unelectable, feelings are bound to be hurt ...

But that's politics.

Laurie Oakes, in The Bulletin on February 26, 2002, says John Howard's lies will help Peter Costello:

HOWARD may ride out the [children overboard] storm, but he will be permanently damaged by it. His credibility will not recover ... If he tried to stay on, the issue would dog him and the Liberal Party through the next campaign. It must now be clear to even the most one-eyed Howard backer -- and to Howard himself -- that a change of leader before the next poll is imperative.

Laurie Oakes, in The Bulletin on Wednesday, says Howard's lies hurt Costello:

JOHN Howard is exposed as a purveyor of porkies and his support grows. Peter Costello tells the truth and gets the thumbs-down from voters. Should we be surprised? Sadly, no.

The punters want Howard to stay on as Prime Minister. They don't want to hear about him leaving politics. They don't care if he lied, as long as he's going to stick around. Tough luck for the Treasurer.

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

LETTERS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 24, 2006 Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Letters; Pg. 10

Length: 1107 words

Body

No peace unless futility of war is recognised

Middle East specialist Anthony Cordesman, as quoted in Paul McGeough's opinion piece ("Immoveable foes are playing for keeps", July 22-23), issues this most salutary warning: "For many ordinary Arabs and Muslims, there will be a clear linkage between the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Lebanon conflict, war in Iraq, war in Afghanistan and the war on terrorism. They will see at least the US, and perhaps the West as a whole, as anti-Arab and anti-Muslim."

In other words, what Iran, in collaboration with Syria, is clearly managing to do is to unite the entire Muslim world against what al-Qaeda claims to be its No.1 enemy: the Zionist-Christian alliance.

This could well turn out to be a holy war that has the biblical makings of Armageddon. And unless the children of Abraham each recognise its futility, there can never be peace.

Reverend Dr Vincent Zankin

Rivett (ACT)

Hezbollah, the so-called defender of Lebanon, is proving to the world that it is, in fact, the destroyer of the country. It has shown that it has no restraints, moral or otherwise, and no responsibility for that which it is destroying.

Protest should be directed at **Hezbollah**, not at a country that has shown incredible restraint over the years absorbing terrorist acts, interpreted falsely by **Hezbollah** as weakness.

David Bornstein Balmain

The tragedy of the Middle East is a product of inhumanity to humankind. Hamas and **Hezbollah** were born out of the desperation of refugee camps of dispossessed people. One would have thought that nations would have learnt something from their own past experiences.

It is an unmistakeable fact that for Israel to have secure borders, it cannot rely on concrete walls but on the goodwill of its neighbours; that goodwill cannot come from its present policy of oppression and coercion.

Of course, the US could have played a statesman-like role, but that has been missing under the leaderless meanderings of a hateful and vengeful administration. Time and again, great opportunities have been wasted.

LETTERS

There was no statesman-like response to September 11, to the disaster of New Orleans and to the latest events in the Middle East.

Ultimately, the resolution will not come from the barrels of guns but out of a fundamental truth: no justice, no peace.

Paul Philippa Valentine

Euthanasia's no answer

Bryan Milner (First Word, July 22-23) obviously believes that a secular ethos will lead us to a better world. Who is he kidding? Surely one of the great hallmarks of an educated and humane society is its ability to give voice to those most vulnerable.

In general, children are not well served by divorce or homosexual unions, the unborn are considered "untermenschen" by abortion, voluntary euthanasia is all too easily abused to include those whose lives merely have a level of frailty, and stem cell research (presumably he means embryonic) is highly dubious in value but usually destroys viable life.

I'm a Christian, but I never find myself thinking that the teachings of Jesus are less relevant these days - in fact, quite the opposite. Especially the one about us as individuals being more valuable than the collective wealth in the world (Mark 8:36).

Bryan Milner should be happy that it includes him and is not dependent on what anybody else thinks or says. The secular alternative is to be a small disposable cog naked to exploitation in a gigantic machine.

Mark Rabich Mt Evelyn (Vic)

In 1999, June Burns, a bladder cancer patient, appeared in television advertisements in the Northern Territory as the face of the pro-euthanasia campaign. An emaciated and suffering Burns, clearly in pain, pleaded for the introduction of euthanasia laws.

Today, June Burns is in remission. If she had been euthanised, she would not have had the opportunity to spend the last seven years with her family. Somewhat ironically, the best argument against euthanasia has been provided by the pro-euthanasia lobby itself.

Nigel Freitas Roseville

Dog policy is wrong

The dreadful dog attack on Tyra Kuehne was, like most tragedies, a cascade of unlucky events, but it was not a failure of dog-control laws as has been claimed ("Debate unmuzzled: call to curb hunting dogs after girl's death", July 22-23). No law was violated, no law could have prevented the attack except one requiring secure caging of all dogs.

This attack, and others recently reported, illustrate the failure of the Government's approach to dog-safety legislation. Breed-specific laws, enacted to appease the media rather than any expectation of preventing attacks, not only have failed, but have distracted the Government from more effective approaches.

There is a dog-safety education campaign in preparation, which is a better approach than banning breeds because a specimen bites. Dog attacks can never be eliminated, but they can be reduced. They have not been reduced by the failed policies introduced to date.

Stephen Collier School of Human

and Environmental Studies, University of New England, Armidale

Need for fringe benefits

LETTERS

Michael Duffy is spot on regarding the attractions of Sydney being monopolised by a lucky minority when it comes to work opportunities, social facilities and entertainment ("More spread, greater good", July 22-23).

A more equitable sharing of community facilities such as good schools, hospitals and universities and other major employers would do wonders for some of Sydney's problems such as housing prices and transport.

I am one of those social outcasts, having dared to move from the North Shore to the western suburbs. I sometimes feel like a world away from my old friends and colleagues who have stayed in the North Shore or eastern suburbs.

I have worked as a specialist in outer-metropolitan hospitals at Nepean and Camden/Campbelltown for more than 10 years. Hardly any specialist doctors live "out in the sticks". It is virtually impossible to attract some specialties to these already under-resourced facilities. Many who start working out on the fringe eventually move to the "better" side of town.

I congratulate Michael Duffy on his perceptive analysis of life in Sydney.

Martin Low Green Valley

A negative direction

I hope the Herald's other **female** conservative commentator, Lisa Pryor, feels justifiably proud labelling teachers, police officers, nurses and other civil servants "losers".

Who else would do a job that requires the people skills of Nelson Mandela, the emotional temperament of Mother Teresa and the patience of Job? Accentuating the negative aspects of everything must be very rewarding and this commentator has got better and better at it every week since joining the Herald.

Ross Kennedy Rose Bay

Graphic

Photo:AP/Lefteris Pitarakis

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Unfashionably late to leave

Guardian.com

July 24, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 960 words

Highlight: Beirut's trendy districts are emptying of their well-heeled clientele, leaving few others but western journalists and Shia fleeing the besieged suburbs, writes Brian Whitaker.

Body

I got to know Karim when I was based in Beirut for a few months last year. He lived nearby and, conveniently for me, he owned a brand new washing machine that his employer had given him as a sort of bonus.

Karim (not his real name) was a Syrian who had been working in Beirut for several years. He spoke near-perfect English with a slight drawl - the result of watching American films on his DVD. Sometimes, when I took my washing round, we would watch one together and share a takeaway.

When the war came, Karim announced that he was planning to sit it out. But then, suddenly, last week, he sent me a text message: "Leaving Lebanon tomorrow. Come and see me if you get a chance."

I found his flat full of cardboard boxes that he was hastily packing. He had summarily lost his job that morning when the firm closed down and had decided to return to his family in Damascus. His treasured washing machine, he said, was too big to take. He was giving it to a neighbour.

Sifting through his belongings, he came across a small plastic bag. "It's a shame," he said, holding it up, "but I suppose I'll have to throw this away." The bag contained a small amount of cannabis - grown in the Bekaa valley - and half a dozen ecstasy tablets.

Ecstasy arrived on the Lebanese club scene in large quantities only last autumn, when the first big rave was held in Beirut - the first in a regular series, as it turned out. The drugs all came from Dahiyeh, Karim said - the southern suburb now flattened by Israeli bombs. Whether that's the end of the ecstasy remains to be seen, but I suspect not. The Lebanese have learned, through bitter experience, that hedonism is the best defence against the insanity of war.

Saturday was my day off - or at least, as much of a day off as a journalist is likely to get in these circumstances. In the morning, along with Jonathan Steele, my Guardian colleague, I went to interview Mohammed Fneish - one of two ***Hizbullah*** ministers in the Lebanese government.

In the afternoon, to get away from it all, I went to the gym. "Lifestyles", in Ras Beirut, is described as "the most prestigious health club in town". Located several floors below ground, it is probably the safest place in the city just

Unfashionably late to leave

at the moment. There's an indoor pool, with a 100-metre running track around it on the balcony above, an aromatherapy centre, and every kind of exercise machine imaginable.

I went there regularly during my stay last year, and at the time many of its clients were Lebanese women of the elegant, well-heeled kind, guided through their exercise programmes by muscular personal trainers. No doubt these were purely commercial relationships, but the sexual frissons were sometimes hard to miss.

On Saturday, though, the gym was almost empty and even in the bowels of the earth it was difficult to escape the war. As I dripped sweat over the treadmill, the bank of TV screens in front of me showed more criminal damage in the world above.

Israeli rockets had toppled transmitters in the central and northern mountains, blacking out broadcasts from LBC (Christian-owned) and Future TV (Hariri-owned), as well as Hizbullah's al-Manar, in some parts of the country. As with many such attacks there was no obvious military reason, and in any case the channels can still be viewed by satellite.

On my way back from the gym I stopped off at a bakery for zaatar - hot flat bread, coated in thyme and rolled up with slices of tomato and cucumber inside. As I munched on it outside the shop, a Lebanese student struck up a conversation.

"You look like a foreigner," he said. "Why haven't you left?" With around 60,000 people now evacuated, almost all the foreigners who remain (the white ones, at least) work in the media. In Beirut now, "foreigner" equals "journalist".

"Are you a journalist?" a shopkeeper asked straight away when I went to buy a bottle of water. The man, who had a charity collecting box in the shape of al-Aqsa mosque by the side of his counter, wanted to know what I thought of the war, and how long it would last. For his part he was confident it would be over within a week, but much as I admired his optimism, I told him I was expecting it to take a good deal longer.

One of the weird things about this war is the way it is affecting Beirut, with collective mood swings that range from deepest gloom one day to almost carefree abandon the next. The Hamra district, which had been dead for most of the week, suddenly sprang to life on Saturday with an almost holiday atmosphere, as families walked the streets, enjoyed the sunshine and bought ice creams from the stalls in Bliss Street.

De Prague, a trendy hangout next to HSBC (dollars no longer available from the cash dispenser) was almost its old self. A wild-haired man wearing dark glasses and giant headphones sat quietly grooving in the corner.

Such characters can still be found here and there, but cosmopolitan Hamra has changed dramatically over the last week. The fashionable twenty-somethings have mostly gone, replaced by Shia fleeing from the suburbs - women in hijab and lots of small children - who now occupy many of the flats vacated by foreigners.

You see them now, even in Hamra Street, walking past clothes shops displaying skimpy bras and panties. It's an incongruous sight, and how Hamra - or the Shia, for that matter - will adjust to it remains to be seen. Maybe it's just a short-term change, or maybe not.

The Shia have long been marginalised in Lebanese society. While many Beirutis have been happy to welcome them as fellow citizens in their hour of need, long-held prejudices are coming to the surface in some places. One of the relief workers told me yesterday he had heard of landlords refusing to give Shia a home, even if they were willing to pay good money for it.

Load-Date: July 24, 2006

SAFE BACK FROM HELL; Evacuation of Beirut Britons starts but Blair attacked for snail's pace operation

The Evening Standard (London)

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

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**London
Evening
Standard**

Section: D MERGE; Pg. 1

Length: 1080 words

Byline: JOE MURPHY

Body

THE first Britons rescued from the terror in Beirut have reached safety.

With relief and joy on their faces they dashed from an RAF Chinook helicopter at a British base in Cyprus.

Some 63 refugees, comprising children, the sick and elderly, will now be kept in temporary accommodation while the Middle East conflict rages.

They are due to be joined by up to 22,000 British citizens and dual-nationals currently trapped in the Lebanon and thousands more people from across Europe.

But some of those left behind were bitterly criticising the slow pace of the British evacuation.

Only 100 to 150 of the most desperate cases, such as pregnant women and children, were expected to be taken to safety by the first UK evacuation ship due to dock late afternoon.

Six ships in total were either waiting offshore or heading for the region but ministers were unable to say when they might get in.

Terrified Britons in Beirut complained they were being given no information about when or how they could get out.

By contrast, German families arriving safely home said they wanted to "hug" their embassy staff.

France got a chartered ship in yesterday-to remove 800 of its nationals to Cyprus and was returning today for more.

Greece took away 400 by naval vessel and Italy took 700 by ship and plane, including 153 non-Italians. Germany, Spain and Russia all used aircraft.

SAFE BACK FROM HELL Evacuation of Beirut Britons starts but Blair attacked for snail's pace operation

Tony Blair was forced to defend the slow pace of the operation as criticism mounted from families left behind.

He told a press conference in Downing-Street: "We have acted as quickly as we possibly can.

"We have taken out of Lebanon the first 60 people - that was done yesterday.

The first ship will come today, so obviously we can take far greater numbers out."

A couple with a nine-month baby told how they could get no response from embassy staff.

Camille and Carolanne Nehme, from Glasgow, are holed up in the southern city of Tyre with their daughter Melody.

Mr Nehme, 34, said: "We haven't been told anything. Everybody wants to be somewhere else, but there is nowhere to go. We really don't know what the future holds."

Jolie Boyle, a DJ from Essex who is trapped in a Beirut hotel, said no one from the British embassy told her she could have been evacuated on the ship chartered by France, which was seen off personally by French prime minister Dominique de Villepin.

She told BBC Radio Five Live: "The British embassy here in Beirut don't answer the phone. It just rings and rings and rings, and they don't answer."

Arriving in Dusseldorf, rescued German families were delighted with their government.

"I could hug the German authorities and just want to thank everyone," said German-Lebanese Iman Kouteich, who had been visiting her parents near the Israeli border. "Without the help of the German embassy we would have never got out in one piece."

The first British ship to arrive was expected to be HMS Gloucester, one of two Type 42 destroyers stationed off the coast.

Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett did not rule out further "limited" airlifts but said the main focus now was evacuation by sea.

"Our priority from the beginning is to do this safely," she said, in reply to questions about why France was quicker at removing its countrymen.

She pointed out that many Britons may choose not to leave but take their chances in their homes.

Replying to Mr Blair in the Commons, Tory leader David Cameron said it was a "deeply troubling time", and there was a "very real danger of the conflict escalating".

Liberal Democrat leader Sir Menzies Campbell criticised Israel for targeting the infrastructure of Lebanon. "What happens if the Lebanese government, already weakened, were to fall?" he asked. "Who will fill the vacuum which would form as a result?"

Among those desperate to get out of Lebanon were said to be 86 stranded in Hezbollah-dominated southern Lebanon, who dared not drive out because Israeli warplanes are targeting anything that moves.

Diplomats were in talks to secure safe passage for known Britons. Attacks continued on both sides today, with Israel's third city Haifa being hit by a rocket in daylight.

Israeli warplanes battered Lebanon for a seventh day, killing 29 people as the Israeli army said its offensive to crush Hezbollah could take a few more weeks.

The campaign has killed 233 people, all but 26 of them civilians, and inflicted the heaviest damage on Lebanon since the 1982 Israeli invasion to expel Palestinian guerrillas.

SAFE BACK FROM HELL Evacuation of Beirut Britons starts but Blair attacked for snail's pace operation

Ms Beckett accused Hezbollah of engineering the crisis by attacking Israel.

She said: "It is clear that Israel has been under attack and is responding.

And this is indeed exactly what was intended by Hezbollah, which poured petrol on the bonfire."

Downing Street admitted that Mr Blair had abandoned his plan to go to the region on a diplomatic mission - an idea that was rebuffed by President George Bush in a conversation between them picked up by a stray microphone at the G8 summit.

Mr Blair is still pressing for a multinational stability force to open the way for a lasting ceasefire.

He said: "The issue is how we manage to bring that about and that's something I'm discussing, as you can see, with close allies.

"It's an appalling situation and a dangerous situation for the whole of the region and the whole of the world."

The advice to the 12,000 Britons and 10,000 people with dual nationality in Lebanon was to keep in touch with the embassy and maintain a low profile.

The Israeli military was understood to have agreed a "safe period" when it would allow rescue ships through. The military is maintaining a blockade of the ports as part of its offensive.

Six hundred soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, the Light Infantry, were preparing for an "imminent" deployment to Cyprus to get Britons out of the war zone in what could be the biggest mass evacuation since Dunkirk.

They will move to the Mediterranean from RAF South Cerney in Oxfordshire over the next few days to help with the logistics of handling more than 20,000 refugees.

As well as HMS Gloucester, the task force off the coast or heading for the region includes HMS York, St Albans, the aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious, the commando assault ship HMS Bulwark and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Fort Victoria.

In today's continuing Israeli onslaught, nine family members, including children, were killed and four wounded in an air strike on their house in the Lebanese village of Aitaroun. A truck carrying medical supplies donated by the United Arab Emirates was hit and its driver killed on the Beirut-Damascus highway.

Graphic

HAPPY LANDING: THE FIRST BRITISH FAMILIES EVACUATED BY RAF CHINOOK FROM BEIRUT'S WAR ZONE ARRIVE IN CYPRUS

Load-Date: July 19, 2006

Dummies' guide to west asia

Hindustan Times

July 22, 2006 Saturday 11:49 AM EST

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Length: 1693 words

Byline: Hindustan Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

NEW DELHI, India, July 22 -- AAl Aqsa: The third holiest site in Islam. But Israel has governed the ground since 1967. In September 2000, a heavily guarded Ariel Sharon visited the mosque. Palestinians interpreted it as an assault, and let loose the second Intifada. The toll of the Al Aqsa intifada during 2002-2004: 4,173.

Ahmad Yassin: Despite being paraplegic and nearly blind, Yassin fathered 12 children and rallied Sunnis together to form Hamas. He was arrested in 1989, released in 1997 and assassinated in April 2004 by an Israeli helicopter gunship.

BBa'ath: Though made popular by Saddam Hussein, a faction of the Ba'ath holds 135 of the 250 seats in the Syrian parliament. The Lebanese wing of the party is led by Assem Qanso, who has had to scuffle with Damascus-wary politicians.

CCondoleezza Rice: Sent as a peace broker to the region. But hopes are minimal, as she is Secretary of a state that has given its ally more time to destroy what it believes is a terrorist network in Lebanon. Has said "a temporary ceasefire would be a false promise".

Cyprus: West Asia's 'blue lagoon', which gave up hopes of a summer tourist season when the sealift began last Monday. It's raining refugees: some 20,000 foreign nationals have already come through Cyprus. Their complaint: "We feel alone."

DDisproportionate use of force: The new 'collateral damage' - a weak phrase used as alibi. When Israel unleashed an all-out offensive to free three soldiers, the UN Security Council elite admonished the Jewish state with this mild reproof.

EEhud Olmert: Taking over from General Sharon is not an easy task, especially for someone whose background in the military and defence leaves a lot to be desired. There are many who believe that the current crisis has snowballed because Olmert has to prove to his people that he has muscles to flex.

EU Special Envoy: Marc Otté is EU's special representative to the Middle East. His job is simple - to meet 'friends', make statements about 'positive developments' and solemnly express Europe's collected stance - 'Make love, not war.'

FFatah: Perceived by many Palestinians to be corrupt and ineffective, Fatah lost to Hamas in the Jan '06 . The rift between the two has widened ever since and is being fuelled by many. In May this year, Israeli security sources

Dummies' guide to west asia

claimed they had uncovered a Hamas plot to assassinate Fatah leader and president Mahmoud Abbas. The allegation was denied.

FSiniora: The same time last year, Siniora became the first Prime Minister to form a government post Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. His was also the first government to include members of Hezbollah. All that Siniora can do now is bite his nails as his weak democracy becomes the casualty of war.

GGaza Strip: Not a night club, but an ancient trading area abutting the Mediterranean. Aldous Huxley could've felt 'eyeless' there, but Israel is going into the territory with both eyes open. Most of the 4 lakh people there are impoverished. Civilian casualties in the latest war: 60+.

GShalit: The captured Israeli corporal who's the apparent casus belli of the latest offensive, which the ever-poetic Israeli army calls 'Summer rains'. His captors want all female Palestinians and those under 18 to be freed from Israeli prisons in exchange of this 20-year-old.

HHamas: Considered by Israel and the US to be a terrorist organisation, Hamas won 74 of the 132 seats in Jan '06 and now forms the democratically elected government of the Palestinian people. Its capture of an Israeli soldier (see Gilad Shalit) is considered evidence enough of it not having changed its ways.

HHasan Nasrallah: When he's not reading Sharon's biography, Nasrallah makes transient but impactful appearances on Arab television. Widely credited in Lebanon for ending the Israeli occupation, this leader of Hezbollah has helped his cadres enjoy the political status they now do.

Hezbollah: Pioneers of armed resistance or masters of a terrorist network? Both might be misleading, as its primary motive is to fight the Israeli Defence Forces. On 12 July, Hezbollah started Operation Truthful Promise, named for a 'promise' by Nasrallah to capture Israeli soldiers and swap them for the remaining three Lebanese held by Israel. Israel retaliated with Operation Change of Direction.

IIntifada: This Arabic for 'shaking off' gave the name to the first (1987-93) and the second (see Al Aqsa) Palestinian uprising. The first intifada was sparked by a road accident and ended with the Oslo Accord. Its civilian casualties: 1,087 Palestinians, 101 Israelis. The second is still raging.

JJordan: This kingdom, whose army is said to have killed more Palestinians than anyone else, was the keeper of Jerusalem till June 1967. Not directly affected by the current crisis, it's going on collaborating with Israel on a Dead Sea-Red Sea canal.

KKnesset: The Israeli parliament, which is now led by Olmert's Kadima Party. The building in which it's housed now was a gift from James Rothschild. Its latest session passed a record number of resolutions to smoothen the path of the ongoing war.

LLebanon: The site of the largest evacuation exercise now, the country has half a million of its population homeless. Roads, bridges and telecom networks paralysed, as is the \$4-billion tourism industry. Has 14 Hezbollah representatives in its government.

MMossad: This most respected and feared of all intelligence organisations hasn't been able to get to the Israeli hostages in the present crisis. Their glory is celebrated in Steven Spielberg's Munich and Marvin Chomsky's Victory at Entebbe.

NNeo-conservatives: Rumsfeld, Cheney, Wolfowitz - the one thing that binds them together is their fervent belief in neo-conservatism, a philosophy that is not deferential to traditional forms of diplomacy and is less inclined to a compromise of principle. Effect - Unilateral action in Iraq. Their project for the New American Century has called for an Israel no longer dependent on American aid through the removal of major threats in the region. Effect - Israel is given time to do what it has to.

OOslo Agreement: After highly secretive deliberations in Norway, the Oslo Accords were finalised in August 1993. The agreement called for the withdrawal of Israelis forces from parts of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and also

affirmed the Palestinian right to self-governance within those areas. The violence has not stopped, the Israelis have not left and this vital component in the road-map for peace has had once accident after another.

PPalestinian Statehood: The 'State of Palestine' (SoP) is nothing more than a declaration that was approved by the PLO in 1988. The declaration asks for Palestine's capital to be Jerusalem and recognises Israel with its pre-1967 boundaries. Israel rejected the declaration and the SoP is still a distant dream.

QQualitative military edge: Israel, the only nuclear state in the area, wants weapons that are superior to its neighbours'. The paranoia stems from its 1948 experience, when the just-born state had to hold its own on all fronts, though it was outnumbered. Israel thus tries to maintain QME in order to offset the supposed numerical superiority of Arab armed forces it may face in future wars.

RRuhollah Khomeini: The Grand Ayatollah of Iran who gave Iran its Islamic state and non-aligned status. Pictures of this Shia leader, who once urged Mikhail Gorbachev to embrace Islam, adorn most offices of the **Hezbollah**.

SSix-day War: New research shows it was triggered by a Russian lie on Israel's massing of troops on the Syrian border. At its end, the Israeli army was 50 km from Amman, 60 km from Damascus, and 110 km from Cairo.

TTel Aviv: It has been one of Hamas' favourite targets and suicide bombers are known to pay visits to the city's discotheques, buses and ATMs at regular intervals. Most foreign embassies are located here, enabling countries to remain neutral on the competing claims on Jerusalem.

UN Security Council: The Security Council (SC) would have perhaps been able to bring peace to the region, were it not for the Veto card used often enough by the US. Most recently, the SC wanted to pass a resolution which condemned Israel's use of force in and around Gaza. The US felt the resolution was not 'balanced' enough.

UUN Security Council: The Security Council (SC) would have perhaps been able to bring peace to the region, were it not for the Veto card used often enough by the US. Most recently, the SC wanted to pass a resolution which condemned Israel's use of force in and around Gaza. The US felt the resolution was not 'balanced' enough.

VValley of Tears: The Golan Heights is a plateau, whose borders are shared by Israel, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. Israel captured the heights from Syria in 1967 and its 'occupation' has been disputed since. Roadside memorials have propped up as dedications to those who have died in the area, justifying the mantle 'Valley of Tears.'

WWest Bank: East Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah can all be found in this landlocked territory which is called 'occupied' by others and 'disputed' by the Israelis. Israeli settlers occupy parts of the area that continue to be controlled by the Israeli military.

XX-mas: Has become a rare symbol of syncretism in this deeply divided area. It may not bring gifts for all the children of the region, but it attracts people of all faiths to the celebrations in Jerusalem and Bethlehem every year.

YYom Kippur War: Egypt and Syria caught Israel off-guard by striking on the Jewish holiday in 1973, though Anwar al-Sadat's right hand man was a Mossad agent. But the advantage lasted 48 hours, after which Israel pushed into the Golan Heights and Sinai Peninsula. Resulted in the Camp David accord.

ZZionism: Considered by some to be the exact opposite of 'anti-semitism', Zionism is an ideology that supports a homeland for the Jews in the 'Land of Israel', where Jewish kingdoms existed up to the 2nd century. Though thoroughly out-of-date, the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 is widely credited to the Zionists.

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End of Document

Three weeks ago, the city pulsed with giddy fun: Israeli bombs shows things are slow to change in Mideast

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 22, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. B7

Length: 737 words

Byline: BRIAN WINTER, Los Angeles Times

Body

"The head of **Hezbollah** sends his regards," the note read, "but he will not be able to attend your book signing." Bummer, I thought. What else could he possibly be up to?

I figured he might be at a rave, or maybe watching the World Cup on one of the big-screen TVs at the sidewalk cafes in Solidere, the heart of the city's stubbornly-won rebirth, where teenage girls in tank tops and **women** in black burkas mingled well past midnight, casing the jewelry stores and lining up at Dunkin' Donuts.

This was Beirut only three weeks ago, when it still seemed like a post-apocalyptic amusement park. Enough time had passed since the civil war that the handful of battle-scarred buildings that we saw seemed almost quaint. "That's where the Green Line used to be," my guide gushed. "Those are real bullet holes!"

The city pulsed with that giddy, heartbreakingly innocent feel of the early stages of youthful revolution. "SEX!" blared the cover of the June issue of Time Out Beirut, bearing a racy photo of crossed legs with black panties around the ankles. A bullet-ridden water tower downtown had been converted into a discotheque; at the plaza where in 2005 thousands of Lebanese protesters demanded Syria's withdrawal, there was an outdoor jazz festival. Just two weeks before my visit, the rapper 50 Cent had played to a packed house; surely he found it infinitely less threatening than Queens, N.Y.

For my book signing at the new Virgin Megastore downtown, I was assigned two bodyguards; fewer than 50 Cent, probably, but I still felt positively gangsta. For laughs, I went to the bathroom just to see if the guards would follow me. They did. Apparently, journalists hadn't enjoyed the best safety record in Lebanon two decades ago, but now I was armed with a flower bouquet and a good-luck letter from the Lebanese prime minister.

Besides Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, the head of **Hezbollah** (smiling posters pasted all over Beirut made him look like such a pleasant man), the guest list included diplomats and uniformed representatives of the Lebanese armed forces. They each bought several copies of the book for me to sign. One was for a general whose name I couldn't catch. "Verrrry important man in Lebanese army," one of the soldiers purred in halting English. "You sign now."

It was only on the last night of our visit that we caught a glimpse of a long-ago past, as if we had stepped into a time machine. My mother-in-law, a Brazilian diplomat stationed in Beirut, threw my wife and me a party to celebrate our

Three weeks ago, the city pulsed with giddy fun: Israeli bombs shows things are slow to change in Mideast recent wedding. Within half an hour, the subject turned to politics. Everybody at the party, we soon discovered, was Christian.

"The Muslim neighbourhoods here, they are all so dirty, full of trash," spat a young woman who had been sugar sweet until that point. "They're all like that, everywhere in the world. Why would you visit a Muslim country? They are awful!"

When I told another guest that we had driven to Baalbek, a site of spectacular Roman ruins deep in the Bekaa Valley, he was horrified. "Are you crazy?" he shrieked, nearly dropping his champagne. "That area is controlled by Hezbollah!" But that guy Nasrallah is my homey, I replied, not believing the hype.

We left the next morning for the airport, where my last images of Lebanon came from an exhibit inside the terminal. There, someone had proudly hung before-and-after images of Beirut, with black-and-white pictures of bombed-out buildings and streets next to shiny, colourful snapshots of the same spots after years of rebuilding. The centrepiece was the \$500-million reconstruction of the airport, which in the 1980s had been obliterated by Israeli bombs. Isn't it remarkable, I happily mused as we boarded our plane, how quickly countries can change?

Ten days later, the airport was bombed and Beirut was a devastated war zone - again. I watched on TV as entire buildings were raked with fresh bullet holes, the cafes of Solidere were shuttered, and Nasrallah, not smiling any longer, vowed to make the streets of Israel run red with blood.

Meanwhile, as Israeli bombers roared overhead, my mother-in-law, her 87-year-old mother and their Yorkie puppies set out for the northern border with Syria, desperate to flee the onslaught. The rest of us were left to marvel again at how, in the Middle East, countries can change so quickly - or, perhaps, how they never really change at all.

Brian Winter is the co-author of The Accidental President of Brazil.

Load-Date: July 22, 2006

Carnage: At a building in Qana, 34 of 56 victims were children.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

July 31, 2006 Monday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A01

Length: 762 words

Byline: Hannah Allam, McClatchy Newspapers

Body

Many of the bodies were as tiny as dolls, with limp little fingers and debris that clung to their curls. Many still wore the action-figure pajamas and thin nightgowns they'd been dressed in when they were laid down to sleep.

By late afternoon, at least 34 children - more than half of the 56 or more people who died in a predawn Israeli air strike yesterday - had been pulled from the rubble of a house where families had gathered each night in the mistaken hope that safety from the Israeli strikes could be found in numbers.

The attack was the deadliest so far in Israel's 19-day war with Hezbollah militants. Israeli officials called the bombing a mistake, saying that had they known there were civilians in the building, it would not have been hit.

But the words meant little to those recovering the dead.

"I have a dead father and son in the back right now," said Dawoud Kahwaji, a local Red Cross worker who leaned against his ambulance at the scene, waiting for another batch of bodies. "Go look."

Nestled among the olive groves and tobacco farms of south Lebanon's Shiite Muslim heartland, Qana makes no secret of its support for Hezbollah. Memorials to dead fighters hang among the storefronts. Hezbollah's yellow flags are everywhere. Yesterday's bombing only bolstered that support.

"I will tell you the truth. Yes, we have resistance fighters in Qana, but, no, they weren't in that area that Israel hit," said Sanaa Faraj, a 32-year-old mother of three. "Don't they know that the more they bomb us, the more connected we become to the resistance?"

Witnesses here say the strike came at 1 a.m., followed by others at dawn. The barrage partially collapsed the house and flattened nearby buildings - though Israel has hit Qana so hard in recent days that it's difficult to distinguish old rubble from the new.

There are two main clans in Qana: the Shalhoub and the Hashems. Most of the Shalhoub who had remained in town had begun spending their nights in the house, which was owned by a Hashem. It was clearly a residence, villagers said, so they thought it would be safe.

Carnage: At a building in Qana, 34 of 56 victims were children.

The air strike wiped out dozens of Shalhoub, including a generation of children.

"All the Shalhoub are gone," Hosniya Shalhoub, 40, told a caller as she watched the broken bodies of her relatives brought to the hospital in Tyre.

She explained that she and many of her relatives hadn't fled Qana before because they didn't have the \$7 it would take for a taxi to another village. Besides, she said, "we never thought this would happen."

Mahdi Shalhoub lost his mother and 18-year-old sister. His brother-in-law was still missing in the rubble. He seemed in shock.

"I don't want to go. Where should I go? I am from here," he said, his eyes vacant. "I'll just die here. Die at home."

Rabab Yusuf, 40, and her husband, Mohamed Ali Shalhoub, 41, survived the attack. So did their 4-year-old son, Hassan. But there was no sign of their daughter, Zeinab, 6. Both children had been cradled next to their mother as they slept, Yusuf said.

Yusuf said she dug her husband from beneath rubble to free him and rescue workers later freed Hassan.

The family was separated at the hospital, where doctors tugged off Yusuf's veil to inspect a bleeding head wound. Her legs had been crushed, so they gingerly lifted her into a wheelchair and set off down a corridor. Nurses pushed a gurney in the opposite direction - on it lay Hassan, weak and bloody, but alive.

"I'm coming, my darling, I promise I'm coming soon," Yusuf called to him.

Yusuf was placed in a hospital bed next to her husband's. She shouted at nurses, demanding news of her daughter, Zeinab. A doctor brushed visitors aside and whispered two words to Yusuf: "She's gone." The father bowed his head and the mother sat silent for a moment.

"God gave her to me as a gift, and God took her away," Yusuf said quietly. "Oh, my darling Zeinab, God is greatest."

In the hospital courtyard, Red Cross workers unloaded more bodies. When the workers ran out of black body bags, they began unrolling clear plastic sheets on the ground. The limp bodies of babies and young children were placed one to a square, then wrapped up and sealed with duct tape.

A villager accompanied doctors, identifying the neighborhood children by sight. Flies buzzed around their long eyelashes.

One little boy wore pajamas emblazoned with the words *Strike Zone*. **Women** who had fled Qana before the strike arrived at the hospital, drawn by news of the tragedy.

"Here you go, Israel, take your terrorists," they shouted, as a second wave of dead children was unloaded from stench-filled ambulances.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

QUARTET: ABBAS MUST DISARM TERRORISTS

New York Sun (Archive)

March 2, 2005 Wednesday

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 8

Length: 796 words

Byline: By BENNY AVNI, Special to the Sun

Dateline: UNITED NATIONS

Body

Even though it did not participate in yesterday's London summit, which was intended to strengthen the recently elected Palestinian Arab leader Mahmoud Abbas, Israel hoped the meeting would lead to stronger pressure on Syria and other terrorist elements, senior officials in Jerusalem say.

The conference, at which \$1.2 billion was pledged by donors to help the Palestinian Authority, also called on Mr. Abbas to disarm terror organizations. Mr. Abbas promised reforms in the Palestinian Authority to assure the donations would improve his people's lot.

Secretary of State Rice endorsed Israeli intelligence at the meeting that the foreign ministers of Russia, France, major Arab states, and Secretary-General Annan attended, that implicated Syria in last Friday's suicide bombing in Tel Aviv. Five Israelis were killed in the terror attack that was perceived in London also as an assault on peace moves in the region. "There is evidence that Islamic Jihad, headquartered in Syria, was in fact involved with the planning of those attacks in Tel Aviv," Ms. Rice told ABC News. "And so the Syrians have a lot to answer for."

Mr. Abbas said he had no evidence of Syria's involvement. But France, which has cooperated at the U.N. with Washington in pressuring Syria to pull out of Lebanon, indicated it might endorse a resolution based on the new intelligence, but "it has to be made public," U.N. Ambassador Jean Marc de la Sabliere told The New York Sun yesterday.

In Jerusalem, Ms. Rice's statement was seen as an endorsement of Israel's claim to have intercepted communications that established that orders and plans for the attack came from the Damascus headquarters of Islamic Jihad; Israeli officials called for the already intense international pressure on Syria to be increased.

"Syria is the weak link in a terror triangle, along with Iran and Hezbollah," a senior official in Prime Minister Sharon's office told the Sun, adding that Islamic Jihad was merely "an errand boy" in the grand terror scheme.

The official, who asked not to be named, explained that while oil-rich Iran supplies the funding and grand strategy for terrorists in the Palestinian Arab areas, and while Hezbollah organizes and executes terror attacks, Syria's role is that of a "land base." Goods, weapons, funds, and orders run from Iran through Syria to Hezbollah in Lebanon and in the Palestinian Arab territories. Israel, he said, "has an interest in neutralizing Syria, which is now in the world's crosshairs, to break this crucial part of the triangle."

QUARTET: ABBAS MUST DISARM TERRORISTS

The conference was envisioned by the host, Prime Minister Blair, as a way to strengthen Mr. Abbas's hand in diplomatic matters, but the Friday bombing put new pressures on him regarding terrorism. Until now, Mr. Abbas has merely tried to reach a cease-fire with terrorist organizations. Now Israel is demanding he disarm them.

The demand was tacitly endorsed in London. A statement issued by the steering group known as "the Quartet", which includes America, Russia, the European Union, and the U.N., called on Mr. Abbas to arrest the perpetrators and bring them to trial, but also stressed "the need for further and sustained action by the Palestinian Authority to prevent acts of terrorism."

In yesterday's Cabinet meeting, Mr. Sharon vowed there would be no progress in the region "until the Palestinians take strong action to eliminate the terrorist organizations and their infrastructures in the Palestinian Authority areas."

"The London gathering was intended for, to paraphrase a movie title, Saving Private Mazen," his aide told the Sun. "Now everyone understands that this is impossible if terrorism continues."

Mr. Abbas called for widening the effort to reach a resolution on outstanding "final status" issues beyond America, expressing hope that yesterday's meeting would lead to "an international conference that would take place in accordance with the road map."

At the U.N., too, officials saw the London gathering as an opportunity to "reinvigorate" the role of the international steering group. "The Quartet remains ready to engage," its statement yesterday said. This was also Mr. Blair's intent - but not Jerusalem's.

"Israel has no interest to upgrade the role of the quartet," Education Minister Limor Livnat, who attended a U.N. conference on women's rights yesterday, told the Sun. "Foreign involvement is not necessarily helpful."

Instead, Israel hoped to engage Mr. Abbas's cooperation in implementing Mr. Sharon's "separation plan," initially envisioned as a unilateral measure. The Jerusalem official told the Sun that such cooperation could help shorten the time allotted for evacuating settlements in Gaza and the northern West Bank, so that it could be completed by September 1, and not the end of 2005, as previously scheduled.

Load-Date: March 2, 2005

US evacuees angry at ferocity of Israel's military offensive

The Irish Times

July 21, 2006 Friday

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Section: WORLD; Middle East Crisis; Pg. 11

Length: 459 words

Byline: Michael Winfrey aboard USS Nashville

Body

US Marines waded ashore on a Beirut beach yesterday and evacuated about 1,000 Americans to Cyprus, where thousands of foreigners have fled to escape the Israeli air strikes against Lebanon.

About 40 lightly-armed Marines, aided by Lebanese soldiers, helped 1,052 Americans, including many children, to a troop carrier that set sail for Cyprus as two big explosions shook the Beirut coastline.

The Americans are among thousands pouring into Cyprus since Israeli air raids began nine days ago, including scores of young children, the old and infirm.

Authorities expect many more to arrive by military and civilian ships to the island, which is struggling to cope at the peak of its tourist season and has asked its EU partners for help in dealing with the crisis.

US officials have said they can evacuate 6,000 people by today. The British have sent a warship to bring about 2,000 out early today and several countries said they were bringing home thousands more.

"What we are trying to do is get people on two charter flights tonight and that's going reasonably smoothly," US ambassador to Cyprus Ronald Schlicher told reporters.

"After we move these folks, we will have an even bigger wave in the next couple of days. We are trying to calibrate the best we can the inflow and the outflow," he added.

Three ships docked at the Cypriot port of Larnaca late on Wednesday, bringing in more than 1,300 people, mostly Americans.

A French ship with 900 evacuees arrived yesterday, two Greek navy frigates are due to bring about 800 foreigners, and an Italian warship about 400 Italians today.

While many were fleeing by sea, tens of thousands of Lebanese, as well as foreigners, have braved the road to Syria.

Washington said nine military ships, including a helicopter carrier, were involved in its massive evacuation operation.

The Marines were back in Lebanon nearly 23 years after a Shia Muslim suicide bomber blew up their barracks in Beirut in 1983, killing 220 Marines and 21 other service personnel.

US evacuees angry at ferocity of Israel 's military offensive

"We are here to help people," said petty officer Eric Walker (36) from Canton, Mississippi. "It's one of the reasons I joined the military."

American evacuees expressed anger at the ferocity of Israel's offensive. "What Israel is doing is terrible," said Ahmed Temsah (55) from Chicago, aboard the USS Nashville. "If you want to go after Hizbullah, then beat them to the ground, please.

"But don't kill innocent people. It's a tragedy women and children are dying.

"They're blowing up a beautiful country and hurting wonderful people," said Billy Broeckelmann (44) from Sugarland, Texas. "It's not right."

"I'm going, but leaving my heart in my country and my village," Mustapha Safieddine (48), a father of three who holds French citizenship, said with a choking voice.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

End of Document

Hezbollah no protector

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 20, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. A16

Length: 112 words

Byline: The Gazette

Body

Re: "I'm crying for the innocents" (Gazette, July 17).

I was deeply disturbed to hear the ***female*** relative of the eight Canadians killed in Lebanon this week say "***Hezbollah*** protected my home and Israel killed my family."

It was heart wrenching to see the pain caused by the death of her family, but I was shocked to hear that even a Westernized Middle Easterner cannot accept the reality of this conflict.

What I would like to know is how exactly firing rockets into Israel and capturing two Israeli soldiers is a form of "protection." Something tells me that Israel did not intend to kill Canadian civilians, whereas ***Hezbollah*** did intend to kill Israelis.

Evan Kalin

Montreal West

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

We need to remind ourselves how rare it is that war is the lesser evil

The Vancouver Province (British Columbia)

July 26, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A20; Paul Campos

Length: 482 words

Byline: Paul Campos, Scripps Howard News

Body

In the midst of Israel's ongoing bombardment of Lebanon, Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz has claimed that not all "innocent victims" of war are truly innocent.

For example, he points out that the Israeli army has dropped leaflets in the south of the country, advising the populace to flee, and argues that civilians "who voluntarily remain behind have become complicit [with Hezbollah]. Some -- those who cannot leave on their own -- should be counted among the innocent victims."

As for the rest, Dershowitz proposes that international law experts and the media devise a nuanced scale for judging the combat status of people who "choose" not to flee their homes when a foreign power announces it is going to destroy them.

Where hundreds of thousands of now-homeless and impoverished peasants are supposed to go, and how they're supposed to get there, isn't something Dershowitz explains. And I confess I have difficulty imagining what such a scale would look like.

On the other hand, drawing subtle analytic distinctions is what law professors do best.

So I suppose we could give it a try: "You, sir, are an able-bodied young man. Your grandmother, by contrast, is an arthritic elderly woman, somewhat deaf in one ear.

"Therefore, while you are equivalent to 93 per cent of a Hezbollah foot soldier, transforming her into a mangled corpse will add only one sixth of an enemy combatant to our kill ratio.

"A simple calculation reveals that together you constitute slightly more than one legitimate target and slightly less than one innocent civilian. Have a nice day."

Still, as Voltaire remarked, witticisms do not go well with massacres. Let us give serious attention to the professor's proposal.

It's striking how, when our enemies intentionally kill ordinary men, women and children, we have no difficulty recognizing that such acts are essentially monstrous.

Yet, when we or our allies commit similar acts we find it almost impossible to do so.

We need to remind ourselves how rare it is that war is the lesser evil

It's said the difference between soldiers and terrorists is that soldiers don't want to kill civilians, while terrorists do. But it's easy to overstate this difference.

For one thing, given that sociopaths are rare, the average terrorist and the typical soldier would no doubt prefer to achieve their goals in less horrific ways.

Each knows that what he does kills innocent people, but each has been taught to believe the greater good justifies his actions.

For another thing, throughout history, from the Roman legions who sacked Carthage to the firebombing of cities in the Second World War, armies have often not even pretended to draw distinctions between enemy soldiers and the civilians in their midst.

War is always savage, disgusting and evil. It is better to admit that, if for no other reason than to avoid telling ourselves comforting lies.

A better reason is to remind ourselves of how rare those occasions are when it truly is the lesser evil.

Load-Date: July 26, 2006

DIGEST

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

November 25, 2005 Friday

THIRD EDITION

Copyright 2005 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A16

Length: 497 words

Byline: FROM NEWS SERVICES

Body

BEIRUT, LEBANON

Israel will return bodies of guerrillas

Israel agreed Thursday to return the remains of three Hezbollah guerrillas killed this week in border clashes, after Lebanon said such a move was vital to restoring calm to the area.

Four guerrillas were killed and 11 Israeli soldiers were wounded in fighting Monday on the south Lebanon border. Israeli warplanes and artillery bombarded Hezbollah positions, and the guerrillas fired missiles at Israeli military outposts.

ITALY

U.S. will close nuclear sub base

The United States intends to close a Navy base in the Mediterranean that maintains nuclear submarines, a Navy spokesman confirmed Thursday.

The 33-year-old naval base at La Maddalena, on an island off the coast of Sardinia, will close, said the spokesman, Cmdr. Mark McDonald of the 6th Fleet. "We're adjusting our forces to meet our current and future security needs," he said.

Italy's Defense Ministry announced the base closing this week, after the defense minister, Antonio Martino, met with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in Washington.

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

Volcanic eruption dumps ash on city

A volcano erupted Thursday in southwestern Colombia, spewing smoke and ash.

Police and emergency officials were on high alert after the 14,110-foot Galeras volcano became active at dawn and dumped heaps of ash on the city of Pasto, 12 miles away.

DIGEST

"It was a brief eruption of ash for 30 minutes that was not preceded by a temblor inside the volcano," said Marta Lucia Calvache of Colombia's Volcanology Institute. He said further eruptions were possible.

LONDON

England relaxes law on hours for bars

The first day of relaxed drinking laws in England and Wales began quietly Thursday.

Police forces around the country reported no untoward incidents as some establishments took advantage of a law that permits them to apply for opening hours of their choice -- up to 24 hours a day.

The government hopes the change in laws introduced during World War I will stop the flood of drunks onto city streets just

after the traditional 11 p.m. closing time.

TOKYO

Panel suggests letting women ascend throne

A panel on Japan's imperial succession formally recommended Thursday that women be allowed to ascend the Chrysanthemum Throne, a change that could spare the royal family a looming succession crisis.

The panel's final report to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi calls for revising Japanese law to give a ruler's first-born child of either sex the right to head Japan's hereditary monarchy.

Japan's imperial family hasn't produced a male heir for 40 years, and Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako's only child is a girl, 3-year-old Aiko.

SANTIAGO, CHILE

Former dictator faces human rights charges

Former dictator Gen. Augusto Pinochet was indicted on human rights charges Thursday and placed under house arrest.

Judge Victor Montiglio charged Pinochet in connection with the kidnapping and disappearance of seven dissidents in the early years of his 1973-90 dictatorship, his office said.

Load-Date: November 26, 2005

WORLD IN BRIEF

The Evening Standard (London)

November 23, 2005 Wednesday

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London Evening Standard

Section: A; Pg. 16

Length: 475 words

Body

ITV pulls Elaine out of jungle over risk of more seizures FORMER EastEnder Elaine Lordan said she was "gutted" after becoming the first contestant to leave I'm A Celebrity, Get Me Out Of Here! The actress had been eager to stay on the reality TV show, despite twice collapsing in the jungle and spending the past two days in hospital.

Doctors have said she is "in good health", but ITV has decided it is too risky to let her go back. Lordan, 39, who has a history of alcoholism, said she did not know what had caused the seizure in the first few hours.

Two die in Taliban blast A US soldier and an Afghan interpreter have been killed by a roadside bomb in the latest spate of violence involving Taliban fighters.

The two were in a convoy resupplying US-led forces targeting militants in the central province of Uruzgan. The soldier's death brings the number of US casualties in Afghanistan this year to nearly 60, the worst period since the Taliban were deposed in 2001.

Israeli war of words in Beirut ISRAELI planes dropped leaflets over Beirut today, denouncing militant Shi'ite Muslim **Hezbollah** guerrillas two days after some of the worst border clashes in Lebanon in years. The message included: "Who wishes the return of the destruction? Who is the tool in the hand of his Syrian and Iranian masters?" And in bold type it added: "**Hezbollah** is causing enormous harm to Lebanon."

Chinese flee waterless city RESIDENTS of a huge Chinese city that has had its water supply cut off have jammed the airport and railway stations in a bid to escape. Taps in Harbin, home to nine million people, were shut off yesterday after an explosion at a chemical plant by the Songhua River, which supplies the city. Officials say the water should be back on in four days, but many have chosen to leave.

Weighty problem for French THE myth of the svelte, healthy Frenchwoman has been exploded by a survey which reveals that more than a third are overweight. Many drink too much, with one in 30 consuming enough to be classed as an alcoholic, the survey of 21,000 **women** by the state-run national statistics institute revealed. And 56per cent are thought to be at serious risk

WORLD IN BRIEF

from overeating, smoking or drinking.

Suicide bomber kills 21 A SUICIDE car bomber killed 21 people about half of them police - and wounded 24 after insurgents in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk lured them by shooting an officer.

Meanwhile, the American military death toll in Iraq rose to 2,100 when a soldier was killed by a roadside bomb near Habaniyah, 50 miles west of Baghdad.

FAKE FLIER LANDS IN JAIL

An Australian man who collected 17.6 million frequent flier points without getting on a plane was jailed for six months today after pleading guilty to fraud. A court in Victoria heard that Austin Perrott, 45, collected points from nine frequent flier schemes while working for Singapore Airlines.

Load-Date: November 23, 2005

End of Document

Shiite muscle flexing is not just for the West's enlightenment

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 22, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Comment; Pg. 31

Length: 864 words

Byline: Hamish McDonald

Body

Shiite Islam has got a fanatical name in the West these days, not unreasonably after 27 years of the Shiite theocratic regime in Iran launched by Ayatollah Khomeini and the recent moves by the Hezbollah and al-Sadr militias in Lebanon and Iraq.

But it was not always thus. Film buffs familiar with the oeuvre of Satyajit Ray will recall The Chess Players, about the decadent nawabs of Oudh in north-central India who frittered away their time as the British empire encroached.

Their capital, Lucknow, still the main stronghold of India's 11 million Shiite Muslims, was known for its musicians, courtesans, fine fabrics and elaborate cuisine more than for self-flagellation, another common Shiite image.

As feeble as they were, the nawabs were dear to their subjects. When the impatient British forced the abdication of the last one in 1856, it helped light the fuse for the Great Mutiny of the following year.

More recently, the last nizam of the vast central Indian state of Hyderabad, Mir Osman Ali Khan, was the son of a Shiite mother, quietly converted to Shiite ways, and was buried separately from his Sunni ancestors when he died in 1967, as recounted in a new book, The Last Nizam, by the Australian author John Zubrzycki.

He was noted for a vast fortune spent on palaces, jewels, cars and hundreds of concubines (and a destroyer, the Nizam, for the British navy that was transferred to Australia near the end of World War II).

The same has often been the story of other countries and khanates like Persia and Herat where Shiites prevail.

The notion that the rise of Shiite influence, created by the removal of Saddam Hussein's secular regime in Iraq, is a dangerous development for Western interests is not necessarily the case. Nor, probably, is any notion it can be suppressed again.

Nearly all the terrorist groups attacking the United States and other Western targets spring from the Sunni school of Islam, to which some 85 to 90 per cent of the world's Muslims belong.

Shiites are victims of this fanaticism, too. In Afghanistan, the Shiite population of the north and west were bitterly at war with the Taliban and al-Qaeda, purists from the Wahabi and Salafi streams of Sunni Islam. Many Afghan Shiites had to flee, including some caught up in the inglorious Tampa and "Pacific solution" affair.

Shiite muscle flexing is not just for the West's enlightenment

In Pakistan, the vicious Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist movement, blamed for the recent bombings in Mumbai, has been implicated in a sectarian internal war carried out by bombings of Shiite mosques and schools.

Hezbollah, the self-styled army of God in Lebanon, was formed in reaction to the Israeli invasion of 1982. After the bloody bombing of a US Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983 and several hostage captures, it focused on Israel once the Americans were seen off.

It has certainly received Iranian help. About 1500 of Khomeini's Revolutionary Guards were sent to assist it in the early 1980s. Some may still be there, operating more sophisticated weapons like the radar-guided Chinese or North Korean missile successfully fired at an Israeli warship last week.

How long any religious or political movement can sustain militancy is always a question. Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was a revolutionary guard commander in the eight-year war of attrition with Iraq, reportedly finding no shortage of 12- and 13-year-old boys to send into minefields on promise of glorious martyrdom.

Behind the talk, Tehran seems to see more security in possessing nuclear weapons than threatening endless human sacrifice. Young Iranians now tend to dream more of US Green Cards than the green banners of jihad.

At a moving exhibition about the Iran-Iraq war I saw in Tehran five years ago, Iranian visitors moved through in wonderment - a bit like Australians viewing images of the futile frontal assaults over the trench tops in World War I.

In the holy city of Qum, while I debated the morality of terrorism with a sharp young mullah, a grand ayatollah from Bandar Abbas sat in a corner of the room, stuffing a huge pile of banknotes into a small suitcase. Iran's clergy are regarded by many Iranians as corrupt and parasitical, like the friars and abbots of medieval Europe.

The very essence of Shiite faith - in divine leadership expressed through the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad's successor, Imam Ali - inclines the community to a cosy folk-faith.

The Shiites, with their pilgrimages to the tombs of imams, their stronger stress on individual responsibility, higher regard for **women**'s rights, and indulgences like muttah (temporary marriages), are less likely recruits for purists than their Sunni cousins.

How far Iran's Ahmadinejad and **Hezbollah**'s Hassan Nasrallah want to push their confrontation with Israel remains to be tested. For Tehran it seems intended to divert US pressure from its nuclear program, but it could be a big miscalculation.

Meanwhile, the democracy the West is promoting in the Middle East is bound to empower the former Shiite underclass. With majorities of the population in Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, Azerbaijan and Yemen, 45 per cent in Lebanon, and 20 per cent or more in Turkey, Pakistan and Kuwait, the Shiite voice will be a loud one - but not necessarily more hostile.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Even in death, mothers hugged children

The Irish Times

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Section: FRONT PAGE; Pg. 1

Length: 465 words

Byline: Lara Marlowe in Qana

Body

Hands and feet protruding from the earth told civil defence workers where to dig for at least 54 Lebanese civilians who died here in an Israeli bombing early yesterday.

The rescuers wore rubber gloves and dug with their hands. A piece of flowered cloth would emerge, then a torso. The corpses - almost all of them women and children - were lined up on the ground beside the collapsed building, then covered with grimy sheets and towels retrieved from the ruin where they had been sleeping when the Israeli air force struck.

One body led to another. Even in death, mothers hugged their children.

"I saw women in foetal positions, protecting their bodies, thinking the wall would protect them, but the opposite happened; the wall collapsed on them," said Naim Rakka, a civil defence worker.

The bodies of children were distressing: a little girl with an angelic face, her mouth overflowing with earth; small boys carried out by their spindly limbs, bruised purple from the weight of the concrete.

Close to one-third of this town, 10km (6 miles) from Tyre, has been flattened in nearly three weeks of Israeli bombardment, and the dead and wounded had to be carried hundreds of metres to ambulances on stretchers because roads were blocked by debris. There are other bodies lying in the wreckage of Qana. Its deserted streets reek of decomposing flesh. Israeli aircraft continued to bomb the area throughout the rescue operation and prime minister Ehud Olmert said that Israel was "in no hurry to reach a ceasefire".

This is the second time in 10 years that Qana, where Jesus Christ is said to have turned water into wine, has been the site of a massacre.

On April 18th 1996, the Israeli army bombarded the headquarters of the UN Fijian battalion, slaughtering 105 civilians who were sheltering there. Yesterday's atrocity, the worst since hostilities started on July 12th, occurred about a kilometre from the graves and monument of the 1996 victims, which has become a place of pilgrimage for Muslims around the world.

The US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, cancelled a trip from Jerusalem to Beirut after the Lebanese prime minister, Fouad Siniora, demanded an immediate, unconditional ceasefire.

"There is no room for discussion on this sad day," Mr Siniora said, calling the Israelis "war criminals".

Even in death, mothers hugged children

Israel claimed that Hizbullah fired rockets from near the shelter and promised an investigation.

The victims of the bombing had sheltered in the basement for 10 days, sending two young men out for food.

One of the food searchers, Fares Attiya, said there were 63 people living in the shelter, including 34 children.

The Lebanese health ministry said that 700 Lebanese had been killed in nearly three weeks of war, and more than 2,000 wounded.

In Israel, 18 civilians and 33 soldiers have been killed.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Israel suspends air attacks in wake of strike killing 56

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

July 31, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 14

Length: 496 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM (AP) -- Israel suspended air attacks on south Lebanon for 48 hours in the face of widespread outrage over an air strike Sunday that killed at least 56 Lebanese, almost all of them women and children, when it levelled a building where they had taken shelter.

The announcement -- made by a State Department spokesman with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Jerusalem -- appeared to reflect American pressure on Israel to make some concession after the strike.

In addition to suspending air attacks, Israel will also allow the opening of corridors for 24 hours for Lebanese civilians who want to leave south Lebanon for the north and would maintain land, sea and air corridors for humanitarian assistance, officials said.

Israeli government officials confirmed Prime Minister Ehud Olmert agreed to an immediate 48-hour halt in air strikes on Lebanon around midnight Sunday while the military concludes its inquiry into the attack on the south Lebanese village of Qana.

The 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.

Lebanon said the Israeli suspension was inadequate.

"There is no ceasefire and there is no cessation of hostilities," Lebanese special envoy Nouhad Mahoud told reporters at the United Nations late Sunday. "We are looking for something much more than that."

The bloodshed in Lebanon prompted Rice to cut short her Mideast mission and intensified world demands on Washington to back an immediate end to the fighting.

A three-storey house on the outskirts of Qana was levelled when a missile crashed into it at 1 a.m., local time. Red Cross officials said 56 were killed and police said 34 children and 12 adult women were among the dead. It was worst single strike since Israel's campaign in Lebanon began on July 12 when Hezbollah militants crossed the border into Israel and abducted two soldiers.

Israel suspends air attacks in wake of strike killing 56

The attack in Qana brought Lebanon's death toll to more than 510 and pushed American peace efforts to a crucial juncture, as fury at the United States flared in Lebanon.

The Beirut government said it would no longer negotiate over a U.S. peace package without an unconditional ceasefire.

In Qana, workers pulled dirt-covered bodies of young boys and girls -- dressed in the shorts and T-shirts they had been sleeping in -- out of the mangled wreckage of the building. Bodies were carried in blankets.

Israel apologized for the deaths but blamed Hezbollah guerrillas, saying they had fired rockets into northern Israel from near the building.

Rice called the Qana bombing "awful" and said she wanted "a ceasefire as soon as possible." It appeared to be her first real call for a quick end to the bloodshed.

U.S. President George W. Bush repeated his call for a "sustainable peace" in the Middle East and said: America mourns the loss of innocent life, those tragic occasions when innocent people are killed."

Graphic

Colour Photo: Associated Press; People hold a candlelit vigil in Paris in memory of at least 56 people -- more than half of them children -- who were killed Sunday in an Israeli airstrike in the southern Lebanese village of Qana.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Expat tales

Sunday Telegraph Magazine (Sydney, Australia) (Sydney, Australia)

May 22, 2005 Sunday

Copyright 2005 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: MAGAZINE; Expat tales; Pg. 42

Length: 482 words

Byline: TONY MAGNUSSON

Body

Name Matthew Carney, 39

Location Beirut, Lebanon

Job TV correspondent

Facts Overseas for 4 years

As a Middle East correspondent for SBS, Matthew Carney and his family got the inside story on Beirut

So you're living it up in Lebanon? Actually, my wife, my daughter and I are about to come back to Australia, but I'll still be doing a lot of reporting from the Middle East.

Was your daughter born there? Yes, Catherine and I had her in February 2004. They are very into children here; children are the centre of the universe. Because Yasmine's blonde and blue-eyed, she gets Z-rate celebrity status. Anywhere we go, young girls cry out "before God!" in Arabic.

MATP

Do you feel safe there? In terms of civil crime - robberies, rapes, etc - Beirut is much safer than Australia. You can walk anywhere. The street we live in is a mixed area - it has Druze, Shiah, Sunni, Maronite Catholic and Greek Orthodox families. When Yasmine was born, the whole street came out to party and give us gifts.

Life before Lebanon? I spent 10 years reporting in South-East Asia before coming here as the Middle East correspondent for SBS's Dateline.

First impressions? Beirut really surprised me and continues to do so. It's such an eclectic little place and has a real energy - they really embrace life here. It's also a complete paradox: on one hand, it's a liberal party town; and, on the other, it's deeply religious and conservative. The bars and clubs are sensational, but then you walk 300m down the road and you're in a Hezbollah [Shiite Muslim extremist faction] area and the women are wearing chadors.

What are the people like? The Lebanese have a Mediterranean lifestyle and mentality. They are educated and are famous for their language ability. Even your greengrocer down the street will speak Arabic, French and English. In some places, Arabic isn't spoken because it's considered lower-class.

Expatriate tales

Had any strange experiences? Every year they have the Baalbek Festival, held on the site of Roman ruins. Last year, we saw a German opera there - sitting there with the Beirut literati - and outside there was a Hezbollah fight. The festival organisers told them they could fight, but only in intermission and after everyone had left, and that's what they did!

The Vegemite of Lebanon is ... Za'atar, a mixture of thyme, sesame seeds, olive oil and salt that you toast and put on bread. I love it.

What do you do on weekends? In summer, we go to beach clubs, like those in southern France. In winter, we go to the ski fields 45 minutes from Beirut.

Snow in Lebanon? Sure. Lebanon is probably the only country in the Middle East that doesn't have a water problem. Down south, the countryside is green and quite fertile, and there are dairy farms.

What will you remember most about your time in Lebanon? A sense that you're part of a secret that has revealed itself to you. There's no tourism here, yet it has so much to offer.

Load-Date: May 21, 2005

End of Document

Struggle to reach wounded - MIDDLE EAST IN CRISIS

The Australian (Australia)

July 21, 2006 Friday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 8

Length: 540 words

Byline: Nicholas Blanford

Body

MATP

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. "Allah Akhbar," moans the latest victim of Israel's onslaught on southern Lebanon.

The woman was one of five people -- four women and a young man -- whose car had been hit by an Israeli jet on a road near Bourgheliyeh, a tiny, ramshackle village off the coastal road about 6km 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 their 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.

On Wednesday, Unifil could not send any armoured convoys because of the intensity of the shelling and air raids around Tyre.

Ahmad Mrowe, the exhausted director of Jabel Amel hospital, said one civilian casualty who arrived on Wednesday had been ferried by eight cars from the village of Siddiqine, each driving from one crater to the next. It took eight hours to cover a distance that usually takes 20 minutes.

Struggle to reach wounded - MIDDLE EAST IN CRISIS

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, 16km east of Tyre. Israeli jets flattened four homes there overnight. Villagers recovered 10 bodies but another 25 were thought to still be lying under the rubble.

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," Dr Abdullah Abbas 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 crammed into the Rest House hotel in Tyre, few blamed Hezbollah for their misery.

When an Arabic channel announced that Haifa in Israel had been struck again by the group's rockets on Wednesday, one man declared to general assent: "Let them suffer as we are suffering."

The Times

Load-Date: July 20, 2006

End of Document

Captured soldier's father begs for crisis to end: 'What good will come of it?'
Shalit pleads

Ottawa Citizen

July 18, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A5

Length: 484 words

Byline: Stephen Farrell, The Times, London

Dateline: HILLA, Israel

Body

HILLA, Israel - The father of the Israeli soldier kidnapped in Gaza three weeks ago described yesterday how he watched in a trance as the crisis escalated into a war with Lebanon.

By an extraordinary coincidence, Noam Shalit was sitting in Ehud Olmert's office at 10 a.m. last Wednesday when an aide walked into the Israeli prime minister's office with news that Hezbollah had captured two more Israeli soldiers on the Lebanese border.

"It was like an, I don't know the English word, hazui (hallucination)," Mr. Shalit said.

"His military assistant came in with a note and briefed him and then began all the telephone calls and so on. He didn't leave, he didn't stop the meeting with us. We sat with him for about an hour while the Japanese prime minister waited outside.

"It was a very hard feeling because at that moment I realized that all the cards had been reshuffled and things wouldn't be as they were before. We were now in another severe crisis and we knew it would complicate our case, not simplify it."

Yesterday, he sat in his garden of olive, orange and lemon trees awaiting news of his son, Gilad, 19 -- the same age as Mr. Shalit's twin brother, Yoel, when he was killed in the Golan Heights in 1973.

A moderate who still talks of his hopes for an eventual negotiated settlement with the Palestinians, even while his son is in the hands of Hamas, Mr. Shalit remains in daily contact with Israeli officials.

He agreed there was no sign of a breakthrough even before the escalation, but hinted that if his country were not virtually at war, he would be making louder noises about getting his son free.

Mr. Shalit still holds out hope, pointing out that Mr. Olmert spoke of a wider release of prisoners to Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, before the emergency.

Captured soldier's father begs for crisis to end: 'What good will come of it?' Shalit pleads

To hardliners who call for an end to Israel's tradition of trading prisoners, he said, "It is a very solid and well-known code in Israel, and the Israel Defence Forces in particular, that they don't abandon combat soldiers in the field. I believe it is still valid."

He added, "My message to the Hamas people is first of all, let's stop this crisis immediately. What good will come out of it?"

"Beyond the suffering of the families there are thousands of Palestinians suffering, being killed by day and by night, they are without electricity and water.

"They would do better around the negotiating table and not with terror actions and Qassam rockets," Mr. Shalit said.

Watching his son's capture escalate into war, he spoke of the suffering on all sides, and expressed his anger against Hezbollah's leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah.

"The events are passing us by. Our main thought is to get back our son. All the other things are in the background.

"But we are connected to the situation in Israel. People, civilians and soldiers being killed is very painful for us, and also innocent Lebanese who have to pay the price for one crazed person."

Graphic

Photo: David Silverman, Getty Images; Israeli women comfort each other after a rocket struck their apartment building in the northern Israeli town of Carmiel. A rocket also landed just outside Nazareth, the farthest point south to be hit so far.

Load-Date: July 18, 2006

Seven Canadians die in airstrike: nMontreal family was visiting Lebanese village where grandfather was born; Relative says family got 'no response' when they contacted embassy; Relatives fear 'more bad news' after at least 3 other family members hurt

Ottawa Citizen

July 17, 2006 Monday

EARLY Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 807 words

Byline: Michelle Lalonde, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from the Edmonton Journal; Canadian Press and Reuters

Dateline: MONTREAL

Body

MONTREAL - Hassan El-Akhras was marching in a peaceful demonstration against recent Israeli bomb attacks on Lebanon yesterday afternoon when his cellphone rang with some devastating news.

Seven Canadian citizens visiting Lebanon -- all members of Mr. El-Akhras's Montreal family -- were killed yesterday in the bombing of Aitaroun, a village about 50 kilometres south of Beirut.

Four children, believed to be between the ages of one and eight, were among the dead.

At least three other members of the same family were badly injured, said Mr. El-Akhras. The family had been hiding in the basement of their ancestral home for the past three days.

"They are all martyrs," said Mr. El-Akhras, 31, clearly stunned by the news.

His sister, Hanan, cried out in anguish, clinging to a baby stroller to keep from collapsing, as she tried to digest the news.

Weeping **women** and children embraced each other, while several men, still holding Lebanese flags and placards from the rally, called relatives to deliver the grim news or to try to get more details.

Mr. El-Akhras, who at first received conflicting reports from Lebanon, was later told that his aunt, Haniya Al-Akhras, his cousin's wife Amira Al-Akhras, 23, and their four children, Saja, Zeinab, Ahmad and Salam -- were confirmed dead.

Another man died as well, but Mr. El-Akhras said he didn't know whether it was his father, Ali El-Akhras, 70, or his uncle, Ahmad Al-Akhras, 60.

The other was reported wounded, as were his mother, Saada El-Akhras, and his cousin, Ali El-Akhras, a Montreal pharmacist and the father of the dead children.

Seven Canadians die in airstrike: nMontreal family was visiting Lebanese village where grandfather was born;
Relative says family got 'no response' when they co....

A family member in Montreal told all-news channel LCN that Canadian Embassy officials in Lebanon did little to help his relatives flee the country.

"My cousin even tried through the Internet to contact the Canadian Embassy," said Hussein El-Akhras. "But no response."

He later pleaded with the Canadian government to intervene.

"It is not just us, there are a lot of civilians who have been killed," he told the CBC. "I am asking the international community to help, put pressure on Israel to stop the bombing."

With the chances for a lasting peace in Lebanon seemingly better than ever, they wanted the children to see the village where their grandfather was born, said another family member.

"Everything was OK in Lebanon," said Samir Bleibel, a cousin of Ali El-Akhras, said during an interview at his north Edmonton office yesterday afternoon. "Now, apparently, none of them will come back. Definitely the kids are not coming back."

Mr. Bleibel was watching Lebanese news on satellite television early yesterday morning when he heard that a Canadian family had been caught in the bombings.

The description in the report -- the numbers, the ages, the area of the country -- all matched his family. But it took hours of frantic phone calls to confirm the report.

A composed, but visibly upset Mr. Bleibel had to wipe tears from his eyes as he fielded a constant stream of calls from friends, family and the media.

He has a total of 40 close family members from Canada still in Lebanon and countless cousins and friends scattered around the country. He estimated that 2000 members of Edmonton's tight knit Lebanese community were among the up to 40,000 Canadians still in the country.

"We were trying and we were hoping that we would not hear such bad news," Mr. Bleibel said. "Our fear is that we are going to get more."

The Israeli army said after the bombing that it had warned residents of the village to clear out of the area and that **Hezbollah** was responsible for any civilian deaths.

"The IDF (Israeli Defence Forces) requested and warned residents of the area not to stay within range of the launch sites" used by **Hezbollah** to fire rockets into Israel, the army said in a statement.

"The responsibility for any civilian casualties rests entirely with the **Hezbollah** terrorist organization," the army said.

The elder victims had all moved to Montreal from Lebanon in the early 1990s, Mr. El-Akhras said, while his cousin's four children were born here. Two more of his aunts, both Lebanese nationals, were also killed in the attack, he said.

He said his parents moved to Montreal in 1991, but returned frequently to Lebanon to visit relatives. This time, his parents had left Montreal for Lebanon in mid-April and were to stay six months.

"I want this message to go to the prime minister," Mr. El-Akhras said.

"Tell Israel to stop the bombing. They are killing Canadian citizens.... They are attacking civilians and Canada has been supporting Israel without even knowing what is going on."

Seven Canadians die in airstrike: nMontreal family was visiting Lebanese village where grandfather was born;
Relative says family got 'no response' when they co....

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Graphic

Colour Photo: (Salam);

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Colour Photo: A Montreal family is mourning the deaths of seven members in the bombing of their ancestral home in a Lebanese village. The victims include four children between 1 and 8: (sisters Zeinab and Saja El-Akhras), and their brothers Ahmad, and Salam.

Load-Date: July 17, 2006

Focus: 'Diceman' Olmert on the spot over new Israeli crisis

The Scotsman
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Byline: George Kerevan

Body

LAST June, a senior Israeli leader got up before a Jewish audience in New York and said the following: "We are tired of fighting, we are tired of being courageous, we are tired of winning, we are tired of defeating our enemies."

It was the use of the word "tired" that indicated this was no macho fundraising speech but a cry from the heart for a peaceful settlement of the Palestine-Israel dispute.

That speaker, Ehud Olmert, is now the prime minister of Israel. With the kidnapping of an Israeli soldier, Corporal Gilad Shalit, by the military wing of Hamas, Olmert finds himself in charge during the most dangerous crisis Israel has faced in many years.

Cpl Gilad was kidnapped when Palestinian terrorists used a secret tunnel to enter Israeli territory from Gaza, which Israel evacuated last year. The kidnappers are thought to be members of the independent military wing of Hamas, the Islamic fundamentalist movement which forms the elected government in Palestine.

The kidnappers announced they would return Cpl Shalit if the Israelis agreed to release all **female** Palestinian prisoners and youths under 18 held in Israeli jails.

Israel holds around 10,000 Palestinian prisoners, but prime minister Olmert refused, saying there could be "no negotiations, no bargaining, no agreements" with terrorists.

However, Israel has always negotiated to get back its people - albeit discreetly. In October 2000, three Israeli soldiers were kidnapped by the pro-Iran **Hezbollah** terror group. Three years later, the then prime minister, Ariel Sharon, announced that "negotiations for the return of our sons began a short time after they were kidnapped, and have been conducted continuously ever since then".

He informed the Israeli public that the soldiers would be exchanged for 400 Palestinian prisoners.

It turned out that **Hezbollah** had murdered the soldiers shortly after they were abducted, but the Palestinians were still swapped for the bodies of the lost soldiers. Sharon's cabinet voted 12 to 11 to do the deal, with Olmert supporting the exchange.

So why has Olmert changed his tune now and opted to send in tanks, bomb the main power plant in Gaza and keep Palestinians awake by having the Israeli air force make supersonic bangs in the middle of the night?

Focus: 'Diceman' Olmert on the spot over new Israeli crisis

One view is that Olmert fears capitulation to the demands of the kidnappers will only spur on more abductions on the West Bank, where both al-Qaeda and the super-extremist Hezbollah have started to appear.

Another view is that Olmert, unlike Sharon, was not a senior military officer but a lawyer and journalist, and may feel he needs to put on a tough face.

However, Olmert's implacable stance is also part window-dressing. With Israeli blessing, the Egyptian government has been desperately trying to broker a deal with the kidnappers. Egyptian intelligence has good contacts inside Gaza, but they have also been dealing directly with the external leader of Hamas in Syria, Khaled Mashaal, pressuring him to facilitate the release. The Egyptians are desperate to tame Hamas before the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism engulfs their own regime.

While these negotiations have been going on, Olmert has been content to make a display of force by putting tanks a few kilometres into Gaza and dropping a few bombs. But he knows only too well that a full-scale invasion of Gaza would be a nightmare. It would mean house-to-house street fighting that could kill hundreds of civilians, while certainly precipitating the immediate murder of Cpl Shilat (assuming he is still alive).

Unfortunately, the Egyptian negotiations do not seem to be having much success, because Hamas is no great friend of Egypt. Olmert's other option is therefore to get the Palestinian president and leader of Fatah, Mahmoud Abbas, to capture the kidnappers.

A low-level civil war has been taking place between Fatah and Hamas, since the latter was elected as the Palestinian government in January on an anti-corruption ticket. America and Israel have been discreetly supplying the Abbas wing of Fatah with arms in the hope that it can discipline Hamas.

With time running out for Cpl Shalit, Israel has increased the pressure on Hamas by arresting more than 60 of its ministers and MPs in the Palestinian parliament. This does two things: it gives Israel hostages to exchange for Shalit, and strengthens the day-to-day political control exercised on the West Bank by Abbas and Fatah.

There are signs that the pressure on Hamas is already beginning to tell, with the people in the Palestinian territories taking a more pragmatic line than the external leadership in Syria.

The Shalit kidnapping was expressly designed to stop the Hamas prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh, from ratifying the so-called Prisoners' Document with president Abbas. This is an accord drawn up by Marwan Barghouti, of Fatah, and Abdul Khaleq Natshe, of Hamas, both of whom are interned in Israeli jails for leading the violent Intifada uprising. The accord - in so many words - recognises Israel. Despite the kidnapping, Abbas and Haniyeh signed it on Tuesday.

In his New York speech last year, Ehud Olmert said peace was possible "if we will be prepared to take the risks". Some on the Israeli left are urging Olmert to take such a risk and exchange Cpl Shalit for the key signatories of the Prisoners' Document, Barghouti and Natshe. The theory is that their release would isolate the Hamas leadership in Syria, which is opposed to any acceptance of an Israeli state, and pave the way for a genuine ceasefire and peace negotiations.

With so many pressure points, the outcome of this crisis is impossible to predict - but the man who must throw the dice is Ehud Olmert.

Load-Date: June 30, 2006

Seven Canadians die in airstrike: Montreal family was visiting Lebanese village where grandfather was born; Relative says family got 'no response' when they contacted embassy; Relatives fear 'more bad news' after at least 3 other family members hurt

Ottawa Citizen

July 17, 2006 Monday

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Byline: Michelle Lalonde, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from The Edmonton Journal; Canadian Press and Reuters

Dateline: MONTREAL

Body

MONTREAL - Hassan El-Akhras was marching in a peaceful demonstration against recent Israeli bomb attacks on Lebanon yesterday afternoon when his cellphone rang with some devastating news.

Seven Canadian citizens visiting Lebanon -- all members of Mr. El-Akhras's Montreal family -- were killed yesterday in the bombing of Aitaroun, a village about 50 kilometres south of Beirut.

Four children, believed to be between the ages of one and eight, were among the dead.

At least three other members of the same family were badly injured, said Mr. El-Akhras.

The family had been hiding in the basement of their ancestral home for the past three days.

"They are all martyrs," said Mr. El-Akhras, 31, clearly stunned by the news.

Weeping **women** and children embraced each other, while several men, still holding Lebanese flags and placards from the rally, called relatives to deliver the grim news or to try to get more details.

Mr. El-Akhras, who at first received conflicting reports from Lebanon, was later told that his aunt, Haniya Al-Akhras, his cousin's wife, Amira Al-Akhras, 23, and their four children, Saja, Zeinab, Ahmad and Salam -- were confirmed dead.

Another man died as well, but Mr. El-Akhras said he didn't know whether it was his father, Ali El-Akhras, 70, or his uncle, Ahmad Al-Akhras, 60.

The other was reported wounded, as were his mother, Saada El-Akhras, and his cousin, Ali El-Akhras, a Montreal pharmacist and the father of the dead children.

Seven Canadians die in airstrike: Montreal family was visiting Lebanese village where grandfather was born;
Relative says family got 'no response' when they con....

A family member in Montreal told all-news channel LCN that Canadian Embassy officials in Lebanon did little to help his relatives flee the country.

"My cousin even tried through the Internet to contact the Canadian Embassy," said Hussein El-Akhras.

"But no response."

Mahmoud Akhras, who was a cousin to the Canadian victims, said around 20 people were seeking shelter in a home at the time of the airstrikes.

"These are Canadian citizens, they're not Lebanese," he said.

"They were picked up in pieces. Piece by piece."

With the chances for a lasting peace in Lebanon seemingly better than ever, the family wanted the children to see the village where their grandfather was born, said another relative.

"Everything was OK in Lebanon," said Samir Bleibel, a cousin of Ali El-Akhras, during an interview at his north Edmonton office yesterday afternoon. "Now, apparently, none of them will come back. Definitely the kids are not coming back."

Mr. Bleibel was watching Lebanese news on satellite television early yesterday morning when he heard that a Canadian family had been caught in the bombings.

The description in the report -- the numbers, the ages, the area of the country -- all matched his family. But it took hours of frantic phone calls to confirm the worst.

A composed, but visibly upset Mr. Bleibel had to wipe tears from his eyes as he fielded a constant stream of calls from friends, family and the media.

He has a total of 40 close family members from Canada

still in Lebanon and countless cousins and friends scattered around the country. He estimated that 2,000 members of Edmonton's tight-knit Lebanese community were among the up to 40,000 Canadians still in the country.

"We were trying and we were hoping that we would not hear such bad news," Mr. Bleibel said. "Our fear is that we are going to get more."

The Israeli army said after the bombing that it had warned residents of the village to clear out of the area and that **Hezbollah** was responsible for any civilian deaths.

"The IDF (Israeli Defence Forces) requested and warned residents of the area not to stay within range of the launch sites" used by **Hezbollah** to fire rockets into Israel, the army said in a statement.

"The responsibility for any civilian casualties rests entirely with the **Hezbollah** terrorist organization," the army said.

The elder victims had all moved to Montreal from Lebanon in the early 1990s, Mr. El-Akhras said, while his cousin's four children were born here. Two more of his aunts, both Lebanese nationals, were also killed in the attack, he said.

He said his parents moved to Montreal in 1991, but returned frequently to Lebanon to visit relatives. This time, his parents had left Montreal for Lebanon in mid-April and were to stay six months.

"I want this message to go to the prime minister," Mr. El-Akhras said.

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"Tell Israel to stop the bombing. They are killing Canadian citizens.... They are attacking civilians and Canada has been supporting Israel without even knowing what is going on."

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