

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

Job Number: 223498631

Documents (100)

1. [Deep in the heart of Lebanon THE WAR OF IDEAS SEPT 11 - FIVE YEARS ON](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

2. [Heavy fighting rages despite ceasefire bid](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
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3. [Staying Focused](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

4. [Comment & Debate: The global battle for ideas cannot be fought with guns: Bush and Blair's belief that Islamism could be bombed into submission was deluded. We need to find a middle way](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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5. [The imagined enemy, and the real one Mideast II](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

6. [Ground to a Halt](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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7. [On the pathway to terror](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

8. [Debate on the crisis in the Middle East](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Apr 15, 2007

9. [Forced ceasefire will be defeat](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

10. [A war of endless 'accidents' that's headed for stalemate](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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11. [Dozens killed in fighting as Israel authorizes offensive to continue Israel warns residents of Sidon, Lebanon's third-largest city, to leave ahead of imminent airstrikes.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

12. [War of Surprises](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

13. [Debate on the crisis in the Middle East](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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14. [Shock and distress](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

15. [Feelings mixed for Israeli mothers as sons go to war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Apr 15, 2007

16. [THE FIRST STEP BLAIR HOPEFUL FOR MID-EAST PEACE AS UN THRASHES OUT DEAL](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Apr 15, 2007

17. [Comment & Debate: FREE RADICAL: On Hampstead Heath I feel the pain of war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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18. [Mass funerals occur on Muslim holy day](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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19. [Prospects appear poor for Lebanon ceasefire set to start this morning](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Apr 15, 2007

20. [US diplomats battle to save the day for Israel](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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21. [Article attacking Israel unfair](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Apr 15, 2007

22. [Middle East crisis: Bloody night in Beirut as Israel intensifies aerial bombardment: IDF warns UN troops will be attacked if they repair bridges](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Apr 15, 2007

23. [War as an extension of politics](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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24. [Lebanese put dead relatives to rest](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

25. [Israeli troop pullout begins](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

26. [THE CIVILIAN CASULTIES ARE AWFUL BUT ISRAEL IS FIGHTING FOR ITS EXISTENCE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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27. [Criticism grows but Olmert digs in MIDDLE EAST CRISIS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

28. [Sweating Out the Truth in Iran](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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29. [Businesses starve in 'Paris of the Middle East'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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30. [Israel lost by winning](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

31. [Left or Right, Israelis Are Pro-War](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

32. [*PM right to stand up for Israel*](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

33. [*Harper is right to stand up for Israel , despite poll numbers*](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

34. [*We need fast end to fighting Blair*](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

35. [*Middle East crisis Civilian toll grows as barrage unleashed*](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

36. [*Timely cover for villagers and Rice - MIDDLE EAST IN 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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

37. [Bombing suspension gives Rice some breathing space ANALYSIS](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

38. [Abduction signals troubling trend in Gaza](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

Narrowed by

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

39. [CEASEFIRE; FRANCE & US DESIGN PEACE PLAN UN FORCE MAY END WAR IN DAYS](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

40. [Ten Israeli reservists killed SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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41. [Israel to step up offensive as hopes of a truce collapse](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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42. [Anger at U.S. hurts Arab reformers Israelis unite behind war From Jerusalem, the conflict is seen as a matter of survival](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 200743. [THE BOMBING](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 200744. [Forces of darkness are only victors in Lebanon](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 200745. [Winning battles, losing a war? Lebanon peacekeeping](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 200746. [War without victors](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

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

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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

48. [*Massacre at Qana may be a turning point*](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

49. [*No ceasefire says Israel as fighting intensifies*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

50. [*Impassioned Pleas in the 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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

52. [*Lebanon takes hardline against 'traitors'*](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

53. [ISRAEL PUSHES ON DESPITE AGREEING TO AIRSTRIKE LULL](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

54. [There's life in the streets, but ceasefire reveals scars of war CIVILIANS FLEE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
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55. [THE FIRST STEP BLAIR HOPEFUL FOR MID-EAST PEACE AS UN THRASHES OUT DEAL](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

56. [Timely cover for villagers and Rice](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

57. [Terrorism is rotting the Islamic revolution it craves](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

58. [Why Israel can no longer win this war Whatever the terms on which the Middle East conflict is concluded, a leading expert on the region says Tel Aviv will not emerge victorious](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

59. [UN resolution calls for fighting to stop](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

60. [In Short](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

61. [HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: POLITICS; Mideast Conflict a Setback For Iran Reform Movement](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

62. [A bloody night in Tyre and then Israelis warn: Sidon is next](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

63. [International: World briefing: Israel counts the cost of war](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

64. [THE MIDDLE EAST WAR](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

65. [Middle East crisis: Iran : Bush and Blair complicit in war crimes, says Tehran](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

66. [U.S. , too, shoulders blame for conflict in Middle East](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to Apr 15, 2007

67. [We must be ruthless](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

68. [Israel stalled by intense fighting Battle rages on in Lebanon as guerrilla force refuses to give up and MI5 warns fight may come to Britain](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

69. [Lebanese protesters hold out for unity cabinet](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Apr 15, 2007

70. [Israel plans for next war using mock city Training ground resembles an Arab city of 50,000](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

71. [Escalation feared as 10 reservists killed SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

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

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

73. [*Airstrike kills at least 56 on 'sad, bloody Sunday'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

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

74. [*Condi's 'new Middle East' a dangerous model*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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75. [*A fierce storm before calm: Israel offers truce ahead of today's ceasefire deadline*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

76. [*Mideast crisis: Warplanes pound Lebanon in hours leading up to truce*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

77. [*Israeli premier dashes hope of early ceasefire*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

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

78. [*Qana bombing may come at a high cost*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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79. [Lebanon sends Rice packing after Israelis kill 37 children](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

80. [2 women candidates: The likeness ends there Politicus](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

81. [Deaths in the Mideast should be blamed on terror groups](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

82. [Besieged](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

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Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

84. [12 ISRAELIS DIE; SHEIK THREATENS TO BOMB TEL AVIV](#)

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: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

85. [Thinking Right Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

86. [Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

87. [Islamic Leaders Urge Children To Be Bombers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

88. [At least 40 killed in Israeli raid on village](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

89. [*Thousands rally in Lebanon at slain leader's funeral*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

91. [*Debate on the crisis in the Middle East*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

93. [*Thousands of troops join huge push into Lebanon*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

94. [OPPOSITION, GOVT JOIN HANDS IN SLAMMING ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST LEBANON](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 200795. [On streets of Jerusalem, defiant support for war](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 200796. [Israeli raid kills at least 30 children](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 200797. [Sporadic violence despite ceasefire](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 200798. [Israeli Military Policy Under Fire After Qana Attack](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**
News**Narrowed by**
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Jul 31, 2006 to
Apr 15, 2007

99. [KILLING CIVILIANS MUST END](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

100. [Rice sees possible truce this week Lebanon is braced for attacks despite pause in airstrikes](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Hizbullah" OR "Hezbollah"

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

Deep in the heart of Lebanon; THE WAR OF IDEAS SEPT 11 - FIVE YEARS ON

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 4, 2006 Friday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Insight; Pg. 12

Length: 2472 words

Byline: Paul McGeough

Body

Hezbollah is entrenched in every corner of Lebanese life, from the Government to the villages, from old men to unborn babies, writes Paul McGeough in Nabatieh.

BODIES are still being dug from the rubble at Qana. So 32-year-old Samira Sabah seems oddly cheerful as she fossicks among the wilting fruit and vegetables at a makeshift stall in the desolate streets of Nabatieh. Utterly unshaken by the death just hours earlier of dozens of women and children in the Israeli attack on nearby Qana, she dallies over the crated produce. She tests and talks as she goes.

Sabah is wearing wraparound sunglasses and a military-chic jumpsuit. She totters on sequined high-heels. Are they appropriate in a time of war? - "I don't run."

What about the daily bombardment, which so far has killed 30, wounded 250 more and forced about half of her townspeople to flee? - "It's just like someone banging on a barrel."

The stallholder, Bassam, calls for coffee which a boy brings on an engraved brass tray. As they sip this muddy brew, Sabah articulates a statement of faith that is one of the most potent weapons in the **Hezbollah** militia's arsenal: "God will protect us. As long as we have Allah and [**Hezbollah**'s leader] Hassan Nasrallah we will stay here - we are not afraid. We are all **Hezbollah** - our men, women and children are the resistance."

At the Hykmat al-Amin Hospital on a chalky hill above the town, a local gynaecologist makes the same claim on behalf of the newborn. Explaining that one in three were stillbirths, Leyla Noor Eddine says of the survivors: "They are the new resistance."

This is the rhetoric from one side in an asymmetric war - an act of faith that eclipses United States and Israeli charges that **Hezbollah** is a terrorist organisation, just as it renders meaningless all Western condemnation of a force that Lebanese see as freedom-fighters.

It also is a hymn of praise for a force that is fracturing the myth of Israel's military invincibility. On Wednesday they stepped up their attacks dramatically - lobbing more than 230 missiles into Israel just as its Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, was declaring that all **Hezbollah**'s infrastructure had been destroyed and that Israel was "victorious".

Deep in the heart of Lebanon THE WAR OF IDEAS SEPT 11 - FIVE YEARS ON

By maintaining a daily strike rate of about 100 missiles and not crumbling in the face of a powerful Israeli ground and air attack, Nasrallah is fast becoming the next-best Arab hero since Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal 50 years ago.

And just by continuing the fight, Nasrallah's men have exposed sloppy Israeli intelligence. In less than a week, the Israelis targeted and killed four United Nations peacekeepers, the women and children who were sleeping at Qana, and a Lebanese Army soldier who they believed was a Hezbollah kingpin.

With no let-up in Hezbollah's punishing, indiscriminate missile strikes after three weeks of fighting, the loss of dozens of Israeli soldiers and the failure to take substantial territory in the border region, Israeli commentators are making their own judgements. Zeev Schiff, a respected military analyst, wrote in Haaretz last week: "Israel is far from a decisive victory and its main objectives have not been achieved."

And that's Israel's big problem. To win this war it must win; but in the best tradition of guerilla war, Hezbollah merely has to ensure that it is not wiped out. Or as Nasrallah puts it, he "needs only to survive to win".

Lebanese civilians lucky enough to escape the line of fire or who emerge from the rubble of the latest strike, invariably thank Allah and Nasrallah.

The ruthlessly efficient Hezbollah machine - military, political, social and corporate - is often described as a "state within a state" in Lebanon. But more importantly, it is a state of mind for most in an idolising population and all the more so because Hezbollah's highly secretive guerilla fighters are thwarting the might of Israel's conventional forces.

Inspired by the 1979 Iranian revolution of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and funded, trained and armed by Tehran ever since, Hezbollah emerged in the early 1980s from what one of its founders describes as "a scuffle of desert camels" among competing Shiite groups in Lebanon.

When they wanted a military base for training, the fledgling Hezbollah commandeered a Lebanese army barracks. When they needed military instructors, Tehran bussed in 1500 of them. When the Lebanese military and other militia groups tried to block them, they shot their way through. But the making of today's Hezbollah was the appointment in 1992 of the enigmatic Nasrallah as its secretary-general. The young Iranian-trained cleric has built a near invisible military structure of self-contained and semi-autonomous cells.

Last week the Lebanese President, Emile Lahoud, told the Herald: "As commander-in-chief of the Lebanese Army in the 1980s, I knew that my forces could not oppose the Israeli occupation of Lebanon, so I allowed Hezbollah to do it ... they are respected here and throughout the Arab world because they drove the Israelis out."

Surrounded by three urns of freshly cut red roses and dressed in a shiny pale blue suit, Lahoud added: "But most people don't know who the Hezbollah people are; where they are; or where their weapons come from."

A senior political adviser in Beirut explained Hezbollah's organisational tightness with an anecdote: "An expatriate Lebanese called us from Paris because he was anxious about his 73-year-old father, who lived in a southern village that was being bombed. We made extensive inquiries before we established that his father was alive and well and fighting for Hezbollah. The son was shocked - he knew nothing of his father's part in the struggle."

The exile's father is among small Hezbollah units that come together for just minutes at a time to fire missiles into northern Israel from Hezbollah's hidden launchers, confident in the knowledge that they can be back in their homes within the 10 to 15 minutes it takes for the Israelis to identify their location and return fire.

They do not wear uniforms and are impossible to pick from among their neighbours who may - or may not - be aware of their activities. They can invoke the protective silence of their local communities or hide behind their women's skirts at the same time as they can throw their weight around because of the political and military weakness of the central Government.

Deep in the heart of Lebanon THE WAR OF IDEAS SEPT 11 - FIVE YEARS ON

In today's Lebanon, they are the biggest kid on the block. They have been trained to operate new-tech missile launchers; they are computer-literate. Their only armour is their faith and everything is positioned in the south - they don't have supply lines that might be targeted by the Israelis.

Seemingly unaware of the firepower of Israel's sophisticated US-made weapons and its command-and-control structures, a US military observer complained about Hezbollah's six-year preparation for this war - including the stashing of an estimated 12,000 Iranian-made missiles along the border.

He told a reporter: "They dug tunnels. They dug bunkers, they established communications systems - cell phones, radios, even runners who are not susceptible to eavesdropping. They divided southern Lebanon into military zones with many small units that operate independently, without the need for central control."

Military experts have coined a name for this kind of conflict - network war.

In a network war, the rigid hierarchical structure of a conventional army has difficulty engaging the flattened structure of a hybrid force like Hezbollah, in which all the sophistication of a conventional force is packed into a horizontal cell structure. And in the judgement of Anthony Cordesman, an analyst at Washington's Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Hezbollah has the Israelis foxed.

Of the Israeli performance, he writes: "It may simply be too late for Israel to react in this war. It entered it based on deeply flawed grand strategic ... and tactical principles ... [Non-state armies like Hezbollah] compensate for ... conventional military superiority by using populations and civil facilities as a shield, and constantly finding and exploiting new ways to use civilian casualties and collateral damage as ideological, political, psychological, and media weapons.

"It is a duel that favours [Hezbollah]. It is easier and cheaper to disperse, shelter and hide, and then exaggerate and lie if civilian casualties and collateral damage occur."

This invisible, below-the-radar structure has defied attempted infiltration by Israel's intelligence services. Mocking their efforts to co-opt Hezbollah's strictly disciplined fighters, Nasrallah told a reporter in 2000: "But they were always confronted with rejection because ... Hezbollah is a group seeking the heavenly world, martyrdom and death. So members cannot be easily drafted by the enemies."

Every Hezbollah fighter goes through deep-immersion spiritual training and, leaving nothing to chance, an extensive internal party security apparatus also vets every member and maintains a file on their movements and contacts.

Nasrallah heads a standing army of about 3000 paid fighters, which includes an elite commando force which is reportedly trained in Iran. But he also has thousands more reservists. Such are the lines of organisation that some, like a group of reservists interviewed by The Guardian in the south this week, were still biding their time, waiting for explicit orders to join the fight.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Hezbollah or its associated groups mounted a series of menacing suicide missions. The most lethal were six months apart - the death of 90 Israeli soldiers in Tyre, in the south, and six months later the death of 80 Americans in an attack on the US embassy in April 1993.

In the 1980s, Hezbollah or its front groups were involved in the abduction of dozens of foreigners. They were also implicated in several aircraft hijackings - charges the group has denied.

But despite Israel's outrage at Hezbollah's claim that the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers which sparked the present crisis was to set the scene for a prisoner swap, that is precisely what both parties have done in the past. In a remarkable German-brokered exchange in 2004, Hezbollah won the release of 435 Arab prisoners from Israeli jails in exchange for the bodies of three captured Israeli soldiers and a former Israeli army colonel who had been abducted in Lebanon.

Deep in the heart of Lebanon THE WAR OF IDEAS SEPT 11 - FIVE YEARS ON

After the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon in 2000, Nasrallah set about the meticulous planning for this war, with help from Iran and, to a lesser extent, Syria.

Despite US and European prodding on the need to disarm Hezbollah, few in the Beirut political establishment seem to take the idea seriously. An adviser to one of the Christian leaders says the only way to disarm the party's military wing would be to co-opt it into the Lebanese security forces.

For now, Hezbollah's military leadership has gone underground. But other senior figures go about their political, welfare and media work seemingly with little regard for their security. One non-military leader told the Herald: "At a time like this you feel there is an element of risk - but we have this sense of sacrifice."

But they also have time on their side - to fall back, to regroup, to plan new attacks. Elaborating on the claim by a Taliban leader in Afghanistan that "the Americans have watches, we have time", the Hezbollah fighters who spoke to The Guardian said that part of their training entailed spending days at a time alone in an empty building.

Their leader was quoted: "Patience is our main virtue. We can wait for days, weeks, months before we attack. The Israelis are always impatient ... I know them very well."

Hezbollah's followers take Nasrallah's word as gospel. Talal Salman, editor-in-chief of As-Safir newspaper, told the Herald: "In this war Hezbollah is showing that it can do what it says it will do."

The unique aspect of Hezbollah is that while it keeps one foot in the resistance-militia sphere, it keeps the other in national and local politics - its two cabinet ministers were among the signatories last week to Prime Minister Fouad Siniora's ceasefire proposal.

The shift into democratic politics in 1992 was highly strategic. The possibility that a strong central government might emerge meant that Hezbollah needed to be a part of the process to protect its interests and, with all this talk of disarmament, its very existence.

The party takes its name from a verse in the Koran: "Those who accept the mandate of God, his prophets and those who believe, Lo! the Party of God, they are the victorious."

On these early summer evenings in Beirut, TVs sound from apartment to apartment, blending into a chorus of warlike anthems from Hezbollah's Al-Manar satellite channel. The Party of God is still at work.

LOATHED BY THE WEST, HEZBOLLAH HAS SUPPORT AT HOME

* Hezbollah, or Party of God, was founded during Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. The Shiite Muslim group adheres to the teachings of the late Iranian revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who vowed holy war against Israel and its Western allies.

* Funded and armed by Tehran, the group began a guerilla war to evict Israeli forces from Lebanon. Shadowy groups linked to Hezbollah launched suicide attacks on Western targets and took Westerners hostage in Beirut. The most spectacular was a suicide bombing at the US Marine headquarters in Beirut in October 1983 that killed 241 servicemen.

* In 1985 Hezbollah announced its political program, aimed at establishing an Iranian-style republic in Lebanon. It fought rival Lebanese groups until the civil war ended in 1990, and kept up attacks on Israeli forces.

* An Israeli helicopter strike killed the Hezbollah chief, Sheik Abbas Musawi, in February 1992, sparking a wave of sympathy for the group in Lebanon. Musawi had set up a welfare arm caring for the long-deprived Shiites. He was replaced by Sheik Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah.

* The group entered Lebanon's parliament in 1992 in the first election after the war, effectively abandoning its goal of setting up an Islamic state.

Deep in the heart of Lebanon THE WAR OF IDEAS SEPT 11 - FIVE YEARS ON

* **Hezbollah** withstood large Israeli bombing campaigns in 1993 and 1996.

* Israel ended its 22-year occupation in Lebanon and pulled out in May 2000. Some Lebanese hailed **Hezbollah** as liberation heroes. The group vowed to keep fighting as long as Israel remained in the disputed Shebaa Farms area. It also declared support for a Palestinian uprising against Israel.

* **Hezbollah** and Israel exchanged prisoners in January 2004. Israel swapped more than 400 Palestinians and Lebanese for a captive Israeli businessman and the remains of three soldiers.

* UN Security Council Resolution 1559, sponsored by the US and France and adopted in September 2004, called for all Lebanese militias to be disbanded and disarmed. **Hezbollah**, the only such militia, has defied the resolution.

Graphic

PHOTO: Lebanese protesters, many with posters of **Hezbollah**'s leader, demonstrate outside the UN headquarters in Beirut after the bombing of Qana. Photo: AFP/Hassan Ammar

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Heavy fighting rages despite ceasefire bid

The Toronto Star

August 6, 2006 Sunday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 814 words

Byline: SAM GHATTAS, Associated Press

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

Israel and **Hezbollah** sharply intensified fighting with a blitz of air strikes, dozens of rocket attacks and brutal ground combat yesterday - an apparent bid to inflict maximum mutual damage even as the United States and France agreed on a draft UN resolution calling for a halt to the violence.

Israeli commandos battled **Hezbollah** guerrillas in a raid on an apartment building in the southern port city of Tyre, while warplanes blasted south Beirut. The fighting across Lebanon killed at least eight Lebanese and two Israeli soldiers, while a **Hezbollah** rocket volley killed three **women** in northern Israel.

The raid in Tyre was the latest Israeli commando operation deep inside Lebanese territory aimed at taking out **Hezbollah** strong points even as heavy fighting raged closer to the border, where Israel is trying to push back guerrillas.

Both Israel and **Hezbollah** claimed victory, with Israel saying it took out a key guerrilla unit involved in firing long-range rockets into its territory - including one Friday that hit the town of Hadera, 80 kilometres south of the border in the deepest **Hezbollah** strike yet.

The commandos landed from the sea and progressed through an orchard before dawn, cutting through a barbed-wire fence to advance on the apartment building where a fierce gun battle broke out with those inside.

Later, pools of blood were seen in the orchard, through which the Israelis evacuated their wounded. The building's stairs and pavement outside were stained with blood and littered with bullets from the fighting.

At least five Lebanese - including a soldier at a nearby checkpoint - were killed in the raid, the Lebanese military and rescue workers said.

Brig.-Gen. Noam Feig, Israel's deputy navy commander, said the commandos killed four **Hezbollah** guerrillas inside the apartment who were directly involved in the Hadera attack.

Five more **Hezbollah** fighters were killed in a gun battle on the way out, while eight Israeli soldiers were injured, including one who underwent surgery at the scene, Feig said.

Separately, a missile fired by an Israeli drone killed two people riding a motorcycle near al-Bass, on the outskirts of Tyre, the Lebanese military said.

Heavy fighting rages despite ceasefire bid

In eastern Lebanon, a gutted van with the charred body of the driver was found yesterday morning in a field near Qaa, the town's mayor, Saadeh Toun, said.

Meanwhile, loud explosions resounded in Beirut as Israeli warplanes renewed their strikes on Hezbollah strongholds in the capital's southern suburbs. Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said four people were killed in the bombing.

Hezbollah fired some 70 rockets into northern Israel, killing three Israeli women in a single attack in a direct hit on the house they were in, police said.

Hezbollah has fired some 3,000 rockets into northern Israel since fighting broke out July 12, the Israeli army said. Israel's military also said it carried out some 160 air strikes against Lebanon in the past 36 hours.

More than three weeks of Israeli bombardment have been unable to stop the rocket attacks. The Israeli military has stepped up its ground campaign, pushing troops across all along the border in an attempt to force Hezbollah back. The troops have seized positions in or near 20 towns and villages, moving about three kilometres into Lebanon - with the deepest foray about 10 kilometres in, said Maj.-Gen. Udi Adam, head of Israel's northern command.

Heavy clashes erupted at the border village of Aita al-Shaab, where Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV reported that guerrillas ambushed Israeli troops with machine guns and rockets in a co-ordinated attack from different sides. Al-Manar said at least six Israelis were killed or wounded.

So far, at least 575 people have died in the fighting in Lebanon, including 497 civilians, 28 soldiers and 50 Hezbollah guerrillas. The Israeli military said late yesterday it had killed more than 400 Hezbollah guerrillas since the fighting began.

Seventy-nine Israelis have died, including 46 soldiers and 33 civilians killed by Hezbollah rockets.

The fighting continued even as the United States and France reached agreement yesterday on a draft Security Council resolution calling for "full cessation of hostilities" between Israel and Hezbollah.

The United States has been resisting European pressure for a resolution calling for an immediate, unconditional ceasefire.

The U.S. stance prompted former president Jimmy Carter, who helped broker the historic Camp David peace accord, to accuse U.S. President George W. Bush of pursuing an "erroneous policy" that has fostered violence in the Middle East.

Carter said the U.S. should work for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah.

In another development, Israeli forces seized the speaker of the Palestinian legislature at his house early today, Palestinian officials said. The Israeli military confirmed the arrest of Abdel Aziz Duaik but would not give a reason.

Graphic

DAVID FURST afp getty images An Israeli soldier tries to help an Israeli Arab man who collapsed yesterday after a rocket fired from Lebanon killed his wife and two daughters in the village of al-Aramsha in northern Israel.

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

Heavy fighting rages despite ceasefire bid

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Staying Focused

New York Sun (Archive)

August 16, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 8

Length: 671 words

Byline: KATHERINE CURTIS STETHEM

Body

It's too soon to say whether the ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah will hold, but its success could pose a significant challenge to Americans. Even during the heaviest fighting, there seemed to be some Americans who didn't understand why the battle mattered, who argued that it was Israel's war, not America's. As a semblance of quiet, if not actually peace, settles on northern Israel and southern Lebanon, even those who have understood the importance of Israel's struggle in the context of the global war on terror might find it dropping off their radar screens. That would be a terrible mistake, because Israel's ongoing war against Hezbollah, whether hot or cold, is our war, too.

Last month, the House passed a resolution by a vote of 410 to eight in support of Israel in this conflict. Rep. Ray Issa, a Republican of California, one of the eight dissenters, has lamented, "In ten weeks, I think we will regret not having shown more empathy for the suffering of innocent Lebanese." What we should regret, however, is that America didn't take on Hezbollah back in 1983 after bombings of our embassy and Marine barracks at Beirut. How different the last 20 years might have been had America recognized these atrocities as acts of war and taken the appropriate action then.

The horrific pictures of the innocent Lebanese victims, particularly children, are indeed haunting. Their tragic deaths, however, rest squarely at the feet of Hezbollah and their sponsors in Tehran and Damascus. In stationing offices and housing missiles in residential areas, Hezbollah terrorists hid themselves behind Lebanese women, children, and elderly, thus committing a despicable act of treachery against their own people. Hezbollah, the hometown heroes, deliberately placed those children in harm's way.

There's plenty of blame to go around. Lebanese Prime Minister Siniora has been quoted as stating that Israel must pay for the "barbaric destruction" of his country. The truth is that under the impotent leadership of Mr. Siniora, Lebanon has been rotting slowly from the inside out. Under Mr. Siniora, the puppet of Syria, Hezbollah flourished in Lebanon like a cancer. Mr. Siniora is weak; the people of Lebanon deserve better.

Of course, we cannot speak of blame without mentioning the tragic broken wheel that is today's United Nations. Resolution 1559 was ignored not only by Hezbollah and the larger Lebanese government but by the very drafters themselves. Is there any evidence whatsoever that the U.N. actually attempted to enforce the disarmament of Hezbollah? The UN's failure to successfully implement 1559 forced Israel to fend for itself. Kofi Annan can count the escalation of this conflict as the most grievous of his bungling failures. Israel, indeed the world, deserves better.

For many, Hezbollah has only recently emerged as a topic of discussion at the water cooler. Hezbollah, however, has been destroying lives and crushing spirits for decades. The torture and ultimate death of Navy Diver Robert

Staying Focused

Dean Stethem during the 1985 Trans World Airlines hijacking by Hezbollah terrorists is recognized as one of the most brutal slayings of our time. America and our allies have yet to implement cohesive measures to bring Rob's murderers to justice. Robert Stethem and his family deserve better.

Where will it end? Not with this ceasefire, no matter how expedient the agreement may be nor what solution to the Hezbollah problem Israeli and American leaders ultimately fashion. What hope do we have when the leaders of nations and world organizations allow evil to grow and interweave into the fabric of mainstream cultures? Do we expect to defeat militant extremism by playing to the middle ground? The eyes of the world are casting about for the kind of leadership that can bring about a lasting peace. Hezbollah has been America's problem at least since the 1980s. Ceasefire or not, now is certainly not the time for Americans to lose focus.

Ms. Stethem is married to Patrick Stethem, brother of the late Robert Dean Stethem.

Load-Date: August 17, 2006

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Comment & Debate: The global battle for ideas cannot be fought with guns: Bush and Blair's belief that Islamism could be bombed into submission was deluded. We need to find a middle way

The Guardian - Final Edition

August 7, 2006 Monday

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Section: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES ; Pg. 26

Length: 1088 words

Byline: Jackie Ashley

Body

Tony Blair is right. Tony Blair is disastrously wrong. Where he is right is to insist, in his recent speech, that the tragedy of Lebanon is not a single one-off event but part of a much larger confrontation with an "arc of extremism". I have friends so angry about Israel's behaviour that they are beginning to fall for the idea that Hizbullah is an admirable resistance army, a movement of social workers, philosophers and urban guerrillas, to be supported "objectively", as the Marxists used to say - the Guardian in the sunshine with rockets. We read admiring reports about the wit and verbal brilliance of Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, who is sometimes portrayed as a mix of Che Guevara and Groucho Marx.

Then there are those who think we should support poor little underdog Iran against bullying America over nuclear weapons, while taking President Ahmadinejad's effusions about wiping Israel off the map as just amusing banter from downtown Tehran. And when it comes to Iraq, many feel the Shia resistance movement has had so much provocation that it too deserves to win.

So before going any further, let us remind ourselves just what fundamentalist Islam wants and what kind of society it aspires to. As a woman, I can't regard the compulsory veiling of sisters in the Middle East by men who threaten them with violence as just another cultural choice. Iran, the state that most eagerly supports Hizbullah and had come closest to achieving Shiaism in one country, is a place where women are hanged or stoned to death for adultery, where homosexuals are hunted by the religious police, and where an anti-Semitism that would have been regarded as a little extreme in late-30s Munich is daily fare.

And no, I don't think that because Hizbullah are protecting Lebanese Sunnis and Christians against the Israeli onslaught, and because its social service network helps non-Shias too, that makes it a genial or moderate organisation. It is spreading support, building its power base, as any revolutionary group would do in these circumstances. But its ultimate aim, apart from driving out the Jews, is to create a little Iran on the Mediterranean. That would, one day, involve driving out the same Lebanese Christians who currently thank their God for the fighters of Hizbullah.

It does come down to values. Just as I loathe the idea of separate Muslim schools in Britain, or forced marriages, or female genital mutilation, so I cannot swallow the notion of a rising Islamic world that despises western and liberal values. To be a liberal does not mean shrugging your shoulders at those who loathe you and hoping that somehow

Comment & Debate: The global battle for ideas cannot be fought with guns: Bush and Blair's belief that Islamism could be bombed into submission was deluded. We

everyone will get on. A world divided between Christian bible-belt fundamentalists, powered by US military and oil interests, and Islamist Qur'an-belt fundamentalists, ruled by misogynistic mullahs, is a bad world, period.

The question is, what to do about it, and here is where Tony Blair has been proved so hopelessly, catastrophically wrong. Let's bend over backwards to be fair. He may not have known for certain what would happen when Iraq was invaded and Saddam toppled. But we all now know that the result has been to plunge the country into a civil war currently costing more lives per week than the American civil war. Anyone who still thinks this is hyperbole should be directed to the leaked assessment of the outgoing British ambassador in Baghdad.

The Bush-Blair belief was that Arab nationalism could be bombed into defeat. The past few years have shown how deluded that was. Even less plausible is the idea that Islamism will wane if the west flexes its military muscles. In a hearts-and-minds struggle, it does not win much leverage to bomb civilians and kill children. In this regard, Arab Shias are the same as anyone else: murder makes them angry, not conciliatory.

This is the real danger of Israel's actions in Lebanon. Israel has every right to exist, in security. Internally it is a democratic society and, as a non-Jew, I would infinitely prefer to live in Tel Aviv than Tehran. But Israel's vicious behaviour towards the Palestinians, and now in Lebanon, creates a new suicide bomber, a new resistance fighter and a new potential terrorist - in the Middle East and well beyond - every hour of the day. Yes, Hizbullah provoked the Israelis. But they reacted with all the calm deliberation of a maddened bull. They are not the only ones.

The depth of the stupidity shown by the White House and by No 10 is caricatured in the story that Jack Straw was fired as foreign secretary after Condoleezza Rice visited Blackburn and reported back to Bush on the strength of Muslim feeling in Straw's constituency. Put to one side the grotesque affront to British status implied by an American president being able to sack cabinet members by proxy (which Downing Street will doubtless deny) and ask this question: what kind of mind thinks the presence of angry Muslims in his constituency would hamper Straw's diplomacy, rather than sharpen it?

The kind of mind, presumably, that thinks Muslims are generally bad and rejects the battle of ideas in favour of battle. Straw was reaching out to Tehran. He said that nuking them was "nuts". He was, modestly, adopting a rhetoric which was not simply Washington's "Israel good, Palestinians bad" tone. Despite his involvement in the Iraq decision, he was trying to find a middle way. He knew he had to, because like most of us he lives among ordinary, non-extreme Muslims - drawn in some ways to western society, and currently infuriated and despairing. One day even the Americans will have to follow him, or we are all off to hell in a handcart.

We need that ceasefire. We need a rebuilt, protected Lebanon, given something of the outside support Israel has had. There should be no British troops in a peacekeeping force because they would be a provocation. By tamely following Bush into the biggest foreign policy mistake of modern times, Britain has too much blood on its hands to be taken seriously in the region, and Blair is seen as too one-sided. We can and should provide money, doctors and volunteers, but we should have the humility to recognise that others, such as the French, would be more acceptable as honest brokers.

There is a battle of ideas in the world today. We cannot escape it or walk away. But you cannot kill ideas with guns - only with better ideas, expressed through confident, open societies. Blair's words suggest that he realises this. His record, however, suggests this understanding has come too late.

jackie.ashley@guardian.co.uk

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

The imagined enemy, and the real one; Mideast II

The International Herald Tribune

August 4, 2006 Friday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 6

Length: 649 words

Byline: Robert A. Pape

Dateline: CHICAGO

Body

Israel has finally conceded that air power alone will not defeat Hezbollah. Over the coming weeks, it will learn that ground power won't work either. The problem is not that the Israelis have insufficient military might, but that they misunderstand the nature of the enemy.

Contrary to the conventional wisdom, Hezbollah is principally neither a political party nor an Islamist militia. It is a broad movement that evolved in reaction to Israel's invasion of Lebanon in June 1982. At first it consisted of a small number of Shiites supported by Iran. But as more and more Lebanese came to resent Israel's occupation, Hezbollah never tight-knit expanded into an umbrella organization that tacitly coordinated the resistance operations of a loose collection of groups with a variety of religious and secular aims.

In terms of structure and hierarchy, it is less comparable to, say, a religious cult like the Taliban than to the multidimensional American civil-rights movement of the 1960s. What made its rise so rapid, and will make it impossible to defeat militarily, was not its international support but the fact that it evolved from a reorientation of pre-existing Lebanese social groups.

Evidence of the broad nature of Hezbollah's resistance to Israeli occupation can be seen in the identity of its suicide attackers. Hezbollah conducted a broad campaign of suicide bombings against American, French and Israeli targets from 1982 to 1986. Altogether, these attacks which included the infamous bombing of the Marine barracks in 1983 involved 41 suicide terrorists.

While writing a book on suicide attackers, I had researchers scour Lebanese sources to collect martyr videos, pictures and testimonials and the biographies of the Hezbollah bombers. Of the 41, we identified 38. Shockingly, only eight were Islamic fundamentalists. Twenty-seven were from leftist political groups like the Lebanese Communist Party and the Arab Socialist Union. Three were Christians, including a female high-school teacher with a college degree. All were born in Lebanon.

What these suicide attackers and their heirs today shared was not a religious or political ideology but simply a commitment to resisting a foreign occupation. Nearly two decades of Israeli military presence did not root out Hezbollah. The only thing that has been proved to end suicide attacks, in Lebanon and elsewhere, is withdrawal by the occupying force.

The imagined enemy, and the real one Mideast II

Thus the new Israeli land offensive may take ground and destroy weapons, but it has little chance of destroying the Hezbollah movement. In fact, in the wake of the bombings of civilians, the incursion will probably aid Hezbollah's recruiting.

Equally important, Israel's incursion is also squandering the good will it had initially earned from so-called moderate Arab states like Egypt and Saudi Arabia. These countries are the court of opinion that matters because, while Israel cannot crush Hezbollah, it could achieve a more limited goal: ending Hezbollah's acquisition of more missiles through Syria.

Given Syria's total control of its border with Lebanon, stemming the flow of weapons is a job for diplomacy, not force. Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan, Sunni-led nations that want stability in the region, are motivated to stop the rise of Hezbollah. Under the right conditions, the United States might be able to help assemble an ad hoc coalition of Syria's neighbors to entice and bully it to prevent Iranian, Chinese or other foreign missiles from entering Lebanon. It could also offer to begin talks about the Golan Heights.

But Israel must take the initiative. Unless it calls off the offensive and accepts a genuine cease-fire, there are likely to be many, many dead Israelis in the coming weeks and a much stronger Hezbollah.

*

Robert A. Pape, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, is the author of "Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism."

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Ground to a Halt

The New York Times

August 3, 2006 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 2; Editorial Desk; Pg. 21

Length: 639 words

Byline: By Robert Pape

Robert A. Pape, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, is the author of "Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism."

Dateline: Chicago

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Ground to a Halt

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Given Syria's total control of its border with Lebanon, stemming the flow of weapons is a job for diplomacy, not force. Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan, Sunni-led nations that want stability in the region, are motivated to stop the rise of **Hezbollah**. Under the right conditions, the United States might be able to help assemble an ad hoc coalition of Syria's neighbors to entice and bully it to prevent Iranian, Chinese or other foreign missiles from entering Lebanon. It could also offer to begin talks over the future of the Golan Heights.

But Israel must take the initiative. Unless it calls off the offensive and accepts a genuine cease-fire, there are likely to be many, many dead Israelis in the coming weeks -- and a much stronger **Hezbollah**.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

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On the pathway to terror

The Irish Times

September 29, 2006 Friday

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Section: WORLD; Under The Crescent; Pg. 10

Length: 2605 words

Body

Turkey is facing a growing Islamic militancy, often involving the educated middle class, fuelled by the Iraq war, and often targeted on the country itself, writes Mary Fitzgerald

It is not easy to get to Bingol. Buses that connect the town with the nearest city take more than three hours to negotiate the narrow winding road that cuts through the steep gorges of this part of southeastern Anatolia.

Police and army checkpoints on the way are a reminder of the violence that convulsed the region more than a decade ago as Kurdish separatists battled Turkish forces. A string of muddy villages and isolated farms eventually leads to Bingol, a bleak hamlet of 70,000 mostly Kurdish inhabitants set deep in rugged, earthquake-prone mountains.

Three years after al-Qaeda struck Istanbul with a series of four suicide bombings that claimed more than 60 lives, the people of Bingol are still trying to come to terms with the fact that three of the bombers grew up on its impoverished streets. "Even today most people here can't believe that he died doing this," says Veysel Elaltuntas, whose brother, Gokhan, blew up a truckload of explosives outside one of Istanbul's oldest synagogues.

"But we believe it - we had to bury what bits remained of him."

Gokhan Elaltuntas (22) was quiet, personable and not particularly religious, his family say. He managed the Bingol Internet Merkezi Cafe on the town's main street but harboured dreams of becoming a teacher.

Elaltuntas's father co-owned the internet cafe with the brother of a man named Azad Ekinici. Ekinici is believed to have played a key role in planning the attacks, buying the trucks used by the bombers.

Elaltuntas and Ekinici had travelled to Istanbul with Mesut Cabuk (29), another friend from Bingol. The tattered remains of Cabuk's passport were found outside a second bombed synagogue.

Another accomplice drove the bomb that exploded outside the Istanbul headquarters of HCBC bank while yet another targeted the British consulate, killing several staff members including the consul-general. It later emerged that the bombers did not act alone - they merely provided the local manpower for a complex plot masterminded by Turks but conceived in Afghanistan.

Unravelling the strands of what has become known in Turkey as El Kaide Turka (Turkish al-Qaeda) would lead investigators all the way back to the pre-9/11 Afghan training camps. And Osama bin Laden.

On the pathway to terror

"We always suspected that this plan was hatched not in Bingol or Turkey but somewhere else," says Veysel, who believes his brother was duped into carrying out the bombing. "Gokhan never talked about politics and he was no more Muslim than anybody else here. His friends were more fond of their religion but they didn't seem like radicals."

Cabuk, who had organised an unofficial Islamic circle that met for regular prayer meetings in the town, spent two years in Pakistan with Ekinici, who is also believed to have fought in Chechnya. No one knows for sure what the two friends did in Pakistan but when they returned to Bingol, they seemed different. They began wearing shalwar kameez, the loose trousers and tunic worn by Pakistani men, and they grew long beards. Befriending Elaltuntas, they spent most of their time in the internet cafe he managed.

No one suspected anything. Today most people in Bingol are keen to distance the town from the events of that November week three years ago. "Bingol's name has been connected with terror but that is not the reality," says the mayor, Hacı Ketenciler. "People in this town may be conservative but they are not radical like that."

But others tell a different story, one that suggests Bingol is no stranger to Islamic militancy. Until the late 1990s, Turkish authorities had tacitly nurtured a violent religious outfit in troubled southeastern Anatolia. Known as Hizbullah, the Sunni organisation has no relation to the Shia group of the same name in Lebanon. In Bingol and other towns, men were recruited for what became a convenient state proxy in the dirty war against Kurdish guerrillas.

By 1998, the army was ordered to rein in Hizbullah, by then notorious for its brutality. Arrests and killings followed. Some members went to ground or fled abroad. "There are still men in this town and other places around here with the potential to fight," says one member of Hizbullah from Bingol who refused to give his name.

"Whether it is about joining a war or carrying out a bombing, that thinking is still there. It will always be there."

One of his friends died fighting in Bosnia, one of some dozen men from the town who heeded the call to join the Bosnian jihad. Others fought in Afghanistan. "If I didn't have my two children, I would have gone to Lebanon to help fight the Israelis this year. We Muslims must not keep silent," he adds.

Bingol is not an isolated case. Throughout the last two decades, hundreds of Turks have trained or fought in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya and Pakistan before returning to their homeland, says Mehmet Farac, a journalist who has written extensively on Hizbullah and recently published a book on al-Qaeda in Turkey.

Farac works in the heavily guarded offices of Cumhuriyet, one of Turkey's leading secularist newspapers. Four of its journalists have been killed by Hizbullah and the building has been targeted three times by bombers.

"For Turkish jihadis, the Afghan training experience was where it all started," Farac says. A report released by Turkish Intelligence noted that one training camp in Afghanistan became known as the "Turks' Camp" because the number of Turkish fighters exceeded those of other nationalities.

The report listed the names of 107 Turkish nationals who received training in al-Qaeda camps before the Taliban were ousted but acknowledged there were hundreds others who remain unknown. The report also indicated that some of these Turks travelled to Iraq to join the insurgency following the US invasion in 2003.

Ibrahim (26) is from the southeastern city of Van. He fought in Chechnya after finishing high school and later travelled to Afghanistan where he battled US troops at Tora Bora in late 2001.

Arrested some time later in the border town of Peshawar, he spent two years in detention at Guantanamo Bay. "Before I left home I had convinced myself through reading the Koran, the hadiths and Muslim writers that Chechnya was a holy war and I had an obligation to join it," he told The Irish Times.

"What I saw in Chechnya made me realise that the gun and the Muslim are inseparable. It is our duty. I would not accept Islam if it didn't have jihad. Through jihad we give ourselves to God."

On the pathway to terror

"I am a mujahed and I will fight jihad wherever it needs to be fought. God willing I will go to Iraq too, this is the next step. There are many Muslims going there because it is a good opportunity for us. We will fight 99 years, we are not afraid. Nothing can defeat us because this is the word of God."

Similar rhetoric marked the opening of one of the most closely watched cases ever to be heard in Istanbul's Central Criminal Court number 10.

During the hearing Harun Ilhan, one of the suspected ringleaders of the Istanbul bombing cell, admitted his involvement, boasting that he was an "al-Qaeda warrior." Though Osama bin Laden is mortal, he said, "jihad is eternal. Even if Osama dies, our jihad will continue. Al-Qaeda exists in all of the Islamic world for victory, and until this fight is finished with success it will continue."

Details that have emerged from the trial so far illustrate the role played by al-Qaeda in inspiring, sponsoring and developing the Turkish terrorist cell. A second defendant, Adnan Ersoz, told the court he had received military training during a trip to Afghanistan. He said Abu Hafs al-Masri, bin Laden's then lieutenant, had provided funds to bring Turks to Afghanistan for jihad.

Ersoz testified that in early 2001 he arranged a meeting between al-Masri and Habib Akdas, a Turkish jihadi and the alleged leader of the bomb plot.

Ersoz insisted that although the Turks had developed links with bin Laden's network, they could not be described as an al-Qaeda cell.

"Habib Akdas established a relationship of mutual support with al-Qaeda," he told the court. "Of course there are similarities in terms of their ideas. But it is wrong to call this al-Qaeda's Turkish structure."

According to Ersoz, he and Akdas later met bin Laden. The al-Qaeda leadership, Ersoz told the hearing, was interested in launching attacks on a number of targets including Incirlik, a Turkish airbase used by US forces. Another plan was to hit Israeli ships that docked at Turkey's southern port of Mersin.

Akdas, later killed while fighting with insurgents in Iraq, was tasked with researching the targets. The initial plans were shelved because Incirlik and the Israeli boats were judged to be too heavily guarded.

Instead, "softer" targets were selected, including the synagogues, HCBC bank and the British consulate.

Akdas told Ersoz he had received \$150,000 from al-Qaeda associates outside Turkey to finance the attacks.

"Sheikh Osama made an agreement with Akdas and the other Turks. The initial order came straight from Sheikh Osama," explains Osman Karahan, a lawyer who represents several of those on trial in connection with the bombings. "But the change in targets was decided by the local commander."

Karahan says he represents almost 80 per cent of the Islamic militants facing charges in Turkey, including al-Qaeda associates and members of Ansar al-Islam, a jihadi group based in northern Iraq. He openly sympathises with his clients and has been questioned on suspicion of aiding and abetting al-Qaeda, accusations he denies.

Karahan is a Salafi, subscribing to the same austere interpretation of Islam popular with militants such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian insurgent leader killed in Iraq earlier this year. Salafis place much emphasis on the "purity" of their beliefs, rejecting all sects or practices apart from the most rigid Sunni Islam as "bida" or "innovation". They despise Shia Muslims as heretics and advocate "takfir", a word often translated as "excommunication", to deal with those who do not measure up to their idea of "pure" Islam.

A book titled Houris [virgins] of Paradise: Eyes Like Fawns and Shining Skin is on sale in Karahan's office. In line with his beliefs, every image of a human face, including the portrait on his diploma, is covered with a small green Post-It. **Female** visitors are requested to sit behind a thick blind that hangs from the ceiling and he will only agree to an interview if I do the same. When asked if he has ever fought himself, he says he cannot answer that question.

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Last year Karahan told judges at the Istanbul bombing trial that jihad was an obligation for Muslims and his clients should not be prosecuted. "If you punish them for this, will you punish them tomorrow for fasting or for praying?" the lawyer asked during a three-hour speech in which he quoted from religious texts. "If non-Muslims go into Muslim lands, it is every Muslim's obligation to fight them," he added.

One of Karahan's most high-profile clients is Louai Sakka, a Syrian al-Qaeda operative accused of financing the Istanbul bombings. Sakka has also been linked to major terrorist plots in Jordan and Iraq, where he says he fought with al-Zarqawi.

The indictment against him charges that he "proposed" the Istanbul attacks and provided funding, with the largest payment handed over in a sock filled with euros sent from Saudi sympathisers.

According to testimony heard in court, Sakka cheered as he watched TV reports of the bombings. The Syrian initially admitted his role in the blasts, but later withdrew the confession. He has, however, admitted that after he left Iraq he attempted to manufacture a bomb to be used in a planned attack on Israeli cruise boats in the Mediterranean.

The Istanbul bombing trial is due to reconvene on November 14th, one day before the third anniversary of the synagogue blasts. While the proceedings are expected to result in a number of life sentences, Mehmet Farac believes al-Qaeda's support in Turkey has not been completely routed: "They are weaker now but they still have the ability to strike using sleeper cells that can be activated at any time."

He says the number of Islamic militants in Turkey runs into thousands, some 500 of whom are known to the authorities. A number of these are remnants of **Hizbullah** or members of another, more marginal group, the Islamic Great Eastern Raiders Front, known as IBDA-C, which advocates an Islamic government for Turkey.

The group has carried out a number of small-scale attacks on secular targets over the last decade and falsely claimed responsibility for the Istanbul bombings in an attempt to gain publicity. It publishes a newspaper called Kaide - Turkish for al-Qaeda - which is regularly seized by police on publication. A copy obtained by The Irish Times contains an article praising **female** suicide bombers and numerous tributes to Osama bin Laden and Iraqi insurgents.

Of greater concern, Farac believes, are the those who sympathise with al-Qaeda and subscribe to Salafi ideology. They pose a challenge very different to that of **Hizbullah** or IBDA-C. "The bulk of **Hizbullah** were uneducated men, some of whom had already dabbled in crime. It was an unsophisticated group largely confined to one part of Turkey," he explains.

"These Salafis are young, middle class, often university educated and found in cities across the country. Their outlook is global whereas **Hizbullah**'s was regional. The ideology they adhere to can easily turn into action and that is the problem, particularly when you look at Turkey's very dangerous geographical location. In many ways, it could serve as a pathway of terror."

Osman Karahan claims the Iraq war has proved a galvanising force for young Turkish Muslims already attracted to Salafi ideas. "A few years ago Salafi ideology was just like a new-born baby in Turkey," he says.

"Now that baby is growing up. The jihad in Iraq is different to that against the Soviets in Afghanistan because it is a Salafi jihad, a pure jihad that resembles most closely the idea of jihad in the Prophet's time."

The internet cafe in Bingol where Gokhan Elaltuntas and his friends planned their "martyrdom" is now a jeans shop. Not much else has changed in this grim town where three generations of unemployed men mull over backgammon boards in crowded teahouses. Many of the streets that lead off the main road are little more than rutted mud tracks.

Outside one mosque, some locals have set up a small stall to solicit donations for Palestinian refugees. One of those manning the table is a **Hizbullah** member recently released from prison.

On the pathway to terror

Few in the town bother to keep up with the latest on the bombing trial in Istanbul, preferring to try instead to forget the tragedy that catapulted Bingol to international attention. But they cannot help wondering what happened to the three young men who used to pray in a basement mosque opposite the internet cafe and why.

Some ask if it was something to do with the town itself and the despair of unemployment that marks so many lives here. Others wonder if the problem is bigger than Bingol, bigger than Turkey even.

"If it can happen to Gokhan, it can happen to anyone," says Veysel Elaltuntas. "If we had just a small sign that he was going in such a way, we would have kept him away from these people. When he left for Istanbul we never suspected he was lost to us already."

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Mary Fitzgerald is the first winner of the Douglas Gageby journalist fellowship. Her reports on "The Faces of Islam" appear in Friday's Irish Times.

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Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

The Irish Times

August 3, 2006 Thursday

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 17

Length: 2056 words

Body

Madam, - While confusion still surrounds the precise series of events which led to the deaths of over 50 civilians in Qana last Sunday, an Israeli bomb will almost certainly prove to have been the tragedy's proximate cause - an indication that the IDF, while never intentionally targeting civilians, must do more to minimise non-combatant casualties.

However, this cannot be allowed to obscure the fact that ultimate responsibility for the killings in Qana lies not with the IDF but with Hizbullah, which is waging its war against Israel from behind the double-sided shield of Lebanon's civilian population and UN personnel. In what are just the latest examples, residents fleeing Ain Ebal angrily told the New York Times last weekend that Hizbullah was using the town as a rocket-launching base, firing them "from between houses" while a former south Lebanese Shia, writing in Berlin's Der Tagesspiegel, described Hizbullah's concealment of a weapons depot under a school in his village. Qana itself has been similarly exploited. The IDF has released footage of both the arrival of rocket launchers into the town and their subsequent firing from neighbourhoods including Hariva, in which Sunday's air strikes took place.

This "cowardly blending. . . among women and children" (as the UN's Jan Egeland described it last week) inevitably results in heavy Lebanese non-combatant casualties which are then adduced as evidence of Israel's "disproportionate" response. But Israel's response to Hizbullah's offensive is not disproportionate to the threat which it faces.

The principle of proportionality in war relates, not to provocation-reprisal ratios of scale, but to the proportion between the amount of force employed and the amount of force required to achieve legitimate military objectives, which must be determined with reference to the conflict's broader contexts. The objective of Israel's current operation in Lebanon is not solely the rescue of its two captured soldiers but the termination of the Iranian-sponsored cross-border campaign by Hizbullah, to which they and scores of other Israelis have fallen victim since May 2000.

Israel is determined to defeat this campaign because it represents not a mere localised terrorist assault but the front-line battle in Iran's 27-year war of annihilation against the Jewish state. Since its foundation in 1979, the Islamic Republic has officially held that the very existence of Israel "humiliates Islam, the Qu'ran, the government of Islam and the nation of Islam" and that it must be "eliminated from the pages of history". The present Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei has stated that "setting Israel on fire" topped Iran's foreign policy agenda while ex-President Rafsanjani has pledged that the Islamic world will "vomit it out from its midst". Most recently, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has repeatedly demanded that Israel be "wiped off the map."

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

Those dismissing these statements as mere rhetorical sound and fury overlook the fact that Iran has spent the past 15 years working to achieve its ambition through the sponsorship of Palestinian terrorism, completely bankrolling Islamic Jihad, channelling significant logistical and financial support to Hamas and, since September 2000, increasing its associations with the Fatah-affiliated militias to the extent that, before the declaration of last year's "ceasefire", it had a hand in almost all of Al-Aqsa Martyrs' attacks. With regard to Hizbullah, Iran has spent around \$100 million a year transforming it into an anti-Israel military force more like a national army than a terrorist militia.

This Jerusalem can no longer be expected to endure. On withdrawing from Lebanon six years ago, it warned that any future attacks from this territory would be met with a forceful response "based upon the pure, simple and compelling right to self-defence". Israel's current action is a legitimate and proportionate exercise of that right. - Yours, etc,

SEAN GANNON, Chairman, Irish Friends of Israel, Ontario Terrace, Dublin 6.

Madam, - Cathal McCann (August 1st) concludes his defence of Israel with the question: "What would you do in Israel's position?"

If I were prime minister of Israel, I would have proclaimed publicly to the world that Israel has no interest whatever in any territory beyond the 1967 borders. I would have offered to share Jerusalem with my Palestinian neighbours. I would have committed my country to the development of a truly democratic secular state; and I would have formally recognised Islam as being of equal status within the state as Judaism.

Having done all this, I doubt if "my citizens" would be dying in the street of Haifa, and I imagine that terrorist rhetoric and action would have been consigned to history.

But the government of Israel, in its wisdom, has not chosen this path. Instead, it insists that it has the right to retain some of the occupied territories in any peace treaty. It demands the right to develop a Jewish State for a Jewish people. It continues to build settlements in the occupied territories. It routinely assassinates and abducts persons it suspects of being members of militias; and it reacts to any resistance to these measures with the indiscriminate slaughter of civilians.

May I respond to Cathal McCann's question with one of my own: "What would you do in this situation if you were a Palestinian?" - Yours, etc,

JOHN McGRATH, Kilbride, Co Wicklow.

Madam, - Given that in recent days those who have found it difficult to condemn the actions that have led to so many civilian deaths have stopped just short of declaring the inevitability of a war between civilisations and belief systems, or more specifically between the West and Islam, it might be useful to recall the words of Prof Benjamin Barber in his book *Jihad vs McWorld* (1996):

"Jihad forges communities of blood rooted in exclusion and hatred, communities that slight democracy in favour of tyrannical paternalism or consensual tribalism. McWorld forges global markets rooted in consumption and profit, leaving to an untrustworthy, if not altogether fictitious, invisible hand issues of public interest and common goods that once might have been nurtured by democratic citizenries and their watchful governments. . . Today. . . we seem intent on recreating a world in which our only choices are the secular universalism of the cosmopolitan market and the everyday particularism of the fractious tribe. "

We desperately need a moral and intellectual commitment that does not lock us into such a desperate and arid choice. Cllr John McManus (August 1st) would be better seeing the task of the left in such a project rather than tacitly accepting the bogus inevitability of the clash of civilisations. Those of us who believe in undertaking the task of developing a position for the left in relation to the Middle East and the task of building peace are not offering a knee-jerk anti-Americanism. We do, however, regard it as an act of moral honesty to condemn the indiscriminate loss of civilian life.

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

Falling back on the cheap option of the easy accusation of anti-Americanism is something one might expect from Mr Alan Shatter, but not from a member of the left, even the revised left. - Yours, etc,

MICHAEL D. HIGGINS, Dáil Éireann, Dublin 2.

Madam, - John McManus (August 1st) has it about right when he says that there is an "unfortunate tendency on the left to identify all who oppose America as objectively progressive".

The present situation across the Middle East is clearly very complex, but the left is too ambiguous about those who want to bring the region back to the Middle Ages, and, as in Iraq, those who attempt to foment civil war to create a viciously repressive state. That war is over: there is a UN-recognised regime in place and the Iraqi people have voted far more frequently in recent years than we have. In their opposition to the US and the Bush regime in particular, many on the left turn a blind eye to what my party colleague, Mr McManus, has correctly identified as the rise of "theocracy and fanaticism".

The left has been indolent in the face of a number of international issues in recent years. Lazy cries for UN reform excuse international inaction in the face of atrocities from Bosnia to Darfur. We on the left were not even united in support of the Nato campaign to prevent further genocide in Kosovo.

On questions such as Cuba, a state which, according to Human Rights Watch, has an "undemocratic government that represses nearly all forms of political dissent" and in which a dictator of 40 years and more has just handed power to his brother, the left remains hopelessly soft.

John McManus says: "It is the job of all those on the left to be clear where they stand on the basic principles of liberty and equality". To state it more baldly, the Left must support democracy, respect for human rights, and the rule of law. - Yours, etc,

Cllr AIDAN CULHANE, Meadow Grove, Dublin 16.

Madam, - In the aftermath of the second Israeli massacre of innocent civilians at Qana, we read Charles Krauthammer lecturing us on how the world has lost its moral bearings by criticising Israel for its attacks on Lebanon (Opinion, August 31st).

Mr Krauthammer persists in his apologia for murder by asserting that Israel has no desire to kill Lebanese civilians. As proof of this, he says that if it really wanted to, Israel could flatten all of South Lebanon and Beirut. A moral stance indeed.

Mr Krauthammer and his ilk persist in demonising Hizbullah and blaming "Islamic terrorism" for the current crisis, thereby avoiding discussion of the fundamental cause of instability in the region: the injustice done to the Palestinian people at the creation of Israel. Similarly, they refuse to recognise that Hizbullah began as a defensive reaction to the 18-year illegal occupation of South Lebanon by the Israelis.

If there is to be peace in the region, Israel must recognise the validity of the claims of the Palestinians and allow the displaced to return. Israel must also recognise that its neighbours have a right to security that is equal to its own. Instead, Israeli actions create the impression that its attitude to its neighbours is that "two of ours are worth a thousand of yours". In other words, racism. - Yours, etc,

BARRA Ó DONNABHÁIN, Aghabullogue, Co Cork.

Madam, - Alan McPartland (August 1st) asks two questions that deserve a reply. The first amounts to an appeal to observe the same standards of criticism in matters concerning Israel as applied to other countries. The reply is that in order to do that one would have to study the fairly recent history of the region, say 100 years, as it is obvious that most of your correspondents are totally ignorant of that history. The second question was his wondering when "we" are going to stop feeling guilty about the Holocaust? I presume that the "we" in question are Christians and the answer to that is another question. Do you know how guilty you are? If you do I hope that you never forget it.

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

He then goes on to accuse "Israelis and Zionists" of using the Holocaust as a stick to beat public opinion as a cover for Israeli atrocities. What he really means to say is not Israelis or Zionists but Jews, but he lacks the courage to use the dreadful word. Let me assure Mr McPartland that we Jews do not use the Holocaust to remind you of your sins but to remind our fellow Jews that never fighting back against the murder, humiliation, rape and banishment we suffered for 16 centuries almost led to our obliteration. - Yours, etc,

MONTY ROSS, Templeogue Road, Dublin 6W.

Madam, - The national outcry over the Israeli bombing of innocent children and civilians in Lebanon must be matched with equal concern at the use of Irish-manufactured weapons support systems in the current military conflict.

As a long time republican and civil rights campaigner I am calling on the 26-county administration to ban the export of computer systems by Irish firms which assist American arms companies.

It is time for this Fianna Fáil-PD coalition to back up their words of condemnation with firm action against the Irish weapons industry. It is no use crying crocodile tears over the awful deaths of young children in Lebanon if Irish computer expertise is being used by American companies to make the weapons that cause these deaths. - Yours, etc,

DES LONG, Corbally, Limerick.

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

End of Document

Forced ceasefire will be defeat

The Toronto Star

August 9, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: LETTER; Pg. A19

Length: 226 words

Body

War without end

Aug. 7.

There are already more than 1 million Israeli refugees displaced from their homes with hundreds of thousands living in bomb shelters for more than three weeks because of Hezbollah missiles. Terrorist groups, like Hezbollah, are known to use women and children as pawns and as human shields. During the past six years, it has built its underground bunkers and tunnels upon which it has built residential multi-unit dwellings.

This is not a battle between Islam and the West, it is a battle between radical Islam and democracy. Al Qaeda's entry into this melee, with its pledged Hezbollah support with a worldwide campaign, hitting Jewish targets, only fortifies this inference.

A dismantling of the Iranian proxy, Hezbollah, would be a major blow against global terrorism, rogue states Syria and Iran and possibly even Iran's nuclear plans.

But, if Hezbollah emerges intact as a fighting force, Israel and the global war on terrorism would suffer significantly. Even Saudi Arabia (and other moderate Arab states) issued a rare condemnation of Hezbollah as they fear the ramifications of its strength.

Much of the Middle East has been engulfed by Islamic radicalism. Israel must remain strong as democracy's bulwark against the tide. A forced ceasefire will be a defeat for Israel as well as for all of democracy.

Harry Grunstein, Hampstead, Que.

Load-Date: August 9, 2006

A war of endless 'accidents' that's headed for stalemate

Canberra Times (Australia)

August 2, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 11

Length: 896 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

THE KILL ratio is becoming a problem: Israel has been killing about 40 Lebanese civilians for every Israeli civilian who is killed. They are all being killed by accident, of course, but such a long chain of accidents begins to look like carelessness, and even in Israel and the United States many people are getting uneasy about the slaughter. Elsewhere, the revulsion at what is happening is almost universal, and the death of so many women and children at Qana has greatly intensified the pressure on Israel and its de facto allies, the United States and Britain, to stop the war.

They are already making tactical concessions to lessen the pressure. Israel "partially suspended" its bombardment of Lebanon for 48 hours, and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice promised to let the United Nations Security Council consider a resolution calling for a ceasefire this week.

But Israel's generals still want another 10 days to two weeks of war to batter Hezbollah into submission, and neither Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert nor his loyal allies in Washington and London are really willing to override them yet.

Israeli Defence Minister Amir Peretz told Parliament on Monday that Israel could not accept a ceasefire now, because if it did so, "the extremists [Hezbollah] will rear their heads again". The US and British governments have to dodge and weave a bit as doubts grow at home about the morality and feasibility of Israel's actions, but they can certainly arrange for the Security Council resolution to fail this week.

The real trick, in terms of keeping American and British public opinion on side, is to blur the sequence of events that led to the war and present it as a desperate Israeli struggle against an unprovoked onslaught by thousands of terrorist rockets.

As Prime Minister Tony Blair said, "It cannot be that Israel stops taking the action it's taking, but Hezbollah continue to kill, kidnap and launch rockets into the north of Israel at the civilian population there."

The website of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs goes further, claiming that the operation in which Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers and killed three others and the rain of Hezbollah rockets on Israeli cities were "simultaneous". Obviously, these are mad terrorists who must be removed from Israel's border at once by any means possible. But unless "simultaneous" means "on the following day" in Hebrew, the website is distorting what happened.

A war of endless 'accidents' that's headed for stalemate

There was an unprovoked Hezbollah attack on the Israeli army on July12, seeking to kidnap soldiers who could be held as hostages and eventually exchanged for Lebanese prisoners who have been illegally held in Israel since the latter ended its 18-year military occupation of southern Lebanon in 2000. And no doubt the reason Israel held on to those prisoners in the first place was to have them as hostages in some future prisoner exchange with Hezbollah.

That's how the game is played locally.

In the course of grabbing the Israeli hostages on July12, Hezbollah fired rockets and mortars at the northern Israeli town of Shlomi as a diversion, but nobody was hurt there. And apart from that, no Hezbollah missiles struck Israel that day. Indeed, none had been fired at Israel for at least four years, although there were regular skirmishes between Israeli soldiers and Hezbollah fighters along the frontier.

Hezbollah had the rockets, but they were not mad terrorists.

During the following 24 hours, however, Israel launched massive air strikes and artillery bombardments the length and breadth of Lebanon, striking Beirut Airport, Lebanese air force bases, the Beirut- Damascus highway, a power station and all sorts of other non-Hezbollah targets, and killing many civilians. And it was only on July13 that Hezbollah rockets began to hit cities all across northern Israel.

Nobody has clean hands here. Israel seized on the kidnap operation as the pretext for a massive onslaught aimed at destroying Hezbollah's resources and removing it from southern Lebanon - a perfectly legitimate goal, in line with United Nations Resolution 1559, but not one that the UN had envisaged as being accomplished by Israeli bombs. Hezbollah may just have been trying to raise its profile in Lebanon and the wider Arab world with a small but successful operation that humiliated the Israelis - or it may have foreseen the likelihood of a massive Israeli over-reaction, and calculated that it could ride it out and win from it.

Whether that was its intention or not, it probably will ride it out and win. Having fired at least 90 missiles at Israeli cities every day but two since the war began - though they only kill an average of one Israeli a day - Hezbollah launched only two rockets on Monday (probably a crew that didn't get the message to stop in time). If there should be a ceasefire in the next week, it will emerge the victor, since no international peace- keeping force is going to fight the kind of campaign that would be required to dig it and its weapons out of south Lebanon's hills and villages.

And if there is no ceasefire, then the Israeli Defence Force will be granted a further opportunity to demonstrate that it cannot do so either. At least, not at a cost in Israeli soldiers' lives that would be remotely acceptable to the Israeli public.

Gwynne Dyer is a London-based, independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Dozens killed in fighting as Israel authorizes offensive to continue Israel warns residents of Sidon, Lebanon's third-largest city, to leave ahead of imminent airstrikes.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

August 6, 2006 Sunday

FOURTH EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A2

Length: 593 words

Byline: By Sam F. Ghattas THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: BEIRUT, LEBANON

Body

Israel and **Hezbollah** sharply intensified fighting Saturday with airstrikes, rocket attacks and brutal ground fighting.

Israeli commandos battled **Hezbollah** guerrillas in a dramatic raid on an apartment building in the southern port city of Tyre on Saturday, while warplanes blasted south Beirut.

The fighting across Lebanon killed at least eight Lebanese and two Israeli soldiers, while a **Hezbollah** rocket volley killed three **women** in northern Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert met with senior ministers late Saturday. They approved continuation of the Lebanon offensive according to the present guidelines, officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to reporters.

Israel warned residents of Sidon, Lebanon's third-largest city, to leave Saturday ahead of imminent airstrikes on what it called **Hezbollah** targets.

"There is **Hezbollah** activity inside, and we are going to be targeting it more intensely than we have before," an Israeli military spokesman said.

Sidon, a predominantly Sunni Muslim city with a population of 100,000, has never been a stronghold of **Hezbollah**. The group draws its strength from Lebanon's Shiite Muslim population in south Beirut, southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley.

In the past two days, **Hezbollah** fired 365 rockets into Israel, including the deepest strike of the conflict -- on Hadera, about 50 miles south of the border.

Six civilians were killed in the attacks.

In the same period, Israel conducted as many as 170 airstrikes on targets in Lebanon, killing at least 45 people.

Dozens killed in fighting as Israel authorizes offensive to continue Israel warns residents of Sidon, Lebanon 's third-largest city, to leave ahead of imminent

The Israeli army also said Hezbollah had fired about 3,000 rockets into northern Israel since fighting broke out July 12.

The U.N. peacekeeping force in the south of Lebanon, known as UNIFIL, reported what it called "intense shelling and exchanges on the ground" along the common border.

Israel has taken control of a band of territory a few miles deep right across the frontier.

Israeli commandos battled Hezbollah guerrillas in a pre-dawn raid on an apartment building in Tyre. The raid was the latest Israeli commando operation deep inside Lebanese territory aimed at taking out Hezbollah positions.

Israel and Hezbollah claimed victory in the Tyre battle -- with Israel claiming it was "very successful" in taking out a key guerrilla unit involved in firing long-range rockets into Israel -- including one that hit Hadera.

Lebanese military and rescue workers said at least five Lebanese -- including a soldier at a nearby checkpoint -- were killed in the raid.

The Israeli military reported eight soldiers wounded, two seriously.

Israeli jets continued pounding targets late Saturday and early Sunday with strikes near Tyre, the southern market town of Nabatiyeh and two separate roads in the north of the country, both of them leading to Syria.

West Bank capture

Israeli forces arrested the speaker of the Palestinian parliament at his house early Sunday on the West Bank, Palestinian officials said.

The officials -- the director of the speaker Abdel Aziz Duaik's office and security officers -- said about 20 Israeli army vehicles surrounded Duaik's house and took him into custody.

The Israeli military had no immediate comment.

Airstrikes in Gaza

In the Gaza Strip, Israel pressed ahead with its incursion into the southern Gaza Strip on Saturday as airstrikes killed five Palestinians and tanks rolled to the edge of Rafah, officials said.

Sixteen Palestinians have been killed since Israeli troops and tanks moved into southern Gaza three days ago, part of an offensive in the Mediterranean coastal strip.

Notes

Middle East crisis

Graphic

PHOTO

PHOTO - In the Gaza Strip A relative mourns at teenage siblings' funeral Saturday in the Rafah refugee camp, in the south. Palestinian officials say they were killed by an Israeli aircraft missile. The Associated Press

Dozens killed in fighting as Israel authorizes offensive to continue Israel warns residents of Sidon, Lebanon 's third-largest city, to leave ahead of imminent

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

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War of Surprises

Hindustan Times

August 5, 2006 Saturday 11:25 AM EST

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Length: 848 words

Byline: Hindustan Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

NEW DELHI, India, Aug 5 -- A Lebanese politician recently used a topical analogy to describe the onset of the Israel-Lebanon conflict. In the World Cup final, Matterazzi sledged Zidane, who responded with a head-butt; the referee showed Zidane a red card and asked him to leave the field.

"Similarly," enunciated the Member of Parliament, "Hezbollah abducted two Israeli soldiers. Like abusing is part and parcel of soccer, the kidnapping of soldiers to bargain for your imprisoned people is also not unusual when the other country is occupying your land (Shebaa Farms). Zidane could have abused back but his reaction was overtly violent so he was shown a red card? Why isn't anyone showing Israel the red card?"

There are many in Lebanon who disagree with Hezbollah's initial act of apparent aggression, but nearly everyone agrees that Israel's reaction has been a lot more than simply over the top. Former Lebanese Naval Commander, Admiral Doctor Samir El-Khadem, who now runs the Arab Institute for East & West Studies in Beirut, explains the surprise element: "Nasrallah had admitted that he expected Israel to hit some Hezbollah strongholds on the southern border. But nobody imagined such massive destruction of Lebanese infrastructure? This has been a war of surprises and deception."

It was quite clear that the Israelis had planned this attack for a while - but hitting the southern suburbs of Beirut and the Capital's international airport in the first days of conflict was unfathomable. The next surprise was for Israel. Despite assuming that Hezbollah was being armed by Iran, Israel has been flattened by the enemy's resilience: it could never have guessed that it was going to be hit by the number of rockets with which it has been hit for over three weeks.

Moreover, Israel's call for its ground troops to enter should have been enough to break Hezbollah's backbone and create a buffer zone all over again. But Hezbollah's guerrilla tactics have made it a 'war of movement' that Israel has found hard to tackle.

There are also the figures: 900 dead, 3,000 injured and a million Lebanese displaced, and all this for two soldiers captured. This has been the most unpleasant surprise of all.

Civilians pay the cost, bear the brunt

In most wars such as this, the ratio between those dead and injured is far greater than has been recorded this time around. Some doctors suspect that the Israeli bombs may well have partially chemical in nature. "Compare the

War of Surprises

numbers of those dead to those injured," says Dr Ghassan Hage, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Health. "It's clear that the weapons used by Israel were highly destructive."

Most hospitals in Beirut and other places only have supplies that will last them a month and it's already the 24th day of war. There is shortage of electricity, water and fuel and hardly any new supplies are being allowed to come in. With Beirut already having 63,000 refugees in the peak of summer, sanitation is also a huge concern.

National resistance, not terrorism

Hussain Ahmood (27) is a resident of Soor, in south Lebanon, now taking refuge in a Beirut hotel. "**Hezbollah** have never targeted any area outside the Israel-Lebanon border and there is a reason why they have done that.

They are a resistance movement and happen to be Islamic - that does not make them Al-Qaeda," he says.

Many Lebanese people feel that **Hezbollah** is democratic. Mohammad Sayeed, a resident of Beirut's southern Dahyeh, says, "I live in an area that is a **Hezbollah** stronghold.. but they never come around and ask **women** to cover their heads or ask me to pray. They let you live your life and they live theirs?. I thank Hassan Nasrallah for doing what he is doing because he is the only who is standing up for the rest of us."

Ali Hamdan, head of the foreign affair Bureau of the Amal Movement (a political party backed by **Hezbollah**) feels that **Hezbollah**'s real motive is the reclamation of the Shebaa Farms (that was captured by Israel during the 1967 Arab-Israeli wars) and the freedom of Lebanese prisoners in Israeli jails. "Israel says Shebaa Farms belongs to Syria but the Syrians have hinted time and time again that it belongs to us. We just want the Israelis to leave, and then we can amicably settle any remaining disputes with the Syrians. **Hezbollah**'s motives are nationalistic and not 'terroristic'," he says.

Hezbollah's goodwill is also magnified by its welfare and charitable activities; and of course, it's been granted political legitimacy after it became part of Lebanon's democratic setup in 2005. "Nasrallah had earlier asked for Israel to be wiped off the map," says 55-year-old refugee Ziad Baqri. "When you say this, you become a great enemy of Israel and an even greater enemy of the US."

Even 62-year-old Wakib Mussalmani, wandering the streets of Beirut, searching for his family housed somewhere in the city, does not blame **Hezbollah** for making the first move towards this chaos: "America is the mother of all terrorists and they have done this to me."

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Load-Date: August 13, 2006

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

The Irish Times

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 15

Length: 1642 words

Body

Madam, - As in 1996, there is only one word that needs to be said to all those contributors, well meaning and otherwise, who write to defend and excuse Israel's barbaric behaviour in the Middle East. Qana. - Yours, etc,

JIM O'SULLIVAN, Rathedmond, Sligo.

Madam, - After Qana can there be any doubt that the Israeli armed forces are terrorists? - Yours, etc,

Dr COLM STEPHENS, St Patrick's Terrace, Drumcondra, Dublin 3.

Madam, - With the latest massacre perpetrated by the Israelis, surely the time has come for the civilised world to publicly show its disgust at such violations of the most basic principles of international law. We can no longer go on treating the Israeli state as a normal member of the international community. We must now publicly and clearly distance ourselves from such horrific assaults on the most innocent and vulnerable members of the Lebanese population.

The fact that this indefensible attack came just days after the killing of four unarmed members of the UN only underlines the Israeli government's complete indifference to all norms of international conduct and human rights.

I believe the Irish Government should lead the way by calling for the exclusion of Israel from next year's Eurovision Song Contest. This may sound like a trivial action, especially when set against the appalling massacre of children perpetrated by the Israeli state, but such a move would be a very public and high-profile indication that Israel cannot be considered a normal member of the international community while it persists in ignoring that community's most basic precepts. If Israel is not excluded, I believe Ireland should boycott the event.

Israel has placed itself outside the pale of normal civilised conduct. The state of Israel should hang its head in shame, as should any state that defends or excuses it. - Yours, etc,

BRIAN MACGABHANN, Béal an Daingin, Connemara, Co Galway.

Madam, - Alan Shatter (July 29th) makes some telling points about the position of the Irish left on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and by implication on the wider issue of the struggle between the West and growing Islamic fundamentalism. There is confusion, and some plain bad politics, being propagated by some on the Left on these important questions. As an active member of the Labour Party I hold a different view.

However murky, heartbreaking and confused the war and politics in the Middle East may be, the issue is the right of the state of Israel to exist within the pre-1967 borders. This right is denied to it by both Hizbullah and Hamas. The

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

other issue is the growing hold of theocracy, fanaticism and fascism on many Islamic people. The question is where people of the left should stand on these matters.

The struggle going on today between reactionary fundamentalism and the West is a continuation of the conflict which started in Europe over 300 years ago between those who pined for a return to the certainties of pre-Enlightenment politico-religious systems and those who believed, with the likes of Thomas Paine in, the rights of man - liberty, equality and democracy - despite the uncertainty they bring.

There is an unfortunate tendency on the left to identify all who oppose America as objectively progressive. This has often been so, but is not always the case. In the matter of Islamic medievalism and its aggressive political and military manifestations it is certainly not the case. The US has made many mistakes and has needlessly alienated potential allies in this struggle, but it is on the right side this time.

It is the job of all those on the left to be clear where they stand on the basic principles of liberty and equality; to criticise where necessary the American/Israeli actions; to support those elements in the Middle East and elsewhere who oppose the growing fanaticism and fascism in their own societies; and not to confuse anti-Americanism with progressive politics. - Yours, etc,

Cllr JOHN McMANUS, Novara Road, Bray, Co Wicklow.

Madam, - It is ironic that Alan Shatter (July 29th) attacks Michael D Higgins for a "lack of objectivity" in his comments on Israel's military action in Lebanon. Mr Shatter's own contribution owes more to propaganda than to objectivity.

He rightly points out that under international law a state has the right to defend itself and its citizens from attack. By his logic, Lebanon should by now have taken military action against Israel. What exactly has Israel been doing other than attacking the state of Lebanon and its citizens? Israel has not simply sought to overcome the terrorist threat from Hizbullah in a limited military operation. Instead Israeli forces have launched a brutal assault on the civilian population centres of Lebanon.

Israeli politicians claim to have no quarrel with the Lebanese people, yet over 400 Lebanese civilians have died due to Israel's military action. Israel claims to support deployment of the Lebanese army in southern Lebanon, yet Lebanese soldiers perished in an unprovoked Israeli attack on a military base in the first week of the current conflict.

Certainly Lebanon would have the right to defend itself by force and to call in aid from Israel's enemies in Syria and Iran. The world should be thankful that Lebanon's moderate government has called for a ceasefire, instead of exercising the right to defend itself which Mr Shatter has correctly identified.

Mr Shatter also conveniently ignores the unlawful killing of four United Nations observers by Israeli forces at Khiam last Tuesday. This Israeli action showed at best a reckless contempt for human life and at worst a deliberate determination to eliminate UN observers from the scene of the conflict. It is no surprise that apologists for Israeli militarism should wish to gloss over the appalling and possibly deliberate attack on the UN.

Mr Shatter calls upon Michael D Higgins to wake up "to the type of world in which we live" and to the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. Such propaganda seeks to justify Israel's actions at all costs. Israel's supporters would do well to wake up to the reality that terrorism will never be defeated by the slaughter of innocent civilians or UN observers. - Yours, etc,

JOHN WALSH, Dunshaughlin, Co Meath.

Madam, - For the past two weeks your Letters page has been filled with many versions of the history of the conflict in the Middle East, depending on the point being argued. Now all this all pales into insignificance as we learn of the latest war crime committed by the Israelis.

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

The sequence of events was as follows. The Israelis ordered all residents in southern Lebanon to leave. The United Nations requested a three-day ceasefire to allow civilians to leave the area. This was refused by the Israelis and now scores of civilians - old people, women and children - have been killed as they slept, by a bomb probably made in the United States.

This pattern of Israeli behaviour had been reported earlier in the conflict. They order people to leave their homes and when they do they are attacked. This is a war crime to add to the many already reported. There is no excuse for this, no justification whatever. What type of nation would allow or even order its armed forces to behave in such a way and how can the Israelis possibly believe that such behaviour is conducive to good relations with their Arab neighbours in years to come? Have they lost all sense of reason and decency?

When are we going to apply the same standards of criticism to Israel as we do to other countries? When are we going to stop feeling residual guilt over the Holocaust? The Israelis and Zionist organisations have used the Holocaust - and I repeat "used" the Holocaust - as a stick with which to beat public opinion and as a cover for the atrocities committed by successive Israeli governments.

It is time to call a spade a spade. If it looks like a war crime, if it smells like a war crime, the chances are it is a war crime. - Yours, etc,

ALAN McPARTLAND, Grange Court, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.

Madam, - Few can deny the distress that Lebanese and Palestinian civilians are enduring due to the Israeli offensive against Hizbullah and Hamas but it is disingenuous of commentators to argue that the Israeli response is disproportionate. How should they respond to organisations whose raison d'être is to wipe the Israeli nation from the map?

After Israel withdrew from both Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, both Hamas and Hizbullah with their incursions have provided casus belli. Israel, as the only true democracy in the Middle East, is entitled to exist peacefully with its neighbours and, difficult as it is to acknowledge for many of us in the West, the endowment of human rights in the region is a two-way process that involves both the recognition of Israel's right to existence and the creation of a Palestinian state.

The real problem lies with Iran and Syria which continued to fund Hizbullah and other other Islamic fundamentalist organisations while Israel was slowly moving towards withdrawing from the West Bank.

There is now no room for moderates in the Middle East and it is unlikely that we will see further acts of withdrawal by Israel, whose very existence has been challenged again. What would you do in Israel's position? - Yours, etc,

CATHAL McCANN, Riverstown, Dundalk.

Madam - Ivana Bacik (July 25th) writes that "the tragic consequences of such a disproportionate reaction to Hizbullah provocation make the inaction of the international community, including our own Government, wholly indefensible".

Arguably it has been the continued inaction over the past six years by the United Nations which, along with many Western governments including our own, turned a blind eye to the arming of the terrorists by Syria and Iran, perhaps for short-term political gain, that has led us to this dreadful conflict. - Yours, etc,

DAVID M ABRAHAMSON, Trinity College, Dublin 2.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Shock and distress

Ottawa Citizen

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A9

Length: 298 words

Byline: Joseph Alexander Norland, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

The United Nations Security Council has expressed "extreme shock and distress at the shelling ... in Qana." I express "extreme shock and distress" at the Security Council which:

- Rushed to a decision without investigating the issue, and referred to the killing of "dozens of civilians" based on Arab reports. One recalls that during the Jenin campaign of April 2002, the Arabs reported 500 deaths, but a UN inquiry found one-tenth that number, mostly among terrorist gunmen.
- Failed to address the well-documented fact that **Hezbollah** places munitions and missile launchers among civilians, thus attracting Israeli fire.
- Failed to condemn **Hezbollah** for deliberately targeting Israeli civilians, killing **women** and children. **Hezbollah** even went so far as to shell a hospital in the Israeli town of Nahariya. Also omitted was the fact that the current war was caused by a **Hezbollah** invasion of Israel, in which two Israelis were abducted.
- Made no reference to the curious fact that eight hours elapsed between the Israeli bombing and the collapse of the building in which civilians died. This raises the suspicion that, at best, the building collapsed because of munitions stored in it, and at worst was deliberately destroyed by **Hezbollah** to incite public opinion against Israel. One also wonders why civilians were not evacuated despite explicit Israeli warnings.
- Failed to notice that **Hezbollah** is guilty of flouting the Security Council resolution that explicitly required this terrorist militia to disarm.

Finally, one notes that among the nations expressing "extreme shock and distress" are those who engaged in the wholesale bombings of Serbia, killing more than 1,000 civilians, destroying the country's infrastructure and even bombing the Chinese embassy.

Joseph Alexander Norland,

Ottawa

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Shock and distress

End of Document

Feelings mixed for Israeli mothers as sons go to war

Christian Science Monitor

August 10, 2006, Thursday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 1

Length: 1227 words

Byline: Ilene R. Prusher Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: ZICHRON YAAKOV, ISRAEL

Body

With the *Hizbullah*-Israel war grinding toward a violent second month, most mothers with a son in the Israeli army would feel conflicted.

But Shlomit Kanotopsky has four. A mother of six, her four oldest children are boys in active duty or reservists who have been called up. One is in Lebanon - she hasn't heard from him in more than a week. Two are stationed near the border. Yet another is posted on a base in a position that she hopes will keep him away from the front lines.

"I want them to feel I'm there for them, that I'm not all stressed," she says, recalling her last phone call with one son. "I wanted to be strong, to hold it in, but ... I cried lot," she says, sitting in a cafe in this seaside town near Haifa, just beyond reach, thus far, of most of *Hizbullah*'s rockets.

Mothers hold an important place in Israel's political fabric. When Israel pulled out of south Lebanon in 2000 after an 18-year occupation, it was the antiwar movement "The Four Mothers" that spearheaded the public campaign to withdraw. The group was started by four mothers after a 1997 helicopter crash that killed 73 soldiers on their way to serve in what Israel had dubbed its "security zone." Many women - both mothers who had lost sons and those who wanted to help bring the boys home safely - played an key role in rallying opinion in favor of a unilateral pullout.

Once Israel moved back to the international border, they argued, *Hizbullah* would have no pretext for attacks. And if the Iranian-backed Lebanese militia did attack, the theory went, Israel would respond with bruising force.

At the time, Mrs. Kanotopsky said in a radio interview that she was quite happy; two of her sons had been serving in combat positions. One of them was angry with her. Indeed, across the political spectrum, there never was clear consensus on the pullout; some here feared that it would display weakness and bolster *Hizbullah*.

Farewell to sons

Now, however, the famously divisive streams of Israeli public opinion have converged. The debate focuses not on whether Israel should be at war with *Hizbullah*, but how to wage it better. The founders of "The Four Mothers" have come out in support of the effort. And Kanotopsky, sad as it makes her for both Israelis and Lebanese, says she is sending off her sons with a full heart, feeling that there is no other choice.

Feelings mixed for Israeli mothers as sons go to war

"I don't want us going into Lebanon, but I don't want to let them destroy our lives like this," she says, describing a morning commute that includes a scan of the horizon for rockets. "It's a crazy reality we're living in, and I think it's important to be strong and defend our state."

By profession, a key focus of Kanotopsky's job is helping people cope: She's a psychologist specializing in children, and spends most days working at a hospital in rocket-rattled Safed, tending to civilians and soldiers suffering from shock and other signs of trauma. Even after 23 years of experience in a country that has known more than its share of conflict, she says, "This war has been more difficult for me, as a mother, than any time in my life. It has really changed my motherhood."

"I feel this total loss of control over being able to protect my children. It's kind of an unending worry," says Kanotopsky, who wears her hair draped in brightly striped scarf that signals a religious but modern lifestyle, and chunky jewelry that hints at an artsiness.

She's very proud of her sons, but adds that she and her husband, who immigrated from New York when he was 17, never encouraged them to sign up for combat positions.

But Israeli society did. The draft process starts in high school, and many teenage boys consider signing up for a challenging combat unit to be the ultimate expression of manhood and patriotism. The more selective divisions are so in demand that they can afford to take only the fittest and smartest, many of whom will agree to stay for at least a year more than the mandatory three in order to become an officer. Afterward, those with combat duty on their resumes are likely to be favored for better jobs, even in the civilian sector, and an employer may look askance at an applicant who didn't serve.

Given that backdrop, perhaps it's no surprise that each of Kanotopsky's sons followed the next into the elite Golani Brigades. Zvi, who is 30, became a career officer; he's a deputy battalion commander who lives in a community that came under so many Katyusha attacks that he asked his wife to take their two-year-old daughter and flee south. David, at 28 also married and a father of two, got a call-up notice and was sent to a base near the border, along with thousands of other reservists. Evyatar, a 26-year-old whom she describes as the one who doesn't love service - preferring his studies and playing ancient Persian music - is the one who has already been sent into battle.

And Omri, who is 23, is at a base southeast of Haifa, involved in training conscripts.

Her daughter, 17-year-old Avia, is interested in being drafted next year. Girls can choose between the army or "national service," two years in a nonmilitary position such as education or social work. Kanotopsky's youngest son, Eliasaf, is talking about joining Golani.

"And I say, what, already? He's only 14," she says. "I've been telling him, 'You don't have to go into the Golani. You could go into the intelligence corps. You could do many things in the army without going into combat,' " she says, and then smiles sadly, a nod to the fact that convincing him might be a losing battle. "It's a classic argument a lot of parents go through with their kids," she says, a balance between personal motivations and national needs.

Meanwhile, uncertainty gnaws. She feels it at home, where sirens send the remaining adults in the village into shelters many times a day; children have been sent away, leaving an eerie quiet. It comes with the bleat of news interrupted by government warnings to take shelter. She sleeps with the cellphone in her bed.

What puts her most on edge is the sound of a car slowing down outside her home: she worries it might be someone from the army, coming to bring bad tidings.

At work, she puts all of that aside. She has learned that what children under stress need most is calm parents. "When they see all the adults around them panicking they start to panic, too," she explains. "And helping people as I do, it helps me summon a lot of strength. Otherwise I'd sit and just imagine all day."

A home-cooked meal; news of a death

Feelings mixed for Israeli mothers as sons go to war

When a nephew, also in the army, had a few hours free on Sunday before his unit moved into Lebanon, she and her husband picked up him and a friend from the same unit. Kanotopsky treated to them to a home-cooked meal and a few hours of relaxation. Two days later, the friend, Noam Meirson, died in the fighting; he was a month away from his wedding day.

"I feel like I was the last mother who saw him," she says, her eyes filming over, before she reaches for the ringing phone. This week, she will attend his week-long mourning service, where she'll visit with people she doesn't know at all, and yet knows all too well.

The loss of soldiers hurts so much, she says, because Israelis largely see them as kids - everyone's kids. "They're serving us, and the tragedy is that they usually haven't had a chance yet to do anything in life except for that."

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Load-Date: August 9, 2006

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**THE FIRST STEP; BLAIR HOPEFUL FOR MID-EAST PEACE AS UN
THRASHES OUT DEAL**

Sunday Mirror

August 6, 2006 Sunday

3 Star Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 340 words

Byline: BY VINCENT MOSS AND FROM CHRIS HUGHES IN BEIRUT

Body

TONY Blair hailed a United Nations deal yesterday as an "absolutely vital first step" to ending the bloodshed in the Middle East.

The PM, who postponed his Caribbean break to deal with the crisis, praised the draft UN agreement hammered out by America and France.

It is said to call for a "full cessation of violence" but, according to UN sources, explicitly allows Israel to strike back in the event of a Hezbollah attack.

The deal came on the 25th day of fighting as Israeli commandos launched more raids on Hezbollah guerrillas in south Lebanon.

But Downing Street hopes the UN's Security Council will back the agreement, paving the way for a ceasefire.

Mr Blair said: "The priority now is to get the resolution adopted as soon as possible and then to work for a permanent ceasefire. I will work tirelessly to re-energise the Middle East peace process, the only way to provide a viable, long-term solution to this situation, with a Palestinian state alongside a secure Israel."

The deal will be seen as a victory for the US and Israel who refused to back global calls for an immediate ceasefire.

A second UN resolution is expected to map out a long-term peace plan including setting up an international stabilisation force in southern Lebanon.

The deal came after Israeli special forces commandos in helicopters swooped on Hezbollah guerrillas yesterday, destroying a rocket-firing team in Tyre.

THE FIRST STEP BLAIR HOPEFUL FOR MID-EAST PEACE AS UN THRASHES OUT DEAL

It is believed the launch centre had been responsible for hundreds of attacks on Israel.

An Israeli Defence Force official said: "This was a successful incursion focussed on high-value targets.

Hezbollah was using civilians as human shields."

Eight Israeli commandos were wounded while the army said seven **Hezbollah** fighters were killed without civilian casualties. **Hezbollah** claimed one Israeli soldier had been killed.

Meanwhile, 170 **Hezbollah** rockets slammed into towns across northern Israel.

One salvo killed three Israeli **women** in an Arab village, bringing to 33 the number of Israeli civilians killed by rockets since fighting began.

COMMENT: Page 14

Graphic

Lebanese soldiers in Tyre examine remains of destroyed missile site' HOPE: Blair

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

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Comment & Debate: FREE RADICAL: On Hampstead Heath I feel the pain of war

The Guardian - Final Edition

August 5, 2006 Saturday

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Section: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES ; Pg. 33

Length: 627 words

Byline: Norman Johnson

Body

Me. My family. A long, lazy afternoon on Hampstead Heath. My kids playing. Twins on the way. A picnic. Our free Marks & Spencer picnic rug. Zadie Smith's On Beauty face down next to a brimming glass of chilled Tasmanian sauvignon ("a scrumptious summer holiday bargain if ever there was one" - N Johnson).

So I'm just taking another blissful sip, and thinking: how can this be borne? Here's me. My family. My friends. All of us healthy and looking great. Not a care in the world (unless you count the scandalous local parking situation). Then, far away in Lebanon: a lot of people who are not so lucky. Dead, even. And what's worse: I know these people being bombed would enjoy being here just as much I am, if only they weren't teetotal. We could offer them juice. If they weren't thousands of miles away. Being bombed. Like everyone else, I'm thinking: it's got to stop.

It's a fairytale setting. With the help of my high-res binoculars, I can just make out a blonde splashing in the far-off women's pond. In the middle distance, swallows are swooping over the lake, rosy breasts glinting in the late afternoon sunshine. Close by, rare butterflies dance round the barbecue, where juicy steaks are sizzling. Yum. I can't kid myself that that the bomb victims, on both sides, wouldn't have liked those juicy steaks just as much as me, even if they were less keen on the sausages. Would they eat the rice salad? They could have had mine.

An earnest young friend breaks into my reverie; asks how I'd go about bringing peace to the Middle East. Should I give her the unpalatable truth? That it will have to wait? That, right now, I'm still finessing the liberation of Iraq, with Helmand province and the Labour succession still in the in-tray? Gimme a break. Unable to speak, I find that all I can offer her is a hug. And as she gently frees herself from my arms, I see that she, too, has tears in her eyes.

Yes, I'm suffering here on the Heath, more, I'd guess, than the many good people who think that an immediate ceasefire is the route to saving lives in Lebanon. Why? Because, unlike my esteemed colleagues, I know it's not that simple. No pain, no gain. Can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. Or legs. Sure, I too would like to hold a picnic without pain. To marinate a lamb chop with a clear conscience. To throw a frisbee to my youngest without contrasting this carefree gesture with the plight of all those kids who'll never throw a frisbee again. But here's my point. That's exactly what Hizbullah want us to think.

Work it out. The more soldiers they kidnap, the more the Israeli missiles rain down, the more picnics get ruined and the louder will be the bleating for a ceasefire from feeble western liberals who want to enjoy their summer evenings in peace. Just get Blair to lean on Bush, the bleaters' orthodoxy goes, and we can savour our coleslaw again. In your dreams.

Comment & Debate: FREE RADICAL: On Hampstead Heath I feel the pain of war

God knows it gets lonely out here on the Heath, standing up to the might of Hizbullah. And it's tough, keeping thoughts of jihadism from spoiling the sylvan scene. I look around, at the buttercups and bright daisies, and think of the poignant, torn stems and broken blooms that now litter the ruined verges of Beirut. Nobody wants wildflowers to get squashed. Or kids. Least of all me. You know me. I've got kids myself. But is that reason enough for me to take the easy route, to the appeasers' side? I see a dog. I think of lost Lebanese dogs called whatever the Lebanese is for Spot. Dogs whose barks have been silenced for ever. Sad. But perhaps necessary. I pour myself another glass and reflect that this, unlike my peace of mind, is something Hizbullah cannot take away from me. How long can I endure such suffering? For once, I do not know.

norman.johnson@guardian.co.uk

Load-Date: August 5, 2006

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Mass funerals occur on Muslim holy day

The Guardian (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island)

August 19, 2006 Saturday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. A17

Length: 269 words

Byline: AP

Body

The breeze blew fine dust across graves where 29 people killed in an Israeli air strike - half of them children - were buried, as the ground was opened for funerals in south Lebanon on Friday, the Muslim holy day.

Women in black robes, their heads hidden by black scarves, held pictures of the dead and threw rice and rose petals on the plywood caskets in the village of Qana, struck during the 34-day Israel- **Hezbollah** war. Twenty-six coffins were draped in the Lebanese flag and three in the yellow **Hezbollah** flag.

To the east, the Lebanese army symbolically took control of a first border village from withdrawing Israeli forces, as two soldiers drove slowly through Kfar Kila in a jeep. And in a bid to prevent more arms from reaching **Hezbollah** fighters, the government vowed to take over all border crossings countrywide, including 60 known smuggling routes from Syria.

At a school in south Beirut's Bourj el-Barajneh neighbourhood, **Hezbollah** started handing out crisp \$100 US bills to residents who lost homes in the Israeli bombing campaign - \$12,000 to each claimant. The stacks of bills were pulled out of a suitcase. **Hezbollah** is financed by oil-rich Iran.

The Higher Relief Council, the government agency that deals with disasters, said Friday that the Lebanese government and UN agencies were undertaking assessments countrywide.

While the government was still absent from the reconstruction effort, there were other offers of private help besides **Hezbollah's** direct payments.

Qana, about 10 kilometres southeast of the port city of Tyre, held the most elaborate of several funerals in southern Lebanon on Friday.

Graphic

Relatives holding portraits of some of those killed grieve at a mass funeral procession in Qana, southern Lebanon, Friday. The funeral of 29 people killed in an Israeli air strike on July 30 - half of them children - took place about half a kilometre from the two-storey home which was destroyed in the attack.

Mass funerals occur on Muslim holy day

Load-Date: August 20, 2006

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Prospects appear poor for Lebanon ceasefire set to start this morning

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

August 14, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 1085 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

BEIRUT -- The people of Lebanon and Israel held their breath Sunday night wondering whether **Hezbollah** and Israel would honour a United Nations resolution ratified by the two sides that calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities, and that UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said was to begin this morning at 8 a.m. local times.

Leaders on both sides expressed their desire for peace and the need for an international force -- 15,000 UN soldiers and 15,000 Lebanese soldiers -- to be inserted into the main combat zone in southern Lebanon.

But the portents for calm did not look good on the eve of the truce.

Plumes of similar-looking grey and black smoke billowed forbiddingly above both Beirut and the northern Israeli city of Haifa Sunday after Israel launched its biggest air raids of the war on the Lebanese capital and **Hezbollah** demonstrated that its ability to terrorize its neighbour remained intact by spraying more than 250 rockets across northern Israel -- the most it has launched in one day since the war was triggered on July 12 by **Hezbollah's** kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers.

Foreign reporters embedded with Israeli troops in Lebanon filed vivid reports Sunday describing intense fighting along a wildly uneven 70-kilometre front that was as much as 30 kilometres deep in places. **Hezbollah** answered attacks by Israeli aircraft and tanks by launching potent Russian-made missiles at Israeli tanks and infantry from fortified positions linked to underground tunnels.

Given the increase in violence over the past three days, it looked as though both sides felt there was still unfinished business. It was difficult to see how the two sides would be able to completely disengage when the truce was set to take effect.

Signs from the Lebanese side were particularly discouraging. A cabinet meeting that had been called to discuss the specifics of the deployment of Lebanese troops to the south was indefinitely postponed without official explanation late Sunday amid Lebanese media reports that **Hezbollah** refused to lay down its arms. This delay, which followed unanimous approval of the UN initiative on Saturday, will inevitably postpone the full implementation of the UN resolution. It will also provide an additional pretext for both sides to keep fighting.

Prospects appear poor for Lebanon ceasefire set to start this morning

"I am not naive. I am living in the Middle East and I am aware that not every decision is fully implemented," Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said when asked about the prospects for a quick cessation of hostilities after the UN accord was endorsed by the Israeli cabinet by a vote of 24-0 with one abstention.

"A lot depends on the implementation . . . and the determination of the UN and the international community to carry out their decisions."

After **Hezbollah** leader Hassan Nasrallah declared on Saturday that his fighters would attack any Israeli soldiers in Lebanon after the truce, Israel's Deputy Prime Minister Eli Yishai said: "The moment a single Katyusha is fired, we should hit their infrastructure very hard -- water, electricity, gas and more."

About 20 bombs or artillery shells dropped by Israeli warplanes or fired by Israel warships exploded in Beirut at about the same time that Israel's cabinet was approving the UN accord. The barrage -- which landed within a span of less than two minutes in the middle of the afternoon -- caused more than the usual panic in the streets of Beirut. It reduced to rubble 11 apartment buildings in a suburb just to the south of the city centre that had previously escaped most of the fighting.

As of late Sunday, only 10 deaths were reported from this bombardment, most probably because most people had heeded Israeli warnings to flee the area.

The air raids were part of a major Israeli offensive that began early Saturday when about 20,000 ground troops rushed to join about 10,000 others already in southern Lebanon. Those troops would only "leave in tandem with the deployment south of the Lebanese army along with the international force," Livni said.

When the international force will arrive has been the subject of intense speculation. The force, which Lebanon said Sunday will include troops from France, Italy, Turkey, Spain, Morocco, Indonesia and Malaysia, may start to take up position within 10 days. It will be the beginning of a process that may take as long as a month to complete, according to the UN.

An eyewitness reached by telephone in the southern Christian town of Marjayoun said it was relentlessly hammered for hours Sunday by artillery and tank shells. Israel said four days ago that it had captured Marjayoun almost without a fight.

Elsewhere, a Shia mosque was struck in the middle of the Bekaa Valley, where support for **Hezbollah** was particularly strong. Targets were also hit in the eastern Bekaa.

Gas stations in the southern port of Tyre were heavily bombed Sunday by Israeli aircraft, as were the hills surrounding the city, which has been entirely cut off from the rest of Lebanon for nearly one week.

After losing a high of 24 soldiers in fighting on Saturday, including a **female** helicopter mechanic, with 11 more seriously wounded, Israel said five of its soldiers were killed in combat in Lebanon Sunday. An Israeli civilian was killed by a **Hezbollah** rocket in Haifa.

At least 20 Lebanese civilians died Sunday, according to the Lebanese government, adding to a tally that it claims already numbered about 1,000 civilians. Forty-six Israeli civilians have died in **Hezbollah** rocket attacks.

Israel, which claims to have killed about 550 **Hezbollah** fighters, dropped leaflets in Beirut Sunday that listed the names of many of the those it said were dead. **Hezbollah** has only admitted a relatively small number of casualties.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

What happened Sunday and early today in the Middle East.

- The UN said Israeli and Lebanese leaders had agreed to ceasefire at 8 a.m. today to end month-long war between Israel and **Hezbollah**.

Prospects appear poor for Lebanon ceasefire set to start this morning

- Syria says **Hezbollah** has the right to resist Israeli forces until they withdraw from south Lebanon.
- Israel's foreign minister says Israeli troops would only pull out of Lebanon when an international force was deployed.
- Lebanese security sources say Israeli air raids killed at least 17.
- **Hezbollah** launches its heaviest one-day rocket barrage into Israel, firing more than 250 rockets that killed one and injured 91.
- At least 1,076 people in Lebanon and 144 Israelis, including 104 soldiers, have been killed in the war. Israel's army estimates it killed 530 **Hezbollah** guerrillas during the month of fighting in Lebanon.

Reuters

Graphic

Colour Photo: Morteza Nikoubazl/Reuters; A Lebanese Christian woman prays Sunday during a religious ceremony at Al-Adra church in the city of Zahle, north of Beirut.

Load-Date: August 14, 2006

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US diplomats battle to save the day for Israel

Australian Financial Review

August 8, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; International News; Pg. 13

Length: 590 words

Byline: Tony Walker WASHINGTON

Body

A spike in Israel's war casualties, in which 12 Israeli army reservists were killed by a Hezbollah rocket attack, has underscored the high costs of a conflict which shows no sign of ending, despite diplomatic efforts to bring about a cease-fire.

Israel embarked on its war against Hezbollah, with an American "green light", in the expectation that it would quickly bring the radical Islamic militia to heel, but the reverse has been the case.

The war stretches towards the end of its fourth week and Israel's hard-won reputation for invincibility is under challenge as Hezbollah gains credit in Lebanon and across the Arab world for its ability to withstand an Israeli onslaught.

The war has not turned out as Israel anticipated and led the US to believe it would. This is the story of the first month of fighting.

The question is whether American diplomacy, having provided cover for Israel's hitherto unsuccessful efforts to smash Hezbollah militarily, will now be able to deliver a cease-fire that achieves some of what Israel has been unable to bring about on the battlefield.

A United Nations draft resolution, jointly sponsored by the US and France, is aimed at neutralising Hezbollah's military capabilities, particularly its ability to launch hundreds of rockets a day into northern Israel, paralysing one-third of the country.

The signs are not promising. Lebanon has said a cease-fire resolution that does not require Israel's withdrawal is unacceptable. Hezbollah spokesmen have derided the UN draft.

"We are saying the Lebanese army, right after the cease-fire, right after the first resolution, takes charge of the south, takes over the military position at the same time that Israel withdraws to the border," said Mohammed Bahaa Chatah, senior adviser to Lebanon's Prime Minister Fouad Siniora.

"If we adopt a fuzzy plan waiting for some international force to be put together, in the meantime things can escalate - and they probably will - and can spill over to other countries in the region, and that's the last thing that anyone wants."

US diplomats battle to save the day for Israel

The US-French draft (they have come together on the Lebanon issue because of traditional US closeness to Israel and France's historical ties to Lebanon) calls for "a full cessation of hostilities" based on "the immediate cessation by Hezbollah of all attacks and the immediate cessation by Israel of all offensive military operations".

But there is no requirement for Israel to draw down its forces after a cease-fire.

This will await the establishment of an international stabilisation force, to be the subject of a follow-up Security Council resolution, that might take months.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who slow-walked the diplomatic process in the conflict's early stages, is now urging a quick acceptance of the UN resolution.

She called on Hezbollah's backer's - Iran and Syria - to get behind the diplomatic process.

"We will ask everyone who has any influence with all the parties to talk to them about taking this opportunity," said Dr Rice in Crawford, Texas, where she has been briefing President George Bush.

But Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem was not encouraging. "This agreement is bad in every sense of the word," he said while on a visit to Lebanon.

Dr Rice repeated the standard US position that there can be no return to the "status quo ante because we don't want to create a situation in which we get out of this, and then you create the conditions in which Hezbollah, a state within a state, goes across the line again, abducts soldiers, and we get another war".

Graphic

FOUR PHOTOS: Clockwise from top left, Israeli artillery fires into southern Lebanon from the border with Israel; an Israeli soldier stands in front of a portrait of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah outside a home in southern Lebanon; anti-US protesters in Jakarta demonstrate outside the United Nations building in the Indonesian city; and Lebanese women flee an Israeli bombardment in Beirut's southern suburbs. Photos: AFP, REUTERS

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

Article attacking Israel unfair

The Whit: Rowan University

December 7, 2006 Thursday

University Wire

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 1

Length: 493 words

Body

An opinion article ran in the Nov. 2 issue of The Whit about about the recent fighting in Lebanon. This letter was sent in response to that article. Imagine, as residents of the state of New Jersey, if Pennsylvania, Delaware and New York deny that we have a right to exist as a state, for the only reason being that our state is populated mostly by people who have different beliefs than those of the other states.

As a result, New Jersey is constantly bombarded by mortar shells on a daily basis. Usually targeted are places such as the Rowan Townhouses or Edgewood Apartments, because that is where the most damage can be done to civilians. Sounds preposterous, right? Unfortunately, this happens in Israel every day. Groups such as Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah in Lebanon claim that Israel has no right to exist, and use this to justify the murder of innocent men, women and children. Their justifications are full of half-truths and lies which they use to draw sympathy to their cause. The main goals of the Israeli forces sent into Lebanon this past summer were to take down the key players in Hezbollah with as few civilian casualties as possible. That's why the targets were places where the leaders of Hezbollah were. For Hezbollah, the goal was simple: murder as many Israelis as possible. It is one thing to send rockets that will destroy the site in which it is targeted. It is a completely different situation when you have weapons designed to both kill and maim innocent civilians, such as those used by Hezbollah. Unfortunately, the reality is that many innocent lives were lost on both sides. But what some don't realize is that there are Muslims living in, and protected by, Israel. So by attacking Israel, the Lebanese are attacking those who share the same faith. This paper chose to publish an Op/Ed piece that similarly used these same half-truths and lies to chastise Israel for its military action this past summer. The writer told a lie when he said that Israeli soldiers "invaded" Lebanon. The kidnapped soldiers were indeed kidnapped in Israel, and would not have even been there if not for the constant bombardment of Israel by these terrorists. The author claimed that certain news networks like CNN and FOX only told the American-Israeli point of view. I have found this to be false. CNN especially looks at several points of view. But in the end, CNN, ABC and FOX report the cold hard facts. The author even proudly used the following quotation: "Hezbollah will destroy Israel." These words show the terrorist organization's true intent, and, in itself provide justification for Israel to defend itself, which it did this past summer. Despite the attempt of the writer, no moral equivalence can be made between the act of terror taken by groups like Hamas and Hezbollah and the defensive actions taken by Israel. This is why so many Americans support and stand with Israel, not Hamas and Hezbollah.

Jared Jackson Rowan Hillel President

Load-Date: January 16, 2018

Article attacking Israel unfair

End of Document

Middle East crisis: Bloody night in Beirut as Israel intensifies aerial bombardment: IDF warns UN troops will be attacked if they repair bridges

The Guardian - Final Edition

August 8, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: GUARDIAN HOME PAGES; Pg. 4

Length: 699 words

Byline: Clancy Chassay, Beirut, Conal Urquhart, Metulla and Jonathan Steele, Tyre

Body

Israel inflicted one of its deadliest attacks on Beirut last night when an air strike on a southern district killed at least 15 people, just hours after the departure of a delegation from the Arab League.

At least 30 were injured in the strike, which capped another day of violence in Lebanon in which more than 50 people died, including three Israeli soldiers.

As night fell, Israel declared a curfew in southern Lebanon, warning that all vehicles apart from humanitarian traffic would be at risk. Ground forces continued to run into fierce resistance in southern Lebanon. **Hizbullah** militants fired more than 100 rockets into northern Israel, wounding at least one.

But the Beirut attack was the day's bloodiest episode. Last night, local residents and rescue workers scrambled through the rubble and debris in the dark as the insides of an eight-storey building spilled out into a narrow street. Water from a burst pipe in a building opposite sprayed out a fine mist across the wreckage. Neighbouring residents, now stuck in teetering buildings, peered out of the back half of their sitting rooms as splintered furniture dangled out on the street below. A **women** in her nightdress on the sixth floor tried to retrieve something on what was left of her balcony as a chunk of her front room crashed down on to the street. An ambulance worker said he had counted 10 bodies so far. At least two were children.

Lebanese officials said there were many reports of other casualties throughout southern Lebanon but rescue workers were not able to reach the sites because of continued Israeli airstrikes. Israel also threatened to attack UN peacekeepers if they attempted to repair bomb-damaged bridges in southern Lebanon. UN officials contacted the Israeli army to inform them that a team of Chinese military engineers attached to the UN force in Lebanon intended to repair the bridge on the Beirut to Tyre road to enable the transport of humanitarian supplies.

According to the UN, Israeli officials said the engineers would become a target if they attempted to repair the bridge.

Senior UN officials reacted angrily to the destruction of a temporary causeway over the Litani river overnight. "We must be able to have movement throughout the country to deliver supplies. At this point we can't do that," said David Shearer, the humanitarian coordinator for Lebanon. "The deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure is a violation of international law."

Middle East crisis: Bloody night in Beirut as Israel intensifies aerial bombardment: IDF warns UN troops will be attacked if they repair bridges

International aid groups have blamed Israel for not providing security guarantees, thereby paralysing the delivery of aid to the south. Even when aid reaches Tyre, convoys have to apply on a case by case basis for permission to take it out to the villages. Most applications are refused.

A convoy run from Beirut to Tyre by Medecins sans Frontieres yesterday was forced to stop at the ruins of the causeway. Boxes of medicine were carried over a footbridge by hand and loaded up into separate vehicles on the other side.

Car passengers had to do the same, driving to the footbridge and waiting for transport on the other side.

Israel's army warned residents in southern Lebanon to remain indoors after 10pm yesterday and said anyone moving after that would be at risk. "Anyone who does travel is taking a high risk. There is no end period," an Israeli military source said. "This will allow us to track anyone potentially trying to launch rockets."

The source said the restriction on movement applied anywhere south of the Litani river, which is roughly 13 miles from Israel's northern border. He did not specify how the warning had been delivered.

Israel also said it shot down a Hizbullah drone. "We located it over Lebanon and the tracked over the Mediterranean where we shot it down. Naval vessels picked up the debris for investigation," an Israeli military spokesman said. The Israeli army said it could not immediately say if it was carrying explosives.

Tyre was rocked yesterday by fresh Israeli airstrikes. Four buildings on the northern outskirts were crushed in pinpoint strikes which left adjacent buildings standing. The four destroyed buildings included the flat where the Israeli commandos had killed the two alleged Hizbullah leaders on Saturday.

Load-Date: August 8, 2006

End of Document

War as an extension of politics

Australian Financial Review

August 7, 2006 Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Opinion; Pg. 55

Length: 504 words

Byline: Ted Lapkin Ted Lapkin is director of policy analysis for the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council.

Body

General Patton once observed that you don't win wars by dying for your country; you win them by making the other poor bastard die for his.

But **Hezbollah** has turned that pearl of military wisdom on its head. These jihadists are trying to defeat Israel, not by killing Jews, but by engineering a slaughter of the Lebanese populace.

Welcome to fourth-generation warfare.

During the present conflict, **Hezbollah** has elevated civilian skirt-hiding to a Machiavellian art form. They have hidden their arsenal of rockets in mosques, hospitals and homes throughout Lebanon. And their favourite launching sites for attacks against Israel are crowded villages and sites next to United Nations posts.

So brazen is **Hezbollah**'s deployment of human shields that it has attracted criticism from a most unlikely source. The UN is not an institution noted for its pro-Israel sympathies. But undersecretary-general Jan Egeland railed against what he observed in Lebanon, declaring: "**Hezbollah**, stop this cowardly blending in among **women** and children!"

Yet there is method to the madness. Nineteenth-century military theorist Karl von Clausewitz wrote that war is an extension of politics, but by other means. And **Hezbollah** leader Hassan Nasrallah understands that, in 21st century conflict, the camera is more powerful than the cannon.

Recognising that he cannot defeat Israel militarily, Nasrallah is trying to humble the Jewish state politically through the immolation of the Lebanese people. **Hezbollah** is cynically attempting to out-Clausewitz the Clausewitzians.

Of course, the laws of war forbid combatants from using civilians to shield arms depots and gun positions. The Fourth Geneva Convention declares: "The presence of a protected person may not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations." But only the terminally nave could believe that the people who invented suicide bombing would care what international law has to say.

The tragedy of Kafr Qana exemplifies the moral and operational dilemma facing Israel's military. This village, where civilians died in an Israeli air strike, was the source of over 150 rockets fired into the Galilee since this conflict began.

War as an extension of politics

The fact that **Hezbollah** used the site for military purposes makes these jihadists morally and legally responsible for those deaths.

Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz wrote that those who shelter behind civilians in wartime are no better than criminals who take hostages during a bank heist. If police inadvertently kill hostages during a rescue operation, those robbers are culpable for murder.

If **Hezbollah** cared about the wellbeing of the Lebanese people, it would not have precipitated this unnecessary war.

The fighting was triggered by jihadists who are sworn to the cause of Israel's annihilation. And while the butcher's bill is being paid in Lebanon and the Galilee, the strings of this conflict are being pulled by the mullahs in Teheran.

- Ted Lapkin is director of policy analysis for the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council.

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

Lebanese put dead relatives to rest

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

August 19, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 15

Length: 368 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: QANA, Lebanon

Body

QANA, Lebanon (AP) -- The breeze blew fine dust across graves where 29 people killed in an Israeli air strike -- half of them children -- were buried, as the ground was opened for funerals in south Lebanon on Friday, the Muslim holy day.

Women in black robes, their heads hidden by black scarves, held pictures of the dead and threw rice and rose petals on the plywood caskets in the village of Qana, struck during the 34-day Israel-**Hezbollah** war. Twenty-six coffins were draped in the Lebanese flag and three in the yellow **Hezbollah** flag.

To the east, the Lebanese army symbolically took control of a first border village from withdrawing Israeli forces, as two soldiers drove slowly through Kfar Kila in a jeep. And in a bid to prevent more arms from reaching **Hezbollah** fighters, the government vowed to take over all border crossings countrywide, including 60 known smuggling routes from Syria.

At a school in south Beirut's Bourj el-Barajneh neighbourhood, **Hezbollah** started handing out crisp \$100 US bills to residents who lost homes in the Israeli bombing campaign -- \$12,000 to each claimant. The stacks of bills were pulled out of a suitcase. **Hezbollah** is financed by oil-rich Iran.

The Higher Relief Council, the government agency that deals with disasters, said Friday that the Lebanese government and UN agencies were undertaking assessments countrywide. While the government was still absent from the reconstruction effort, there were other offers of private help besides **Hezbollah**'s direct payments.

Qana, about ten kilometres southeast of the port city of Tyre, held the most elaborate of several funerals in southern Lebanon on Friday after residents decided it was finally safe and hospital morgues made sure all bodies could be claimed. A caravan of cars made its way from one service to the next.

"This is the day to bury our dead," said Shiite cleric Sheik Shoue Qatoon. "It was decided that we would schedule the funerals so that we could all attend them all."

During the war, bodies were taken to the Tyre morgue and later buried in a shallow mass grave when refrigerated trucks holding the corpses became too crowded. On Friday, the bodies were exhumed and taken to the home villages for burial.

Graphic

Photo: Associated Press; Coffins draped in Lebanese and some **Hezbollah** flags are carried aloft at a mass funeral procession in Qana, southern Lebanon on Friday.

Load-Date: August 21, 2006

End of Document

Israeli troop pullout begins

The Toronto Star

August 16, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A10

Length: 795 words

Byline: Lin Noueihed, With files From the Star's wire services ; REUTERS NEWS AGENCY

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

Fragile peace Israeli forces began leaving parts of south Lebanon yesterday as a UN truce largely held for a second day and the Lebanese army prepared to move south.

Lebanese troops were expected to start moving across the Litani River tomorrow to eventually take control of the war-ravaged region with the help of UN peacekeepers, said military officials on both sides.

The Israeli army, which had poured 30,000 troops into the south to fight the Shiite Muslim guerrillas, plans to start handing over some pockets of territory to UN troops in a day or two, Israeli officials and Western diplomats said.

Israel's top general, Dan Halutz, said Israeli forces could complete a withdrawal within seven to 10 days.

Tens of thousands of refugees who had fled the month-long war between Israel and **Hezbollah** headed home to battered villages in the south.

Yesterday, bulldozers began removing hills of rubble in Beirut's southern suburb as **Hezbollah** teams surveyed the damage and contacted residents to compensate them for the property destroyed during the war with Israel.

Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah has said the guerrilla group would immediately start repairing bomb-damaged homes and pay a year's rent and other costs to help the owners of about 15,000 destroyed homes across the country.

"We know that Sayyed never says a word without making good on it. **Hezbollah** told us to log our details with them for compensation," said 46-year-old Adnan Mansour, standing in front of his destroyed home and two stores.

The general calm has prompted a chaotic tide of Shiite Muslim refugees flowing back to southern villages, despite the risk of unexploded munitions left over from the fighting and Israeli leaflet drops warning that it was not safe to return.

"People need to be aware the dangers are very high," said Astrid van Genderen Stort, spokeswoman for the UN refugee agency UNHCR.

There had been at least eight incidents involving unexploded ordnance, she said, but there was no word on casualties.

Israeli troop pullout begins

Scores of people sifted with bare hands through slabs of concrete where their homes and businesses once stood, salvaging vacuum cleaners, fridges, computers and family photos.

And life was returning to towns in northern Israel as thousands of Israelis headed back to their homes after nearly two days without rocket attacks from Lebanon.

"I am glad I left, but even happier to be back," said Shimon Chen, 30, in the town of Nahariya. "The government is telling us to come back north, but I'm not so quick to trust the ceasefire."

In Lebanon, aid agencies struggled along bombed-out roads thronged by refugees returning home to reach people who had been wounded or trapped by war in southern Lebanon.

For the first time since the UN-backed truce, convoys set out from the southern port of Tyre to villages isolated by fighting.

The UN's World Food Program said it sent a ship to Tyre from Beirut carrying 21 trucks loaded with food, fuel and other supplies. Aid agencies said they had yet to gauge the full extent of the damage and humanitarian need across southern Lebanon.

"There's two kinds of people who need help now: those who stayed behind and couldn't leave during the fighting, and those arriving back," said Christopher Stokes, operations director for Medecins Sans Frontieres in Lebanon.

But the truce remains fragile. Israeli forces reported killing Sajed Dawayer, a senior Hezbollah leader and head of the group's special forces, just before the UN ceasefire.

A Hezbollah official in the southern Lebanese port city of Sidon dismissed the report as "baseless," saying he had not heard of Sajed Dawayer.

Israeli soldiers shot five Hezbollah fighters in two incidents in Lebanon, the army reported. It was not known whether any had been killed.

The army also said four Hezbollah mortar bombs landed near its troops overnight, but there were no casualties.

In other news:

Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres said yesterday Israel had achieved its goals during the conflict and that Hezbollah had lost more than half its fighting power.

"They (Hezbollah) thought they will bring Israel on our knees. I don't say it's easy but we withstood it and we feel that we went out of it militarily in a good shape and politically in an even better one," said Peres, who was fundraising in the United States.

Israel says it killed 530 Hezbollah fighters. Hezbollah puts the toll at 80.

A source close to the negotiations for an Israeli soldier captured on June 25 said the proposal called for Hamas to transfer Cpl. Gilad Shalit to Egyptian authorities in return for Israel's release of up to 600 Palestinian prisoners, including women and minors.

Another 550 Canadians left Lebanon by ship yesterday for Cyprus. Some will fly to Montreal today.

With files From the Star's wire services

Graphic

Israeli troop pullout begins

ODED BALILTY ap Two Israeli soldiers carry an Israeli flag yesterday followed by a column of troops as they cross a fence marking the border between Israel and Lebanon. The Israeli army plans to start handing over some pockets of territory to UN troops in a day or two, said Israeli officials and Western diplomats.

Load-Date: August 16, 2006

End of Document

THE CIVILIAN CASULTIES ARE AWFUL BUT ISRAEL IS FIGHTING FOR ITS EXISTENCE

Daily Mail (London)

August 4, 2006 Friday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 17

Length: 1341 words

Byline: RICHARD LITTLEJOHN

Body

THERE'S no doubt Israel is losing the propaganda war. You don't have to be a paid-up peacenik to find some of the pictures coming out of the Middle East distressing.

No one with an iota of humanity wants to see the corpses of women and children caught up in the conflict.

But you don't have to be a conspiracy theorist, either, to wonder how many of the male 'civilians' killed by the Israelis are actually Hezbollah terrorists or whether everything we're being shown from Lebanon is for real.

Islamonazis are sophisticated propagandists and they know they'll find a gullible audience in the civilised world for their carefully-strewn teddy bears, strategically-placed 'Baby Milk Factory' signs (in English) and wailing widows from central casting.

Have you ever noticed how every time a coalition air strike goes astray in Iraq, it always manages to hit a 'wedding party'?

Why is there only ever one child's shoe in the rubble, never a pair? There always seems to be a broken medicine box, too, with a handy red cross never a red crescent, mind you - on the lid, just in case we haven't got the message.

Credulous CNN correspondents and handwringing BBC reporters fall over themselves to sign up for the Hezbollah guided tour of the ruins.

I use a rough rule of thumb whenever I watch television coverage of the Middle East. Anyone who pronounces Hezbollah as 'Hiz-bull-arrgh' and Israeli as 'Izza-ra-ay-lee' is almost certainly telling lies.

The bien-pensant buzzword used to describe Israel's bombing is 'disproportionate'. But what's 'proportionate'? Are the thousands of rockets fired at genuine civilian targets in Israel 'proportionate'?

It is only because Israelis are hunkered down in underground shelters built out of necessity and bitter experience, or have fled out of range of Hezbollah's salvoes, that there haven't been piles of bodies on their side of the border.

What would 'world opinion' consider an acceptable death toll before acknowledging Israel's right to retaliation and self-defence - 1,000? 10,000? 100,000? 1,000,000?

THE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES ARE AWFUL BUT ISRAEL IS FIGHTING FOR ITS EXISTENCE

Hezbollah has started a war it knows it can't win in the certain knowledge that there will be civilian casualties. Its stated aim is to kill as many Israelis as possible and if innocent Lebanese get caught in the crossfire, tough.

These fanatics have little or no regard for human life. Their tactic is to hide among civilians; to use terrified **women** and children as human shields; to deploy school playgrounds as rocket launch sites; hotels and apartment blocks as command centres; homes as weapons dumps; mosques as air-raid shelters.

I've heard reporters referring to **Hezbollah** as a 'resistance' movement.

They love it, don't they? Just as they insist on calling terrorist murderers 'radicals' or 'militants' as if there's no difference between Al Qaeda and Aslef train drivers on unofficial strike.

What they never point out is that if **Hezbollah** didn't exist, there would be nothing to resist. Israel is the Tony Martin of the Middle East, lashing out in fear and frustration after enduring years of provocation.

Just as Tony Martin was abandoned by the police to endure burglary after burglary at his remote farmhouse, so the 'international community' has done nothing to disarm and disband **Hezbollah** or prevent it and Hamas repeatedly attacking Israel.

The United Nations hasn't lifted a finger to stop Iran and Syria supporting and supplying a standing terrorist army in Lebanon.

There are no sanctions against the barking mad president of Iran when he constantly threatens to wipe Israel off the face of the earth and is hell-bent on obtaining nuclear weapons.

Iran has put Lebanese civilians in the front line of its lunatic war against Israel and the U.S. in particular and Western civilisation in general. So where's the international condemnation?

Hezbollah is the provisional wing of Iran. Would it be 'proportionate' if Israel attacked the paymasters and ringleaders of **Hezbollah** in Tehran?

It may yet come to that. But first Israel has to remove the immediate threat to its security.

The United Nations isn't going to do that. The UN is a busted flush, led by the laughable Kofi Annan - the Chauncey Gardiner of world diplomacy. When it left the U.S.-led coalition to go it alone in Iraq, it sent a clear message to other tyrants and rogue states that they had nothing to fear from the UN.

Listening to 'world opinion' has got Israel nowhere. It was told it should trade land for peace. So it did. It got war. Israel pulled out of southern Lebanon six years ago. **Hezbollah** boasts that it has spent that time preparing for this fresh assault, building tunnels and bunkers and stockpiling a deadly arsenal of 13,000

weapons, which it is now raining down on Israeli civilians.

There are hourly calls for a ceasefire, but when Tel Aviv suspended bombing for 48 hours the response was a record number of Katyusha rockets fired into Israel in return.

I saw a BBC reporter standing on a hillside trying to convince us that because missiles were still being fired from Lebanon despite three weeks of fighting, it was evidence that Israel's tactics weren't working and it couldn't win.

Hezbollah has spent six years building up its arsenal in preparation for this war. Who said an Israeli victory would only take three weeks?

If there is a ceasefire, **Hezbollah** will simply regroup. There's talk of a negotiated settlement, but how do you cut a deal when one side says it will not be satisfied until the other is totally eradicated?

Lasting peace has only ever

THE CIVILIAN CASULTIES ARE AWFUL BUT ISRAEL IS FIGHTING FOR ITS EXISTENCE

followed total victory in war. Even if Israel and Hezbollah/Iran agree to walk away tomorrow, we'll be back here again in a few years.

Then there's the Palestinian question. Again, even though Israel ceded territory in pursuit of peace, terror attacks and kidnappings on Israeli soil have continued.

There's talk about dusting off the old 'road map'. Israel accepts there will have to be a two-state solution, but the only 'road map' of the Middle East its enemies will accept is one without Israel on it at all.

Meanwhile, spare a thought for the Jewish community in Britain. They're as distressed by the carnage as the rest of us and there are divisions over Israel's actions. No one wallows in the death of innocents - except, of course, Hezbollah and its Iranian puppet-masters. AT THIS time of year, there are 15,000 British Jewish teenagers in Israel on the traditional summer rite of passage. And there are 30,000 British passport holders living in Israel.

Although we had wall-to-wall coverage of grumbling British passport holders being evacuated from Beirut, there doesn't seem to have been equal concern about our fellow citizens under bombardment on the other side of the border.

What struck me about the recent pro-Israel demonstration in London was the number of Union flags in the crowd. These are our people.

I didn't notice any Union flags at the Stop The War rally, though there were plenty of 'We Are All Hezbollah Now' banners. It doesn't seem to dawn on them that if you want to stop the war you've got to stop Hezbollah.

But what drives most of these 'peace campaigners' is not so much a desire for peace as a hatred of Israel.

Every time something goes off in Iraq we're told it will radicalise young Muslims back in Britain. We hear that Tony Blair's failure to call for an immediate halt to the Israeli offensive has put us at imminent risk of another Islamist homicide attack on our streets.

Despite the Hezbollah war on Israel and the mounting casualties - and the widespread condemnation of Israel in this country - I've yet to hear anyone warn that young British Jews are queueing to blow up themselves and hundreds of others at Brent Cross shopping centre.

I repeat, this war is awful. The civilian deaths are a tragedy.

But there won't be peace in the Middle East until the likes of Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas recognise Israel's right to exist.

And, I'm afraid, this side of kingdom come, that just ain't gonna happen.

Israel may be losing the propaganda war, but it isn't fighting a propaganda war - it's fighting a real war for its very existence.

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

Criticism grows but Olmert digs in; MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 2, 2006 Wednesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 8

Length: 920 words

Byline: Paul McGeough Chief Herald Correspondent in Beirut

Body

DESPITE faltering progress in its war in Lebanon, Israel is signalling a determination to push deeper into Lebanese territory with the call-up of another 15,000 reserves, and increased ground incursions.

Shrugging off international outrage in the wake of mass civilian deaths when Israeli forces hit the wrong target at Qana in south Lebanon, the Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, declared: "The fighting continues. There is no ceasefire and there will not be any ceasefire in the coming days."

Promising during a special session of the Knesset that Israeli forces would "expand and deepen [their] operations against Hezbollah", the Defence Minister, Amir Peretz, intimated there would be no let-up by Israel until a multinational force was mandated to use its weapons against Hezbollah if the group broke the terms of any ceasefire agreement.

But amid rising uncertainty about the direction of the war - one leading Israeli commentator yesterday described Mr Peretz as "stupid" - Israel saw time on its side because efforts to formulate a peace plan at the United Nations are stalling.

The Hezbollah militia, whose kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers sparked the war, also dug in, warning it would not accept the presence of an international security force on Lebanese territory.

As the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, left Jerusalem on Monday, she was upbeat about the prospect of putting a peace plan in place this week. But in-flight to Washington, that confidence seemed to ebb as she told reporters: "I can't tell you when to pack just yet ... We're working very hard to make it this week."

There are two stumbling blocks at the UN - the timing of a ceasefire within a greater peace plan and the perception that the US is dragging its heels to allow Israel more time as it tries to diminish Hezbollah as a fighting force.

But in judging the progress of the war, Michael Oren, of Israel's Shalem think tank, said: "Israel started this crisis with the most favourable diplomatic position it has ever had in its history, and over the course of three weeks the Olmert Government has managed to squander that advantage".

Israel, with strong US backing, is demanding any international force must take up its positions on the border before it will stop fighting. Other countries, led by France, are insisting that there has to be a halt to the war before any big-picture plan can be finalised.

Criticism grows but Olmert digs in MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

The diplomatic logjam forced the cancellation of a UN-convened meeting of countries likely to make up the force - France, Italy, Greece, Sweden, Norway, Indonesia, Turkey and Egypt. The most fraught issue on their proposed agenda was the rules of engagement, particularly the extent to which they would have to fight Hezbollah.

Central to the UN debate is a requirement that Lebanon's security forces must be backed in extending Beirut's authority to the south of the country - a near-autonomous Hezbollah enclave - but weakness and sectarian splits in the Lebanese Army virtually guarantee it will be the foreign forces that engage Hezbollah.

Like Hezbollah, the Lebanese forces are mainly Shiite and in the past have crumbled in the face of Hezbollah aggression and manipulation of their sectarian loyalty.

Combined with political inertia in Beirut, this Lebanese reality cuts the ground from under claims like that made by President George Bush on Monday: "Lebanon's democratic government must be empowered to exercise sole authority over its territory."

Calling for "a long-lasting peace, one that is sustainable" over what Washington sees as a short-term ceasefire, Mr Bush again shaped the conflict as part of a global battle between good and evil: "The current crisis is part of a larger struggle between the forces of freedom and the forces of terror in the Middle East."

But as he directed his verbal fire at Syria and Iran, Hezbollah's chief sponsors, the French Foreign Minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy, was dining with his Iranian counterpart in Beirut and praising Iran as "a great country, a great people, and a great civilisation which is respected and which plays a stabilising role in the region".

A 48-hour halt to Israeli air strikes, which ends at 2am local time today, was partially observed by Israel and Hezbollah. In a remarkably cynical explanation of the Israeli response to the slaughter in Qana, an Israeli Foreign Ministry official said Israel had to offer the suspension to "take the steam" out of the reaction to the mass civilian killings at Qana.

As the confirmed death toll there reached 49, Israel's Deputy Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, admitted the sloppiness of the Israeli targeting at Qana. He said the rocket launcher they were targeting was a full 300 metres from the apartments that were demolished - a distance commanders believed avoided the risk of hitting the building in which up to 60 are thought to have died.

Writing in Yediot Aharonot on Monday, the columnist Nahum Barnea challenged the carte-blanche bombing of civilian homes that were believed to be stores for Hezbollah weapons.

He defended Israel's right to strike at Hezbollah and acknowledged the inevitability of civilian casualties in war, but wrote: "The question is how and at what cost? ... A blanket directive [by Mr Peretz] regarding the entire civilian population of southern Lebanon and the Shiite neighbourhoods of Beirut is a hasty and light-headed act, which courts disaster. We saw the outcome of this yesterday, in the bodies of the women and children that were taken out of the bombed house in Qana."

Editorial - Page 10

Graphic

PHOTO: Exodus ... Lebanese villagers take to a road outside Kasmiyeh after Israeli air strikes destroyed most of the main escape routes. Photo: AP/Huseein Malla

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Criticism grows but Olmert digs in MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

End of Document

Sweating Out the Truth in Iran

The New York Times

August 24, 2006 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Editorial Desk; Pg. 27

Length: 1251 words

Byline: By Maziar Bahari

Maziar Bahari is a journalist and documentary film maker.

Dateline: Tehran, Iran

Body

WORKING as a journalist in Iran embodies the definition of insanity: doing the same thing over and over again without getting any results. That's how I felt at the height of the conflict in Lebanon, when I asked officials about Iran's relations with Hezbollah, bearing in mind that posing such questions can be a futile, dangerous and sometimes even lethal exercise.

How was Iran helping Hezbollah? Did Iran really start the war to divert attention from its uranium enrichment program (which it vowed this week to continue)? Was Iran, as Hezbollah's ally, if not patron, willing to put its money where its mouth was and enter the conflict?

Questions, questions. Of course no one answered.

So as a good Iranian, I indulged in fantasy. Fantasizing has become something of a national sport here. Our president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, predicted that the national soccer team would finish third or fourth in the World Cup. He also thinks we can become a nuclear powerhouse, even though we have a hard time manufacturing safety matches or making light bulbs with life expectancies of more than two weeks. By the way, the soccer team didn't make it out of the first round.

The setting of my dream was a sauna, where I questioned an imaginary official for five minutes (alas, even our dreams have boundaries here). Why a sauna? For some reason, Iranian officials love going to saunas. Some of the most important decisions in our recent history have been made in saunas. I'm serious.

I politely approach the high-ranking official and give him the impression that he is actually as important as he thinks he is. A bearded man in his early 50's, he usually wears a navy-blue suit and a collarless white shirt buttoned to the neck. (You can imagine how he would look in a sauna yourself. Hint: lots of hair). He is friendly and polite at first, but then his munificent smile turns to an agitated frown.

Q. How do you support the Lebanese resistance?

A. The Israeli regime has shown it has no concern for human rights and international law. It kills infants and pregnant women.

Sweating Out the Truth in Iran

Q. How do you support the Lebanese resistance?

A. Americans have double standards. There is one for Israel and another one for the rest of the world. If it were not for America, Israel would never dare to kill innocent Lebanese citizens with such impunity.

Q. How do you support the Lebanese resistance?

A. I just answered you.

Q. No. You didn't. You just repeated the slogans I heard people were chanting in the Palestine Square demonstration yesterday morning and at Friday prayers two days before that. How does Iran support Hezbollah? Financially? Militarily? Spiritually? How?

The official gets annoyed and looks to his bodyguards to take him away. He wipes the sweat off his face, adjusts his towel and leaves.

It is a silly fantasy, I admit. But the Iranian regime has reached a crossroads in its relationship with the rest of the world, and no one in the government is willing to give the public a straight answer.

There is a vague logic in the absurdity of the events here. But the people in the government tend not to share the obscure reasons behind their decisions with the public during crises. Officials usually leave it to pundits to interpret the government's behavior as they wish (they must enjoy the French film critics who divine philosophical gesticulations in Iranian films in which absolutely nothing happens).

Using Hezbollah as a threat has always helped Iran in its negotiations with the West. Iran would like to keep it that way. Helping Hezbollah overtly, however, would lead to a direct confrontation with Israel and the United States, while officially staying out of Lebanese affairs means betraying revolutionary ideals the regime pretends to hold dear to its heart. For the moment, Iran is sticking to bombastic rhetoric while doing nothing, to the chagrin of many of its hard-line supporters.

Iran helped create Hezbollah in the early 1980's, it is Hezbollah's most vocal supporter, and before the war it sent the group millions of dollars of cash, medicine, arms and of course posters of Ayatollahs Ruhollah Khomeini and Ali Khamenei, which accompanied every aid package and arms shipment.

Does this Iranian aid make Hezbollah Iran's puppet? From all evidence, Hezbollah, to a great extent, makes decisions independently of Iran. Hezbollah is an indigenous Lebanese armed resistance group that owes its popularity to Israeli atrocities, biased American policies and corrupt Lebanese politicians. When the United States and Israel try to portray Hezbollah as an Iranian proxy, they are pointing the finger in the wrong direction.

But Iran definitely uses the threat of its influence over Hezbollah to further its objectives. And its prime objective is the survival of the Islamic regime at any price. The clerics and non-clerics (they are now mostly non-clerics) in power in Iran are not the old revolutionary zealots the Americans tend to imagine. They are pragmatic men who have enjoyed the fruits of power for 27 years and don't want to lose them. In the aftermath of Sept. 11, Iranian statesmen were so scared of American retaliation that for the first time since the revolution, no one chanted "Death to America" in Iran for 10 days.

The regime's rhetoric about the United States and Israel is a remnant of the time when seizing embassies and staging revolutions were in vogue. But now the Islamic Republic has one of the world's younger populations. Most young Iranians I know don't care for their fathers' ideals. They prefer the better things in life, like plasma TV's on which to watch Britney Spears and the exiled Iranian pop diva Googoosh on illegal satellite channels. (No, Mr. Cheney, they don't want the United States to invade their country.) The government spends much of its \$60 billion in annual oil revenue to import goods and keep its youth happy.

The paradoxes of the regime have exposed its hypocrisies. On one hand, the fiery slogans are the *raison d'être* of the Islamic Republic, and on the other, acting openly on those slogans would spell its demise. The most expedient thing to do has been nothing, while continuing to chant.

Sweating Out the Truth in Iran

Up until the start of the war in Lebanon, that was just fine. Iran benefited from a series of victories without doing much. First the Americans got rid of the Taliban, Iran's enemy to the east. Then the Americans got rid of Iran's archenemy to the west, Saddam Hussein. Finally, with Americans mired in both countries, the price of oil went through the roof, and Iran started enriching uranium again, knowing that the West could do nothing. The regime was intoxicated with oil money and regional influence.

But the war in Lebanon has made it impossible for the Islamic Republic to enjoy the same calm. Hezbollah has become a liability for Iran. Weakened, it now needs Iran's petrodollars and rockets to regain its strength. At the same time, Israel and the United States are scrutinizing the transfer of arms and money from Iran to Hezbollah more closely than ever. The next shipment of arms from Iran to Hezbollah may result in direct confrontation with Israel and the United States.

The bearded men in the saunas must be sweating more than usual, even though in public they toast Hezbollah's "victory" with glasses of pomegranate juice. The Islamic Republic is coming to the point where it has to choose: destroy itself by repeating the same old slogans, or come up with new definitions for itself, its friends and foes.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: August 24, 2006

End of Document

Businesses starve in 'Paris of the Middle East'

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

December 17, 2006 Sunday

FIRST EDITION

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Length: 498 words

Byline: By Zeina Karam THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: BEIRUT, LEBANON

Body

Sales at the Virgin Megastore, a music and movie store in downtown Beirut, had just begun bouncing back from the summer war when a sit-in connected to Lebanon's tense political standoff paralyzed the area, forcing the store to close again.

"This is what I call slow death," the store's chairman, Jihad Murr, said recently, predicting he may have to close the branch situated in an elegant building downtown.

This vibrant city, mostly rebuilt after its long civil war, has been struggling since the Hezbollah-Israeli war with a series of political crises that have brought both fears of civil war and economic devastation.

A weeklong sit-in by Hezbollah and other opposition protesters in two downtown squares has brought the heart of Beirut to a standstill, transforming it into a tent city of protesters camped out and combat troops in armored vehicles behind barricades of barbed wire.

Hundreds of businesses have lost revenue, and many have closed. Hotels hoping for strong tourism in the holiday season - Christmas and the Islamic al-Adha - have seen most of their bookings canceled.

Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah told thousands of protesters that they eventually would bring down Lebanon's government.

The Western-backed government has tried to ignore the protests, but Finance Minister Jihad Azour has said that every day of the sit-in costs the economy \$70 million.

Overall, the economy has been gloomy since the summer war. The latest cycle of unrest began Nov. 21 with the assassination of anti-Syrian politician Pierre Gemayel, followed by a national strike, his funeral and the opposition sit-in that began Dec. 1. Road closures have caused huge traffic jams, and troop searches of pedestrians downtown have kept many away. Scattered violence between Sunni Muslims backing the government and Shiites led by Hezbollah has fueled the uncertainty.

For this city that prides itself on being the Paris of the Middle East, the impact has been severe on the posh designer boutiques, restaurants and nightclubs that cluster downtown.

Businesses starve in 'Paris of the Middle East'

"Downtown is like a ghost town, and the sad thing is that every time we think it's over, some new disaster strikes," said George Helou, training director at a trendy food outlet that now is closed.

Sidewalk cafes - a favorite of Gulf Arab tourists in years past - now sit empty and closed. Restaurants and department stores also have closed.

Outside the fashionable Buddha Bar, a **Hezbollah** tent was pitched steps away from portable latrines and water tanks in the middle of an intersection in front of the prime minister's building.

Recently, Charles Samaha worked to move **women's** clothes and shoes from his store to a suburban branch. "It looks like it's going to last long," he said, estimating his losses were at least \$100,000.

Banks and multinational companies with downtown headquarters have relocated staff and offices. Others now work shorter hours, evacuating their buildings before the afternoon, when the **Hezbollah** protests often become boisterous.

Notes

WORLD

Graphic

PHOTO

PHOTO - A **Hezbollah** civil defense man (right) sprays disinfectants Friday around tents set up by **Hezbollah** supporters in downtown Beirut, Lebanon. The Associated Press

Load-Date: December 17, 2006

Israel lost by winning

University Wire

August 22, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Daily Mississippian via U-Wire

Section: COLUMN

Length: 473 words

Byline: By Will MacDonald, Daily Mississippian; **SOURCE:** U. Mississippi

Dateline: OXFORD, Miss.

Body

Welcome back everybody. For those of you I didn't see in summer school, all I can say is: "lucky \$&#^#". And to the freshmen, welcome to God's Country, home to the most beautiful women in the world, a limitless supply of beer and football. God Bless America indeed.

Now with that out of the way, we can get down to business. Folks, it's been an interesting month in world affairs. And by "interesting" I mean "disastrous". Despite what some people say, Israel lost the war against Hezbollah by not winning. Hezbollah fought the IDF to a draw, which for them is as good as a win.

Now Israel has to sit back and wait for Hezbollah to reequip courtesy of Iran and Syria, while Israel bides by a worthless UN cease-fire resolution that will do nothing but prolong the conflict in the future. All of this in the name of "peace." But it's not really peace, and for the U.S. and Israel there can be no peace in the world until radical Islam is wiped off the face of the earth forever.

Whenever Hezbollah starts the next round of fighting, Israel must not hold back like it did this time. No matter what they do, Israel is always portrayed as the bad guy in the Arab and European press, so they should just ignore the press and go for the throat of their enemy. The press portrays the people of South Lebanon as victims, but the fact is that as long as they allow Hezbollah to control their region, they are no better than Hezbollah itself and deserve whatever the IDF throws at them.

Some may see that as cruel, but to quote General William T. Sherman: "War is Hell." And civilian support for war is the key to any military victory. That is why the only way Israel can win a war against Hezbollah is to break the spirit of the people of Lebanon and to show them that supporting Hezbollah is the same as signing your own death warrant.

The other real victor in this is Iran, who once again has shown it is willing to do anything to stir up trouble for the U.S. and the West in general. Iran once again gets to walk away unpunished for it's actions despite the fact that Iranian Revolutionary Guards were found among the dead in South Lebanon. And why do they get to walk away unpunished? Because they have the oil weapon, so think about that the next time you fill up you tank.

Because we're so addicted to oil, we are losing the war on radical Islam. But that's a column for another day.

In the end, all this fighting was for nothing; all the lives wasted and millions spent didn't mean a damned thing. This should prove to everybody that if you start a war you should finish it. So now we wait for the next round and

Israel lost by winning

speculate what will happen then. But until then, I'm going to indulge in the great Oxford pastimes: drinking beer, watching the beautiful girls around campus and praying for a good football season.

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Load-Date: August 22, 2006

End of Document

Left or Right, Israelis Are Pro-War

The New York Times

August 9, 2006 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 3; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1; HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: SOLIDARITY

Length: 1499 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER; Greg Myre contributed reporting for this article.

Dateline: JERUSALEM, Aug. 8

Body

As Israel's war with **Hezbollah** finishes a fourth difficult week, domestic criticism of its prosecution is growing. Yet there is a paradoxical effect as well: the harder the war has been, the more the public wants it to proceed.

The criticism is not that the war is going on, but that it is going poorly. The public wants the army to hit **Hezbollah** harder, so it will not threaten Israel again.

And while Israelis are upset with how Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has run the war, they seem to agree with what he told aides this week -- that given the weaponry and competence of **Hezbollah** and the damage already done to Israel, "I thank God the confrontation came now, because with every year their arsenal would have grown."

Abroad, Israel is criticized for having overreacted and for causing disproportionate damage to Lebanon and its civilian population and even for indiscriminate bombing. But within Israel, the sense is nearly universal that unlike its invasion of Lebanon in 1982, this war is a matter of survival, not choice, and its legitimacy is unquestioned.

Even the bulk of the Israeli left feels that way. There is no real peace camp in Israel right now, says Yariv Oppenheimer, the secretary general of Peace Now, which has pressed hard for a deal with the Palestinians and on June 22, before this Lebanon war, called for a halt to air raids over the Gaza Strip. "We're a left-wing Zionist movement, and we believe that Israel has the legitimate right to defend itself," Mr. Oppenheimer said. "We're not pacifists. Unlike in Gaza or the West Bank, Israel isn't occupying Lebanese territory or trying to control the lives of Lebanese. The only occupier there is **Hezbollah**, and Israel is trying to defend itself."

In the daily newspaper Haaretz, a cartoon satirized the group, showing a Peace Now advocate, balding with a ponytail, in a coffee shop saying, "It won't end until we wipe Beirut off the map."

After the war, Mr. Olmert and his defense minister, Amir Peretz, will face hard questioning, particularly from the center-right, about why there was such an early and naive dependence on air power and why the ground war began so tentatively, especially in the face of so many rocket attacks on northern cities.

But as the fighting against **Hezbollah** has proved difficult and hazardous, most Israelis have come to believe that it is important to press ahead with the war and try to secure a visibly successful outcome rather than risk leaving **Hezbollah** emboldened enough to threaten Israel again.

Left or Right, Israelis Are Pro-War

Ehud Yaari, an Arab affairs analyst with Israeli Channel 2, sees popular opinion reflected in his mother. He is from Metulla, in northern Israel. His mother, 85, grew up in southern Lebanon and knows it well, and knows what it is like to be shelled.

"She calls me all the time to ask me how come the army is still having a fistfight with Hezbollah in places 500 meters from the border," Mr. Yaari said. "I think she's very typical. There is a feeling that Olmert was right to respond with force on July 12, but he should now do it properly, and that the harder it is, the more important it is to continue it, so Hezbollah can't regroup and rebuild themselves."

With the diplomacy so unclear, and no end to the fighting in easy sight, the Israeli government sees the best chance of a conclusion favorable to Israel, and to the government's political reputation, coming from aggressively moving farther northward into Lebanon to try to reduce Hezbollah's ability to fire its extensive stockpile of short-range rockets at Israeli civilians.

Continuing blows to Hezbollah will inevitably weaken it further, the Israelis feel, and make it more likely to bow to international pressure to allow a robust multinational force to patrol Lebanon south of the Litani River and prevent Hezbollah from regrouping there.

Mr. Oppenheimer of Peace Now said the only dispute in his group was over timing and tactics. Some feel Israel hit Lebanon's infrastructure too hard in the beginning, trying to punish Lebanon to hurt Hezbollah, and in the process hurt too many civilians, he said, but now the army has shifted its sights more directly at Hezbollah.

The real debate, he said, "is whether this is the right time to stop the fighting and get a good agreement that accomplishes our goals, or do we have to keep hitting Hezbollah harder in order to get a good agreement."

In this debate, too, he said, Peace Now "is together with the mainstream of Israelis." On Wednesday, he said, Peace Now will publish an advertisement -- not calling on the government to stop the war, but to "take seriously" the new Lebanese offer to deploy its army to the south.

Similarly, Yossi Beilin, the leader of the dovish Meretz Party, said the left must hold to the principle that the Jewish people have the right to "a democratic and secure state." In an opinion column in Haaretz, he wrote that the war in both Gaza and Lebanon to secure the release of captured Israeli soldiers is legitimate, "but that is not reason enough to support all aspects of the war," including the government's falling "into the trap set by Hezbollah of an extended war of attrition."

Once the war is over, Mr. Beilin said, "the right will turn against the government, because they'll say the army didn't go far enough. But a big land operation could push us into a long battle that will be very costly."

There have been weekly demonstrations against the war from smaller, more pacifist groups, but they have rarely drawn more than a few hundred supporters.

Yaron Ezrahi, an Israeli political scientist, sees two other reasons for strong popular support for the war. After years of seeing its army deployed to occupy the West Bank, "pride in Israel's people's army has been eroded because of the checkpoints, the shooting of civilians, the confrontation with women and children," he said. "Suddenly you have a war against an unambiguous enemy and the army is defending the Israeli public."

Second, he said, Israelis see Hezbollah as a proxy for Iran, which wants to destroy Israel. "It's unifying," he said. "People see it intuitively as part of the war against Iran."

The fiercest critics of Mr. Olmert and Mr. Peretz, the head of the Labor Party, have come from the right, especially from the Likud Party that Ariel Sharon and Mr. Olmert left behind when they formed Kadima, now the ruling party. The Likud leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, has been a loyal supporter of the government and the war, but most expect him to be scathing about the government's performance after the conflict is over.

But there are even strong murmurings within Kadima that neither Mr. Olmert nor Mr. Peretz was experienced enough in security matters to ask the military leaders tough questions about war plans, especially given a chief of

Left or Right, Israelis Are Pro-War

staff who is, for the first time in Israel's history, from the air force, and a chief of military intelligence also from the air force.

Gerald M. Steinberg, who directs the Program on Conflict Management at Bar-Ilan University, says Mr. Olmert and Mr. Peretz have been badly damaged. "This is not the disaster of the Yom Kippur war" in 1973, when Golda Meir was pushed out of office after Israel was judged to have been taken by surprise, he said. "But there is a strong sense of hesitation, of the lack of military leadership needed in times like this."

Once the war is over, Mr. Steinberg said, regardless now of the outcome, "there will be investigations, and serious questions in Parliament and out, and you could have some defections from the current government."

Yuval Steinitz of Likud, head of the parliamentary subcommittee for defense preparedness, is already loaded for bear. "Doubts?" he asked. "That's an understatement. People are talking of failure."

"The bombardment of Israeli cities was supposed to be over after 48 hours. The fact that only now the government is ready to even start the real ground campaign is overwhelming."

Israeli defense doctrine, formulated by Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, is that tiny Israel should immediately carry the fighting "deep into enemy territory to protect its civilian rear," Mr. Steinitz said. "This didn't happen, and against who? Hezbollah, which is the size of a Syrian division without any air defense. So what would we do against Syria?"

Dan Schueftan, deputy director of the National Security Studies Center at the University of Haifa, said that "what will determine Olmert's future is not one good or bad day, but the outcome and how it affects the larger issues."

"It's not just rooting out Hezbollah," he said. "The real issue is Iran and the nuclearization of Iran."

The diplomacy at the end is crucial. "Olmert comes out well if at the end of this, the United States, France and Egypt will have greater sway over the Lebanese government than Hezbollah," Mr. Schueftan said. "If Iran and Syria can no longer use Hezbollah as a proxy, Olmert comes out well."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: Israeli troops prayed before moving into Lebanon. While Israel has been criticized abroad, most Israelis see the conflict as a battle for survival. (Photo by Michael Kamber for The New York Times)(pg. A10)

Load-Date: August 9, 2006

PM right to stand up for Israel

The Guardian (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island)

August 8, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A6

Length: 708 words

Byline: Yaffe, Barbara

Body

Canada's prime minister can stand tall in upholding Israel's right to defend itself, even in the face of broad public criticism.

A late July poll shows 32 per cent of Canadians - and just 17 per cent of Quebecers - approve the pro-Israel stance his government has adopted. (A second poll, released Thursday by Conrad Wynn's Compas Inc., is somewhat less condemnatory.)

Also, opposition parties have voted uniformly in favour of a motion put forward at an emergency Commons committee meeting urging an immediate ceasefire between Israel and the terror group Hezbollah.

While Opposition Liberals are split on an early ceasefire, prominent leadership aspirant Michael Ignatieff favours one.

So does B.C. Liberal Keith Martin, who asserted last Wednesday "the 'sustainable ceasefire' that Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay is willing to wait for, cannot be achieved during times of violence - it can only be obtained through peaceful negotiation."

Martin clearly has never attempted negotiating with Hezbollah. Militants in the Party of God would guffaw at his naivete.

Their objective is to destroy Israel. An immediate ceasefire would serve their ends, enabling Hezbollah to restock weaponry and resume the offensive without the constraints imposed by having Israeli soldiers on Lebanese soil.

Even a labour leader got in on the controversy last week. Sid Ryan, head of the Canadian Union of Public Employees in Ontario, issued a July 31 appeal to Harper on behalf of his members: "As president of the largest union in Ontario, representing over 200,000 workers in the public service, I ask that you stop supporting the heinous war crimes that Israel is committing against the people of Lebanon and Gaza."

Is this guy for real? What happened to labour leaders who pushed for job security and higher wages? Ryan should re-evaluate his own job and consider entering politics or doing political commentary.

Whatever the flak, Harper has demonstrated in the past that he's not for turning. And his position in this instance happens to be well worth defending.

PM right to stand up for Israel

Everyone can agree that opponents of the fighting make a worthy point in decrying the civilian misery on both sides and pointing out that the death and destruction should end sooner rather than later.

In the final analysis, it's true that it is never bloodshed but talk that leads to final, sustainable settlements.

But basic truths simply do not apply when one party to the battle is a terror organization bent on the absolute destruction of the other. Opposing sides in this instance aren't fighting over a piece of land or for power within given terrain.

Hezbollah, backed by Iran, is fighting Israel because it wants to annihilate the UN-mandated Jewish state.

Further, **Hezbollah**, a non-state actor, doesn't abide by conventions of war. Ceasefires mean nothing to its members.

Any international force installed to keep peace in southern Lebanon or disarm **Hezbollah** would be dead meat. A force made up of, say, Turkish or French peacekeepers won't be keen to lay down their lives for the sake of Zionists. Keeping **Hezbollah** at bay is not a job for mediators or a peacekeeping force.

As it happens, Israel isn't asking others to do its fighting for it. The Jewish state has sent its own young men into battle to do the dirtiest of work. Only Israel knows when it can stop the fight, when it will have sufficiently defanged **Hezbollah** to enable Israeli citizens to proceed with their lives.

That civilians are being killed by the aggression in Lebanon is deplorable. That **Hezbollah** has engineered the fighting so that **women** and children are directly in the line of fire only underscores the necessity of definitively decapitating this force of evil.

Political analyst Barry Rubin writes from Tel Aviv that if **Hezbollah** is perceived to win or even survives relatively unscathed, "it will help set back by 20 years Arab-Israeli peace, moderation in the region and an end to terrorism."

Israelis do not have the luxury of accepting peace at any price; the price is survival of the Jewish state. Those willing to forsake the existence of such a state are finding it a relatively straightforward matter to call for a ceasefire.

Mercifully, Stephen Harper is not one of them.

Barbara Yaffe writes for the Vancouver Sun.

Load-Date: August 8, 2006

Harper is right to stand up for Israel, despite poll numbers

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

August 4, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A11; Barbara Yaffe

Length: 704 words

Byline: Barbara Yaffe, Vancouver Sun

Body

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Harper is right to stand up for Israel , despite poll numbers

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byaffe@png.canwest.com

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

We need fast end to fighting Blair

Birmingham Post

August 7, 2006, Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 7

Length: 696 words

Byline: Andrew Woodcock

Body

Tony Blair wants a draft UN resolution to halt fighting in the Middle East to be adopted as quickly as possible, it was claimed yesterday.

The wording of the text was finally agreed by the US and France after intense negotiations on Saturday night.

It calls for a "full cessation" of hostilities between Israel and guerillas of the militant Hezbollah group in Lebanon, but allows Israel the right to defend itself if attacked.

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

The resolution must now go before the full 15-nation UN Security Council and gain Israeli and Lebanese acceptance.

Diplomats said the document was likely to be adopted this week.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We need fast end to fighting Blair

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

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

He has spoken to the prime ministers of both Israel and Lebanon, as well as French President Jacques Chirac, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and the premiers of Italy, Sweden and Spain. Downing Street said he had no immediate plans to leave for his summer break. The resolution to be discussed by the Security Council calls for "a full cessation of hostilities based upon, in particular, the immediate cessation by Hezbollah of all attacks and the immediate cessation by Israel of all offensive military operations".

It asks Israel and Lebanon to agree to a set of principles to achieve a long-term peace.

The terms include an arms embargo that would block any entity in Lebanon except the Lebanese Government from obtaining weapons from abroad. The clause is designed to prevent Hezbollah from receiving arms from Syria and Iran, believed to be the militia's main suppliers.

Other principles include the disarmament of Hezbollah and the creation of a 20-kilometre buffer zone between the Israel-Lebanon border and the Litani River.

The existing Unifil UN force would monitor the ceasefire until a second resolution establishes a new stabilization force for the area, expected to be led by France.

Fighting continued in Lebanon this weekend, with Israeli commandos battling Hezbollah guerillas in the southern port of Tyre while warplanes attacked capital Beirut. Across the country, at least eight Lebanese and one Israeli soldier were killed, while Hezbollah rockets killed three women in Israel.

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

A Hezbollah member of the Lebanese Cabinet, Mohammed Fneish, yesterday said: "We abide by (the resolution) on condition that no Israeli soldier remains inside Lebanese land. If they stay, we will not abide by it."

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

Middle East crisis; Civilian toll grows as barrage unleashed

The Advertiser (Australia)

August 4, 2006 Friday

Metro Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 9

Length: 476 words

Byline: HAMZA HENDAWI, BEIRUT

Body

ISRAELI warplanes renewed strikes against Beirut's southern suburbs yesterday and an Israeli missile killed three people in the border village of Taibeh, a day after Hezbollah's most intense wave of rocket attacks yet.

Three weeks into the conflict, six Israeli brigades - or roughly 10,000 troops - were in south Lebanon locked in fighting with hundreds of Hezbollah guerillas, and the battle looked likely to be bitter and long.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said more than one million people - a quarter of the population - had been displaced, adding the fighting "is taking an enormous toll on human life and infrastructure, and has totally ravaged our country and shattered our economy."

The Israeli army said its soldiers had taken up positions in or near 11 towns and villages across south Lebanon, as they try to carve out a 7km-wide buffer zone ahead of the deployment of a multinational force there.

In heavy ground fighting, one Israeli soldier was killed and four wounded around the south Lebanon village of Ayt a-Shab, the Israeli military said. It claimed four Hezbollah fighters were killed and two wounded. Hezbollah's Al-Manar television reported guerillas clashed with Israeli troops in Taibeh, 5km from the border, destroying a tank and two bulldozers and injuring its crew members.

In Israeli airstrikes, Lebanese security officials said a missile crashed into the two-storey house in Taibeh, killing a man, his wife and daughter.

Israeli artillery shells soared into nearby hills, sometimes as many as 15 a minute. In the southern town of Nabatiyeh, fighter jets struck an ambulance working for a local Muslim group.

In the first air raids on the Lebanese capital in almost a week, witnesses said at least four missiles hit the southern Beirut suburb of Dahieh, a Shi'ite Muslim sector that has been repeatedly shelled by Israel since fighting began three weeks ago.

Israeli jets also fired more missiles at roads and suspected guerilla hideouts in the town of Rashaya.

Other strikes hit targets near Lebanon's northern border with Syria, Lebanese radio said.

Middle East crisis Civilian toll grows as barrage unleashed

The new strikes came after Hezbollah scored its deepest hits on Israel yet, with missiles landing in the West Bank and Beit Shean, about 70km into the country, on Wednesday. Across northern Israel, forests and fields lay scorched from rocket fire.

An Israeli inquiry on the bombing of a building in the village of Qana that killed many civilians, mainly women and children, admitted a mistake but claimed Hezbollah guerillas used civilians as shields.

U.S.-based rights group Human Rights Watch claimed Israel appeared to have deliberately bombed civilians. Some of its strikes were war crimes, it said.

It said Israel's contention that Hezbollah fighters were hiding among Lebanese civilians did not justify its "systematic failure" to distinguish between civilians and combatants.

Load-Date: August 5, 2006

End of Document

Timely cover for villagers and Rice - MIDDLE EAST IN CRISIS

The Australian (Australia)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 9

Length: 584 words

Byline: GEOFF ELLIOTT

Body

MATP

ANALYSIS

ISRAEL'S 48-hour suspension of aerial bombing in southern Lebanon to allow civilians to get to shelter may save a lot of Lebanese but it also gave some diplomatic cover for US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

The bombing at Qana just as Rice arrived back in the Middle East was a disastrous public relations moment for the Secretary of State, whose staff put a lot of energy into her public persona -- photo opportunities with sports stars or cultural leaders of the host country she visits is a common request in her travel itinerary.

But this time around, the only images dominating the airwaves in the Middle East, and elsewhere for that matter, were of dead women and children being pulled from the rubble in Qana.

Rice, under instructions from US President George W. Bush, has refused to call for an immediate ceasefire, saying it doesn't make sense if it isn't sustainable and if the root causes of the issue are not addressed -- namely that the Lebanese Government get control of the south and kick out Hezbollah.

However, there was no way Rice could repeat that policy formulation after the tragedy at Qana. Instead, having told reporters "it is time to get a ceasefire", she went on to meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and secured an agreement that Israel temporarily halt its aerial bombardment for 48 hours.

It is significant that it was Rice's spokesman Adam Ereli, rather than the Israeli military, who announced the news -- after midnight in Jerusalem -- giving the US ownership of the suspension. It was portrayed as allowing time for humanitarian assistance, as well as investigations into the Qana tragedy.

And, of course, Rice can fly back to Washington with some cover. But in reality, nothing much appears to have been achieved. The weekend trip was to have been about setting a framework for a permanent ceasefire but Rice never got to Beirut to discuss things there. A furious Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora cancelled the meeting.

And there is no agreement that Hezbollah stop firing rockets. Indeed, if Hezbollah continues its bombardment, Israel has, naturally, reserved its right to respond, including more air attacks.

Timely cover for villagers and Rice - MIDDLE EAST IN CRISIS

It is not Rice's fault that the Israeli military misdirected the bombs in Qana. But there has been little argument in the Bush administration -- or, for that matter, the entire US Congress, Democrat and Republican -- on the right of Israel to respond to Hezbollah's attacks. There has been an implicit acknowledgement that Israel needs to do what the Lebanese Government could not -- rout Hezbollah.

Bush's spokesman said yesterday: "Not only do we feel sorrow for what happened in Qana, but also a determination that it is really important to remove the conditions that led to that."

At this point, however, it's hard to see a win for the US and Israel on the issue. The Hezbollah militia is proving a more formidable foe than expected, further burnishing its credentials on the Arab street.

The Bush administration rightly points out that Hezbollah started the conflict, entering Israeli territory, killing eight soldiers and kidnapping two, and firing rockets over the border.

The West hardly wants Hezbollah coming out of the conflict with an ability to crow about some kind of a victory, but at the moment that's where this could be headed.

If nothing else, it could underscore the huge risks in a strategy that uses conventional military operations against a guerilla outfit hiding among civilians.

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Bombing suspension gives Rice some breathing space; ANALYSIS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Third Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 9

Length: 569 words

Byline: Michael Gawenda Herald Correspondent in Washington

Body

THE decision by Israel to suspend its bombing campaign in southern Lebanon for 48 hours following the air strike on an apartment building in the Lebanese village of Qana was the result of intense pressure on the Israeli Government by the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice.

Officials in Washington say the suspension of the air campaign also means no further ground incursions by Israeli forces into southern Lebanon for the two days - as long as Hezbollah does not move its forces back to the border area.

Some Bush Administration officials say that if Hezbollah stops firing rockets into Israel's northern cities during the 48-hour period there is a good chance this will become a de facto ceasefire while the United Nations Security Council looks at setting up a multinational force for southern Lebanon, part of a wider plan to end the fighting.

Rice desperately needed this breakthrough. After the Qana tragedy, she was suddenly faced with a situation where the only place in the Middle East where she was welcome was Jerusalem.

It does not matter whether the Lebanese Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora, told Rice not to come to Beirut or she decided to call off the visit. Her presence in Beirut would have inflamed a city already in uproar at what many saw as US complicity in Israel's attack on Qana.

Officials in Washington said Rice was furious when told of the air strike and not just because of its timing, with Rice in Jerusalem and seemingly powerless to do anything about the escalating violence and mounting civilian death toll.

As outraged world reaction to the Qana air strike flooded in, Rice's frantic efforts to get international backing for a ceasefire plan to be put to the Security Council early this week seemed to have been derailed.

The US is increasingly isolated in its position, which opposes a ceasefire that does not force Hezbollah to disarm and allow the Lebanese Army to take control of southern Lebanon.

Rice was not exactly thrilled to hear the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, say that Israel needed up to another two weeks to complete its operations in Lebanon. Increasingly, there is doubt in Washington that Israel can do much more than it has already done to weaken Hezbollah.

Bombing suspension gives Rice some breathing space ANALYSIS

The US President, George Bush, spoke briefly to reporters after the Qana tragedy, offering his sympathy for the victims and their families, but said that US policy remained unchanged - Israel had a right to defend itself.

Administration officials are alarmed that after almost three weeks of air attacks and ground incursions into southern Lebanon, Israel does not appear to be even close to "winning" this war against Hezbollah.

The leading neoconservative William Kristol reflected the view of many in the Administration when he said Israel and the US had underestimated Hezbollah's strength. He said Israel and the US looked likely to be the losers in this conflict and Hezbollah and Iran the winners.

The suspension of Israeli air strikes in southern Lebanon was one small victory for Rice and the Bush Administration in what had been a terrible week. It seemed Rice's hard work in trying to repair relations with allies after the Iraq war and focus on diplomacy - as opposed to unilateralism in US foreign policy - had been undone.

If the suspension of Israeli air strikes means Hezbollah will stop its rocket and missile attacks, there is some chance diplomacy might still be given a chance to work.

Graphic

PHOTO: Suicide sisters . . . women dressed as suicide bombers denounce Israel at a rally in Tehran yesterday. Photo: Reuters/Hasan Sarbakhshian

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Abduction signals troubling trend in Gaza

Christian Science Monitor

October 25, 2006, Wednesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 7

Length: 816 words

Byline: Ilene R. Prusher Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Highlight: Emilio Morenatti was kidnapped Tuesday, the third abduction of a foreign journalist in two months.

Body

A Spanish photojournalist was kidnapped at gunpoint in Gaza Tuesday, the latest in a worrying trend of abductions of foreigners - particularly, but not exclusively, journalists - in the Palestinian territories.

No group claimed responsibility for the abduction. But amid increasing lawlessness, economic deterioration, and internecine rivalries that have become a prevalent aspect of life in Gaza following January's election of a Hamas-led government, the kidnapping is seen as a troubling signal of a Palestinian Authority (PA) unable to control radical elements or enforce law and order.

Moreover, this and other kidnappings, analysts say, are probably the product of tiny offshoot cells who could be acting independently of the main factions that have long defined Palestinian politics, and who are likely taking a page from the recent kidnapping feats of **Hizbullah** militants and Iraqi insurgents.

"There are some groups that are taking cues from **Hizbullah**, but also from the Iraq model as well," says Magnus Ranstorp, an expert on Hamas and other Middle Eastern militant groups at Swedish National Defense College. "Those currents are pulsating in all sorts of directions. We're moving in dangerous and uncharted territory when you have autonomous, independent groups that are learning from other conflict zones and taking advantage of the situation."

The Associated Press (AP) photographer, Emilio Morenatti, was leaving his apartment in Gaza Tuesday when militants grabbed him, shoved him into a white Volkswagen and drove off, according to an AP driver and translator.

Some of the details of the abduction bore similarities to the August kidnapping of two journalists for Fox TV, US reporter Steve Centanni and New Zealander cameraman Olaf Wiig, who were snatched at gunpoint from their vehicle. The two men, like Mr. Morenatti, had been staying in Gaza for several days at time.

After intensive campaigning by family members and colleagues, the two were released uninjured but told a harrowing story of their ordeal, including rough treatment and being moved from house to house. They were forced to make several videos, including one which aired on Al Jazeera and demanded the release of all Muslim **female** prisoners held by the US.

Those demands represented an unprecedented shift in direction for Palestinian militants - one that has a much more global agenda, rather than one focused solely on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Abduction signals troubling trend in Gaza

Dr. Ranstorp says whether Palestinian militants may actually be getting help from Al Qaeda-related groups - as Israeli intelligence officials have occasionally indicated - or simply gleaning inspiration from the international Islamic group founded by Osama bin Laden is a question that is almost irrelevant.

"I think it's more the state of mind," he says. "Yes, there will be people who will be sympathetic not just to Al Qaeda, but Hizbullah. The point is that they're improving and improvising. I don't think it really matters whether Al Qaeda is in Gaza or not. If the idea is attacking and killing Westerners, you don't need Al Qaeda to figure out how to do that."

Tuesday's kidnappers also had uncanny timing, Gaza sources noted. First, it was the start of the Eid el-Fitr holiday that comes at the end of Ramadan, a time when political activity generally comes to a halt and people prefer to be at home with their families. Moreover, the Palestinian Minister of the Interior, Hamas's Sayeed Siam, just returned Tuesday from a trip abroad, and there was some speculation that the timing would have been particularly embarrassing for him.

"So far, we have no idea who it is, but whoever was behind this is a criminal and should be punished," says Khaled Abu Hilal, the interior ministry spokesman. "If it's a message, it's a terrible one and it's beyond the law. Its aim is to create more and more chaos and instability for the Palestinians, and put more obstacles in front of the Palestinian government."

He blames the deterioration of conditions in Gaza on Israel, whose military operations have made it increasingly difficult for the Palestinian police to function. "The security situation is really difficult and the Israelis and their collaborators are directly responsible for this chaos and the anarchy, by destroying the bases and headquarters of the Palestinian police."

Tuesday, Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz said the army will carry out more military operations in Gaza to prevent Palestinian rocket attacks and arms smuggling from Egypt.

The army just completed a week-long operation along the Gaza-Egypt border corridor that was meant to find and blow up tunnels used by militants to smuggle arms. The army said it destroyed 15 tunnels during the operation, the first along the border since Israel withdrew from Gaza in September 2005.

* Material from the Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Load-Date: October 25, 2006

CEASEFIRE;
FRANCE & US DESIGN PEACE PLAN UN FORCE MAY END WAR IN DAYS

The People
August 6, 2006, Sunday

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Section: 3 Star Edition; NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 287 words

Byline: BY NIGEL NELSON POLITICAL EDITOR

Highlight: DEAL: Blair and Chirac

Body

A CEASEFIRE plan to end the bloody 25-day war between Israel and Arab foes Hezbollah was hammered out yesterday.

The USA and France won crucial agreement on a UN move to stop the Middle East mayhem that has cost 800 lives.

And last night Britain was not ruling out the possibility of UK troops joining a French-led international peacekeeping force heading for battered Lebanon.

The UN proposal calls for a "full cessation of violence".

But it allows Israel to retaliate if attacked by Hezbollah fighters inside its neighbour's borders.

That stops short of calling for an immediate ceasefire, which both Britain and the US reject.

It is now hoped a lasting ceasefire can be agreed in days.

Negotiators pray it will lead to the release of all prisoners and the withdrawal of 10,000 Israeli troops from southern Lebanon.

French President Jacques Chirac had called earlier for an all-out peace effort.

And the breakthrough came after PM Tony Blair postponed his Barbados holiday to work round the clock to end the crisis.

Mr Blair and top advisers hit the phones talking to all those involved in the conflict yesterday.

And he called the deal an "absolutely vital first step in bringing the tragic crisis to an end".

US ambassador to the UN John Bolton said: "We've reached agreement and we're ready to proceed."

But south Lebanon was again the scene of vicious fighting yesterday as Israeli commandos raided Hezbollah strongholds in the port city of Tyre.

CEASEFIRE; FRANCE & US DESIGN PEACE PLAN UN FORCE MAY END WAR IN DAYS

Suburbs in the capital Beirut were bombed and 170 Hezbollah rockets hit northern Israel killing three women. At least one Israeli soldier and eight Lebanese died. Hezbollah have vowed to target Israel's capital Tel Aviv if Beirut's centre is hit.

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Load-Date: August 7, 2006

End of Document

Ten Israeli reservists killed; SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 7, 2006 Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 6

Length: 388 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Beirut and agencies

Body

FIGHTING and killing continued unabated in the Israel-Lebanon war over the weekend.

At least 10 people were killed when a Hezbollah rocket struck a building in the northern Israeli village of Kfar Giladi yesterday, medics said. The army said all were reserve soldiers. Ambulance workers said another nine people were wounded, four critically.

Among the Lebanese dead were at least five civilians killed in an air strike on a family home near the southern town of Nabatiyeh and six people - the Lebanese authorities say civilians; the Israelis, Hezbollah militants - who died in an inconclusive Israeli commando raid on Tyre.

The bodies of five more Syrian labourers were found in the ruins of a food depot on the Syrian-Lebanese border that was attacked by Israeli bombs on Friday, bringing the death toll from the incident to 28.

The Israelis say they thought the depot was being used to transport weapons.

The Israelis lost at least two more troops in fighting along the border, and three Israeli-Arab women were killed when a Hezbollah rocket hit their village.

The latest violence brings the Lebanese death toll in the 25-day war to at least 575, although the Lebanese Government says that the real toll, including bodies hidden in rubble in inaccessible border areas, could be more than 900.

Most of the dead are civilians hit by Israeli air strikes in the far south and Shiite districts of Beirut.

Hezbollah admits it has lost about 50 of its fighters, though the Israeli Government claims to have killed more than 400, including 50 this weekend. In contrast, 56 of Israel's 89 casualties are combatants, while the remaining 33 are civilians killed by Hezbollah long-range bombardment of northern Israeli towns and cities.

Over the weekend fighter-bombers destroyed parts of the coast road linking Beirut to northern Syria, cutting Lebanon's last main link to the outside world and a vital aid route.

There seemed little prospect of an end to the violence in the near future, with the Israeli Justice Minister, Haim Ramon, saying Israel will continue to "hit Hezbollah" until a new multinational force is deployed in south Lebanon -

Ten Israeli reservists killed SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

a process that could takes weeks if it happens at all. Israeli security forces arrested the Palestinian parliamentary Speaker, Aziz Dweik, a Hamas leader, in the West Bank city of Ramallah yesterday.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Israel to step up offensive as hopes of a truce collapse

Daily Mail (London)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: ED 3RD; Pg. 2

Length: 707 words

Byline: KIRSTY WALKER

Body

ISRAEL approved plans for a massive expansion of its ground offensive in Lebanon last night as hopes of a ceasefire were shattered.

The country's security cabinet also backed the call up of an extra 15,000 reservists.

This follows the call up of 30,000 reservists last week.

Last night, tens of thousands of Israeli soldiers and columns of tanks were massed on the Lebanese border.

Israeli sources indicated early today that its forces intended to push terrorist group **Hezbollah** back 13 miles from the border in the biggest land offensive the Jewish state has mounted against the guerilla group.

The development came as fears grew that the conflict could engulf the Middle East.

Syrian President Bashir Assad put his huge army the biggest in the region on a higher state of alert as he pledged support for 'Lebanese resistance against Israel,' a reference to **Hezbollah**.

Blair's hopes of securing a ceasefire by persuading Israel and **Hezbollah** to halt their attacks in return for a peacekeeping force entering Lebanon collapsed earlier yesterday when Israel reneged on its promise of a 48-hour halt in its air bombardment. It lasted just 12 hours .

A UN meeting on a peacekeeping force was indefinitely postponed for lack of 'political clarity' after world leaders failed to agree on the composition of the peacekeepers.

Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert hammered home the message of defiance, saying: 'There is no ceasefire, there will be no ceasefire.' His forces would continue fighting, he said, and insisted the war would end when Israel brought home two soldiers captured by **Hezbollah** guerillas three weeks ago.

Fears that the conflict could soon spread to Syria were raised in an address by President Assad to his military commanders.

'We are facing international circumstances and regional challenges that require caution, alertness, readiness and preparedness,' Assad said.

Israel to step up offensive as hopes of a truce collapse

'The barbaric war of annihilation the Israeli aggression is waging on our people in Lebanon and Palestine is increasing in ferocity.' Israeli jets dropped two bombs to support ground troops battling the guerillas and artillery shells hit two border villages.

A Lebanese soldier died and three were wounded when another Israeli air strike destroyed their vehicle in a botched attack.

Israel later apologised, saying it thought it was targeting a Hezbollah chief. It said it was forced to carry out yesterday's raids after Hezbollah guerillas hit an Israeli tank near Taibeh with an antitank missile.

In another blow to hopes of a breakthrough, Hezbollah continued to fire into the northern Israeli border town of Kiryat Shmona and claimed to have hit an Israeli warship off the coast of the south Lebanese port city of Tyre. An Israeli security source denied a vessel had been hit.

Hezbollah claimed it was responding to the Israeli assault on the village of Qana in which 54 Lebanese died, many of them children.

The Qana attack sparked world outrage and prompted Israel to announce a 48-hour suspension of air strikes.

Mr Olmert apologised for the carnage, saying: 'I am sorry from bottom of heart for all deaths of children or women in Qana. We are not fighting against the Lebanese people.

We are fighting terrorism.' U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice tried to be upbeat yesterday, insisting a ceasefire could still be forged at the UN later this week.

She said in Jerusalem after a two-day trip: 'As I head back to Washington, I take with me an emerging consensus on what is necessary for both an urgent ceasefire and lasting settlement. I am convinced we can achieve both this week.' Miss Rice said a deal should include a ceasefire, a framework for a lasting settlement and approval of a peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon.

However, the mood in Downing Street grew more despondent. The PM's official spokesman said: 'We cannot force both sides to operate a ceasefire if they are not ready.

We are dealing with sovereign governments, we are not dealing with puppets on strings.' President Bush spelt out a series of what he called 'clear objectives' to accompany a halt in the fighting.

'Iran must end its financial support and supply of weapons to terrorist groups like Hezbollah. Syria must end its support for terror and respect the sovereignty of Lebanon,' he said.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Anger at U.S. hurts Arab reformers; Israelis unite behind war; From Jerusalem, the conflict is seen as a matter of survival

The International Herald Tribune

August 10, 2006 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 8

Length: 1140 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Greg Myre contributed reporting.

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As Israel's war with Hezbollah finishes a fourth difficult week, domestic criticism of its prosecution is growing. Yet there is a paradoxical effect as well: The harder the war has been, the more the public wants it to proceed.

The criticism is not that the war is going on, but that it is going poorly. The public wants the army to hit Hezbollah harder, so it won't threaten Israel again.

And while Israelis are upset with how Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has run the war, they seem to agree with what he told aides this week that given the weaponry and competence of Hezbollah and the damage already done to Israel, "I thank God the confrontation came now, because with every year their arsenal would have grown."

Abroad, Israel is criticized for having overreacted and for causing disproportionate damage to Lebanon and its civilian population and even for indiscriminate bombing.

But within Israel, the sense is nearly universal that, unlike Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, this war is a matter of survival, not choice, and its legitimacy is unquestioned.

Even the bulk of the Israeli left feels this way. There is no real peace camp in Israel right now, says Yariv Oppenheimer, the secretary general of Peace Now, which has pressed hard for a deal with the Palestinians. On June 22, before this Lebanon war, the group called for a halt to air raids over the Gaza Strip.

"We're a left-wing Zionist movement, and we believe that Israel has the legitimate right to defend itself," Oppenheimer said.

"We're not pacifists," he said. "Unlike in Gaza or the West Bank, Israel isn't occupying Lebanese territory or trying to control the lives of Lebanese. The only occupier there is Hezbollah, and Israel is trying to defend itself."

In the daily newspaper Haaretz, a cartoon satirized the group, showing a Peace Now advocate, balding with a ponytail, in a coffee shop saying, "It won't end until we wipe Beirut off the map."

Anger at U.S. hurts Arab reformers Israelis unite behind war From Jerusalem, the conflict is seen as a matter of survival

After the war, Olmert and his defense minister, Amir Peretz, will face hard questioning, particularly from the center-right, about why there was such an early and naive dependence on air power and why the ground war began so tentatively, especially in the face of so many rocket attacks on northern cities.

But as the fighting against Hezbollah has proved difficult and hazardous, most Israelis have come to believe that it is important to press ahead with the war and try to secure a visibly successful outcome rather than risk leaving Hezbollah emboldened enough to threaten Israel again.

With the diplomacy so unclear, and no end to the fighting in easy sight, the Israeli government sees the best chance of a conclusion favorable to Israel, and to the government's political reputation, from aggressively moving farther northward into Lebanon to try to reduce Hezbollah's ability to fire its extensive stockpile of rockets at Israeli civilians.

Continuing blows to Hezbollah will inevitably weaken it further, the Israelis feel, and make it more likely to bow to international pressure to allow a robust multinational force to patrol Lebanon south of the Litani River and prevent Hezbollah from regrouping there.

Oppenheimer of Peace Now said the only dispute in his group was over timing and tactics. Some feel Israel hit Lebanon's infrastructure too hard in the beginning, trying to punish Lebanon to hurt Hezbollah, and in the process hurt too many civilians, he said, but now the army has shifted its sights more directly at Hezbollah.

The real debate, he said, "is whether this is the right time to stop the fighting and get a good agreement that accomplishes our goals, or do we have to keep hitting Hezbollah harder in order to get a good agreement."

In this debate, too, he said, Peace Now "is together with the mainstream of Israelis." On Wednesday, he said, Peace Now would publish an ad not calling on the government to stop the war, but to "take seriously" the new Lebanese offer to deploy its army to the south.

Similarly, Yossi Beilin, the leader of the dovish Meretz Party, said that the left must hold to the principle that the Jewish people have the right to "a democratic and secure state."

In an opinion column in Haaretz, he wrote that the war in both Gaza and Lebanon to secure the release of captured Israeli soldiers was legitimate, "but that is not reason enough to support all aspects of the war," including the government's falling "into the trap set by Hezbollah of an extended war of attrition."

Once the war is over, Beilin said, "the right will turn against the government, because they'll say the army didn't go far enough. But a big land operation could push us into a long battle that will be very costly."

There have been weekly demonstrations against the war from smaller, more pacifist groups, but they have rarely drawn more than a few hundred supporters.

Yaron Ezrahi, an Israeli political scientist, sees two other reasons for strong popular support for the war. After years of seeing its army used to occupy the West Bank, "pride in Israel's people's army has been eroded because of the checkpoints, the shooting of civilians, the confrontation with women and children," he said.

"Suddenly you have a war against an unambiguous enemy and the army is defending the Israeli public," he said.

Second, he said, Israelis see Hezbollah as a proxy for Iran, which wants to destroy Israel. "It's unifying. People see it intuitively as part of the war against Iran."

The fiercest critics of Olmert and Peretz, the head of the Labor Party, have come from the right, especially from Likud, which Ariel Sharon and Olmert left behind when they formed Kadima, now the governing party. The Likud leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, has been a loyal supporter of the government and the war, but most expect him to be scathing about the government's performance after the conflict is over.

Anger at U.S. hurts Arab reformers Israelis unite behind war From Jerusalem, the conflict is seen as a matter of survival

But there are even strong murmurings within Kadima that neither Olmert nor Peretz was experienced enough in security matters to ask the military leaders tough questions about war plans, especially given a chief of staff who is, for the first time in Israel's history, from the air force, and a chief of military intelligence also from the air force.

Gerald Steinberg, who directs the Program on Conflict Management at Bar-Ilan University, thinks Olmert and Peretz have been badly damaged.

"This is not the disaster of the Yom Kippur war" in 1973, when Golda Meir was pushed out of office after Israel was judged to have been taken by surprise, he said. "But there is a strong sense of hesitation, of the lack of military leadership needed in times like this."

Once the war is over, Steinberg said, regardless now of the outcome, "there will be investigations, and serious questions in Parliament and out, and you could have some defections from the current government."

Load-Date: August 24, 2006

End of Document

THE BOMBING

The Toronto Star
July 31, 2006 Monday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A01

Length: 1481 words

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

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE BOMBING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE BOMBING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

With files from Associated Press, Reuters

Graphic

THE BOMBING

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

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Forces of darkness are only victors in Lebanon

Yorkshire Post

August 2, 2006

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Length: 1095 words

Body

David Howell

Lord Howell of Guildford was a Minister in the governments of Edward Heath and Margaret Thatcher. From 1987-97, he was chairman of the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee.

QANA in southern Lebanon, where Israeli bombs have just killed 60 more people, 37 of them children, is said to be the Cana of the Bible where Jesus turned water into wine (St John, Chapter Two).

It is a small hilltop town where the visitor is led down a series of zigzag paths to a grove and a large open cave where Jesus is supposed to have performed the miracle at the wedding gathering.

Elsewhere in the town, a narrow side street leads to an open square and a large fenced off pit containing a pile of broken amphora in which, rather improbably, the transformation is supposed to have taken place. Children gather round trying to sell sketches of the scene.

But that was yesterday. Today the children are dead. Today the Hezbollah gunmen have infested the little town, spraying missiles southwards in the direction of Israel and the bombs have duly come pounding back at them with dreadful ferocity.

There seems to be a tragic and ghastly inevitability about it all. Israel carefully withdrew from Lebanon in the hope of peace, but Israel has now suffered a vicious and unprovoked attack, slaughtering its citizens and kidnapping its soldiers. And those who attack Israel pay the price.

So, even if there was a brief pause, the campaign continues, although so far unsuccessfully, towards the Israeli military's "central goal", backed, or at least unchallenged, by Washington and by London and refreshed with bombs and shells duly shipped by American cargo planes, some of them via Prestwick.

Voices call for an immediate ceasefire. But a genuine ceasefire, as opposed to a brief unilateral pause by Israel, even if it could be agreed and sustained, would leave Hezbollah triumphant, ready to devour what is left of Lebanon and turn it into a fanatical Islamic satrapy of Iran and Syria.

That is why many Lebanese fear the Hezbollah organisation as much as the Israelis do. That is why many Lebanese, even as they shelter from Israeli bombs and struggle to find food and basic services amidst the smashed infrastructure of their country, want to see the Hezbollah finally destroyed and reject the idea of any kind ceasefire which would leave the Hezbollah leaders in place.

Like a badly wounded individual with a smashed limb, they are reluctantly ready to allow amputation to prevent the gangrene of Hezbollah killing them.

Forces of darkness are only victors in Lebanon

Yet it is these brave people who have been reduced to collateral damage by the Israeli agenda, cut to pieces as a by-product of the war against Hezbollah. One fifth of the entire population of Lebanon (that would be 11 million people if applied to the UK) are now said to be fleeing and homeless, crowding into northern Lebanon and paralysing everything. No administrative structure can survive under this kind of calamity.

In their fury, the Israelis seem to have become blinded to the prospect of collapse of the Lebanese state - the only other democracy in the region - and to the opening up of a lethal vacuum on their northern border. Into that vacuum will flow first civil war, of the kind which paralysed Lebanon back in the 1980s, and then Iranian and Syrian influence, with military personnel, missiles, tanks and all the other instruments of renewed aggression following on behind. A new extreme Islamic state will emerge from the corpse of gentle Lebanon - right there on the shores of the Mediterranean.

Israel will then have succeeded in destroying, almost by accident, a good neighbour and recreating on its border an even deadlier force than the existing Hezbollah. And it will have done so unnecessarily.

Another huge step will have been taken in achieving the declared and combined objectives of al-Qaida, of the Iranian leaders, of the Hamas government in Palestine, and of countless other Arab fanatical groups, whatever their other differences may be - which is to drive the West, in which they include Israel, out of the Middle East and away from the sacred soil of Islam for ever.

What the Israelis ought to have done, when their soldiers were first kidnapped and the missiles first fell on their towns, was to befriend the Lebanese leader, Mr Siniora, and his unifying team - the men of the 14th March coalition - and to work with them in every possible way, open and covert, to isolate and target the Hezbollah leaders in their hide-outs. Wise, hard-thinking Israelis, who could see the Hezbollah attack coming for months back, should have stretched out a hand to leaders within Lebanon against militant Hezbollah, men like Samir Geagea, the leader of the Maronite forces (once trained by Israel), men like Walid Jumblatt, the Druze leader, men like Saaed Hariri, the leader of the Sunnis. These should have been their allies, if only on the principle that the enemy of my enemy is my friend.

What the international community should have done is to have stopped wringing its hands and uttering platitudes about the slaughter of Lebanese women and children, while leaving the Israeli anti-Lebanon strategy unchallenged.

Instead it should have backed Lebanese efforts to the full and insisted on the closest co-operation between Israel and Lebanon - and in due course with international forces as well if they can be found and are willing to take on the task (which looks unlikely) - in rooting out Hezbollah and establishing a thriving Lebanese state as a bulwark against Islamic fanaticism and a protective neighbour for Israel. The American decision, while naturally deploring all the killing, to condone Israel's over-the-top strategy is surely the final crashing misjudgment of George W Bush's foreign policy.

Tony Blair's endorsement of this stance, and his black-and-white simplism that Israel must defend itself, whatever the cost and however flawed and counter-productive its methods may prove, will surely hasten his own departure. But, for the rest of us, who certainly want Israel to survive and be secure, who want Lebanon to hold together and rebuild itself yet again, who want Palestine to emerge and prosper and all the unrestrainedly violent anti-Western factions to be contained (and no doubt in due course to turn on each other), the bloody Middle-Eastern tragedy will continue to unfold, maybe slowly but now with renewed inevitability.

Irrespective of who appears to win out of the immediate horrors, extremism will have won and darker forces will now come out

on top. And for that we will all pay an even greater price than anything so far.

Load-Date: August 2, 2006

Forces of darkness are only victors in Lebanon

End of Document

Winning battles, losing a war?; Lebanon peacekeeping

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 21, 2006 Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Leaders; Pg. 10

Length: 551 words

Body

PREDICTABLY, cobbling together an enlarged, 15,000-strong international force to police the edgy, so far only partial, stand-off that passes for peace in Lebanon is proving as difficult as forging a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah. A lot depends on these negotiations between United Nations diplomats and governments that are potential contributors to the force. Until its composition and rules of engagement are settled, and its effectiveness has been tested on the ground, it is impossible to make a final judgement as to who really won the war - or, rather, lost least badly.

About all that seems clear today is that in narrow military terms, Israel did better than its enemies suppose. This is unsurprising, given its advantages in troop numbers, weaponry and monopoly of air and sea power. While it failed to achieve its optimum aim - to disarm or disable Hezbollah and, in doing so, to inflict a heavy blow on its Iranian and Syrian patrons - Israel has destroyed or seen Hezbollah expend much of its missile arsenal. The Shiite militia's infrastructure was largely demolished and, post-ceasefire, its fighters have gone to ground. If the UN can deploy a credible peacekeeping force to work with the ramshackle Lebanese army, Israel will again have a buffer of sorts between its northern border and its enemies, with the cost borne by foreigners.

But this conflict has as much to do with perceptions as with tactical gains, and in the battle for domestic and international public opinion Israel has fared poorly. True, Hezbollah provoked the Israelis with kidnappings and rocket raids. While itself indiscriminately targeting civilians, it adopted the old guerilla ploy of taking cover in, and attacking from, residential areas to tempt the adversary to inflict heavy civilian casualties. That was indeed the Israeli response, leading to the deaths of many more Lebanese than Israeli noncombatants, including women and children, and to widespread devastation. In the age of televised warfare, this was a public relations disaster for Israel and its chief backer, the United States. Unhelpfully, Saturday's post-ceasefire Israeli commando raid in southern Lebanon coincided with reports of Hezbollah handing out hefty cheques to people whose Beirut homes were bombed.

Moreover, by sustaining its missile offensive to the end, Hezbollah has undermined the perception of Israeli invincibility while itself acquiring heroic stature across the Islamic world. Far from being humbled, the radical regime in Iran is cockier than ever - bad news for Iraq and nuclear non-proliferation. The Bush Administration's democracy project in the Middle East looks even sicker. Ehud Olmert's Israeli Government is in deep political trouble.

Clearly, a robust UN force must be quickly deployed, but the signs aren't good. Israel baulks at contributions from countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, which don't recognise it. The Europeans dither, with the French - originally expected to provide the force's commander - so far offering only 200 extra troops. The Italians are more forthcoming but, like the French, rightly insist the force's role and powers be clearly defined. Like the Lebanese

Winning battles, losing a war? Lebanon peacekeeping

army, several potential contributor nations oppose being involved in disarming **Hezbollah**, as mandated by the UN. It's a mess.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

War without victors

Weekend Australian

August 19, 2006 Saturday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Inquirer; Pg. 27

Length: 1216 words

Byline: Martin Chulov

Body

MATP

After the Lebanese incursion comes the argument over who won. Middle East correspondent Martin Chulov reports from Beirut

ALONG the streets of south Lebanon's battered villages are two things that sit oddly amid the chalky dust and rubble: rose petals and millions of rice grains. Late on Thursday, as another rare sight turned up in the destroyed border town of Ain al-Shaab -- the Lebanese Army arriving in the south for the first time in 28 years -- the source of the litter became obvious.

The troops had been greeted by dozens of women throwing rice and petals at their feet in a symbol of celebration and victory. The men of Hezbollah, who loitered around a dusty town square farther up the road, were given the same treatment. And, by the signs of the banners and flags being prepared in their honour on a makeshift parade ground, they were in for a lot more feting.

The leading Lebanese officer on the scene read out the unit's orders, providing a telling sign of the looming dynamic. "The army will deploy on the wounded Lebanese land alongside the men of the resistance," he said.

Since the tenuous ceasefire took hold almost a week ago, reactions on either side of the Israeli border have been sharply different. In Lebanon, especially in the Hezbollah heartland of the south, it is back to business as usual. Most of the 500,000 or so people who fled their homes during the fighting have returned to start again, and what remains of Hezbollah has melted back into village life.

In Israel, the end to 33 days of fighting has brought soul-searching and deepening fears that the war it didn't ask for has led to a result it did not want. The wash-up has left many Israelis believing that they have lost important strategic ground in a region that is steadily turning as hostile as it has ever been. It has led others to ponder new ways of engaging its enemies to bed down a safer home for its citizens in a neighbourhood in which they are finding it increasingly difficult to safely co-exist.

Analysts, commentators and even politicians suggest that the war of perceptions is playing out in Hezbollah's favour. While the true political implications of the savage conflict will take months to play out, an early read suggests that Hezbollah and its nation-state proxies, Iran and Syria, have done more to achieve their objectives than the Jewish state.

War without victors

The war has led to Sunni Muslims across the region developing a new-found affinity with the Shi'ites of Iran and **Hezbollah** who they believe led them to a heroic victory over a historic enemy. Iran, in particular, feels greatly emboldened, with its Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, this week praising **Hezbollah** chief Hassan Nasrallah for leading his Shia guerillas to a "divine victory".

"Your unprecedented holy war and steadfastness are beyond the limits of my description," Khomeini said. "It's a divine victory. It is a victory of Islam. With God's help you were able to prove that military superiority is not [measured] in the number [of soldiers], planes, warships and tanks. Rather, it depends on the power of faith and holy war. You have ridiculed the myth that the Zionist army is invincible."

Israel did not suffer a military defeat in the war, although **Hezbollah**'s ability continually to fire rockets across the border in the face of overwhelming air power did alarm Israeli military chiefs.

The soul-searching in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv centres on whether the Jewish state was able to achieve its strategic objectives through its military might alone. A snapshot of rice-strewn Lebanon offers a resounding no.

One week after the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1701, none of Israel's three key demands have been met. **Hezbollah** remains in southern Lebanon, it has no intention of handing in its weapons and the two Israeli soldiers captured on July 12 are still being held somewhere in Lebanon.

Hezbollah, too, has been left unsatisfied by the resolution, with up to 20,000 Israeli troops remaining in southern Lebanon ahead of the mobilisation of the Lebanese Army and an international stabilisation force. However, the buoyant support it enjoys across the Arab world means it is unlikely to break the truce and bring war back to a region that is brimming with its returning supporters.

Before the war **Hezbollah** was in danger of losing relevance; its initial reason for being had been to fight Israel during its 18-year occupation of Lebanon that ended in 2000. Since then it had attempted to morph into a broader resistance group that aimed to liberate all Arab land from Israeli presence.

Apart from a small parcel of contested land on the Israeli, Syrian and Lebanese border, **Hezbollah** was struggling for an arena until it sprung to the defence of the Palestinian Authority in Gaza, which was under Israeli siege when the **Hezbollah** guerillas struck.

Israel will never agree to negotiate with a threat to its existence.

However, the shakeout from the war, and particularly the reaction to it in the Arab world, has given it cause for thought about the key issue of the Palestinian occupation. After six years of eschewing diplomacy in favour of military muscle, it is under domestic and international pressure to recalibrate the mix. There is a growing realisation in Jerusalem that Condoleezza Rice's "New Middle East" does not mean more of the past six years in which political dialogue with the Arab world was severely limited.

Defence Minister Amir Peretz said during the week that Israel wanted to re-engage Lebanon and Syria, and maybe even Hamas. The maxim that occupation is the root cause of all the Middle East problems has gained impetus.

Australia's John Howard lent his voice to this view during the week, establishing a clear point of difference between his administration and the US in a rare foreign policy divergence from President George W. Bush, who insists that a panacea will be found when the Arab world recognises Israel's right to exist.

For decades, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Iran have been insisting that the problem does not have a "chicken before the egg" dimension and have promised better times ahead if the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is first sorted out.

As the dust settles and the 4000 or so injured on both sides recover, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert appears to be backing away from a key thrust of his domestic policy, which threatened to further inflame the Arab world: moving ahead with a unilateral withdrawal from the West Bank.

War without victors

Some Israelis believe the decision to leave Lebanon in 2000 and Gaza in 2005 on its own terms created more problems than answers. Both withdrawals were perceived at the time as acts of good faith.

But in Gaza and Lebanon many saw the Israelis slamming the door behind them and no longer being prepared to talk about grievances they still held close.

In conversations with ministers and senior members of his Kadima party this week, Olmert backed away from his staunch support before the war for a further unilateral withdrawal. He said he was not ignoring that something fundamental had changed in recent weeks and recognised that his Government's views needed to shift.

Israel, the US and the Arab world are all starting to take out of the war the notion that diplomatic engagement of each other's enemies is the only way forward.

Load-Date: August 18, 2006

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Israeli jets strike as Rice told: Stay away

The Advertiser (Australia)

July 31, 2006 Monday

Metro Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 5

Length: 334 words

Byline: HUSSEIN SAAD, QANA

Body

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hezbollah and the governing Palestinian movement expressed intentions to retaliate.

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

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

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

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

Israeli jets strike as Rice told: Stay away

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

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Massacre at Qana may be a turning point

The Philadelphia Inquirer

August 4, 2006 Friday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer
Found on Philly.com

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A19

Length: 677 words

Body

Karim Makdisi

is an assistant professor of political studies at the American University of Beirut

Earlier this week, we woke to the news that there had been yet another massacre in South Lebanon. Reports say that anywhere from 28 to 60 civilians, mostly women and children, were killed when Israeli missiles took down a building in which refugees had gathered for safety in the biblical town of Qana, where Jesus performed his first miracle, turning water into wine. As mutilated children were pulled from the debris, my wife and I instinctively held on tightly to our own two young daughters.

No one here believes Israeli claims that this attack was "unintentional." For Lebanese and Arabs everywhere, memories of a previous slaughter in Qana flooded back. In 1996, Israeli planes chased fleeing residents into the well-marked United Nations camp there. About 100 civilians - again mostly women and children - were killed.

Now, Lebanon is facing its 24th day of relentless assault by Israeli air, sea and ground forces amid a humanitarian disaster. Hundreds of Lebanese have been killed and thousands more injured. Nearly a million have become refugees.

Israel's war on Lebanon, however, seems not to be going according to plan. Hezbollah - which most Arabs refer to as the Resistance - has so far repelled the superior might of the Israeli army, and gained unprecedented popular support within Lebanon and the wider Arab and Muslim world. Israel's military strategy is unraveling into a desperate and indiscriminate lashing out against Lebanon's infrastructure and its beleaguered civilian population.

When Israel began its attacks, Lebanon was deeply divided politically. Leaders of the pro-American March 14 coalition, including many cabinet ministers and members of parliament, publicly accused Hezbollah of acting like a "state within a state" to advance Syrian or Iranian interests at the expense of Lebanon's sovereignty. This unprecedented criticism was angrily denounced by an alliance led by Hezbollah and populist Christian leader Gen. Michel Aoun, as well as Arab nationalists, leftists, and many citizens across Lebanon's sectarian divide.

The pro-American Arab regimes in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan joined the United States and Europe in openly blaming Hezbollah for its "adventurism" in capturing two Israeli soldiers. There seemed to be tacit approval by

Massacre at Qana may be a turning point

many Arab regimes to destroy, or at least clip the wings off **Hezbollah** to alter the balance of power within Lebanon in favor of the March 14 camp, and to stem what was seen as an increasingly powerful Shia crescent that links **Hezbollah** with Syria and Iran.

The projected swift defeat of **Hezbollah** was to have been a major victory for America in its "war on terror" and its plans to kick-start yet another "new Middle East" after similar plans failed so disastrously in Iraq and Palestine, not to mention Afghanistan.

This latest massacre in Qana, however, may be a turning point against U.S. plans for Lebanon and the region: It has wiped away any ambivalence about who started this war, and has unified Lebanon and the Arab world behind the Resistance. The March 14 leaders and Arab regimes have now followed their outraged citizens in demanding an end to Israel's assault and American complicity, as well as accountability for all the massacres of this brutal war.

Hezbollah and Syria look likely to emerge stronger than before, while Israel's military faces a humiliating defeat that would resonate across the Arab world.

Qana has also buttressed the suspicions of many Lebanese and Arabs: This war is part of an Israeli-American plan to assert U.S. and Israeli hegemony over servile, autocratic and unpopular Arab regimes. America's role in blocking U.N. calls for an immediate cease-fire, and its apparent willingness to grant Israel more time for its assault - with all the suffering that this entails for ordinary Lebanese - therefore comes as no surprise. It represents, however, the final nail in the coffin of America's credibility in the region.

Contact Karim Makdisi at km18@aub.edu.lb.

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

No ceasefire says Israel as fighting intensifies

Daily Post (North Wales)

August 1, 2006, Tuesday

Mersey Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 15

Length: 602 words

Byline: LIAM CHRISTOPHER Daily Post Correspondent

Body

ISRAELI Prime Minister Ehud Olmert yesterday said no ceasefire would be forthcoming in Israel's 20 day battle with **Hezbollah** guerrillas in southern Lebanon.

Olmert said that Israeli forces continued fighting in the air, from the sea and on the ground in Lebanon.

"Israel continues to fight," he said.

Olmert spoke a day after Israeli airstrikes levelled a building in the southern Lebanese town of Qana, killing at least 56 people.

Under US pressure, Israel had called a 48-hour halt to airstrikes.

Olmert said Israel had no choice but to begin its attacks on **Hezbollah** after the guerrillas crossed over the border on July 12, killed three soldiers and kidnapped two others.

"We could not let the terror organisation on our border get stronger, let them get more missiles," he said. "If we had held off, the day would have arrived soon when they would have caused unprecedented damage."

He also said he was sorry for the deaths of **women** and children during raids in Qana.

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

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

Israel had said, in announcing the halt to air strikes, that it would suspend that pledge to end air strikes for 48-hours depending on "operational developments" in Lebanon. After **Hezbollah** guerrillas hit an Israeli tank near Taibeh with an anti-tank missile, Israel said it carried out the air strikes to protect its ground troops.

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

No ceasefire says Israel as fighting intensifies

In a second airstrike around the port city of Tyre, Israel accidentally killed a Lebanese soldier when it hit a car that it believed was carrying a senior **Hezbollah** official, the Israeli army said. Lebanese security officials said the soldier was killed by a rocket strike from a pilotless drone aircraft.

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

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

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

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

"Egypt, which triggered the peace process, warns of the consequences of its collapse," Mubarak said in a nationwide televised statement. "The Israeli aggression undermines the opportunities to continue it and its success."

Fighting was heavy in the north-east corner of south Lebanon around Taibeh and other border villages. Constant Israeli artillery blasts shook the hills.

Hezbollah guerrillas in the area fired a volley of rockets at the nearby Israeli town of Kiryat Shemona.

The bloodshed in Qana increased international pressure on Washington to back an immediate end to the fighting and prompted US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to cut short her Mideast mission to return home yesterday

They were not the targets and we regret it

Graphic

Ehud Olmert' Press photographer Wael Ladiki carries an elderly woman after she spent a week in a basement of the southern town of Bint Jbail, Lebanon, site of the bloody week-long siege of **Hezbollah** fighters by Israeli forces

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Impassioned Pleas in the Mideast

The New York Times

August 4, 2006 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 4; Editorial Desk; Pg. 16

Length: 1005 words

Body

To the Editor:

No words are strong enough to capture what is happening in Lebanon, Gaza and Israel. Yet the world cannot stay silent when hour after hour masses of men, women and children are dying or are fleeing destruction and death.

The agonizing themes of Jew against Muslim, Muslim against Jew must not be exploited as excuses for inhumanity.

Before the eyes of the world, humanity on all sides is being reduced to what Shakespeare called poor, bare, forked animals preying on each other like monsters of the deep.

Moderation in this struggle is dismissed as weakness. But if people cannot reassert it, the attractive slogans of violence will take over.

Is it too late for us to recognize that a moderate attitude is not a weak and spineless compromise? That it makes undeniably strong demands on honest feeling and pitilessly clear thought.

Diplomacy and declarations that only play for time are indefensible. The only way out of this devastation is if people in every country stand up, with passion and with strength, to reaffirm our common humanity by refusing all military solutions.

Leaders are there to find the ways. Our role across the world, regardless of race, religion or culture, is to cry, "Stop!"

Daniel Barenboim

Peter Brook

Costa-Gavras

Nadine Gordimer

London, Aug. 3, 2006

The writers are, respectively, the pianist and conductor; director of the International Center for Theater Research; the filmmaker; and the Nobel laureate in literature. The letter was also signed by 28 other writers, artists and academics, including five other Nobel laureates. The full list of signers is at nytimes.com/opinion.

Impassioned Pleas in the Mideast

To the Editor:

Re "The Long-Term Battle: Defining 'Victory' Before the World" (news analysis, Aug. 3):

Of course Israel has every right to defend itself. That is not the question.

The question is whether reducing Lebanon to rubble, bombing power plants and hospitals, and killing hundreds of trapped, terrorized civilians defends Israel; or whether instead, such actions turn it into an international pariah without friends anywhere.

The question is whether, along with the Bush administration's disastrous policies in Iraq, this war plays into Hezbollah's and Hamas's hands, undermining moderate Islam and strengthening radical hard-liners everywhere.

The question ultimately is whether, without anyone in power in Washington or Jerusalem or Damascus or Tehran having the wisdom and courage to say "Enough!," with violence begetting more and more violence, we are all drifting mindlessly, like people in a dream, toward the ever-increasing likelihood of a nuclear catastrophe.

Eric Chivian, M.D.

Boston, Aug. 3, 2006

The writer is a co-founder of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which won the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize.

To the Editor:

It would be wise for the international community to remember the price that was paid after the first President Bush did not complete the job in the first Persian Gulf war, when Saddam Hussein and the rest were spared.

Israel's war with Hezbollah is really the whole world's. Not allowing Israel completely to dismantle Hezbollah forces in Lebanon could have dire consequences for the entire world and would be tantamount to giving up the struggle with worldwide terrorism.

Nachama Kanner

Rehovot, Israel, Aug. 3, 2006

To the Editor:

Robert Pape ("Ground to a Halt," Op-Ed, Aug. 3) claims that "the only thing that has proven to end suicide attacks, in Lebanon and elsewhere, is withdrawal by the occupying force."

On the contrary, Israel withdrew from Lebanon six years ago, and suicidal terrorists perceived it as weakness. Therefore, they began almost immediately to increase their attacks.

Hezbollah itself used those six years of unlimited freedom in running its own affairs in southern Lebanon to increase the supply of missiles and arms from Iran, through Syria, and train for the war it started three weeks ago.

Susan H. Sachs

Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel

Aug. 3, 2006

To the Editor:

Impassioned Pleas in the Mideast

Of all the parallels one might offer to describe Hezbollah, Robert Pape's choice of "the multidimensional American civil-rights movement of the 1960's" seems intended to mock not just the peaceful activists who fought racism and discrimination but also the innocent victims of Hezbollah terrorism.

While both groups might be, at the core, coalitions of those with shared political interests, only one used murder and violence, a key distinction if there ever was one.

Adam Gregerman
New York, Aug. 3, 2006

To the Editor:

Paul Krugman ("Shock and Awe," column, July 31) suggests that Israel was hasty in its military response to Hezbollah's unprovoked attack. In doing so, he assumes that Israel did not consider all of the options before reacting.

Israel waited nearly two years for the international community to carry out Resolution 1559, which calls for the disarmament and disbanding of Hezbollah. Meanwhile, the international community virtually looked the other way as Hezbollah built up its arsenal of rockets and missiles waiting for the moment that it would strike Israel.

Israel's response in defense of its citizens finally awakened the international community to the scope of Hezbollah's threat to Israel and the region. It is time for the world to act decisively to ensure that the rocket and missile attacks end.

The Lebanese Army, supported by a meaningful international force, can prevent Hezbollah from rearming and regaining control of southern Lebanon. But it cannot do it alone, which is why the international community must embrace President Bush's call for a sustainable peace.

Michael A. Salberg
Director, International Affairs
Anti-Defamation League
New York, July 31, 2006

To the Editor:

As a man-on-the-street Muslim, I appreciate Paul Krugman's realistic column. He is right in concluding that "Israel needs, for its own sake, to stop a bombing campaign that is making its enemies stronger, not weaker."

Will the Israeli politicians and generals heed this sane advice?

Jalal Syed
Brossard, Quebec, July 31, 2006

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Impassioned Pleas in the Mideast

Drawing (Drawing by Jerry Silverberg)

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

End of Document

Israeli missile strike in Lebanon kills more than 50

University Wire

July 31, 2006 Monday

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Length: 1241 words

Byline: By Kathy Gannon, Indiana Daily Student; **SOURCE:** Indiana U.

Dateline: BLOOMINGTON, Ind.

Body

Israeli missiles hit several buildings in a southern Lebanon village as people slept Sunday, killing at least 56, most of them children, in the deadliest attack in 19 days of fighting.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert expressed "great sorrow" for the airstrikes but blamed Hezbollah guerrillas for using the area to launch rockets at Israel, and said he would not halt the army's operation.

The Lebanese Red Cross said the airstrike in Qana, in which at least 34 children were killed, pushed the overall Lebanese death toll to more than 500. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice postponed a visit to Lebanon in a setback for diplomatic efforts to end hostilities. She was to return to the U.S. Monday morning, abruptly breaking off her diplomatic mission in the Mideast.

Before the airstrike, Olmert told Rice he needed 10-14 days to finish the offensive in Lebanon, according to a senior Israeli government official. The two said they would meet again Sunday evening.

"We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning," Olmert said during Israel's weekly Cabinet meeting, according to a participant in the meeting. "We will continue the activity and if necessary it will be broadened without hesitation."

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan called an emergency Security Council meeting Sunday at the request of Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora.

The council was expected to discuss a French-sponsored draft resolution spelling out a series of steps meant to resolve the crisis, including an immediate halt to fighting.

Rice said she had called Saniora to postpone her visit to Lebanon; angry Lebanese officials said it was their government that called off the meeting.

Israel said it targeted Qana because it was a base for hundreds of rockets launched at Israelis, including 40 that injured five Israelis on Sunday. Israel said it had warned civilians several days before to leave the village.

"One must understand the Hezbollah is using their own civilian population as human shields," said Israeli Foreign Ministry official Gideon Meir. "The Israeli defense forces dropped leaflets and warned the civilian population to leave the place because the Hezbollah turned it into a war zone."

Israeli missile strike in Lebanon kills more than 50

Rescuers aided by villagers dug through the rubble by hand. At least 20 bodies wrapped in white sheets were taken away, including 10 children. A row of houses lay in ruins, and an old woman was carried away on a plastic chair.

Villagers said many of the dead were from four families who had taken refuge on the ground floor of a three-story building, believing they would be safe from bombings.

"We want this to stop!" shouted Mohammed Ismail, a middle-aged man pulling away at the rubble in search for bodies, his brown pants covered in dust. "May God have mercy on the children. They came here to escape the fighting."

"They are hitting children to bring the fighters to their knees," he said.

Rice said she was "deeply saddened by the terrible loss of innocent life" in Israel's attack. But she did not call for an immediate cease-fire in the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah militias.

"We all recognize this kind of warfare is extremely difficult," Rice said, noting it comes in areas where civilians live. "It unfortunately has awful consequences sometimes."

"We want a cease-fire as soon as possible," she added.

The United States and Israel are pressing for a settlement that addresses enduring issues between Lebanon and Israel and disables Hezbollah -- not the quick truce favored by most world leaders.

Saniora said Lebanon would be open only to an immediate cease-fire.

"There is no place at this sad moment for any discussions other than an immediate and unconditional cease-fire as well as international investigation of the Israeli massacres in Lebanon now," he told reporters Sunday.

More than 5,000 people protested in central Beirut, denouncing Israel and the U.S., some chanting, "Destroy Tel Aviv, destroy Tel Aviv."

A few broke car windows and tried briefly to break into the main U.N. building until political leaders called for a halt to damage.

Lebanese Defense Minister Elias Murr questioned Israel's claim that Hezbollah fired rockets from the village.

"What do you expect Israel to say? Will it say that it killed 40 children and women?" he told Al-Jazeera television.

Qana, in the hills east of the southern port city of Tyre, has a bloody history. In 1996, Israeli artillery killed more than 100 civilians who had taken refuge at a U.N. base in the village. That attack sparked an international outcry that helped end an Israeli offensive.

Sunday's attack drew swift condemnation from several world leaders.

French President Jacques Chirac's office said "France condemns this unjustifiable action, which shows more than ever the need to move toward an immediate cease-fire."

Jordan's King Abdullah II condemned "the ugly crime perpetrated by Israeli forces in Qana."

Lebanese officials said most of their citizens slain in the conflict have been civilians. Thirty-three Israeli soldiers have died, and Hezbollah rocket attacks on northern Israel have killed 18 civilians.

Fighting also broke out between guerrillas and Israeli soldiers in a zone called the Taibeh Project area, about 2 miles inside Lebanon. The Israeli army said one soldier was wounded. Hezbollah's al-Manar TV claimed two Israeli soldiers were killed.

Israeli missile strike in Lebanon kills more than 50

Heavy artillery rained down on the villages of Yuhmor and Arnoun, close to Taibeh. In northern Israel, rockets fell on Nahariya, Kiryat Shemona and an area close to Maalot, the army said.

Israel has said it would launch a series of limited ground incursions into Lebanon to push back guerrillas, rather than carry out a full-fledged invasion. Israeli troops pulled back Saturday from the town of Bint Jbail, suggesting the thrust, launched a week ago, had halted.

But Lebanese officials reported a massing of troops and 12 tanks near the Israeli town of Metulla further to the northeast, on the tip of the Galilee Panhandle near the Golan Heights, suggesting another incursion could begin soon.

The Security Council has yet to take a stance on the fighting, in part because the U.S. has not called for a cessation of hostilities.

The French draft circulated also seeks a wide new buffer zone in south Lebanon free of Israeli and Hezbollah forces and monitored by international forces and the Lebanese army.

British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett said the strike on Qana was a "tragedy" but stopped short of calling for a cease-fire.

A peace package Rice brought to the region called for a U.N.-mandated multinational force that can help stabilize in the region, according to a U.S. official speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the discussions.

It also proposes: Disarming Hezbollah and integrating the guerrilla force into the Lebanese army; Hezbollah's return of Israeli prisoners; a buffer zone in southern Lebanon to put Hezbollah rockets out of range of Israel; a commitment to resolve the status of a piece of land held by Israel and claimed by Lebanon; and the creation of an international reconstruction plan for Lebanon.

The latter two provisions resembled parts of a proposal by Lebanon's government. But they fell short of Hezbollah's demands, including a prisoner swap to free Lebanese held for years in Israeli prisons and the disputed land, known as Chebaa farms, put under U.N. supervision until its status can be resolved.

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Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Lebanon takes hardline against 'traitors'

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

August 21, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 14

Length: 330 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

BEIRUT (AP) -- Lebanon's defence minister said Sunday he is certain **Hezbollah** will not break the ceasefire but warned all militant groups of harsh measures and a traitor's fate if they incite Israeli retaliation by firing rockets into the Jewish state.

Defence Minister Elias Murr's strong remarks indicated concern that Syrian-backed Palestinian militants might try to restart the fighting by drawing retaliation from Israel.

Prime Minister Fuad Saniora, meanwhile, toured the devastated **Hezbollah** stronghold in south Beirut and decried the destruction by Israeli bombs as a "crime against humanity." Parliament speaker Nabih Berri, a Shiite and **Hezbollah** backer, stood at the Sunni premier's side and said they spoke with one voice.

In Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said he would name a panel to investigate the military and government's performance during the war, which has been criticized by many Israelis as weak and indecisive.

A day after Israeli commandos staged a pre-dawn raid deep into Lebanon, prompting UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to declare the Israelis in violation of the Security Council ceasefire resolution, no new clashes were reported.

Residents in the mountains east of Beirut, however, described continued overflights by Israeli warplanes on the truce's seventh day.

Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Regev said Saturday's raid was aimed at disrupting arms shipments to **Hezbollah** and such operations may continue until international peacekeepers arrive to enforce an arms embargo.

"In the situation where there was a flagrant violation of the embargo, Israel had the right to act. Had there not been a violation, Israel would not have to respond," he said Sunday, expressing impatience with the slow international response in offering troops for the peacekeeping force.

Siding with Jerusalem, the U.S. government also said the Israeli raid underscored the importance of quickly deploying an expanded UN peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon.

Graphic

Colour Photo: AP Photo; Lebanese women dance on top of a bar in the Christian heartland of Ashrafieh, an area of Beirut, Lebanon, late Saturday. On the sixth day of the UN-brokered ceasefire, the Lebanese capital was returning to normal as bars, nightclubs, and restaurants came back to life after a 34-day battle between Israel and Hezbollah guerrillas.

Load-Date: August 21, 2006

End of Document

ISRAEL PUSHES ON DESPITE AGREEING TO AIRSTRIKE LULL

The New York Times

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 6; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1; HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: THE OVERVIEW

Length: 1886 words

Byline: By CRAIG S. SMITH and STEVEN ERLANGER; Craig S. Smith reported from Metulla for this article, and Steven Erlanger from Jerusalem. Helene Cooper contributed reporting from Washington, Hassan M. Fattah from Beirut, and Mona el-Naggar from Cairo.

Dateline: METULLA, Israel, July 31

Body

As Israel poured soldiers and artillery shells into southern Lebanon, it vowed Monday to press ahead with its war on **Hezbollah** and made a number of airstrikes after promising a 48-hour pause in its air campaign.

"The fighting continues," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said. "There is no cease-fire, and there will not be any cease-fire in the coming days."

Israel promised Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on Sunday that it would halt air operations for two days, except to respond to "imminent threats," like rocket-launching teams, and to support ground forces.

Ms. Rice said she had accepted Israel's explanation for resuming airstrikes barely 12 hours after the suspension was announced.

Before leaving Jerusalem, Ms. Rice said she believed that a cease-fire and a United Nations Security Council action on it were on the immediate horizon. "I am convinced we can achieve both this week," she said.

On her flight to Washington, she appeared a little less assured, and aides said the timing had slipped to the end of the week. "I can't tell you when to pack just yet," she told reporters on board. "We're working very hard to make it this week."

Meanwhile, **Hezbollah** held its fire, with the Israeli Army counting only three mortar shells landing in Israel on Monday and no rockets, compared with a record 156 rockets launched on Sunday and about 100 daily before. More than a million Israelis are in bomb shelters.

Israel's defense minister, Amir Peretz, told a special session of Parliament that the army "will expand and deepen its operations against **Hezbollah**." He suggested that the fighting would not stop until a multinational force was ready with a mandate to use its weapons against **Hezbollah** if the group breached any eventual cease-fire agreement. He said Israel would demand outside supervision for the border crossings between Syria and Lebanon.

Israel said it began a 48-hour suspension of airstrikes in Lebanon at 2 a.m. Monday after it fired at a rocket-launching team in Qana on Sunday and killed dozens of civilians in a nearby building.

ISRAEL PUSHES ON DESPITE AGREEING TO AIRSTRIKE LULL

While bombs did fall across Lebanon on Monday, they came at a slower pace and struck at more limited targets, Israeli officials said.

"It's reduced compared to regular days," said Capt. Jacob Dallal, an Israeli Army spokesman, adding that the military was not bombing roads, bridges or structures that might interfere with civilian movements.

But he said the airstrikes were aiming at "immediate threats," including rocket launchers and other weapons, as well as providing air support for ground troops. On Monday, Israeli forces hit a Lebanese Army jeep that Israel said it had mistakenly thought was carrying a senior Hezbollah commander, killing a Lebanese soldier and wounding three others.

The air force also destroyed a truck full of weapons near Lebanon's border with Syria, the army said.

And the Israelis made a ground raid into Lebanon in the Aita al Shaab area. Hezbollah said its fighters were resisting the advance.

In an interview with Reuters on Sunday after the Israeli airstrikes on Qana, Khaled Meshal, a Hamas leader based in Syria, called for "an acceleration of the resistance in Lebanon and Palestine" and asked, "Is there anything left for our people except resistance to protect our women, children, land and honor in this Zionist-American age?"

Some Lebanese civilians took advantage of the bombing lull to move north out of southern Lebanon, and aid agencies drove convoys of food and medical supplies into the south. Lebanese rescue workers retrieved at least 49 bodies from destroyed buildings, Reuters said.

An Israeli Foreign Ministry official said Israel had agreed to the suspension and a 24-hour safe-passage period for civilians heading out of southern Lebanon as a way to "take the steam" out of Sunday's bombing in Qana. But he also said the fight against Hezbollah would continue until there was a diplomatic solution that stopped the rocket fire against Israel and that deployed an international force on the border. "We couldn't ignore Qana," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity, as is customary. "And if we want to continue to get the full cease-fire we want, with an international force, it was important to change the tone and the conversation."

Vice Prime Minister Shimon Peres, speaking at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, said the bombing in Qana was aimed at rocket launchers 300 yards from where the civilians were, a distance commanders considered large enough to avoid the risk of hitting them. He said Israel was investigating what had gone wrong.

On Monday, President Bush appeared to back the Israeli position of continuing the war, repeating his insistence that any cessation of hostilities must be "sustainable."

"A multinational force must be dispatched to Lebanon quickly so we can help speed the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Lebanese people," he said in Miami. "Iran must end its financial support and supply of weapons to terrorist groups like Hezbollah. Syria must end its support for terror and respect the sovereignty of Lebanon."

Meanwhile, Israel continued to call up reserve troops and move fresh soldiers to its northern border, to reinforce troops already fighting and to "prepare for any eventuality," a military spokesman said. While the military has not said how many troops are involved, the maneuvers have led some analysts to suggest that it is planning an accelerated push on the ground before diplomacy closes the window for action.

"I think the only way that they can get in under the wire here is by launching a major ground offensive in southern Lebanon," said Michael Oren, senior fellow at the conservative Shalem Center. "Otherwise they have no leverage, no tangible gains."

In Beirut, Iran's foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, whose country is a main supporter of Hezbollah, arrived from Syria and was dining at the Iranian Embassy on Monday with Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy of France, a French diplomat said. It was unclear what they discussed, but Mr. Douste-Blazy said earlier Monday that Iran was "a great country" that "plays a stabilizing role in the region," a view at odds with the American one.

ISRAEL PUSHES ON DESPITE AGREEING TO AIRSTRIKE LULL

Israel has come under heavy criticism for what many abroad see as a disproportionate response to the July 12 Hezbollah attack that started the fighting. Yet Israelis are critical of their government for failing to strike more swiftly on the ground to push Hezbollah back from the border.

The battles on Monday gave a startling demonstration of how far Israel is from creating an effective buffer between northern Israel and Hezbollah fighters in southern Lebanon; after more than two weeks at war, much of the fighting still took place within sight of the border.

The Israeli leadership has favored air power with guided munitions, which minimizes casualties to its troops but can lead to civilian casualties, as in Qana, when civilians were sheltering in the basement of a building that collapsed after the Israeli strike. The result has been slow progress on the ground and growing international condemnation.

"Israel started this crisis with the most favorable diplomatic position it has ever had in its history, and over the course of three weeks the Olmert government has managed to squander that advantage," Mr. Oren of the Shalem Center said.

The fighting Monday focused on the villages of Taibe, Al Adeisa and Kafr Kila across the border from Metulla, which is near the Golan Heights. Israeli military officers said the villages were the source of repeated recent rocket barrages on northern Israel, in particular the town of Kiryat Shimona, which was hit Sunday by more than 80 rockets.

Airstrikes may have slowed over Lebanon, but they continued apace over the Gaza Strip, the other front in this war. Five Palestinians were wounded when Israeli aircraft bombed a house in the Sheik Radwan neighborhood of Gaza City. For days now, Israel has targeted homes in residential areas where it suspects weapons are being stored.

One of the major questions remains the timing of any cease-fire. The sentiment of much of the world, including crucial members of the Security Council like France and Russia, is that a cease-fire should begin no later than the passage of a Council resolution authorizing an international force for southern Lebanon.

But that force may not be on the ground for weeks. Israel, Mr. Olmert said, wants a cease-fire only when the international force arrives, so there is no vacuum. An immediate cease-fire with no international presence, the Israelis argue, would allow the rearmament of Hezbollah through the Syrian border and even its reinfiltration to the Israeli border.

"If there's a cease-fire tomorrow and no international presence, how do you prevent the rearming of Hezbollah?" asked a senior Israeli official. "And if you can't control that, how can you move to disarm Hezbollah?"

Israel is asking for more time to hit Hezbollah and is asking those like the French, who want an immediate cease-fire, to take concrete actions to help create the conditions for a sustainable peace, the official said.

Another senior official said he expected that a Council resolution could take a week and be capped by a session with foreign ministers, perhaps next Monday. If a resolution, with an acceptable political package, resulted in a cease-fire, Israeli forces would remain in southern Lebanon until an international force arrived, he suggested.

In such a cease-fire, to which Hezbollah would have to agree through the Lebanese government, the official said, Israeli forces would only fire if fired upon, or if rockets continued to be launched against Israel.

The Council extended the mandate of the United Nations observer force in Lebanon for one month to allow more time to formulate a new peacekeeping force.

Israeli reaction to Qana was largely one of sorrow, mixed with determination not to end the fighting too quickly and for what many here consider the wrong reasons.

ISRAEL PUSHES ON DESPITE AGREEING TO AIRSTRIKE LULL

But the country's most influential columnist, Nahum Barnea, writing in Yediot Aharonot, raised questions about Israeli tactics and leadership. Mr. Barnea wrote about the government's decision to allow the army to attack civilian houses if Hezbollah rockets and war materiel were stored inside and the population was warned in advance to leave.

In an interview, he said the policy, however justified, courted the Qana bombing, and he criticized Mr. Peretz for being "stupid enough to make it seem like a moral statement."

In his column, he said Israel had to respond to Hezbollah's attack with military action, but added, "The question is how and at what cost." He criticized Mr. Peretz for describing "proudly how he relieved the army of restrictions on harming civilian population that lives alongside Hezbollah operatives."

"I can understand accidentally harming civilians in the course of combat," he wrote. "But a blanket directive regarding the entire civilian population of southern Lebanon and the Shiite neighborhoods of Beirut is a hasty and lightheaded act, which courts disaster. We saw the outcome of this yesterday, in the bodies of the women and children that were taken out of the bombed house in Qana."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: A Gaza home destroyed by Israel yesterday. The Israeli Army called the homeowner to warn him about the attack, and his family was evacuated. (Photo by Michael Kamber for The New York Times)

An Israeli soldier provided cover for soldiers evacuating a tank damaged by Hezbollah missiles yesterday near the village of Kafr Kila. (Photo by Rina Castelnovo for The New York Times)(pg. A8)Chart/Map: "Moving Aid Into the South"Relief agencies took advantage of the lessened violence yesterday by moving more food, water and medical assistance into southern Lebanon.STAGING AREA -- Several convoys have moved from Beirut to Tyre, a 50-mile trip that now takes nine hours.RESCUE -- One Red Cross convoy reached Qana.NO ACCESS -- In Aitarun, a Red Cross convoy was halted because of ongoing violence.EVACUATION -- One Red Cross convoy reached Bint Jbail to evacuate wounded and stranded residents. Doctors Without Borders sent medical supplies by taxi.CANCELED -- On Sunday, a convoy was canceled here because of airstrikes.Map of Israel and Lebanon highlighting the areas listed above.(Sources by World Food Program, Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders)(pg. A8)

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

*There's life in the streets, but ceasefire reveals scars of war; CIVILIANS
FLEE*

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 8

Length: 431 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Bint Jbeil

Body

SHELLS still thudded around embattled Bint Jbeil yesterday but the bombing had stopped, for a few hours at least, and that was enough to bring a brief flurry of life back to the cratered roads of south Lebanon.

From all along the border, swarms of terrified civilians took advantage of the lull to flee towns and villages where they had been trapped by 19 days of bombardment, picking their way along shattered back roads, through the rubble of buildings and metal of twisted cars.

The border town showed the scars of two weeks of heavy ground fighting between Israeli troops and Hezbollah.

Hezbollah flags still flew proudly along the main street, fastened to portraits of martyrs.

Fierce Hezbollah resistance claimed the lives of at least nine Israeli soldiers here before the Israeli Defence Force gave up its attempt to seize the town. But there were signs too that Hezbollah had suffered.

A thick blood trail led to a bombed-out residence on the outskirts of town, where a Kalashnikov rifle lay abandoned with its ammunition.

Some came in old Mercedes with blown-out windows, scarred by shrapnel. Many rode out in the last vehicles left to them, women and children crammed tight on tractors. One of these was 21-year-old Khadija Mustafa Akil, fleeing the border village of Jibbayn.

"We left at 6am. We didn't have any car so we had to take the tractor. We heard that the Israelis were going to have a 48-hour ceasefire so we decided to get out. But we don't know anybody anywhere. Where are we going to go?"

Here and there along the road the sweet and sour stink of decay oozed from collapsed buildings, evidence of the grim work that lies ahead - should Israel's 48-hour cessation of bombing somehow be extended.

With so many dead to attend to it takes something special to draw out the rescue workers.

On the edge of Qana soldiers and Red Cross volunteers were still digging through the rubble of the house where as many as 60 civilians were killed on Sunday morning.

There's life in the streets, but ceasefire reveals scars of war CIVILIANS FLEE

The bodies of the dead now lie at Sour general hospital, stacked in a refrigerated truck container with tigers stencilled on the back.

"Can these children shoot Katyushas?" a soldier asked quietly.

Hezbollah still can, despite Israel's massive onslaught. Israel may have forsworn aerial bombing for 48 hours, to allow it to "investigate" the Qana mass killing, but **Hezbollah**'s chief, Hassan Nasrallah, has sworn to avenge the dead.

On the hillsides above Qana yesterday, camouflaged in an olive grove and mysteriously unattended, two Katyusha rockets sat ready on their launch stands, dull silver darts aimed south towards Haifa.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

**THE FIRST STEP; BLAIR HOPEFUL FOR MID-EAST PEACE AS UN
THRASHES OUT DEAL**

Sunday Mirror

August 6, 2006 Sunday

0 Star Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 358 words

Byline: BY VINCENT MOSS IN LONDON AND CHRIS HUGHES IN BEIRUT

Body

TONY Blair hailed a United Nations deal yesterday as an "absolutely vital first step" to ending the bloodshed in the Middle East.

The PM, who postponed his Caribbean break to deal with the crisis, praised the draft UN agreement hammered out by America and France.

It calls for a "full cessation of violence" on both sides and demands the disarmament of all forces inside Lebanon except for the Lebanese army.

There will also be a substantial peace zone "free of armed personnel other than those of the UN and Lebanese force".

The deal - which will be discussed again today behind closed doors by the 15-nation UN Security Council - came on the 25th day of fighting as Israeli commandos launched more raids on Hezbollah guerillas in south Lebanon.

But Downing Street hopes the Security Council will back the agreement, paving the way for a ceasefire. Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett, currently on a caravanning holiday in France, is ready to fly to the UN HQ in New York if agreement is reached. Mr Blair said: "The priority now is to get the resolution adopted as soon as possible. I will work tirelessly to re-energise the Middle East peace process, the only way to provide a viable, long-term solution to this situation, with a Palestinian state alongside a secure, Israel." The deal will be seen as a victory for the US and Israel who refused to back global calls for an immediate ceasefire. A second UN resolution is expected to map out a long-term peace plan including the release of prisoners by both sides.

Meanwhile Israeli special forces in helicopters swooped on Hezbollah guerrillas yesterday, destroying a rocket-firing site in Tyre.

THE FIRST STEP BLAIR HOPEFUL FOR MID-EAST PEACE AS UN THRASHES OUT DEAL

An Israeli official said: "Hezbollah was using civilians as human shields." Eight Israeli commandos were wounded while the army said seven Hezbollah fighters were killed.

In the West Bank, Israelis seized Palestinian Parliament speaker Aziz Dweik.

During the day 200 Hezbollah 1 rockets slammed into towns across northern Israel.

One salvo killed three Israeli women in an Arab village, bringing to 33 the number of Israeli civilians killed by rockets since fighting began.

BECKETT ON TOW: Page 8&9

COMMENT: Page 14

Graphic

Lebanese soldiers in Tyre examine destroyed missile site yesterday' HOPE: Blair

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

Timely cover for villagers and Rice

The Australian (Australia)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

All-round Metro Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 9

Length: 593 words

Byline: GEOFF ELLIOTT

Body

MATP

[[[ANALYSIS]]]

ISRAEL'S 48-hour suspension of aerial bombing in southern Lebanon to allow civilians to get to shelter may save a lot of Lebanese but it also gave some diplomatic cover for Condoleezza Rice.

The bombing at Qana just as Rice arrived back in the Middle East was a disastrous public relations moment for the US Secretary of State, whose staff put a lot of energy into her public persona -- photo opportunities with sports stars or cultural leaders is a common request in her travel itinerary.

But this time around, the only images dominating the airwaves in the Middle East, and elsewhere for that matter, were of dead women and children being pulled from the rubble in Qana.

Rice, under instructions from US President George W. Bush, has refused to call for an immediate ceasefire, saying it doesn't make sense if it isn't sustainable and if the root causes of the issue are not addressed -- namely that the Lebanese Government get control of the south and kick out Hezbollah.

However, there was no way Rice could repeat that policy formulation after the tragedy at Qana. Instead, having told reporters "it is time to get a ceasefire", she went on to meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and secured an agreement that Israel temporarily halt its aerial bombardment for 48 hours.

It is significant that it was Rice's spokesman Adam Ereli, rather than the Israeli military, who announced the news -- after midnight in Jerusalem -- giving the US ownership of the suspension. It was portrayed as allowing time for humanitarian assistance, as well as investigations into the Qana tragedy.

And, of course, Rice can fly back to Washington with some cover.

But in reality, nothing much appears to have been achieved. The weekend trip was to have been about setting a framework for a permanent ceasefire but Rice never got to Beirut to discuss things there. A furious Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora cancelled the meeting.

Timely cover for villagers and Rice

And there is no agreement that Hezbollah stop firing rockets. Indeed, if Hezbollah continues its bombardment, Israel has, naturally, reserved its right to respond, including more air attacks.

It is not Rice's fault that the Israeli military misdirected the bombs in Qana. But there has been little argument in the Bush administration -- or, for that matter, the entire US Congress, Democrat and Republican -- on the right of Israel to respond to Hezbollah's attacks. There has been an implicit acknowledgement that Israel needs to do what the Lebanese Government could not -- rout Hezbollah.

Mr Bush last night stuck to his position that he wanted a sustainable end to the violence.

"I assured the people here that we will work toward a plan in the United Nations Security Council that addresses the root causes of the problem," he said in Miami. "We want a long-lasting peace and one that's sustainable."

At this point it's hard to see a win for the US and Israel. The militia is proving a more formidable foe than expected, further burnishing its credentials on the Arab street. The Bush administration rightly points out that Hezbollah started the conflict, entering Israeli territory, killing eight soldiers and kidnapping two, and firing rockets over the border.

The West hardly wants Hezbollah coming out of the conflict with an ability to crow about some kind of a victory, but at the moment that's where this could be headed.

If nothing else, it could underscore the huge risks in a strategy that uses conventional military operations against a guerilla outfit hiding among civilians.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

End of Document

Terrorism is rotting the Islamic revolution it craves

The Sunday Times (London)

August 6, 2006

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Section: FEATURES; News; Pg. 12

Length: 1578 words

Byline: Amir Taheri

Body

Hezbollah's men of terror are both the strength and the Achilles heel of a movement that seeks to spread Islamic states, says Amir Taheri

The scene is Beirut, some years on, when Hezbollah has driven out the "Crusader-Zionists" and begun building the model Islamic state it has promised since the 1980s.

The rallying cry of Tony Blair -for western democracies to remain united in the global war against terror and engage in a battle of values -has not been heeded.

The western powers, led by the United States, have run away from the Middle East, allowing the Islamic republic and its newly acquired allies in Al-Qaeda to set the agenda.

The former American University of Beirut has been replaced by the Iranian-sponsored Islamic University. As teenage "volunteers for martyrdom" chant "Allah, Koran, Khomeini", the new chancellor of the Islamic University prepares to read a message from Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian president.

He calls on the Lebanese to prepare for more sacrifices because his "jihad to wipe the Jewish stain of shame" off the map is only the beginning. He plans to liberate Egypt, north Africa and Spain.

Much has changed in Lebanon since the Party of God seized power. Women have been put into purdah and men forced to grow beards. Bars, pubs, discotheques, hotels with a louche reputation, and other "places of sin" have been closed.

Swimming on some beaches is allowed, though not for women, and men are required to enter the sea fully dressed. Gone are cinemas, theatres, the opera, comedy saloons, and bookshops selling publications that are "at variance with Islamic values".

Newspapers and magazines that had once criticised the Party of God or its patrons in Tehran have been banned. In accordance with the slogan "Hizb faqat Hizballah" (Only one party: Hezbollah!), Lebanon has become a one-party state.

All that is but a glimpse of what Lebanon could look like if and when Hezbollah, armed to the teeth and flush with Iranian cash, realises its dream of extending south Beirut to the whole of Lebanon.

Terrorism is rotting the Islamic revolution it craves

The Lebanese know what all that could mean because they have seen it first hand in Beirut's suburbs controlled by Hezbollah. But how many might wish to live in such a system?

The answer came in Lebanon's first free general election last year: Hezbollah and its allies won 14 of the 27 seats allocated to the Shi'ite community in the 128-seat national assembly. This means that some 89% of the Lebanese, including half the Shi'ite community, do not share Hezbollah's vision of an Islamic state modelled on Iran.

Much of Hezbollah's current power and prestige is due to the fact that it is the best funded and best armed political-military machine in the country, feeding thousands of families through employment in its businesses or with subsidies and stipends.

Nevertheless, it would be naive to deny the fact that the message of Hezbollah, which is in fact that of the Khomeinist revolution in Iran and the various Salafist movements in other Muslim countries, appeals to large segments of opinion in the Islamic world and beyond.

The message, first put by Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, is simple: the modern world, a creation of Crusader-Zionists, cannot reflect the values and aspirations of Muslims. It declares that Islam has the right, indeed the duty, to offer an alternative to the western model.

To build the Islamic model, Muslims must expel the Crusader-Zionists from their land, regain control of their destiny, build powerful states and proceed to liberate Muslim lands lost to the "infidel".

The same message is put by Muhammad Khatami, Iran's former president, in a more sophisticated way: the modern West, a child of the Renaissance, has led to colonialism, imperialism and world wars, pushing mankind to the brink of extinction through thermonuclear exchanges or environmental collapse. Western civilisation has undermined the family, done away with moral scruples, encouraged sexual licentiousness and promoted greed as man's highest motivation. It is Islam's mission to offer all nations, Muslim or not, an alternative vision.

Such a purely political interpretation of Islam illustrates why the West must engage in a battle of values, as Blair suggests. For this political interpretation has several advantages for its proponents.

It challenges western-style nationalist, liberal, democratic, socialist and communist parties. It also prevents theological discussions that would reveal divisions within Islam, even inside rival Sunni and Shi'ite camps.

Inside the Muslim world rival sects persecute and murder each other because of religious differences. The Egyptian government does not allow Shi'ites to have a mosque in Cairo while the Khomeinist regime denies that right to Sunnis in Tehran.

Sectarian killings have become part of daily life in some Muslim countries, most glaringly in Pakistan and Iraq.

The more fanatical Sunnis and Shi'ites even refuse to shake hands with one another for fear of being "sullied". However, when it comes to hating the West and dreaming of planting the flag of Islam on every capital, they are at one.

Another advantage of transforming Islam into a purely political anti-West movement is that it can attract support for its various "causes" inside the West itself.

There are many westerners who, prompted by self-loathing or as a result of ideological passions, share the hatred that Hezbollah and Al-Qaeda have for the "infidel" West. The problem is that while most self-loathers in the West no longer use violence to express their views, Islamism of the type represented by Al Qaeda and Hezbollah is wedded to terrorism.

But there lies both the strength and the Achilles' heel of the Islamist movement.

Terrorism allows small groups to punch above their political weight. The Taliban militia consisted of just 6,000 men. The Fedayeen Islam, the backbone of the Khomeinist movement that rules Iran, originally consisted of just a few

Terrorism is rotting the Islamic revolution it craves

hundred assassins and their mentors. Even if we accept exaggerated figures presented by Israel, Hezbollah has a maximum of 8,000 fighters.

All those groups, however, were able, and some still are, to exert greater influence on their societies because they were ready to do something most people would not do: to use murder as an instrument of politics. By using systematic violence and terror, these groups hold their societies hostage. But terrorism could also be the undoing of Islamism.

The majority of Muslims abhor the use of indiscriminate violence even in response to genuine grievances let alone in pursuit of dreams of world conquest. And the history of the past three decades shows that Islamic terrorism can be defeated.

This happened in Egypt, where Islamists fought an exceptionally vicious campaign for a quarter of a century. It also happened in Algeria, where Islamic terrorism claimed some 150,000 lives in a decade. Turkey has managed to smash Islamist groups, most notably the Turkish branch of Hezbollah.

In the past five years Saudi Arabia has also crushed several Islamist groups, thus loosening their hold on segments of the population. Pakistan, too, has scored significant blows against Islamists -a fact largely ignored by the western media.

There is no doubt that force is often needed to break the terror machines that hold whole societies hostage. Algeria could not have returned to normal political life without defeating armed Islamists. Lebanon cannot live in peace unless Hezbollah is disarmed and turned into an ordinary political party.

Iraq will not know stability unless the insurgents and foreign terrorists are militarily crushed. But the war on terror has been won in several countries and can be won in others provided all those who wish to defeat Islamism remain united, resolute and patient.

The defeat of Islamism, an enemy not only of the West but also of the majority of Muslims, can be speeded up if force is complemented with political, ideological and cultural campaigns to reveal the bankruptcy of the Islamist doctrine. What is urgently needed is a common understanding in the West, and among modernising forces within Islam, of what is at stake.

This is not the first time that western values, of which many are now universal, have been challenged by mortal foes prepared to use violence, terrorism and war.

In every previous instance those foes were defeated because they offered despotism and despair.

There is no reason why the outcome should be different this time -or that the Khomeinist University should ever replace the American University of Beirut.

* THE ARC OF EXTREMISM: BATTLEGROUND OF VALUES AS WELL AS MILITARY MIGHT

Tony Blair says the West must confront Islamist extremists across the Middle East and beyond

LEBANON

Hezbollah, a militant Islamic group backed by Iran, has built up a strong military and political base

SYRIA

Supports Hezbollah and Hamas, a Palestinian group in Gaza. Has more than 300,000 military personnel and stockpiles of Scud missiles

IRAQ

New government remains weak. Some elements want Islamic state. Al-Qaeda also has a presence in the country

Terrorism is rotting the Islamic revolution it craves

IRAN

Led by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has called for Israel to be 'wiped off the map'. Suspected of developing a nuclear weapons programme

AFGHANISTAN

Taliban extremists are resurgent. British troops, who form part of a Nato force, facing stronger opposition than expected

PAKISTAN

Strong Islamic fundamentalist opposition to President Pervez Musharraf, who supports the West. Lawless borderlands are haven for Al-Qaeda

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

End of Document

Why Israel can no longer win this war; Whatever the terms on which the Middle East conflict is concluded, a leading expert on the region says Tel Aviv will not emerge victorious

The Evening Standard (London)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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London Evening Standard

Section: A MERGE; Pg. 13

Length: 1028 words

Byline: BERNARD WASSERSTEIN

Body

TO DECIDE whether a war is just, look at how it begins.

To determine whether a war is wise, watch how it ends.

Israel, no doubt, had every justification for regarding Hezbollah's unprovoked raids and rocket-launchings across its northern frontier as a violation of international law and a casus belli.

But the suspicion is growing that the Israeli government and High Command did not fully think through the foreseeable consequences of going to war. As the endgame approaches, the dismal likelihood is that Israel, not to mention Lebanon and the Middle East as whole, will emerge significantly worse off than before the fighting started.

Unless the Israeli armed forces manage to pull a dramatic rabbit out of the hat in the next few days, they will have to halt their operations without achieving the strategic objectives that they set themselves: elimination of Hezbollah as a threat to border towns in northern Israel; its humiliation, designed to serve as an object lesson to Hamas rocketlaunchers in the Gaza strip; and the unconditional release of the Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah.

With Israeli forces pressing into Lebanon there is no immediate sign of an end to the conflict. But discussions continue on a ceasefire, the terms of which fall far short of Israel's war aims and, if accepted, would amount to a galling rebuff for Israel. Those terms would allow Hezbollah to emerge bloodied but unbowed from the conflict. It might be required to withdraw its forces north of the Litani river but it would neither disband nor disarm. It would survive to fight another day, perhaps in another way.

Far from being humiliated, Hezbollah would emerge with an enormous boost to its reputation throughout the Arab world. Already its leader, Sheikh Nasrallah overshadows Osama bin Laden as a hero for militant Islamists.

Why Israel can no longer win this war Whatever the terms on which the Middle East conflict is concluded, a leading expert on the region says Tel Aviv will not e....

The introduction of some form of international force in southern Lebanon would represent a further setback for Israel. If her armed forces, operating with scant regard for the laws of war, cannot rein in Hezbollah, is it plausible that a UN force, however "robustly" mandated, will do the job better? Have we forgotten the lesson of the bombings of the US marine and French military barracks, resulting in hundreds of dead, in 1983 - and the way President Reagan, that most "robust" of leaders, hastily "repositioned" US forces out of Lebanon? If our memory is so short, we can be sure that Sheikh Nasrallah's is not.

Hezbollah seems no more ready now than it was a fortnight ago to release the kidnapped Israeli soldiers unconditionally.

Notwithstanding Ehud Olmert's fighting talk, he will probably have to follow the dismal example set by several previous Israeli prime ministers, and offer a disproportionate number of Arab prisoners as ransom for the soldiers' release.

To compound Israel's travails, she is now under pressure to surrender Sheba Farms, a tiny area that she has held since 1967. When Prime Minister Ehud Barak removed Israeli forces from Lebanon in 2000, the UN certified that the zone was Syrian, not Lebanese territory. Israel accordingly held on to it, pending an agreement with Syria about withdrawal from the Golan Heights - an agreement that was never reached. Hezbollah claimed that Sheba Farms was Lebanese and that its continued attacks on Israel constituted "resistance to occupation" and a liberation struggle. The strategic value of the area is slight. Supposedly its handover now would provide a face-saving inducement to Nasrallah to withdraw his men behind the Litani. But the symbolic victory that would be handed to Hezbollah would be enormous.

The bitter fruits of this war for Israel do not end there. The damage to the Israeli economy is enormous. Just two months ago Warren Buffett, supposedly the world's canniest investor, paid \$4 billion for an 80 per cent stake in the Iscar Metalworking Company. That was the largest single foreign direct investment in Israel's history. Iscar's main plant is situated in northern Galilee within earshot of the Lebanese frontier. Buffet says he doesn't regret the purchase one bit. We may doubt whether many other investors will share his fortitude.

And then there are the human costs on all sides. In less than three weeks Israel has already lost more dead and injured than in the previous six years of occasional Hezbollah harassment and crossborder pinpricks. As for the horrendous Lebanese civilian casualties, these represent a devastating further blow to Israel's moral reputation, already at a low ebb because of her conduct in the occupied territories. Some cynics are prone to dismiss such considerations as a luxury Israel cannot afford. Even on prudential grounds, they are wrong. In the long run, as Jefferson said: "The good opinion of mankind, like the lever of Archimedes, with the given fulcrum, moves the world".

We hear it argued that the destruction being wreaked by Israel in Lebanon will, at least, force her enemies to think twice before daring to attack her again. History does not lend encouragement to this notion. If the slaughter, by Israeli shelling, of a hundred civilians in the UN compound at Qana in 1996 failed to stop Hezbollah, why should the massacre of 60 innocents in the same place in 2006 make Nasrallah (let alone his Iranian and Syrian backers) pause for reflection?

The awful reality is that, by a long series of missteps, erroneous calculations, and overweening hubris, Israel's leaders have boxed their country into a dead end. They now face the terrible dilemma: either they yield to ceasefire terms that amount to a strategic defeat or they wade back into the inextricable bog that Mr Sharon so blithely entered with his invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

That was justified at the time as a response to the attempted assassination of Israel's ambassador in London and as a strategic effort to root out terrorists from southern Lebanon. The enterprise ended in ignominy, shameful civilian bloodshed, and an unproductive 18-year military commitment.

This war may be more justified. On the current evidence it is even less wise.

Why Israel can no longer win this war Whatever the terms on which the Middle East conflict is concluded, a leading expert on the region says Tel Aviv will not e....

. Bernard Wasserstein is the author of Israel and Palestine: Why They Fight and Can They Stop?

(Profile Books).

Graphic

DESTROYED: A LEBANESE **WOMEN** FLEES THE SOUTHERN TOWN OF BINT JBAIL FOLLOWING ATTACKS FROM ISRAELI FORCES

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

End of Document

UN resolution calls for fighting to stop

Daily Post (North Wales)

August 7, 2006, Monday

North Wales Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 11

Length: 548 words

Byline: ANDREW WOODCOCK

Body

TONY Blair wants a draft UN resolution to halt fighting in the Middle East to be adopted as quickly as possible, he said yesterday.

The wording of the text was agreed by the US and France after intense negotiations.

It calls for a "full cessation" of hostilities between Israel and guerillas of the militant **Hezbollah** group in Lebanon, but allows Israel the right to defend itself if attacked.

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

The resolution must now go before the full 15-nation UN Security Council and gain Israeli and Lebanese acceptance.

Diplomats said it was likely to be adopted early next week.

Mr Blair hailed the agreement as "a vital first step in bringing this crisis to an end".

Speaking at 10 Downing Street, Mr Blair said: "What is then necessary is that we put in place the international force to put the Government of Lebanon fully in control of the whole of the Lebanon, so that Lebanon can get back on its feet and Israel can be secure."

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

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

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

The breakthrough came as at least 15,000 protesters rallied in London to demand a ceasefire.

UN resolution calls for fighting to stop

Many were critical of Mr Blair's failure to call for an immediate ceasefire, which some claim has given Israel the green light to continue military actions against Hezbollah which have killed at least 900 Lebanese over the past three weeks.

Speaking at yesterday's rally, left-wing Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn said: "The demonstration shows the unity of any normal thinking person in this country that there should be an immediate ceasefire and that the Government's line is incomprehensibly wrong."

The resolution asks Israel and Lebanon to agree to a set of principles to achieve a long-term peace.

The terms include an arms embargo that would block any entity in Lebanon, except the Lebanese Government, obtaining weapons from abroad.

Others include the disarmament of Hezbollah and the creation of a 20-km buffer zone between the Israel-Lebanon border and the Litani River.

Fighting continued in Lebanon, with Israeli commandos battling Hezbollah guerillas in the southern port city of Tyre while warplanes attacked Beirut.

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

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

Graphic

A child with a painted face, representing death, takes part in a mass protest in front of Downing Street, during a Stop the War demonstration yesterday. Picture: FELIPE TRUEBA

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

In Short

The Irish Times

August 11, 2006 Friday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 10

Length: 551 words

Body

Other stories from around the world in brief

Bloody battles for UK troops in Afghanistan

LONDON - British soldiers in Afghanistan are engaged in fighting that is more intense and prolonged than any other conflict during the past 50 years, the British commander of all foreign troops in Afghanistan has warned.

Some soldiers will be withdrawn from the region of southern Afghanistan where they have engaged in bloody battles with the Taliban, Lieut Gen David Richards told the BBC yesterday. He said the British soldiers would be replaced by Afghans. - (Guardian service)

1.5m people flee typhoon in China

BEIJING - The most powerful typhoon to strike China for half a century tore into one of the country's manufacturing heartlands yesterday, killing at least two people, injuring 80 and forcing the evacuation of 1.5 million residents.- (Guardian service)

Tamil Tigers say army killed 50

KANTALE - Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels have said that more than 50 civilians have been killed and 200 wounded in their territory in the island's east during a major army offensive to capture a water supply.

An ammunition dump exploded at an army camp east of the government-held town of Kantale, one of the main eastern artillery sites. The army said yesterday it feared many troops had died or had been wounded. - (Reuters)

Locals try to block neo-Nazi hotel

BERLIN - Residents in the small town of Delmenhorst in Lower Saxony are frantically trying to raise EUR 3.4 million to buy a hotel before it is taken over by an extremist organisation that reportedly plans to use it as a neo-Nazi rallying point.

The ultra-right group is led by Jürgen Rieger, a Hamburg lawyer and well-known neo-Nazi who has defended prominent Holocaust deniers and leads an annual rally in Bavaria in honour of Rudolf Hess. - (Guardian service)

Two held in US on Hizbullah charges

In Short

CHICAGO - Two 20-year- old men arrested in Ohio and found with airport security information and airline passenger lists were being held on state charges of money laundering on behalf of Hizbullah, authorities said.

Ali Houssaiky and Osama Abulhassan, of Dearborn, Michigan, were apprehended during a traffic stop in Marietta, Ohio, on Tuesday. - (Reuters)

Ethiopian floods death toll rises

ADDIS ABABA - The death toll from flash floods that hit an eastern Ethiopian town rose to 254 yesterday as rescuers widened their search for 250 people still missing, police said. - (Reuters)

Lobster claws back missing cash

PLYMOUTH - Swimmer Paul Westlake thought he had seen the last of his wallet when it vanished during a late-night dip - until it turned up in the claws of a lobster.

The 30-year-old's wallet was handed in a few days later by a diver - who had caught the lobster and found the creature firmly grasping it. Mr Westlake told the Plymouth Evening Herald newspaper: "I have never eaten a lobster and I never will now." - (Reuters)

Man made 37,760 silent phone calls

TOKYO - A Japanese man was arrested this week after making 37,760 silent calls to directory inquiries because he wanted to listen to the "kind" voices of female telephone operators.

The 44-year-old has admitted to allegations of obstructing the operations of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp by making up to 905 calls a day from his mobile phone, the daily Mainichi Shimbun reported yesterday. - (Reuters)

Load-Date: August 11, 2006

HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: POLITICS; Mideast Conflict a Setback For Iran Reform Movement

The New York Times

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9

Length: 1219 words

Byline: By MICHAEL SLACKMAN; Nazila Fathi contributed reporting for this article.

Dateline: TEHRAN, July 31

Body

The Israeli onslaught in Lebanon and **Hezbollah**'s daily victories in the regional public relations war over the conflict threaten to claim a victim in Iran: whatever hope remained of resurrecting the political reform movement.

Day by day, even as Iran's officials assess the military setbacks of **Hezbollah**, they have grown more and more emboldened by the gathering support in the Islamic world for the Iranian-backed Lebanese militia on the front line with Israel. They have grown more and more emboldened by what they see as a validation of their confrontational approach to foreign policy -- and in their efforts to silence political opposition at home.

That is the view of at least some opposition figures, analysts and former government officials who say they find themselves in the awkward position of opposing Israel and sympathizing with the Lebanese people, yet fear what might happen should **Hezbollah** prevail.

Such an outcome, they say, would strengthen the hand of the hard-liners now in control of Iran's government, including President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, whose firebrand opposition to the West has taken Iran back to the early days of the Islamic Revolution, when the country's leadership focused more on exporting its revolutionary ideas than on integrating Iran with the rest of the world.

In the tense environment, where anyone who questions the leadership's full-throated support for **Hezbollah** can face public vilification, few people who express such opinions are willing to be quoted by name. But the anger, the feeling of conflicting concerns and the fear of a future political crackdown appear to be spreading.

"A victory of violence in this region will make it more difficult for all of us," said a former official who served in the government of Mr. Ahmadinejad's predecessor, Mohammad Khatami. "Of course, I would prefer a **Hezbollah** victory over an Israeli victory," he said, "but "

The perception that Israel has lost the battle for hearts and minds, and that **Hezbollah** and Iran have won, was reinforced by the Israeli attack on the Lebanese village of Qana, which killed dozens of civilians, including many children. That notion has not changed the dynamics in Tehran so much as intensified them.

HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: POLITICS; Mideast Conflict a Setback For Iran Reform Movement

Even before the fighting broke out, a political crackdown was under way, with newspapers under pressure to present the government line, and academics and intellectuals increasingly fearful of arrest.

Ramin Jahanbegloo, a prominent scholar, has been held in Evin Prison for months on a charge that he was trying to "incite a velvet revolution," seemingly an allusion to the nonviolent popular uprising that overthrew Czechoslovakia's Communist government in 1989.

On Sunday, Iranian news agencies reported that Akbar Mohammad, a student leader jailed since 1999, had died in a hunger strike.

"It looks like, if Hezbollah gains victory, this crackdown will intensify against all those forces opposed to the current establishment," Behzad Nabavi, a former deputy speaker of Parliament who has called for dialogue with the United States, said in an interview.

"If Iran succeeds in its goals in the conflict in Lebanon," Mr. Nabavi said, "it can strengthen the hand of the establishment," which he defined as the clerical leadership, including the Guardian Council, and the military, including the Revolutionary Guards and the Basiji militia forces.

Iran is not part of the Arab world, and across Tehran -- home to more than 20 million people, rich and poor, conservative and secular -- many have expressed feelings that this war in Lebanon is an Arab, not an Iranian, fight.

There are pockets of people who say they want to go to Lebanon and fight for the Islamic cause, and as the fighting spreads, their enthusiasm has grown. The war in Lebanon has also fueled a growing anti-American sentiment, which barely existed on the streets of Tehran before.

Even so, many people here say they do not consider this to be their war. That has infuriated the nation's conservative leadership, which has pinned its regional policy on the Israeli onslaught being viewed as a plot by Israel and the United States against Hezbollah and all Muslims.

The conservative daily newspaper Kayhan, which is close to Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, recently ran an editorial under the headline "This Is Our War."

Then, on Saturday, it printed an attack on the daily newspaper Aftab-e Yazd, which had been anonymously publishing opinions criticizing Iran's support for Hezbollah. Kayhan said those opinions were "in line with the Zionist regime's propaganda campaign against the support for the oppressed people of Palestine and Lebanon."

In fact, many here see the war in terms of what it means for Iranians -- not the Iranian nation, but the Iranian people. That means their economy, their political freedoms and their relationship with the rest of the world.

From academic offices to newspapers, those concerns are spreading, however quietly. They have fueled a fear that what is happening in Lebanon threatens to stifle whatever democratic movement remained in Iran and to empower those, like President Ahmadinejad, who have declared that liberal democracy is a failure.

"The events in the Middle East will have a negative impact on democracy in Iran," said Ibrahim Yazdi, secretary general of Freedom Movement, an opposition political group. "Some might ask Hezbollah why it took those two soldiers hostage. Based on what kind of predictions did it take such a measure?"

"But no one can deny the large-scale invasion of Lebanon by Israel and the destruction of its infrastructure and the crimes it is committing against civilians, women and children. Such acts strengthen Ahmadinejad's position."

The widespread destruction in Lebanon may help the president turn the tide of public opinion toward his vision of this being Iran's war. But more immediately, political analysts said, it helps to win him support in a more crucial arena: Iran's inner circles of power.

HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: POLITICS; Mideast Conflict a Setback For Iran Reform Movement

On the most important issues facing the country, consensus must be reached across multiple constituencies within the elite, from moderate clerics like Mehdi Karroubi, the former reformist speaker of Parliament, to the more hard-line Guardian Council.

But there is a feeling among some political analysts that the events in Lebanon will, at least for now, strengthen the hand of those who, like Iran's president, have equated democracy with tyranny and international integration with surrender.

"It seems that the law is the law of the jungle and such acts strengthen the position of those countries which favor violence," said Hermidas Davoud Bavand, a political scientist at Tehran University. "It gives a free hand to radical governments to say that they will not be attacked if they have powerful military capability to act as a deterrent force for them."

The reformist newspaper Etemad Melli said in an editorial on Monday that the carnage in Lebanon had united the region and that even if **Hezbollah** was defeated, "Muslims will deal a blow" to the United States and Israel. Then, reflecting on the broader significance of that prediction, it said: "This silence will cost a lot for the West, a price that might not be good for humanity and the stability of the region."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: Iranian **women** dressed as suicide bombers rallied yesterday in Tehran to express support for **Hezbollah** and opposition to Israel. (Photo by Shawn Baldwin for The New York Times)

Load-Date: August 5, 2006

End of Document

A bloody night in Tyre and then Israelis warn: Sidon is next

Mail on Sunday (London)

August 6, 2006 Sunday

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Section: FB 04; Pg. 12

Length: 444 words

Byline: BOB GRAHAM

Body

ISRAEL was set to push deeper into Lebanon last night after dropping leaflets over the port of Sidon, warning families to flee the area.

The alert followed a night of bloodshed in an Israeli land and air attack on Tyre.

Witnesses said Israeli commandos were disguised as Hezbollah fighters and Israel said it killed seven of the enemy and destroyed rocket launchers. But Hezbollah said it had repulsed the raid, killing at least one Israeli commando.

The push to Sidon would be Israel's deepest incursion into Lebanon for more than 20 years.

It could see troops move up to the Litani river, 19 miles north of the border.

Israel's warning to Sidon is an attempt to avert civilian casualties ahead of a blitz on Hezbollah targets in Lebanon's third-largest city attacks which will be carried out with 'full force', its leaflet warns.

'Criminal terror operations have been carried out from your area, firing missiles at the state of Israel,' it says. 'For your security, leave the area immediately and head north.

Who stays is risking his safety.' Fears grew for Sidon's 100,000 population and the tens of thousands more who have fled villages in southern Lebanon over the past 26 days to escape Israeli strikes.

Despite the new Israeli threat, by nightfall yesterday Hezbollah had fired 200 Katyusha rockets at towns and villages across northern Israel, killing three women in an Arab community. The victims, believed to be a mother and daughters, died as their home took a direct hit. Daily rocket attacks have intensified in the past four days, with 800 fired into Israel from areas that it claimed it had taken.

In one frantic period in midafternoon yesterday, nearly 130 rockets landed in a 60-mile area from Haifa on the coast to close to Tiberias, by Galilee.

Twelve were also injured in the missile attacks and 33 Israeli civilians have now been killed in rocket strikes.

But Major-General Udi Adam, chief of Israel's Northern Command, said yesterday: 'We have hit a number of launching sites of long-range missiles.

A bloody night in Tyre and then Israelis warn: Sidon is next

We have hit more than 50 per cent of their arsenal.' Seven full Israeli army divisions of 10,000 troops are operating across a 70-mile stretch of border and Israel said that in the previous 36 hours it had flown 170 missions to hit suspected **Hezbollah** targets.

Also yesterday, an Israeli soldier was killed by **Hezbollah** mortar fire in the east Lebanese village of Taibeh.

The bombing of four bridges on the main coastal road north from Beirut on Friday has left aid agencies looking at bringing in supplies by air. The UN refugee agency called the bombing a 'major setback'.

. Get all the latest news and pictures of the conflict at www.mailonsunday.co.uk/news

Graphic

RELIEF: AN ISRAELI SOLDIER SHOWS HIS JOY AS HE CROSSES THE ISRAELI BORDER ON THE WAY BACK FROM FIGHTING IN LEBANON YESTERDAY
STAKEOUT: AN ISRAELI SNIPER TEAM, LEFT, IN AN ABANDONED HOUSE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON YESTERDAY

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

End of Document

International: World briefing: Israel counts the cost of war

The Guardian - Final Edition

April 3, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 20

Length: 580 words

Byline: Simon Tisdall

Body

Israel is still counting the cost of last summer's war against Hizbullah in Lebanon, though the final balance may not be entirely disadvantageous. Regional analysts say internally challenged Arab regimes such as Egypt were privately pleased to see a threatening "sub-state" actor such as Iranian-backed Hizbullah knocked on the head. After all, they could be next.

Arab-Israeli relations have followed an upward curve ever since the war, culminating in prime minister Ehud Olmert's weekend offer of multilateral peace talks without preconditions. Unconfirmed reports abound of secret meetings between Israeli and Saudi officials.

Yet some of the most acute damage from the war is only now coming to light. A survey on patriotism by Herzliya university north of Tel Aviv, conducted primarily to assess the impact of the war on "the Israeli spirit", found that national pride (expressed by 83% of those interviewed) and willingness to fight for Israel (92%) remained high.

In contrast, it noted a "very strong decline in confidence in the government and in the Knesset (parliament)" and to a lesser degree, in the defence forces (whose "approval rating" fell by more than 20 points). Most damaging of all was the war's negative impact on Israel's ethnic Arab minority, comprising about 20% of the population.

"The Arab citizens identify themselves first and foremost as Arab patriots (85%), and then as Palestinian patriots (52%), and least of all as Israeli patriots (32%)," the survey said. "The war weakened the emotional attachment of the Arab public to the state."

Nadia Hilo, the only female Arab Knesset member, said the war was only one element in a growing disconnect. "There's a definite problem of racism, there's more and more divisions, more and more alienation& . . .&The real danger for Israel is inside if it does not give its Arab citizens equality and integration."

Ms Hilo said overcrowded schools in Arab villages, higher than average unemployment, relatively few Arab women in the labour market, and separate security searches at airports were all aspects of an ingrained discrimination. She said "a national programme of positive discrimination with annual targets for employment of equally qualified Arabs" was urgently required.

Ms Hilo also said Israel was not trying hard enough to resolve the Palestinian conflict. "We can't just say Hamas is there so we can't do anything."

International: World briefing: Israel counts the cost of war

Israeli Jews have mixed feelings about such criticisms, to put it mildly. A typical response is that the Arab population prefers to stay in Israel rather than move elsewhere; and that illegal immigration from the Palestinian territories has brought uncounted thousands into the country.

A government official said the results of earlier, limited attempts at affirmative action, in public sector appointments, were not encouraging. "The truth is they don't want to be seen to be working for the Israeli state," he said.

Professor Amnon Rubinstein of Herzliya said the issue should be seen in a wider context. " Society is in a state of transition. The gap between Jews and Muslims is widening."

He said there was recognition that the majority's attitude had to change.

But mutual distrust persisted. Israeli Jews were increasingly spooked by rising Islamic fundamentalism and radicalisation in the Arab world. Despite governments' talk of regional peace, he said, many continued to look at Israel's Arabs and wonder whether "they are hoping to help bring about the day when Israel will disappear".

Load-Date: April 3, 2007

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THE MIDDLE EAST WAR

The Nation (AsiaNet)

August 17, 2006 Thursday

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Length: 705 words

Byline: Dr Ejaz Ahsan

Body

What did the US and Israel expect to achieve from the latter's attack on Lebanon? Seymour Hersh said on TV the other day that they intend to attack Iran, but before they can do that, they wanted to destroy the ability of Hezbollah to rain long-range rockets on Israel. If such was their objective, it certainly does not appear to have been achieved to any great extent. The two abducted soldiers have not been returned. No one is going to disarm Hezbollah.

At the same time, Israel and the US have won the world's indignation and hatred for destroying civilian neighbourhoods in Lebanon and killing a thousand people, including women and children. It seems the Israelis were so frustrated by their inability to conquer and hold territory in Lebanon that they destroyed whole building blocks in impotent rage. Further, by bombarding and destroying even Christian neighbourhoods, they ensured that all citizens of Lebanon unite against them.

Why did the Israelis want to destroy Lebanon's bridges and petrol pumps? They say they destroyed pumps to make movement of supplies and troops across the country difficult, and that they took out bridges in order to prevent Hezbollah transporting their long-range rockets close to the border, whence they could be fired as far afield as Tel Aviv itself. Be that as it may, they are being criticized around the world for destroying the country's infrastructure.

They attacked the southern suburbs of Beirut, alleging these were a Hezbollah stronghold. However, they spared central Beirut. They might have attacked it in the latter part of the war, but were probably deterred by Nasrullah's threat that if they did so, Hezbollah would rain rockets on Tel Aviv. Hezbollah's Katyusha rockets did some damage, but this was a small fraction of that inflicted by Israeli bombing which reduced whole blocks to rubble.

In 1967 the Israelis conquered the Sinai peninsula, the West Bank and the Golan Heights from the mighty armies of Egypt, Jordan and Syria respectively, and in just six days. This time, in over 33 days, they were unable to hold even a single village, and that against a very modestly equipped guerrilla militia.

Israel has one of the world's best air forces, what with F-16s and pilotless drones, apart from hundreds of tanks and heavy field guns. Their opponents had no air cover of any kind, no tanks, no big guns, and no warships. Yet they halted the mighty Israeli army in its tracks. At the same time they inflicted casualties on their adversary only somewhat more than they suffered. The Israelis had told Americans they needed about a week to capture territory up to the Litani river, an area about 14 miles deep and twenty miles wide. Instead, they ended up capturing just about a dozen square miles. Even that, the village Bint Jubail, they had to give up and evacuate.

There is talk of incorporating the military arm of Hezbollah into the Lebanese army. However, if it is absorbed in the army as just another division, it will not be of much use. It should be incorporated into the army as a 'Guerrilla Division'. At the same time, armies of Muslim countries and other small nations should each raise similar guerrilla

THE MIDDLE EAST WAR

militias as part of their armies. However, it should be remembered that these militias will succeed in their missions in future only if they have the **Hezbollah**'s tough training and the will to fight.

In fact, smaller countries threatened by bigger powers should all think seriously about having greater proportions of their armies as guerrilla units, in order to neutralize, to an extent, the enemy's superiority in fire power and technology. From Afghanistan and Iraq, the US has learned that it is easy to conquer countries by raining hell-fire on them for over a month, but is next to impossible to hold the territory indefinitely if the population is hostile.

From Lebanon they ought to learn that if the population is fully against the aggressor and is well-trained, it is very difficult for an invading army to conquer any territory. If these lessons deter them from future aggression, against Iran and other Muslim countries, the lives of innocent civilians lost in Lebanon and Israel will not have been entirely in vain. E-mail: drijaz@nation.com.pk

Load-Date: December 6, 2006

End of Document

Middle East crisis: Iran: Bush and Blair complicit in war crimes, says Tehran

The Guardian - Final Edition

August 7, 2006 Monday

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Section: GUARDIAN HOME PAGES; Pg. 5

Length: 480 words

Byline: Simon Tisdall, Tehran

Body

Tony Blair and George Bush are "co-defendants" in war crimes committed by Israel in Lebanon and should be made to answer for their actions before an international court, a senior Iranian government leader said yesterday.

Manouchehr Mottaki, Iran's foreign minister, also said British and US leaders had foreknowledge of Israeli plans to launch a "campaign of aggression" in Lebanon which he claimed was part of a "war on the whole Middle East". But Iran did not fear an American attack, he said, and Washington's plans to transform the region in its image were certain to fail.

Speaking during his first major interview with a western newspaper since the Lebanon crisis began last month, Mr Mottaki criticised Mr Blair's refusal to back earlier calls for an immediate ceasefire. He also attacked the UN security council's failure to condemn Israeli actions, including the Qana bombing last week when dozens of women and children died.

But he stressed that Iran was ready "to shoulder its responsibilities" in helping to end to bloodshed. He praised France, with which Tehran is in close diplomatic contact, contrasting it with Britain.

"Some Lebanese officials have said that Israel, because of the many atrocities it has committed and because of the devastation it has brought on Lebanon, has to be prosecuted. They say it has to be put on trial and it has to pay reparations," he said. "In such a case I would say that Mr Bush and Mr Blair must be co-defendants. I would say that those who have helped with war crimes . . . they have to be answerable for their actions."

Mr Mottaki claimed Israel's attempt to destroy Hizbullah was part of a plan to weaken Lebanon. "The aggression unleashed by the Zionist regime was premeditated," he said. "One month prior to the aggression, there were military manoeuvres carried out by Zionist troops and this tells us that this incident was in the works for some time. They were preparing for this."

But Israel had miscalculated. "Its military campaign has failed miserably" in the face of stronger than expected Hizbullah resistance, he said. That was why its backers, the US and Britain, had opposed a ceasefire for so long, he said. "This is something that I talked about in my telephone conversation with the British foreign secretary a week ago.

"With this in mind, we believe the British and Americans have a share in the atrocities in Lebanon and they are the reason why all international efforts to date (to end the fighting) have not been successful.

"The British and American policies . . . tell me that they did know beforehand the intentions of the Zionist regime."

Middle East crisis: Iran : Bush and Blair complicit in war crimes, says Tehran

Mr Mottaki said Mr Bush's "greater Middle East initiative" was nothing more than a plan for further "aggression and occupation and the killing of innocents . . . This is a war against the whole of the Middle East," he said.

Nuclear standoff, page 14 guardian.co.uk/iran >

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

End of Document

U.S., too, shoulders blame for conflict in Middle East

USA TODAY

August 3, 2006 Thursday

FINAL EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 8A

Length: 387 words

Body

Never before have I witnessed a war such as the battle raging in the Middle East ("Israel vows no cease-fire soon," News, Tuesday).

Since Israelis are doing the bombing and killing, it seems only fair to place the entire blame on Israel. But let's also consider the role of the United States, which provides the Israelis with war bombs and materials. Shouldn't Washington share the blame?

Of course Israel has a right to defend itself, and any cease-fire should include provisions to ensure Israel's safety. But the fact that the United States is the only nation in the United Nations to consistently back Israel and provide it with the materials of war does not give Israel the right to wantonly run rampant and slaughter innocent children and women.

No matter what one's nationality is, how can any of us sleep at night knowing that this horrible catastrophe is continuing?

David W. Thomas

Sun City West, Ariz.

Blame Hezbollah's strategy

The Hezbollah strategy of attacking Israel from within civilian populations is deplorable. To then call Israel the villain because of its response to such a provocation is a crime against humanity and an insult to the intelligence and sensitivities of the civilized world.

The English language has no word to describe the tactic of one party taking an action for the purpose of causing a second party to harm a third party.

Everyone has known at least one person in his life who seemed to enjoy stirring up trouble between two innocent parties.

Wayne F. Bizer

Plantation, Fla.

U.S. , too, shoulders blame for conflict in Middle East

Road to lasting peace?

President Bush now reasons that continuing to kill and disarm Hezbollah will allow a more "durable" cease-fire solution. This makes no sense to me. Even if a day came when every Hezbollah soldier had been killed, only a fool would presume a lasting peace. Because the next day, a new Hezbollah would be on the rise.

I think the United States will be fighting terrorists until we resolve the reasons why they hate us. Toward that end, talking and listening seem the best weapons of choice. If it takes 10 years to argue a permanent peace, so what? Twenty years? So what? If no one is being shot, burned, dismembered, tortured, blown to pieces, driven crazy, murdered, beheaded or terrorized, what does it matter how long it takes to describe the terms of a true and enduring peace?

Paul Hancy

Berea, Ohio

Graphic

PHOTO, B/W, Ali Hashisho, Reuters

Load-Date: August 3, 2006

We must be ruthless

Ottawa Citizen

August 6, 2006 Sunday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A10; David Warren

Length: 754 words

Byline: David Warren, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

I've touched upon "just war" several times in this space during the last few weeks. I will continue touching it today. The issue is already an urgent one; its significance can only grow in the foreseeable future, as the encounter between fanatical Islam and the West spreads from mere terror incidents to open guerrilla warfare on various fronts.

We see in the Middle East now how the conflagration is spreading. Hezbollah enjoyed little support in the Arab world when it kidnapped two Israeli soldiers and began firing rockets at an unprecedented rate into northern Israel. The Arabs feared Hezbollah's aggressive sponsors -- Iran, principally -- even more than they hated Israel. The Saudi and Egyptian governments were among those that actually criticized Hezbollah more sharply, at first.

But the conflict in Lebanon has gone on for nearly a month, and the hatred of Israel comes back to the fore. Both Western and Arab media have had the opportunity to direct rage against Israel over the deaths of civilians. Neither makes an issue of the fact that Hezbollah's whole fighting strategy involves the use of women and children as human shields, or in some cases of which I am aware, as live bait to lure Israeli soldiers into ambushes.

The Israeli military policy is to hold fire against any building in which soldiers believe civilians are sheltering, even if they believe Hezbollah fighters are also present. This policy goes well beyond the Geneva Conventions, which anyway don't apply to combat with irregular fighters. Moreover, by slowing Israeli progress in destroying Hezbollah, it grants time for pressure against Israel to be built internationally.

The entirely predictable result of the media effort to sensationalize Israeli "atrocities" -- including one at Qana last week that was probably faked -- has been to trigger waves of anti-Semitic rage across the Muslim world, and on the left side of the political spectrum throughout the West. (Events, such as the shooting rampage in the Seattle Jewish Federation office the Friday before last, do not give sufficient pause. But was that not a natural consequence of anti-Israel incitements?)

As I write, Shia demonstrators are now rioting against Israel in Iraq. Add this to the effect of constant terrorist attacks on Shia targets by Sunni insurgents -- supplied, like Hezbollah, by Iran and Syria -- and the prospect of a civil war becomes real -- one that can only serve Iran's interests.

Meanwhile, those of you who missed the Nuremberg rallies, and Herr Hitler's progress through Germany in the 1930s, may now review Iran President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's latest speech this week in both video clip and translation at memritv.org . Before a huge crowd, chanting "Death to Israel" and then "Death to America," he dwells upon various blood-libels against the Jews, mixing these together with a reprise of what the media have been

We must be ruthless

reporting from Lebanon. He boasts of Iran's nuclear technology and looks forward to the imminent "Fire of the Wrath."

What difference has Israel's and the West's "just war" policies made with either the enemy or the media? Every allied accident is presented as purposeful, and where there was no accident, collateral damage is made up. Moreover, the object of Hezbollah's fight is not to defeat Israel -- it can't -- but rather to whip up an international anti-Zionist frenzy, and turn it specifically to the advantage of Iran. They think globally, but act locally.

The way Israel is now fighting -- and the U.S. and allies fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan -- must be reconsidered. The enemy is itself quite indifferent to civilian suffering, as it shows by using its own people as pawns. It consciously uses our own Western, moral reticence against us.

By openly stating that we will, under no circumstances, attack targets where civilians are present, we "hand the foe a blueprint of our acts, incite him to step over our carefully drawn line, encourage his vice and incur our own defeat." (I am quoting a priest who has considered the broader implications of the Catholic just-war doctrine.)

Even "just war" acknowledges that, like medicine, real mercy requires ruthlessness sometimes. We have forgotten this in the West. If we want to save civilians over the longer run, we must resolve to call the enemy's bluff. Show it by our actions that hiding behind baby carriages will not save it. For the enemy will only stop using human shields when they cease to serve its purposes.

David Warren's column appears Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday.

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

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Israel stalled by intense fighting; Battle rages on in Lebanon as guerrilla force refuses to give up and MI5 warns fight may come to Britain

Sunday Express

August 6, 2006 Sunday

U.K. 1st Edition

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Section: NEWS; 8

Length: 818 words

Byline: From Bob Graham ON THE ISRAEL-LEBANON BORDER

Body

THE most intense fighting of the Middle East war yesterday signalled the impotence of the massed ranks of Israeli armoured divisions to conquer the small **Hezbollah** guerrilla force that continues to pour its deadly missiles across the border.

Nearly a month after setting out to crush the well-entrenched **Hezbollah** fighters, Israeli forces inched their way two steps forward and one step backwards as their campaign stalled.

Throughout the day their artillery, dug into the hills above the border region, pounded positions suspected of housing their elusive enemy.

Warplanes joined the barrage, dropping the controversial bunker-buster bombs that have recently arrived in Israel from America via Britain.

Bouts of small-arms fire interspersed with mortar echoed through the orchards and fields in southern Lebanon's ageless hills and valleys.

And despite Israel's mobilisation of their well-equipped forces - there are seven army divisions of more than 10,000 troops operating in a 70-mile stretch of border - and their determination to "eradicate" **Hezbollah** and stop the flow of Katyusha rockets, yesterday was another day when the missiles were fired more often and at targets deeper than ever into the Jewish state.

A spokesman for the Israeli Defence Force said that in the previous 36 hours its warplanes had flown 160 missions into the battle area. But far from achieving a victory within a few days that, at one time, appeared to inevitable, it was clear that Israel's bloody campaign - nicknamed Operation Change of Direction - was being confounded by **Hezbollah**'s guerrilla tactics.

Battle-weary young Israeli soldiers rested in the shade of orange and fig groves. Relief at having survived the combat was etched on their faces.

Some slept, their green and brown camouflage face-paint smudged with sweat. Others stripped to the waist and spoke quietly to anxious family and friends on mobile phones they had taken into battle. Some just sat on their haunches and stared into the distance, too exhausted to speak.

Israel stalled by intense fighting Battle rages on in Lebanon as guerrilla force refuses to give up and MI5 warns fight may come to Britain

Their relief at emerging unscathed from the honeycomb of Hezbollah booby traps, mined fields and sniper ambushes was revealed in the way they greeted one another, embracing, shaking hands and giving high-fives.

Roi, a 26-year-old veteran with the Golani Brigade, explained: "Look, it's tough in there, it's not the sort of fight we'd expected. We all think of war in traditional ways, but it's not like that.

It's the way we are trained. It's slow, it's very cautious, it's unpredictable and it's horrible.

"The Hezbollah use everything, the terrain, the buildings and local people to their advantage. We use the rules of war and know we cannot shoot when we see civilians, if we see them, so we have a handicap before we begin.

"We have a further disadvantage when we know that for the past six years Hezbollah has been able to prepare the battlefield for our return. He was able to do everything necessary to make it to his advantage."

The young soldiers, many of them reservists, know the death toll of their comrades is beginning to mount - up to 45 yesterday. They also know their own public, which is becoming increasingly critical and disaffected, is judging them solely on their ability to silence the Katyushas.

Yet, as they sprawled in an immaculately-kept - but now abandoned - orchard, they spoke of their frustration as Hezbollah rockets passed overhead, fired from beyond the towns of Adessa and El Taibe, where they had been fighting.

Nathan, a 23-year-old regular soldier, vowed: "We will stop them. Our people and our politicians must understand it will take time because we must take care. We will crush them eventually, they must be patient. When we hear a Katyusha going into our towns and villages we all feel the pain it will cause. That's why we must not stop now. I promise all of our people, we will win."

Hezbollah sent 200 Katyushas into towns and villages across the northern region of Israel, killing three women in an Arab community.

Six Katyushas fired shortly after breakfast time wounded five people in the suburbs of Haifa, Israel's third-largest city. Civil defence forces also confirmed that a long-range Khybar One Hezbollah rocket had landed near the town of Hadera, the deepest strike into Israel since the conflict began on July 12. It was just 25 miles from the densely-populated capital of Tel Aviv.

The Israelis later claimed to have destroyed the rocket's launch-site during a bombing raid on the Lebanese border city of Tyre.

A spokesman said: "A large number of terrorists were killed during the raid and their launchers for long-range rockets were destroyed, especially the one used to fire a missile on Hadera."

In the past three weeks more than 2,500 missiles have landed in Israel.

Senior police officer Brigadier General Dov Lutzski said: "We are used to dealing with terror on our streets, but this is a different kind of terror that rains in on us from the skies."

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

Lebanese protesters hold out for unity cabinet

The Irish Times

December 7, 2006 Thursday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 825 words

Body

LEBANON: Opposition supporters are prepared for the long haul in their tented city, writes Michael Jansen in Beirut

Offices, shops and cafes in the commercial centre of the Lebanese capital are shut, and green veils cover the facades of buildings under construction while workers hammer within. Streets leading to the main squares are sealed off with coils of razor wire, and armoured scout cars stand guard at intersections.

The heart of Beirut, rebuilt by slain premier Rafiq al-Hariri, has been captured by opponents to the government dominated by his successor, Fouad Siniora.

A week ago tens of thousands of opposition supporters flowed into the area and set up a collection of tent camps stretching from the top of Martyrs' Square through Riad Solh Square to the foot of the hill topped by the handsome Ottoman-era Serai, which houses government offices.

"More than 9,000 protesters live in 650 tents," says Abu Yasser, a member of the co-ordinating committee which is headquartered in a tent opposite the mosque where Mr Hariri is entombed. "We will stay here until our demands are met. Absolutely! We are preparing the tents for the rains." He points to ground sheets and wooden frames piled on the pavement outside. Food is provided by restaurants. White chemical toilets are grouped at convenient points. Water is brought in by lorries.

"We want a national unity government. This is our demand." He dismisses the idea that the mass protest is meant to scupper the international tribunal soon to be established to try those charged with the assassination of Mr Hariri. "We've agreed to the tribunal but we want to be consulted on its make-up and mandate," he says.

"The majority in the [current] government have approved, but the majority of Lebanese are not represented by this government." He also dismisses the support Germany, France and the US are giving the government. "We need the support of the Lebanese only. We are from all over Lebanon, from Khiam in the south, Baalbek in the east, Tripoli in the north. We are from all sects."

As the sun sinks behind the Serai, protesters stream into the cordoned-off area and patriotic music blares from lorries. One song proclaims, We are all one nation, Sunnis, Shias and Christians. The statue of Lebanon's first prime minister, Riad Solh, fez on his head, a Lebanese flag fluttering from his hand, bows to a full-length portrait of Mr Hariri on a huge banner hung on a building at the end of the square.

Both men were martyrs to Lebanon's domestic disputes. Young men sit outside their tents smoking water pipes; gaggles of teenage girls with flags wrapped round their shoulders stroll slowly round the encampment. A group of

Lebanese protesters hold out for unity cabinet

five-year-olds colour placards outside a tent where Shia women wearing black cloaks and older children are delivering and listening to short speeches on the purpose of the protest.

An independent bystander remarks proudly: "This is democracy. We need change. We need to break the deadlock" between the government and the opposition.

While the Lebanese flag flies over the tent compounds, some also sport the banners and posters of the Free Patriotic Movement or the Marada, two Maronite Catholic parties; the Greek Orthodox Syrian National Socialist Party, the Communists, and the Nasserites.

There are few yellow-and- black Hizbullah flags on display but a great many Hizbullah monitors in white peaked caps making certain there is no violence.

Although Hizbullah is the only party with a militia trained and armed to fight, civil war would pose a great danger to the movement as well as threaten the very existence of the country.

Two women students from the Catholic Université St Joseph, Layal Mrjed and Farah Itani, are sitting on the kerb smoking water pipes and watching the multitude gather for the evening's festivities. They are wearing orange scarves identifying them as Free Patriotic Movement activists.

The leader of the party, Gen Michel Aoun, was the head of the anti-Syrian front at the end of the 1975-90 civil war; now he stands with the opposition characterised by the government and its foreign backers as "pro-Syrian". Alliances of convenience are not only the mainstay of Lebanon's confessional politics but also cross confessional lines.

Independent pollster Abdo Saad says his latest opinion survey, based on a sampling of 5,000 respondents from all communities, shows that 58.5 per cent back the opposition while 41.5 per cent are for the government.

More than 70 per cent favour the formation of a national unity government, in which the opposition, which has 45 per cent of seats in parliament, would have nine out of 24 portfolios - or 37 per cent.

"The opposition insists that demonstrations will carry on as long as it takes to achieve its aims. There can be no retreat." So far, mediators have failed to reconcile government and opposition. In the view of a diplomat, "The Lebanese would be able to reach a deal if outsiders would stop meddling."

Load-Date: December 7, 2006

Israel plans for next war using mock city; Training ground resembles an Arab city of 50,000

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

January 25, 2007 Thursday

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Section: NATIONAL/WORLD; Pg. a10

Length: 583 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: TZEELIM MILITARY BASE, Israel

Body

Under the cover of thick smoke, a Muslim call to prayer sounding in the background, the masked Israeli commandos stormed a concrete building and "killed" two soldiers posing as **Hezbollah** guerrillas.

Monday's drill was accompanied by simulated helicopter, tank and rocket fire, but it was the setting that really made it realistic - a mock Arab city in the Negev desert complete with mosques, apartment buildings, even a faux refugee camp.

For Israeli troops frustrated by last summer's war in Lebanon, it was the perfect place for practicing how to avoid another inconclusive outcome.

"We're definitely training for the next war," said Sgt. Shalev Nachum, a medic who fought in the Lebanon campaign. "Next time, it will be different."

The \$40 million Urban Training Center, built with help from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, was unveiled as Israel named a new army chief of staff. Gabi Ashkenazi, a retired general, succeeds Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, who resigned last week over the failure of Israeli's largest operation since 1982.

Ashkenazi's appointment still needs Cabinet approval, which is expected.

The new commander's main task will be restoring confidence in the military, whose preparedness and tactics have been harshly criticized. The Urban Training Center can play an important role toward that goal, recreating the conditions that bedeviled troops during the fighting in Lebanon.

"This is a very important part of the solution," said Brig. Gen. Uzi Moskovich, the center's commander.

Israel launched the full-scale assault just hours after **Hezbollah** captured two Israeli soldiers and killed three others in a July 12 cross-border raid. The resulting 34-day war killed more than 1,100 Lebanese guerrillas and civilians while Israeli officials said 159 Israelis were killed, including 39 civilians.

Despite the fierce fighting, the military failed to achieve its two objectives - crushing **Hezbollah** and freeing two captured Israeli soldiers.

Israel plans for next war using mock city Training ground resembles an Arab city of 50,000

Hezbollah fired almost 4,000 rockets at northern Israel, stopping only when the United Nations brokered a cease-fire, with **Hezbollah** claiming victory over the Israeli military.

The training center consists of some 500 structures packed into eight square miles. It has all the elements of an Arab city of 50,000. In the future, the training center will host friendly foreign armies for a series of war games.

"This is our playground to practice for anything we need," said Lt. Col. Arik Moreh, the base's second in command. "This complex is the only one of its kind in the world - its size, its characteristics and its technical abilities."

These include surveillance equipment throughout each of the 4,000 scattered rooms and GPS systems attached to each soldier, allowing the command center to track the movement of its units. Each soldier also wears sensors that monitor whether he was hit by the enemy's laser-beam fire.

In Monday's drill, some 600 soldiers were charged with occupying the city and dealing with 350 civilians, including demonstrators and journalists, and suicide bombers hiding in their midst.

Bomb-sniffing dogs searched apartments and the pop of gunfire followed troops through the empty streets.

Playing the **Hezbollah** guerrillas this time around were a group of **women** combat instructors covered with camouflage paint and armed with weapons firing laser blanks.

In one scenario they gunned down a charging Israel infantryman.

"Even if they lose, they just have to learn from it," said Lt. Dana Marcowicz. "We are here to help the war effort."

Load-Date: January 25, 2007

Escalation feared as 10 reservists killed; SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 7, 2006 Monday

Fourth Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 6

Length: 646 words

Byline: Jonathan Pearlman in Jerusalem and Ed O'Loughlin in Beirut and agencies

Body

TEN Israeli soldiers were killed in a village near the Lebanese border yesterday in the single deadliest strike by **Hezbollah** since the conflict began.

During a 15-minute barrage around midday, a Katyusha rocket struck a group of reserve soldiers preparing to cross into Lebanon at the northern village of Kfar Giladi. Israel's Channel Two said at least 10 people were killed and four seriously injured.

The attack could lead to a serious escalation in hostilities. An army spokesman said troops were gathering at the northern border.

After the attack, the Israeli Defence Minister, Amir Peretz, cancelled a meeting to discuss a ceasefire with a visiting US delegation led by an assistant secretary of state, David Welch.

At least 100 rockets landed across northern Israel yesterday morning, including 35 around Kfar Giladi and the nearby town of Kiryat Shmona.

Israeli authorities warned residents in the north to stay in secure rooms or bomb shelters after a barrage of missiles hit Haifa, Safed, Acre and Kiryat Shmona.

Also yesterday, Israel said it had captured a member of the **Hezbollah** cell that killed eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapped two four weeks ago, prompting Israel's attacks all over Lebanon.

The head of Israeli army intelligence told a cabinet meeting the prisoner was being interrogated.

In Lebanon yesterday, an Israeli aircraft attacked a van travelling just ahead of a United Nations convoy carrying food and other aid to the southern port city of Tyre, killing two civilians, a Lebanese security source said.

Aid workers complain that Israeli air strikes prevent them reaching the estimated 800,000 to 1 million people displaced by the nearly month-old conflict.

Escalation feared as 10 reservists killed SINGLE STRIKE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Others among the Lebanese dead at the weekend were at least five civilians killed in an air strike on a family home near the southern town of Nabatiyeh and six people - the Lebanese authorities say civilians; the Israelis, Hezbollah militants - who died in an inconclusive Israeli commando raid on Tyre.

The bodies of five more Syrian labourers were found in the ruins of a food depot on the Syrian-Lebanese border that the Israelis bombed on Friday, bringing the death toll from the incident to 28. The Israelis say they thought the depot was being used to transport weapons.

The Israelis lost at least two more troops in fighting along the border, and three Israeli-Arab women were killed when a Hezbollah rocket hit their village.

The latest violence brings the Lebanese death toll in the 25-day war to at least 577, although the Lebanese Government says that the real toll, including bodies hidden in rubble in inaccessible border areas, may be more than 900.

Most of the dead are civilians hit by Israeli air strikes in the far south and Shiite districts of Beirut.

Hezbollah admits it has lost about 50 of its fighters, though Israel claims more than 400, including 50 this weekend. In contrast, 56 of Israel's 89 casualties are combatants, while the remaining 33 are civilians killed by Hezbollah long-range bombardment of northern Israeli towns and cities.

In addition to the human toll the war has caused tremendous dislocation and economic disruption on both sides. In Lebanon, Israeli precision bomb attacks have struck airports, harbours, oil plants, power stations, bridges and highways. Over the weekend fighter-bombers destroyed parts of the coast road linking Beirut to northern Syria, cutting Lebanon's last main link to the outside world and a vital aid route.

There seemed little prospect of an end to the violence in the near future, with the Israeli Justice Minister, Haim Ramon, saying Israel will continue to "hit Hezbollah" until a new multinational force is deployed in south Lebanon - a process that could take weeks if it happens at all.

* Israeli security forces arrested the Palestinian parliamentary Speaker, Aziz Dweik, a Hamas leader, in the West Bank city of Ramallah yesterday.

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: Devastation ... the bodies of a group of reserve soldiers in Kfar Giladi who had been due to cross into Lebanon. Photos: AFP/Hrvoje; Polan In shock ... an Israeli soldier surveys the damage after the strike.

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Rice's words fall on deaf ears

Australian Financial Review

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Second Edition

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Section: NEWS; International News; Pg. 13

Length: 790 words

Byline: Tony Walker JERUSALEM

Body

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rice's words fall on deaf ears

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Despite this, Israeli aircraft fired to support ground forces fighting Hezbollah guerillas in the Taibe area in southern Lebanon yesterday, an army spokeswoman said. Israel has said it reserves the right to respond from the air to threats to its civilians or troops on the ground.

Graphic

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

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

Airstrike kills at least 56 on 'sad, bloody Sunday'

Yorkshire Post

July 31, 2006

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Length: 442 words

Body

David Hogg

DOZENS of civilians were slaughtered yesterday in the worst day of violence seen in the three-week-old conflict between the Israeli armed forces and Hezbollah militants in Lebanon.

At least 56 people sheltering in the basement of a three-storey building in Qana, south Lebanon, were killed when it was crushed by an Israeli airstrike at 1am.

Israel said in response to the international outcry which followed that its military had warned people to leave the area after Hezbollah guerrillas had fired 40 rockets into northern Israel from launch sites nearby.

Police officials said two extended families had taken refuge from heavy Israeli bombardment in the area.

Rescue workers scrambled throughout the day to dig through the rubble, lifting out bodies of women and children. At one point they found a single room with 18 bodies.

The official death toll included at least 34 children and 12 women.

Lebanese special envoy Nouhad Mahoud criticised the UN at its emergency meeting last night for its inaction, and said Israel was committing war crimes.

"Israel is committing atrocities against humanity. The fact that such massacres are yet... to be taken up by resolutions of this august council - that fact does not mean that the truth is to remain hidden."

Israeli Ambassador Dan Gillerman said yesterday was a "horrible, sad and bloody Sunday."

But he said Hezbollah intentionally targeted Israeli civilians and used Lebanese civilians as human shields, while Israel tried to avoid civilian casualties.

"Those people, including women and children who were killed in this horrible tragic incident may have been killed by Israeli fire, but they are the victims of the Hezbollah. They are the victims of terror," he said.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel was "not in a hurry to have a ceasefire" and is reported to have told the US that he needs 10 to 14 more days to finish its offensive.

"We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning," Olmert told his cabinet after the strike, adding that if necessary it will be broadened "without hesitation".

Airstrike kills at least 56 on 'sad, bloody Sunday'

The Lebanese government spent the last week putting forward proposals to disarm **Hezbollah**. Officials have also called for the deployment of an international force in the south.

But Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said any negotiations on a broader deal were off after the Qana killings.

"We will not negotiate until the Israeli war stops shedding the blood of innocent people," he said.

The Qana attack drew immediate condemnation from the Arab world, with Jordan's King Abdullah II voicing his strongest criticism of Israel yet, calling it an "ugly crime".

david.hogg@ypn.co.uk

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Condi's 'new Middle East' a dangerous model

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

September 16, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 4

Length: 431 words

Byline: Dave Harrison, The Citizen

Body

When Condoleezza Rice uttered the phrase "a new Middle East," red flags shot up immediately. This was first used during the initial phase of the one-sided Lebanon War when both Israel and the U.S. believed it would be a cakewalk and over in days. The U.S. deliberately delayed peace talks because it wished to see Hezbollah crushed and then watched indifferently as hundreds of innocent women and children were slaughtered.

Only when it appeared that the Americans' military ally was in trouble did they begin to speak of peace negotiations. Such a prejudicial, in-conflict resolution attempt simply exposed America's blatant hypocrisy. Atrocities and war crimes were committed on both sides and American encouragement, when neutral intervention was badly needed, was another.

Rice's "new Middle East" was to be one without Hezbollah and with Israel firmly in control. Instead, America's quiet support and backroom guidance backfired. This led to another surprise -- Hezbollah is now firmly entrenched.

In addition, the U.S. simply managed to further alienate its few, fast-fading friends and stiffen its enemies' resolve. And, as surely as Jim Bakker built air-conditioned shelters with your donations for man's best friend (clue: not Tammy Faye), this war has simply emboldened Iran and other Islamic nations, made a hero of Nasrallah and set the stage for another.

As well, it proved that David can stand up to the bully Goliath. For once the seemingly invincible Israeli army and its chief supporter were held to a stalemate by a handful of poorly-equipped, rag-tag Hezbollah fighters who were much better organized and more determined than ever. (They perhaps took a page from the Viet Cong handbook.)

Since the U.S. never seems to learn any lessons, we can expect more of the same. It will continue to meddle in everyone's affairs, supply landmines to kill soldiers, provide air power to destroy nations and deliver cluster bombs to kill innocent civilians. And, after the unnecessary killings and wanton destruction, it leaves others to do the cleanup, just as in Vietnam.

Israel's unjustified actions in Lebanon, and America's behind-the-scenes encouragement, assures several results: a new generation of jihadists, a renewed hatred of Israel, suspicion of the West's motives, continued universal terrorism, a stronger-than-ever Hezbollah, Iranian and Syrian intransigence, and dangerous Middle East instability.

Act Two is yet to unfold and Iran will never bow to Western crusaders determined to have everyone under their thumb and run things their way.

Condi's 'new Middle East' a dangerous model

-- Dave Harrison, Prince George

Load-Date: September 18, 2006

End of Document

A fierce storm before calm: Israel offers truce ahead of today's ceasefire deadline

The Gazette (Montreal)

August 14, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 747 words

Byline: MATTHEW FISHER, CanWest News Service

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

The people of Lebanon and Israel held their breath last night wondering whether **Hezbollah** and Israel would honour a United Nations resolution ratified by the two sides that calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

Leaders on both sides expressed their desire for peace and the need for an international force - 15,000 UN soldiers and 15,000 Lebanese soldiers - to be inserted into the main combat zone in southern Lebanon.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert ordered Israel's army to observe the ceasefire hours before it's official start at 8 a.m. local time, the Haaretz newspaper's website said.

It said some troops would be withdrawn from southern Lebanon immediately while others would remain, to be replaced by an international force.

But the portents for calm did not look good on the eve of the truce.

Plumes of smoke billowed forbiddingly above both Beirut and the northern Israeli city of Haifa yesterday after Israel launched its biggest air raids of the war on the Lebanese capital and **Hezbollah** demonstrated that its ability to attack its neighbour was intact by spraying more than 250 rockets across northern Israel - the most it has launched in one day since the war was triggered on July 12 by **Hezbollah**'s kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers.

Foreign reporters embedded with Israeli troops in Lebanon filed vivid reports yesterday describing intense fighting along a wildly uneven 70-kilometre front.

Hezbollah answered Israeli attacks by aircraft and tanks by launching potent Russian-made missiles at Israeli tanks and infantry from fortified positions linked to underground tunnels.

Given the increase in violence during the past three days, it looked as though both sides felt there was still unfinished business. It was difficult to see how the two sides would be able to completely disengage when the truce was set to take effect at 1 a.m. today, Montreal time.

A Lebanese cabinet meeting that had been called to discuss the specifics of the deployment of troops to the south was indefinitely postponed without official explanation late yesterday amid media reports that **Hezbollah** refused to

A fierce storm before calm: Israel offers truce ahead of today's ceasefire deadline

lay down its arms. This delay, which followed unanimous approval of the UN initiative on Saturday, will inevitably postpone the full implementation of the UN resolution. It also will provide an additional pretext for both sides to keep fighting.

"I am not naive. I am living in the Middle East and I am aware that not every decision is fully implemented," Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said when asked about the prospects for a quick cessation of hostilities after the UN accord was endorsed by the Israeli cabinet by a vote of 24-0 with one abstention.

After Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah declared on Saturday that his fighters would attack any Israeli soldiers in Lebanon after the truce, Israel's deputy prime minister, Eli Yishai, said: "The moment a single Katyusha is fired, we should hit their infrastructure very hard - water, electricity, gas and more."

About 20 bombs or artillery shells dropped by Israeli warplanes or fired by Israel warships exploded in Beirut at about the same time that Israel's cabinet was approving the UN accord. The barrage - which landed within a span of less than two minutes in the middle of the afternoon - caused more than the usual panic in the streets of Beirut.

It reduced 11 apartment buildings to rubble in a suburb to the south of the city centre that had previously escaped most of the fighting.

As of yesterday evening, only 10 deaths were reported from this bombardment, probably because most people had heeded Israeli warnings to flee the area.

When the international force will arrive has been the subject of intense speculation. The force, which Lebanon said yesterday will include troops from France, Italy, Turkey, Spain, Morocco, Indonesia and Malaysia, may start to take up position within 10 days. It will be the beginning of a process that may take as long as a month to complete, according to the UN.

After losing 24 soldiers in fighting on Saturday - the highest number in one day - including a female helicopter mechanic, with 11 more seriously wounded, Israel said five of its soldiers were killed in combat in Lebanon yesterday. An Israeli civilian was killed by a Hezbollah rocket in Haifa.

At least 20 Lebanese civilians died yesterday, according to the Lebanese government, adding to a tally that it claims already numbered about 1,000 civilians. Forty-six Israeli civilians have died in Hezbollah rocket attacks.

Graphic

Photo: SEBASTIAN SCHEINER, AP; An Israeli woman comforts her dog at the scene of a rocket attack in Haifa yesterday.;

Photo: FINBARR O'REILLY, REUTERS; Israeli girls cover their ears in a bomb shelter before a rocket attack on Kiryat Shmona yesterday.

Load-Date: August 14, 2006

Mideast crisis: Warplanes pound Lebanon in hours leading up to truce

The Gazette (Montreal)
August 14, 2006 Monday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 751 words

Byline: MATTHEW FISHER, CanWest News Service; Reuters contributed to this report

Dateline: BEIRUT

Body

The people of Lebanon and Israel held their breath this morning wondering whether Hezbollah and Israel would honour a United Nations resolution ratified by both sides that calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

Israel launched new air strikes on Lebanon less than 45 minutes before the truce went into effect at 8 a.m.

local time, security sources said.

Earlier, Israel's Haaretz newspaper reported on its website that Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had told his army to observe the truce as of 2 a.m.

local time and to start withdrawing some of its estimated 30,000 soldiers from southern Lebanon.

Leaders on both sides have expressed their desire for peace and the need for an international force to be inserted into the main combat zone in southern Lebanon.

But the portents for calm did not look good on the eve of the truce.

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Mideast crisis: Warplanes pound Lebanon in hours leading up to truce

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Photo: FINBARR O'REILLY, REUTERS; Israeli girls cover their ears in a bomb shelter before a rocket attack on Kiryat Shmona yesterday.

Load-Date: August 16, 2006

Israeli premier dashes hope of early ceasefire

Yorkshire Post

August 1, 2006

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Length: 647 words

Body

Air, ground and sea operations will go on, says Olmert, after deadly attack on civilians

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert yesterday said no ceasefire would be forthcoming in Israel's 20-day battle with Hezbollah guerrillas in southern Lebanon.

Mr Olmert said that Israeli forces were continuing to fight in the air, from the sea and on the ground in Lebanon.

He spoke a day after Israeli air strikes levelled a building in the southern Lebanese town of Qana, killing at least 56 people.

Under US pressure, Israel had called a 48-hour halt to air strikes.

Mr Olmert said Israel had no choice but to begin its attacks on Hezbollah after the guerrillas crossed over the border on July 12, killed three soldiers and kidnapped two others.

"We could not let the terror organisation on our border get stronger, let them get more missiles," he said. "If we had held off, the day would have arrived soon when they would have caused unprecedented damage."

He also said he was sorry for the deaths of women and children during raids in Qana.

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

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

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

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

In a second air strike around the port city of Tyre, Israel accidentally killed a Lebanese soldier when it hit a car that it believed was carrying a senior Hezbollah official, the Israeli army said. Lebanese security officials said the soldier was killed by a rocket strike from a pilotless drone aircraft.

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

Israeli premier dashes hope of early ceasefire

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

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

"Egypt, which triggered the peace process, warns of the consequences of its collapse," Mr Mubarak said in a nationwide televised statement. "The Israeli aggression undermines the opportunities to continue it and its success."

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

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

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

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

Israel called the 48-hour halt under US pressure amid worldwide outrage over a strike on Sunday morning that levelled a house in the Lebanese village of Qana, killing at least 56 people, mostly **women** and children, who had taken refuge there.

It was the deadliest single strike in the Israeli onslaught against Lebanon, aimed at reining in the **Hezbollah** guerrillas who sparked the conflict on July 12 by snatching two Israeli soldiers. Some 519 people have been confirmed killed by Lebanon's Health Ministry since.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Qana bombing may come at a high cost

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Pg. 1

Length: 741 words

Byline: Jonathan Pearlman in Jerusalem

Body

AS ISRAELI leaders sought to stave off blame for Sunday's Qana bombing, they were not merely protecting their consciences but trying to persuade the nation to tolerate this conflict's terrible price.

Israel has expressed regret and halted air strikes for 48 hours, although it is expected to expand its ground campaign in southern Lebanon, pushing up to 5000 soldiers deep into the area.

Despite Israel's regrets, it remains to be seen whether the bombing - which killed up to 60 people, including women and children - will join a long history of tragic disasters that have turned public opinion and emerged as symbols of a faltering campaign.

So far, the Israeli public has remained overwhelmingly supportive of this second Lebanon war. Even in the bomb shelters in Israel's north, where some families have been living underground for almost three weeks, the prevailing view is that they are willing to put their lives on hold now to ensure they do not have to descend again in six months or a year.

In big cities, there have been protests against the war but they have attracted, at most, a few thousand people, mostly from left-wing and Arab political parties. The group that led the mass demonstrations against the first Lebanon war, Peace Now, has refused to join the protests.

But Israel's military history is littered with tragic mistakes that have, in an instant, changed the perceptions of campaigns that had broad public support.

The obvious precedent for the carnage on Sunday was the Israeli bombing of a UN base in 1996, also in Qana, which killed more than 100 civilians and prompted the then prime minister, Shimon Peres, to call off a campaign against Hezbollah.

That tragedy also came in the third week of a military operation to prevent Hezbollah firing Katyushas on northern Israel.

Less than a year later, another accident sparked further debate about Israel's military strategy in Lebanon. In February 1997, two helicopters collided on their way to Israel's security zone in southern Lebanon, killing more than 70 soldiers. After the crash, four mothers of Israeli soldiers formed a protest group whose call for a pullout from Lebanon swept the nation. Three years later, under Ehud Barak, the Israeli withdrawal from the security zone met

Qana bombing may come at a high cost

with widespread public approval. Like Peace Now, the so-called Four Mothers have supported the present campaign.

Other battles have produced a range of tragic symbols that have altered the course of Israel's conflicts. The suicide bombing of the No. 5 bus in central Tel Aviv came to mark the end of the Oslo process aimed at solving the conflict with the Palestinians, while the death of a family on a beach in Gaza earlier this year brought intense scrutiny on the use of air strikes to quell rocket attacks by Palestinian militants.

Within hours of the Qana bombing on Sunday, the Israeli Air Force sought to deflect blame for the incident and released images of **Hezbollah** firing rockets from residential areas. A pilot told The Jerusalem Post: "Of course I realise that one mistake by me can change the entire course of the war." But it remains to be seen whether the bombing will serve as the catalyst for a turnaround in public opinion.

Peres, who described the first Qana bombing as a bitter surprise, described this week's attack as "totally, totally **Hezbollah**'s fault. The Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, expressed regret for the deaths but insisted Israel would continue with the campaign for at least two weeks.

The Defence Minister, Amir Peretz, told the Knesset yesterday that Israel will not agree to an immediate cease-fire and would continue its attacks against **Hezbollah**. More than 15,000 soldiers were deployed to the border last week but have not yet been involved in fighting.

A government official told Israel's Yediot Ahronot that the security cabinet, which was due to meet last night, would approve a plan to push **Hezbollah** further from the border.

While the temporary halt to of air attacks may have hastened efforts to call a truce, the campaign is seen as different from previous wars in Lebanon. Most Israelis believe the attack that triggered the conflict was a sign that **Hezbollah** will never recognise Israel or the borders to which it withdrew with international backing. The war is seen as preventive, to try to finally deter further **Hezbollah** attacks: but the Qana bombing may mark the onset of a fear that the aims may not be achievable at a cost the public will bear.

Graphic

PHOTO: Toys lie among the ruins of a house in Qana. Photo: AFP/Nicolas Asfour3

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

Lebanon sends Rice packing after Israelis kill 37 children

Western Mail

July 31, 2006, Monday

Second Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 9

Length: 682 words

Body

The Lebanese government told US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice she was not welcome in Beirut yesterday, after Israeli missiles struck a village yesterday killing about scores of civilians - 37 of them children. Dr Rice abruptly broke off her diplomatic mission in the Middle East and returned to Washington in the wake of the attack. By last night nearly 60 bodies had been recovered, but more were still trapped under the rubble, it was reported.

Israel said it targeted Qana because Hezbollah launched rockets at Israel from there. 'The army did not get an order to strike at Lebanese civilians. In Kfar Qana, hundreds of Katyushas (rockets) are hidden,' Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said.

Gideon Meir, a senior Israeli Foreign Ministry official, 'We deeply regret the loss of any civilian life and especially when you talk about children who are innocent. This is not the code of conduct of the Israeli army. But one must understand, the Hezbollah is using their own civilian population as human shields.'

The attack brought a swift response from Hezbollah - with a vow to retaliate. 'The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered,' a spokesman said. Mohammed Shaloub, a survivor of the attack, said there were 55 people in the house and eight survived.

The bodies of at least 27 children were found, said Abu Shadi Jradi, a civil defence official at the scene. He said the army dropped leaflets several days ago telling civilians to leave Qana. Residents said they were too afraid to take the road out of Qana, which had been attacked repeatedly by rockets and bombs. Charred wreckage and smashed buildings line the road from Tyre to Qana, roughly nine miles away.

Lebanese Defence Minister Elias Murr disputed allegations that Hezbollah was firing missiles from Qana. 'What do you expect Israel to say? Will it say that it killed 40 children and women?' he told al-Jazeera.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora telephoned UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan urging him to convene an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council and arrange for an immediate ceasefire, the government said.

'There is no place at this sad moment for any discussions other than an immediate and unconditional ceasefire as well as international investigation of the Israeli massacres in Lebanon now,' he said.

As news of the attack spread, a protest swelled in central Beirut to more than 5,000 people, denouncing Israel and the US, some chanting, 'Destroy Tel Aviv, destroy Tel Aviv'.

Lebanon sends Rice packing after Israelis kill 37 children

The devastating missile strike came as heavy fighting erupted along the border between Hezbollah and the Israeli army. Hezbollah's al-Manar TV channel said two Israeli soldiers were killed in clashes. Heavy artillery also rained down on the villages of Yuhmor and Arnoun, close to Taibeh, and Israeli jets were seen overhead.: Israel agrees 48-hour aerial-activity ceasefire:Israel last night bowed to international pressure and agreed to a 48-hour suspension of aerial activity over southern Lebanon after an airstrike killed more than 50 civilians - half of them children. The suspension of over-flights was announced by US State Department spokesman Adam Ereli. He said Israel has reserved the right to attack targets if it learns that attacks are being prepared against them. 'The US welcomes this decision and hopes that it will help relieve the suffering of the children and families of southern Lebanon,' Ereli told reporters travelling with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice who had been on a week-long mission to halt the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah. An Israeli government official confirmed that prime minister Ehud Olmert agreed to the 48-hour halt in air strikes on Lebanon. A US State Department official said Rice had been working on such an agreement for some time before the attack on Qana. Ereli said Israel would co-ordinate with the United Nations to allow a 24-hour period of safe passage for all residents of south Lebanon who wanted to leave the region. 'We expect that Israel will implement these decisions so as to significantly speed and improve the flow of humanitarian aid,' he added.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

End of Document

2 women candidates: The likeness ends there; Politicus

The International Herald Tribune

December 5, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 2

Length: 1073 words

Byline: John Vinocur

Dateline: PARIS

Body

Hillary and Segolene: On the evidence, not soul sisters. At best, cautiously connected in the business of getting elected.

But most likely in the end: An acknowledgment that this French-projected relationship Segolene Royal and Hillary Rodham Clinton, nominally women of the left, joining hands as presidential candidates and trans-Atlantic political kin represents not enough truth and too many liabilities to fly in America or look believable elsewhere.

For now, the French Socialist candidate's handlers have said a first encounter will probably occur in mid-December, the time when Royal's people have talked of going to the United States to attend a Democratic Party meeting.

No secrets about the motivation here. In French terms, after last week's sometimes grotesque, amateur-night debut in international politics in Lebanon, where Royal met with Hezbollah and later tried to rectify a stack of jarring statements and silences about America, the Middle East and Israel her plan to hang out with Democrats and their senator from New York has the comfy look of new status and acceptability.

This goes to one of Royal's problems. If she's running 50-50 in the polls against Nicolas Sarkozy, the rightist reformer, she trails him badly ahead of April's election in the categories of dealing with international crises, representing France abroad and authority.

Besides hoping that some of Clinton's reputation for competence and decisiveness rubs off, Royal would like to tie the role of George W. Bush's poodle around Sarkozy's neck. The sought-after contrast is between a Sarkozy allied with Bush they talked in Washington in September and a Royal cast as the pal of the America the French say they like.

There's a risk here for Segolene.

In seeking to pair up with Clinton, Royal gains ground on the obvious association of two women striving for leadership. But she faces trouble on more probing comparisons.

The reality is, whether Americans like or detest the idea of Hillary Clinton as a future president, it is more a matter of her politics than her status as a woman. But in France, the foundation of Royal's popularity is her being a woman: Polls show that's her single most appealing attribute.

2 women candidates: The likeness ends there Politicus

For Royal, this means that the tangible content of her campaign or its absence will be the biggest variable in determining her chances. While Clinton is widely regarded as a politician whose strength is based on substance and clear positions, Royal's success beyond gender has been largely linked to her appearance of modernity and talking about modernizing a country on the decline.

This is while determinedly steering clear of a specific, far-reaching plan for economic and social measures. Indeed, Segolene is stuck with her party's leftist electoral platform, denounced by the right as a blueprint from the 1970s.

Hillary, meanwhile, has cast herself as a centrist, convinced that the Democratic congressional election victory in November was one for the middle and that this is the only path to a Democratic presidency in 2008.

Here's a Clinton who has sponsored an anti-flag-burning constitutional amendment and now says the Democrats "are ready to roll up our sleeves and work with our Republican counterparts. Our country works best when we work from the vital, dynamic center."

And here's Royal who has summed up her view of outreach from the left by saying, "The capitalists have to be frightened. There's no alternative."

Royal's biggest problem for Clinton, and the place where comparisons with her become invidious, comes in the Frenchwoman's core statement about America's nature as an international political incorrigible.

Unlike her choice over the weekend in Beirut to back off from saying she shared "the analysis of the role of the United States" contained in a Hezbollah man's description of the "American administration's unlimited lunacy," Royal has never withdrawn a more official foreign policy declaration on America's incapacity for change.

"Make no mistake," she told an international group in October, "a less conservative government could succeed Bush and dialogue with the United States might be easier. But it's in the nature of a solitary power without a counterweight to make unilateral decisions and be tempted by the use of force."

Europe, Royal said, "is the single peaceful power capable of representing an alternative to American hyperpower."

Clinton can't avoid noting that hyperpower is an expression coined by a French Socialist during her husband's second term to describe Bill Clinton's United States as a problem whose control required the world's banding together in resistance.

And what of Royal's consulting with Hezbollah; or her expressed willingness to talk to Hamas, which demands Israel's destruction; or her initial silence in response to a Hezbollah official's description in her presence of the Israelis as Nazis, and his comparison of Hezbollah to the French resistance fighting the Nazis?

In fact, Clinton appears to have already drawn a political line.

In defending Israel's battles against Hezbollah and Hamas this summer, Clinton called these groups "the new totalitarians of the 21st century."

And Clinton pledged that "America will support Israel in her efforts to send a message to Hamas, Hezbollah, to the Syrians, to the Iranians to all who seek death and domination instead of life and reason that we will not permit this to happen and we will take whatever steps are necessary."

As for Royal in Beirut, she described her position there as one of a "facilitator."

When she was asked if that meant acting as a mediator between Hezbollah and the pro-Western Lebanese government now under Hezbollah's siege, she winged it again and replied, "Why not?"

That's difficult for Royal to explain away to Clinton, who identifies Iran as Hezbollah's key backer and key arms supplier, and who, in the incorrigible Yankee manner, makes it clear that a U.S. military option to deal with Tehran's nuclear ambitions should not come off the table.

2 women candidates: The likeness ends there Politicus

The thorough, painstaking senator, burned once in American public opinion by honoring a rant by Yasser Arafat's wife with a kiss, would be out of pre-presidential character in not checking visitors' affinities.

These days, after Royal's Middle East misadventure, that may well mean a Clinton greeting with a narrow smile at an arm's-length photo op.

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Tomorrow: Roger Cohen on China, North Korea and the six-party talks.

Load-Date: December 5, 2006

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Deaths in the Mideast should be blamed on terror groups

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

August 2, 2006 Wednesday

0 Edition

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 10A

Length: 1216 words

Body

Re: Mideast violence.

For everyone bemoaning the killing of civilians in Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and elsewhere, it must be reaffirmed that jihadists, terrorists, Hezbollah, Hamas and the rest of these radical armies do not fight as an army. They wear civilian clothes and operate their wars from among the civilian population of their country. They hide their armaments in mosques, hospitals, schools, etc. They fire their rockets and missiles from heavily populated areas assuming there will not be an attack against them. The cat-and-mouse game they are playing is fairly obvious, and Israel has known this for many years.

Hamas and Hezbollah have both crossed Israel's border to kill and kidnap soldiers. They then run back to intersperse with the general population and proceed to fire rockets and missiles across their borders with Israel, while being welcomed with open arms by their people.

Israel has every right to protect its borders and its people. If the Israelis do not make a stance, who will and what will happen to the state of Israel? These terrorists have made it clear they want Israel wiped off the map. Israel must do what it has to do to survive, plain and simple. If civilians die as a result, the blame should be leveled directly at the terrorists themselves for bringing civilians into the war by hiding among them. Israel should not be blamed for trying to protect itself from cross-border attacks.

I feel for the families in Lebanon and Palestine, but maybe they should redirect their energies to disarming and evicting the real and only root of the problem, Hezbollah and Hamas, instead of protesting against Israel and the United States. They then could sleep at night without the sounds of gunfire and bombs.

Don Mott, Largo

This is no longer our fight

Re: Horror in Lebanon, July 31.

Horror in Lebanon? What about the horror in Israel? For more than four decades, Lebanon has provided a staging ground for forces and factions that want to see Israel "wiped off the face of the earth." These hostile groups operate out of Lebanon with impunity. They are a movement of Hitler clones with only one aim in mind. Recently, one of their elite said they would not stop until they reached Spain! Is this the Crusades all over again?

Deaths in the Mideast should be blamed on terror groups

Israel has a right to survive and a right to fight for survival. But this is in the back yard of Europe and Russia. We've blown enough "foreign aid" over there, and now it's time for them to step up and protect what Churchill called "the soft underbelly." If they don't, then they deserve what they get. It is not our fight.

We've had 12/7/41 and 9/11/01. When the fanatics are through with Israel and Spain they'll come here again. We need to pull our troops out of Iraq and bring them home where they will be needed. With madmen guiding Islamic policy, it's just a matter of time until we are again at risk on our own ground.

Charles V. Scott, St. Petersburg

Providing destruction and relief

Talk about a schizophrenic foreign policy. We expedite the delivery of bombs to Israel to insure that it has the resources to destroy Lebanon and then our secretary of state slowly goes to Lebanon and offers U.S. aid to help rebuild what has been destroyed with the same U.S.-made ordnance.

We may be looking at another opportunity for the industrial-military complex to flex its power and make money on both sides of the conflict.

Has the noble pursuit of the blessed peacemakers been replaced by the greed of the arms-mongers to bleed the American treasury to spread pain and suffering for fun and profit?

Patrick J. Conrey, Spring Hill

A one-sided view of a tragedy

Re: Horror in Lebanon.

I was both sad and disappointed to see this headline and read the story that followed. Sad to learn about the tragic and heartbreaking loss of civilian life in the town of Qana, Lebanon, but equally disappointed to see what I consider biased and one-sided coverage of this tragic incident.

Nowhere in the article does it mentioned that **Hezbollah** (and other terror groups, for that matter) deliberately place military targets in the heart of civilian areas, a serious violation of international and humanitarian law. Even the United Nations' humanitarian chief, Jan Egeland, said: "**Hezbollah** must stop this cowardly blending ... among **women** and children. I heard they were proud because they lost very few fighters and that it was the civilians bearing the brunt of this."

Nowhere in the article does it mention that Israel dropped thousands of leaflets before the attack over the town, repeatedly warning its inhabitants to leave the area. When was the last time **Hezbollah** alerted Israeli civilians of an impending rocket barrage?

Absent from the article is the complete statement of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, which said:

"I express my deep regret, shared by the entire State of Israel and the IDF, for the death of civilians in the village of Qana. Qana was used for launching rockets at Kiryat Shmona and Afula. All residents were warned to leave. There are hiding places for rockets inside the village, and the village itself constitutes a shelter for rocket launchers. We have no policy of killing innocent civilians. For 18 days thousands of missiles have been fired, aimed at murdering innocent civilians in the north (of Israel)."

Why didn't the author of the article ask why there were children in Qana, after all residents of south Lebanon were cautioned to leave? Did **Hezbollah** prevent civilians from leaving in order to maximize civilian casualties?

These are some of the facts the St. Petersburg Times failed to report, which is disappointing in view of its fair and balanced coverage of the conflict to this point.

Bruce A. Epstein, Pinellas Park

Deaths in the Mideast should be blamed on terror groups

Protection starts at home

Last week I read in your paper that America sent two planes full of missiles to Israel. En route they landed in Scotland for refueling.

Can you or anyone tell the American people why we as Americans, who try hard to love our children and bring them up as good Americans, are sending missiles to Israel to kill innocent children?

Have you all forgotten what it was like when the twin towers collapsed? Do you remember the feelings you all had watching them come down? Well, imagine if it was your children being blown up by our missiles. How would you feel about the people running America?

Shame on us. We are supposed to be civilized. Civilization starts with discussion and understanding, not attacking someone's country. Who gives us the right to attack someone else's country? You say terrorism, but protection starts from within. Protect our own borders, our own people, make us strong by securing our land first.

M. Adams, Spring Hill

Where are Hezbollah's apologies?

Its ironic how Israel has to apologize for bombing of civilians while Hezbollah, which only bombs civilian targets, doesn't have to apologize for anything.

I would like to see some fair reporting all around. Let us know which targets Hezbollah is hitting as well as the Israelis. The world is so ready to condemn Israel for defending itself. What would we do if rockets were landing on our shores?

Why doesn't Hezbollah just return the Israeli soldiers and let this "war" be over? The answer is because Iran wants Israel defeated and eliminated and will do anything, including killing innocent people, to get at that goal.

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The New York Times

September 3, 2006 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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Byline: By Scott Anderson

Scott Anderson has covered numerous wars for the magazine. His last article was about National Guardsmen returning from Iraq.

Body

Things were getting back to normal in Tyre. The bomb craters in the main streets had been filled in with dirt, which slowed traffic but at least made passage possible. Some of the town's more spectacular ruins were already being shoveled into great heaps of rubble. Under the blanching sun of late August, the Lebanese port city -- 12 miles north of the Israeli border on the Mediterranean coast -- was returning to its usual dog-day rhythms. In the mornings and again in the late afternoons, shoppers crowded the central market, families strolled the corniche, the old seaside promenade, and traffic along Jal al Baher Street, the main thoroughfare on the east side of town, was a honking, barely moving mass. The midday hours, however, were given over to a heat-imposed somnolence. In the old city, residents settled in their leafy courtyards or brought chairs out to the narrow alleys to while away the time with neighbors. The outdoor cafes along the marina filled with men who appeared able to muster only enough energy to smoke. It was a city at rest. Even Tyre's multitude of cats took part, gathering in bunches to sleep under the shade of parked cars.

But there was also something new in Tyre. Spanning the highway at the northern outskirts of the city stood a high, triumphal arch quickly constructed from wood and yellow cloth. That color featured prominently on the scores of new posters and banners that lined Jal al Baher Street -- that were to be found on lampposts and billboards throughout the east side of the city, in fact. The images on these posters varied, as did their slogans, but all ultimately echoed the same thing: praise for Hezbollah, praise for "the divine victory" just won.

It was Aug. 8, and the city had been under attack for 24 days. Sitting on the veranda of her elegant house overlooking the marina of old Tyre, 46-year-old Madona Baradhi was extolling the virtues of her hometown. From a prominent Christian family whose members can trace their roots in Tyre back centuries, Baradhi, an effervescent and congenitally cheerful customer-service representative for the Libano-Francaise bank, explained that she had traveled much of the world and found no place better.

"Always when I am on vacation," she said, "the last few days, I just want to come home because I miss Tyre so much." She waved a hand out over the bay. "Every day I swim, I walk to my job in downtown, I go to the market. And the people here are wonderful -- very tolerant and easygoing. We've never had any of the difficulties between the different groups like other places in Lebanon."

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Three days earlier, Baradhi's veranda had afforded her a panoramic view of a predawn, three-hour battle across the bay. Israeli commandos, apparently dropped by helicopter, attacked Hezbollah positions, killing at least eight, then covered their withdrawal by strafing the oceanfront promenade a half-mile away with helicopter gunships. The previous afternoon, she watched as four apartment buildings in the northern, predominantly Shiite suburbs were brought down by heavy Israeli bombs in great clouds of black smoke and brown dust. Even on that early evening, as she sipped espresso on her veranda, the concussion of the explosions on the east side of town, two miles away, were powerful enough to occasionally rattle her home's windowpanes, to cause its old joints to creak.

"My friends in Beirut keep calling me," she said. "'Come stay with us. Tyre is so dangerous.' But no. How can I leave all this?" She waved her hand again over the picturesque marina: no one was moving on its stone walks; the colorful fishing boats had sat in their moorings for weeks.

What appeared to be an almost delusionary optimism may actually have been a practical fatalism, an understanding of the city's violent history. Tyre's very geography was formed by war. During the Phoenician era, the heart of the city was an impregnable island fortress just off the coast that withstood countless sieges -- until 332 B.C., when one of its besiegers, Alexander the Great, came up with the idea of building a massive stone causeway to the island. The city fell to his men, and over the centuries, drifting sand built up around his causeway, forever linking the island to the mainland.

Tyre's history is a dizzying saga of rise and fall, periods of splendor followed by ones of abject ruin; the Egyptians, the Romans, the crusaders and the Ottomans all passed through the city, and all left their mark for good or ill. This march of civilizations and armies made Tyre into a complex mosaic of cultures, religious sects and ethnic groups, a multicultural checkerboard that is both the enduring promise and the enduring tragedy of the place: promise because the city's extraordinarily resilient people always rebuild and patch things over; tragedy because they always have to. In just the past 31 years, the city has endured a civil war, a foreign military occupation, a half-dozen air or naval bombardments and at least two massive suicide bombings.

Despite this sad legacy -- perhaps because of it -- Tyre has long had a reputation as a relaxed and open-minded place. Residents of all sectarian and political stripes tend to echo Baradhi's view of their city as a haven of comity and tolerance. What's more, until mid-July of this year, Tyre appeared on the cusp of a very bright future, about to catch the economic boom that had so transformed Beirut and other Lebanese coastal cities in recent years. Designated a Unesco World Heritage site for its profusion of Hellenic, Roman and Byzantine monuments -- among other archaeological highlights, Tyre can lay claim to the world's largest Roman hippodrome -- the municipal government had just embarked on the construction of a new stretch of oceanfront promenade along the neglected south shore of the old city, workers laying tiles and erecting lampposts. Along Jal al Baher Street, construction was under way on a modern shopping mall, while on Tyre's south bay a small vacant lot had just sold to a hotel consortium for nearly \$2 million, a figure that astounded locals but testified to the city's growing tourist industry and dearth of decent hotel rooms. Tyre did not yet have a Starbucks -- so far in Lebanon, those symbols of the arriviste city were limited to Beirut -- but by this summer it was easy to imagine that that blessed day was close at hand.

And then, quite literally, a bomb dropped. It happened at about 5:30 on the afternoon of Sunday, July 16, while Madona Baradhi was swimming with her nieces and nephews at the fine, white-sand beach beside the Tyre Rest House, the city's most exclusive hotel. "It was a very nice day," she recalled, "hot but not too humid, and a lot of people were in the water. Suddenly, we heard a very loud boom, and when I looked to the city, I saw this great cloud of black smoke rising up from downtown. That's when we knew Tyre was to be targeted also."

The signal event that set this in motion came four days earlier, when Hezbollah guerrillas launched a bold assault on an Israeli Army border outpost, killing three soldiers and taking two others prisoner. The Israeli response was predictably swift, if unexpectedly fierce. That same day, the Israeli military carried out airstrikes on some 40 suspected Hezbollah strongholds throughout southern Lebanon, then expanded their targets the following day to include the runways of Beirut's international airport and highways and bridges throughout the country. When the heavy bomb dropped on Sunday afternoon -- it destroyed the top four floors of an apartment building and killed at least 11 -- the residents of Tyre knew that, once again, war had come for them.

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"Within minutes," Baradhi said, "everyone had left the beach, and by that night, everyone was leaving Tyre. I could see them from here." On her veranda, she pointed to a headland four or five miles away. "A solid line of red taillights, everyone going north."

As it turned out, Baradhi's decision to stay was not based on simple blithe disregard. By way of explanation, she led me into her study and took a framed photograph down from a bookshelf. In the fall of 1982, when fighting between Israeli troops and Palestinian guerrillas turned the old city of Tyre into a pitched battlefield, the Baradhi family was evacuated to the Tyre Rest House. The photograph was taken there: her father looking somewhat befuddled in the foreground; a pensive, young Madonna behind; and in the background, a large crowd of other displaced people.

"We were only there a few days," she said, "but even that was enough to show me what it was like to be a refugee. When we returned, the house had been badly damaged -- you can still see the crack in the wall outside. This is why I will not leave now, because in Lebanon you can leave your home and never come back." She carefully set the photograph back on the shelf. "I look at it very often. I always keep it close to me."

Baradhi's decision also pointed up one of the fault lines that runs through the city. In the days after that first bomb was dropped on Tyre, and under a rain of Israeli leaflets ordering its inhabitants to leave, an estimated 95,000 of the city's 110,000 residents fled north. The pattern of exodus was not uniform, however; instead, it appeared that many calculated who this war's principal victims were likely to be and made their choice accordingly. The overwhelming majority of Shiite civilians living in the Hezbollah strongholds at the east end of town -- close to 100 percent in some districts -- understood that they were at ground zero and left. In other parts of the city -- in al-Bass, the Palestinian refugee camp closer to downtown, and in the Christian quarter at the westernmost tip of the coast -- perhaps half the population remained. As time went on and the violence intensified, this phenomenon lent Tyre a surreal quality: vast urban stretches where nothing moved and no one was seen interspersed with pockets where a modicum of normal life continued, where stores were open and old men gathered in cafes to observe the destruction occurring elsewhere.

To the question of why she supported Hezbollah, Amira Khassem, a 58-year-old shopkeeper, seemed perplexed, as if the answer was utterly self-evident. "Because they are the resistance." She shrugged. "Because they have brought order." Khassem evidently saw no contradiction between those two words, "resistance" and "order." Nor did she seem to appreciate that the "order" Hezbollah had brought to south Lebanon had precipitated a war that had turned much of the region into a battlefield and all but crippled the small grocery store that she and her husband ran in downtown Tyre. Just around the corner from their shop on Abu Deeb Street, two weeks into the war, Israeli warplanes flattened a six-story building reported to be one of Hezbollah's local command centers, turning the surrounding commercial district into a ghost town. For Khassem, "order" was a good deal simpler.

"As a woman, I used to be very afraid walking alone around here after dark," she told me in the fourth week of fighting. "With Hezbollah here, I know that now I am completely safe, that nothing will happen to me."

When I asked her who patrolled the streets prior to Hezbollah, Amira shrugged again. "No one."

One of the consequences of the 18-year cat-and-mouse war between Hezbollah and the Israeli occupying army in south Lebanon was the collapse of virtually all Lebanese government institutions in the region. It was a void Hezbollah deftly filled. Using money funneled from Iran, Hezbollah established an elaborate social-welfare apparatus -- schools, soup kitchens, medical clinics, even law enforcement -- designed to meet the needs of its Shiite constituency throughout the country, but most especially in the war-torn south. By the time Israel finally withdrew from Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah had become the de facto government in the region. The party had already joined the Lebanese political process; today, with a tenth of the seats in Parliament, Hezbollah has earned a place in the current coalition government and also, given Lebanon's political patronage system, the ability to ensure that greater economic benefits flow to its supporters. In essence, then, the Party of God (the literal translation of Hezbollah) has emerged as the bringer of order and services to a chaos and ruin it helped create.

And yet, according to many residents I spoke to, until mid-July of this year, Hezbollah was neither particularly popular nor trusted in the progressive and easygoing streets of Tyre. While Hezbollah members were respected for

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their social-service programs for the poor and their personal code of conduct -- as part of a general morality checklist, members are not supposed to smoke or drink -- many city residents felt a lingering unease over the party's ultimate intentions. The Party of God had long since muted its more radical rhetoric, including its call for an Iranian-style Islamic government in Lebanon, but was it all a ruse to lull their opponents to sleep?

Such fears extended into the Shiite community. In the most recent elections for Tyre City Council, Amal, the other principal Shiite political party in Lebanon, ran a quiet scare campaign suggesting a Hezbollah victory would mean segregated beaches and a ban on outdoor cafes serving alcohol. The tactic apparently worked; in the council elections, the Amal slate (with the support of the Christian minority) swept Hezbollah. Even into the first days of this summer's war, some in Tyre admitted to a quiet satisfaction that, at last, Hezbollah was getting theirs, that however hard the Israelis might strike their enemies, the Party of God had brought it on themselves by their reckless cross-border adventurism.

That attitude soon changed. With Hezbollah giving Israel a far better fight than anyone had anticipated, and with Israeli warplanes engaging in what most in Tyre viewed as the wanton destruction of Lebanon's infrastructure -- highways, bridges, gas stations and power plants throughout the country were bombed -- national pride and national anger fused together in support of Hezbollah. In Tyre, the catalyzing moment came with the July 16 apartment-building bombing; the following day, three children were critically injured when Israeli warplanes blew up the canal they were swimming in. After that, even most Hezbollah critics in the city came to regard the Israeli offensive as an attack on the entire Lebanese nation. The militiamen who launched their Katyusha rockets on Israel from the farm fields surrounding Tyre were no longer viewed as the cause of the city's woes, but as the city's only defenders.

This sense of civic unity played out in myriad ways. After keeping a lower profile in the early days of the war, the Hezbollah auxiliaries -- the teenage spotters on their motor scooters, the bearded functionaries in their 20's with their walkie-talkies -- suddenly were to be found throughout the city, lounging on street corners, calmly walking past police checkpoints. Defiant posters bearing the Hezbollah logo or the likeness of its bearded and bespectacled leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, were pasted to more and more walls and city monuments. Even Chucrallah Nabil Hage, the Maronite archbishop of Tyre and a man who would seem unlikely to be a fellow traveler of Islamic fundamentalism, allowed that Hezbollah was now seen as the chief protector of the city and the nation. "I've always had very good relations with them," he explained to me as we sat in the stone courtyard of his church in the Christian quarter. "They are very forthright and decent men."

What did not change was the elusiveness of the actual fighters. As arguably the world's most disciplined and hierarchical guerrilla organization, Hezbollah's military wing operates with both a cell structure and a pyramid structure: small units of salaried "soldiers" maneuvering independently of one another, occasionally coming together for joint missions ordered by the next rung up the chain of command, their security and secrecy maintained from below by an army of spotters, couriers and neighborhood patrolmen. A walk down a city street that might conceivably lead to a Hezbollah outpost would invariably end -- for a journalist, anyway -- in a young unarmed man stepping from the shadows to politely, but very firmly, announce that the path forward was "blocked." In this war, the fighters in the streets were determined to remain almost as invisible as their enemies in the sky.

This vast "neighborhood watch" apparatus also made it very difficult to tell where support left off and coercion began. Any interviews attempted in public settings -- in a refugee camp, for example -- would usually lead to a young man with a close-cropped beard suddenly appearing at the periphery, casually taking note of the questions asked and the answers given. Even Hezbollah supporters who lauded the movement's social-services programs in their district became visibly nervous if asked for help in locating an actual recipient, as if even this benign peek into the organization might be a breach of the rules on the street.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of this code of silence centered on the conflict's victims. In their "all front" war with Israel, Hezbollah had meticulously planned for the psychological dimension, and it appeared that a crucial component in this was to minimize the reporting of their battlefield casualties. On this front, they were able to rely on the support -- or acquiescence -- of the local medical establishment. While journalists were routinely allowed access to those hospital wards containing wounded women and children, other wards -- presumably those housing adult

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males -- were off-limits, blocked by orderlies or the requisite bearded young men. The same pattern extended to the dead: occasionally ghoulish public displays of the torn bodies of obvious civilians and a curious absence of those of fighting-age men.

Each car in the long convoy was crammed to overflowing -- women, children, the elderly -- and as they passed, all stared back with wide, uncomprehending eyes. They were coming from a cluster of villages at the extreme southwest corner of Lebanon, flush on the border with Israel, and for the past two and a half weeks, they had sheltered in basements and root cellars as their communities on the war's front lines were pounded into rubble. Taking advantage of a lull in the fighting, they had chosen that day -- July 31 -- to make their escape, fastening strips of white cloth to their cars' antennas and falling in behind a small United Nations convoy heading for Tyre.

The reason for the lull was itself rooted in tragedy. The previous morning, Israeli warplanes bombed a home at the edge of Qana, a small town eight miles southeast of Tyre, in the basement of which two extended families had taken shelter; by the time rescue workers were finished, 28 bodies -- 16 of them children -- had been pulled from the ruins. By perverse coincidence, Qana was the same town where Israeli artillery killed 108 residents seeking refuge in a United Nations compound during the 1996 incursion known as Operation Grapes of Wrath.

In response to the outcry over the bombing, Israel had announced a 48-hour suspension of "offensive" aerial operations. While no one was quite sure what that meant, throughout south Lebanon, rescue workers struggled to reach those who had been trapped by the fighting and get them out. Where many of them were taken was to the four-story U.N.-administered school in al-Bass, the Palestinian refugee camp in Tyre that had long ago become more like a Palestinian neighborhood. If it struck anyone as ironic that Lebanese should seek sanctuary in a Palestinian refugee camp, it was actually an irony that didn't end there; al-Bass was originally a refugee camp for Armenians escaping the genocide in Turkey in 1915, a purpose that changed only with the flood of displaced Palestinians into Lebanon following the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.

Farouz Atamian, a 51-year-old sanitation worker for the municipal government and one of the last Armenians in al-Bass, has lived there his entire life. "It's very nice here," he told me during the war, while sitting in the small garden of his ramshackle home. "We have more room than most of the others because we are one of the original families in the camp."

Among the estimated 10,000 Palestinian inhabitants of al-Bass, there seemed to be a kind of collective discomfiture over what was happening in their adopted home, a sense that while this wasn't technically their fight, perhaps it should be. After all, Hezbollah was taking on the "Zionist entity" and doing very well, and this was the same enemy the Palestinians had battled with far less success for 58 years.

Their sideline status in this fight could partly be attributed to the historical schism that runs through Islam -- Hezbollah is Shiite, Palestinians are overwhelmingly Sunni -- but it also underscored the troubled position they hold generally in Lebanon. Seen by many Lebanese of all persuasions as a destabilizing force in the country, Palestinians are often held to blame for the 1975 civil war and even more for historically using Lebanon as a base to attack Israel, then offering only feeble resistance in the face of Israel's periodic and ruinous retaliatory attacks. As many Shiites in Tyre will point out, usually with a touch of pride, it was the Palestinian presence that provoked the 1982 Israeli invasion that so devastated their city, while it was Shiite militiamen -- precursors to Hezbollah -- who dealt the invaders their greatest blow: the successive bombings of Israel's two command centers in downtown Tyre in 1982 and 1983 that together killed 135 Israeli soldiers, events still referred to in Israeli military circles as the first and second Tyre catastrophes.

"In this war against Israeli aggression, we all have our roles to perform," explained Abu Hussein Ali Salem, a craggy-faced man of 66 who is one of the "civic leaders" of al-Bass camp. "So far, Hezbollah has taken the lead on the battlefield, and we" -- the Palestinians -- "are contributing from behind: by taking care of the wounded, the refugees. That, of course, could change at any time. If we feel our place is on the battlefield, we are all prepared to go."

As a younger man, Salem explained, he had been a fighter for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the militant Palestinian guerrilla organization responsible for many of the more spectacular terror attacks against

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Israel in the 1970's. He claimed to have taken three Israeli soldiers prisoner during the bitter battle for Tyre in 1982 and subsequently to have executed them. "It was at the north end of the city," he said, "and I was cut off from my unit. The Israelis were advancing, and I had to leave, so I just turned to them with my machine gun -- pffft." He swept a gnarled finger before him. "I had tried to talk to them before, but they never said a word. They died right there."

There was something slightly unconvincing about this story -- or perhaps it had just dulled in the telling over the years. In any event, Salem professed to be more interested in the future. "If the Israelis come to al-Bass, it will be their graveyard. All of us here are ready to fight -- and we will fight them as well as Hezbollah."

During Israel's air-war suspension, several thousand refugees had come into Tyre from the southern villages. Most continued up the coastal highway to Sidon or Beirut, determined to get as far away as possible from the principal battle zone, generally delineated as everywhere south of the Litani River. Nevertheless, a more buoyant mood began to spread among many who remained in Tyre, a seeping optimism that the respite might be the harbinger of a general cease-fire. Those hopes ended when, just before the close of the 48-hour window, Israel resumed its airstrikes on the city's outskirts.

On the first day of the resumption of the fighting, I dropped by the U.N. school in al-Bass camp to talk with some of the newly arrived refugees. Each classroom had been taken over by several families -- usually grouped together by their home village -- and set in neat stacks were whatever meager belongings they had managed to grab up in their flight: blankets, plastic bags filled with clothes. In the corridors outside, a surprising number of elderly women paced or sat slumped against the walls, many of them muttering to themselves or to anyone who came into their range.

At about 4 p.m., the building reverberated from the sound of four very loud bangs -- apparently nonlethal concussion grenades detonated close by -- and at one corner of the school courtyard, girls began running into one another's arms, screaming and crying. More girls kept rushing in to join the group, the hysteria infectious, until perhaps 40 of them were mashed together in one small, screaming knot. A man hurried over and began pulling the girls free, yanking them from each other's arms one by one, as if he were breaking up a fight.

On the morning of Aug. 3, a small crowd of doctors, orderlies and volunteers from the Lebanese Red Cross milled about the parking lot of the government hospital in al-Bass. They had gathered there to perform a mass burial. Muslim custom holds that the dead should be buried in their home villages, and quickly -- on the day of their death whenever possible. But that tradition had now collapsed in south Lebanon. Because of both the sheer numbers of victims and the exodus from the region that the war had sparked -- often, there were no family members around to perform the ceremony -- bodies were being brought to the government hospital in al-Bass and warehoused in two refrigerated trucks outside its gates.

Hospital administrators had already performed one mass burial in late July. A backhoe had cut two long trenches in a nearby field, the 72 dead were set down in neat rows -- each coffin identified by a number so it could eventually be reinterred in the home village of the deceased -- and then the trenches were filled in, the whole task completed in a couple of hours.

By early August, however, the trucks were full again. Off to one side of the hospital parking lot, stacks of coffins for future victims were piled five and six high, maybe 100 in all. As proper wood had long since disappeared from Tyre, these were made from cheap shelving material -- particleboard topped by a thin veneer of white plastic -- and affixed with simple stainless-steel door handles for lifting. The local Palestinian carpenter who had constructed most of the coffins, Ali Hussein Firmawi, estimated that they cost \$40 apiece and that he had already built around 185.

"They only take about 10 minutes to make," he said. "A little longer for the children, because those sizes aren't standard." He was not at all proud of his work, he explained -- to build a proper coffin took weeks -- but the need was urgent, and he had no choice in the matter.

After much conferring, the hospital administrators decided to postpone the burial because of "the security situation"; there was a lot of shelling around the city that morning, and a large gathering of people might draw the

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notice of the Israeli warplanes and drones overhead. Over the coming days, there would be more postponements, and the odor emanating from the trucks would grow until it permeated a wide swath of al-Bass camp.

Tyre now became a city closing in on itself. Against the near-constant thrumming of invisible Israeli spy drones -- a sound very much like a lawnmower -- the Hezbollah fighters on the outskirts of town and in neighboring villages launched ever more Katyusha rockets toward Israel, drawing ever more Israeli bombing raids in response. As the city grew increasingly isolated from the outside world, rumors became the currency on the streets: there was about to be a peace deal; Israel had finally launched its much-delayed ground offensive; Hezbollah had Israeli forces pinned down just inside the border; the Israelis were sweeping north and might be in Tyre within hours.

The pace of events only added to a general sense of fatigue and disorientation. In the predawn of Aug. 5, there came the Israeli commando raid that Madona Baradhi witnessed, and later that same morning, a missile attack on Jal al Baher Street that killed two young men on their motor scooters. The next afternoon, Israeli missiles hit several cars on the coastal road, their occupants apparently trying to run the gantlet out of the city. Rumors floated back that a family was killed trying to follow an International Red Cross convoy out of town; an alternate rumor held that the car had been coming the other way and traveling alone and that the missile had wounded two.

Along with a cluster of doctors and nurses and other journalists, I was waiting by the emergency-room entrance of Jabal Amel hospital for those coastal-road casualties to be brought in when there came a terrific bang very close by. Two hundred yards down Jal al Baher Street, two Israeli antipersonnel missiles had exploded, and amid a swirl of brown dust and leaves torn from a nearby tree, a wounded man lay on his back in the street. He had just raised his right arm and appeared to be trying to stand when a third missile came in, lifting him six feet in the air and catapulting him face down onto the sidewalk. Incredibly, the man still clung to life, his mouth gasping for air, his severed right arm lying amid a sprawl of plastic coffee cups and shredded leaves. Within minutes, an ambulance arrived to take him up to the Jabal Amel emergency room, where, with one last shudder, he finally died. Nurses quickly wrapped his body in thick plastic sheeting.

The situation just kept getting worse. On Aug. 7, the Israeli military announced a ban on all vehicular traffic south of the Litani River. The sole exception, they said, would be medical vehicles with prior approval -- although Israel wasn't giving approval to anyone, so the point was moot. The ban meant that the city's problems, already dire, were about to have a cascading effect. With all gas and oil deliveries cut off for nearly a month, its hospitals and ambulances were operating on emergency backup supplies -- and they, too, would start running out in another week or so. With stores of insulin dwindling, Tyre's diabetics might soon start dying. With thousands of refugees crowded into the city's schools and the sanitation system collapsing -- to say nothing of the still-unburied bodies decomposing at the edge of al-Bass camp -- there was growing concern of an epidemic.

"So right now, we're experiencing a humanitarian crisis," Dr. Ghassan Farran, a member of Tyre's city council, told me on Aug. 8. "Very soon, it will be a catastrophe." Somehow things got worse yet -- Israeli warplanes destroyed the last small bridge across the Litani. A fallen tree was maneuvered into place to span the breach, but even this merely underscored a remarkable fact: the only way in or out of a city that had once been home to more than 100,000 people was now across a single 18-inch-wide log.

And then on Aug. 12, the Israeli and Lebanese governments finally agreed to a U.N.-brokered cease-fire, Resolution 1701. After one last furious exchange that continued right until the moment the cease-fire took effect, the guns and rockets and warplanes fell silent over southern Lebanon.

Within the air-conditioned confines of her office in the Libano-Francaise bank, Madona Baradhi was in a fine mood. Just over a week into the cease-fire, most of the residents of Tyre had come back from their temporary exiles. The central market was filled with shoppers, and the candy vendors had returned to their little stands on the northern corniche.

"Everything must come to an end," she said, "and so it has with this war." Still, Baradhi admitted, it had been a trying week. Each day since the bank reopened had brought a steady stream of people into her office who had lost everything and were trying to figure out how to rebuild their lives again. "They are taking out their savings, their pensions, trying to arrange loans -- so many people. That is why I say the Lebanese are both the winners and

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losers in this war. We are the winners because we resisted Israel, but we are also the losers for how much we suffered."

As to the question on everyone's mind -- whether the cease-fire would lead to an extended period of peace, or was merely a prelude to the next round of war -- Baradhi, like many in Tyre, was philosophical. "Of course, I hope for peace, but it depends on the people, the choice they make."

In the Shiite neighborhoods on the east side of Tyre, that choice appeared to have already been made. With its "sacred victory" over Israel, support for Hezbollah had soared, and the Party of God was riding that crest both by maintaining its defiant stand and by, once again, being seen as the chief provider to those in need. In the war-damaged neighborhoods, as in the ruined villages throughout the south, Hezbollah engineers were surveying the damage that had been done and drawing up blueprints for reconstruction, while the party's field representatives were handing out cash payments to the homeless. As for Hezbollah ever surrendering its weapons to the incoming Lebanese Army and U.N. peacekeepers -- both the most crucial and contentious point in the debate over Resolution 1701 -- the idea was met with derision by the group's supporters.

"Why should the winners give up their weapons?" asked Moen Zaidan, an orange-juice seller on Abu Deeb Street. "That never happens in war. No, Hezbollah knows it must keep its weapons to prepare for the next war." As for when that war might come, Zaidan claimed to have a reliable guide. "We'll know it's starting by what happens in Kiryat Shemona," he said, referring to the town in northern Israel that has been a frequent target of Hezbollah's rockets. "Because we are in a balance with them. If the Israeli Army moves back there, then we'll know it's about to happen."

In this part of town, few seemed to doubt that war would break out again; the real topic of discussion was when. Perhaps this cease-fire would last for a few weeks, perhaps for a few years, but at some point, the missiles between Hezbollah and Israel would start flying again. In the meantime, Ali Hussein Firmawi, the Palestinian coffin maker, was staying busy. With the cease-fire, his open-ended work order with the municipal government to build temporary coffins had come to an end, but, he said, he had recently been commissioned to build 40 more.

"For Hezbollah," he explained outside his small carpentry shop in al-Bass. "These are to be of much better quality than the other ones. And the good thing about Hezbollah, they always pay upfront, and in cash."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: Airstrike: A five-story building in Tyre was flattened by a bomb from an Israeli warplane on Aug. 7, three weeks into the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

Aftermath: Following a predawn Israeli air raid on Aug. 5, some of the remaining residents of Tyre emerged from their homes to survey the damage.

The Persistent: A man in the virtually empty Shiite quarter of Tyre looked on as bombs fell on Aug. 7. Nearly all of the city's Shiites, and many Palestinians and Christians, had fled Tyre at this point in the war.

A History of Violence: Minutes after an airstrike hit an apartment building, on Aug. 7. Like much of southern Lebanon, Tyre has endured waves of invasions, dating back to the Phoenician era. (Photographs by Paolo Pellegrin/Magnum for The New York Times)

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**BRITAIN/ INTERNATIONAL: Anger as children die in rocket blast;
Condoleezza Rice heads for home as talks derailed**

Daily Post (North Wales)

July 31, 2006, Monday

North Wales Edition

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Length: 588 words

Byline: ED JAMES

Body

AT LEAST 56 people, more than half of them children, were killed in an Israeli airstrike that crushed a building yesterday, the deadliest attack of the Israeli campaign.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice returned early to Washington with her diplomatic mission derailed after Lebanese leaders told her not to come.

Lebanon's prime minister said his country would not talk to the Americans over anything but an unconditional ceasefire. Rice, in Jerusalem for talks with Israeli officials, said she was "deeply saddened by the terrible loss of innocent life" but stopped short of calling for an immediate end to the hostilities.

However, she made one of her strongest statements yet saying: "We want a ceasefire as soon as possible."

The US has resisted world pressure to call for a halt to the fighting, saying it wants first to ensure a deal is in place that will eliminate **Hezbollah** guerrillas from Israel's border and bring an international force to southern Lebanon.

The missiles struck just after 1am, levelling a three-storey building in Qana where two extended families, the Shalhoub and Hashims, had taken refuge in the basement from heavy Israeli bombardment in the area.

Throughout the day, rescue workers were digging through the rubble, lifting out bodies of **women** and children. At one point they found a single room with 18 bodies, police said.

"Why are they killing us? What have we done?" screamed Khalil Shalhoub, who was helping pull out the dead until he saw his brother's body taken out on a stretcher. The dead included at least 34 children and 12 adult **women**, security officials said.

Israel said guerrillas had fired rockets from near the building into northern Israel.

In Beirut, some 5,000 protesters gathered in downtown Beirut, at one point attacking a UN building and burning American flags.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel "is not in a hurry to have a ceasefire" before it achieves its goals of decimating **Hezbollah**.

BRITAIN / INTERNATIONAL: Anger as children die in rocket blast Condoleezza Rice heads for home as talks derailed

He told Rice that Israel would need 10 to 14 more days to finish its offensive, according to a senior Israeli government official.

"We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning," Olmert told his Cabinet after the strike, according to a participant. "We will continue the activity and if necessary it will be broadened without hesitation."

The Lebanese government this week had been putting forward ideas on disarming Hezbollah and deploying an international force in the south. But after the strike, Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said any negotiations on a broader deal were off.

"We will not negotiate until the Israeli war stops shedding the blood of innocent people," he told a press conference. He said the Lebanese government still supported the ideas it offered this week, but would not discuss them without a halt in the fighting.

Israel said Hezbollah guerrillas had fired 40 rockets into northern Israel from Qana, wounding five Israelis, before the airstrike - including some rockets launched from near the levelled building.

"We deeply regret the loss of any civilian life and especially when you talk about children who are innocent," said Foreign Ministry official Gideon Meir.

But he accused Hezbollah of "using their own civilian population as human shields" and said the military had warned people to leave the area.

The attack drew immediate condemnation from the Arab world, with Jordan's King Abdullah II voicing his strongest criticism of his Israeli peace partner yet, calling it an "ugly crime". Israel promised an investigation.

Graphic

Hezbollah supporters furious over the Israeli airstrike storm their way into the main United Nations building in Beirut
Picture: BEN CURTIS

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

12 ISRAELIS DIE; SHEIK THREATENS TO BOMB TEL AVIV

The New York Times

August 4, 2006 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 6; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1; HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDEAST: THE OVERVIEW

Length: 1649 words

Byline: By RICHARD A. OPPEL Jr. and STEVEN ERLANGER; Hassan M. Fattah and John Kifner contributed reporting from Beirut for this article, and Warren Hoge from the United Nations.

Dateline: MAALOT-TARSHIHA, Israel, Aug. 3

Body

The Lebanese militia **Hezbollah** killed 12 Israelis -- 8 civilians and 4 soldiers -- on Thursday, making it Israel's deadliest day in more than three weeks of conflict.

As Israeli troops tried to create a narrow buffer zone inside Lebanon and bombed southern Beirut, **Hezbollah**'s leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, warned that he would send his long-range missiles into Tel Aviv if the airstrikes continued.

"If you bomb our capital Beirut, we will bomb the capital of your usurping entity," he said on Lebanese television. "We will bomb Tel Aviv." But he also offered to halt **Hezbollah**'s missile barrage into Israel if it stopped bombing Lebanon.

The Israeli defense minister, Amir Peretz, told the army to begin preparing to push to the Litani River, some 15 miles north of the border, according to the newspaper Haaretz, a move that could mean a further call-up of military reservists. That would expand the security zone Israel is trying to create. But it is not clear whether he will receive government approval to do so.

Hezbollah launched more than 100 rockets on northern Israel in less than an hour, with most of the damage on the western edge, in Maalot, its associated Arab Israeli village of Tarshiha and the town of Acre.

Five Israelis, including a man and his daughter, were killed in Acre and another three, young Arab Israeli men, were killed when a rocket exploded in Tarshiha. Thirteen people were seriously wounded. Lebanese security officials said an Israeli missile killed a family of three in the border village of Taibe.

In Gaza, Israeli forces killed five Palestinian militants and three civilians in fighting on the edges of the southern town of Rafah as Israeli troops searched for tunnels to Egypt.

Israeli airplanes struck again at **Hezbollah** strongholds in southern Beirut, in the Bekaa Valley and in Nabatiye, while four Israeli soldiers were killed and four wounded in intermittently fierce fighting. Three were hit by an antitank missile fired by **Hezbollah** fighters near the southern village of Rajmin, and one was killed by an antitank missile in

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Taibe, the Israeli military said. The Israelis said they moved to take over new positions along the border and now control some 20 villages.

The Israelis are trying to create a new defensive line about four to five miles north of the border, recreating a security zone Israel intends to occupy until a multinational force can take its place. The zone is similar to that held by Israel in an occupation that ended in 2000. The government is debating whether to extend that zone north to the Litani River.

Maj. Zvika Golan, a spokesman for the northern command, said the zone would be expanded. "We are looking to clear 15 kilometers into Lebanon within the next few days," he said. "We're going to need more brigades, probably two more, and that will depend on government authorization."

Adding two brigades could bring the number of Israeli soldiers in Lebanon to more than 12,000.

But Israeli troops have run into stiff resistance from Hezbollah fighters. One Israeli military official, who was not authorized to speak publicly, said that it had taught Israeli forces a "lesson" about the resolve, skill and discipline of the guerrillas.

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora of Lebanon said in a televised speech to an emergency meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, meeting in Malaysia, that 900 people had been killed, 3,000 wounded, and more than a million, a quarter of Lebanon's population, displaced.

Mr. Siniora's figures for deaths, like the Lebanese Health Ministry's, appear to include those who are missing, and not just the 548 confirmed deaths, according to The Associated Press. The United Nations estimated last week that 500,000 Lebanese had been displaced.

At the United Nations, France and the United States stepped up negotiations on the text of a Security Council resolution calling for an end to hostilities and establishing a path for a political settlement. Diplomats said the talks centered on two issues, which would take some time to resolve.

One, according to Jean-Marc de la Sabliere, the French ambassador, was how to characterize the halt in fighting. A French-drafted resolution calls for "an immediate cessation of hostilities" while the Americans are insisting on a broader measure.

The other is the nature of the force in southern Lebanon once a truce begins. The French resolution suggests that it could be made up of the existing United Nations force and the Lebanese Army. The Americans favor Israel's proposal to leave its own military there, with some restrictions on its power to conduct offensive operations but the right to respond if attacked.

Under this plan, Israeli troops would leave only when a new international force arrives. The international force would be authorized by a subsequent resolution that would also create a buffer zone in southern Lebanon, set up a way to disarm the Hezbollah militia, establish Lebanon's borders and extend the Lebanese Army's authority throughout the south.

One difficulty will be to persuade Hezbollah to accept any United Nations resolution. Its chief spokesman, Hussein Rahal, said Hezbollah would not agree to a cease-fire until all Israeli troops left Lebanon, a condition unacceptable to Israel.

"Declaring a cease-fire is not the concern of the people of Lebanon as long as there is one Israeli soldier on Lebanese soil," he told Al Jazeera television.

Israeli aircraft dropped leaflets over parts of southern Beirut on Thursday warning residents to leave immediately, signaling attacks on the battered southern suburbs.

"Do it!" the leaflet warned.

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[Israeli warplanes bombed the southern suburbs of Beirut early Friday. The Israeli Army said it had aimed at offices of Hezbollah, the house of a Hezbollah official and a building used by the Palestinian group Hamas, Reuters reported.

[Hours later, Israeli aircraft struck several bridges linking Beirut to the north of the country, Reuters and Agence France-Presse reported, based on security sources and witnesses. Previously, Israel had focused on Lebanon's east and south and Beirut's southern suburbs.]

In a television appearance, Sheik Nasrallah spoke in a measured tone, occasionally peering at notes before him, flanked by a Lebanese flag on one side and a signature yellow Hezbollah flag on the other.

"You are victims, like the Lebanese and Palestinian people, of a personality complex in your Prime Minister Olmert," he said, addressing the Israeli public directly. "The only choice before you is to stop your aggression and turn to negotiations to end this folly," he said.

Sheik Nasrallah also taunted Arab leaders, calling on them to "be men for just one day" and work for an end to hostilities.

And he accused the United States of complicity in Israel's attacks, saying, "the blood of children and women and civilians smear the faces of Bush, Condoleezza Rice, Cheney and Rumsfeld. This is the U.S. administration, which is supposed to be the friend of Lebanon and which wanted to make Lebanon an exemplary democratic country."

The eight Israeli civilian fatalities represented the highest number of Israeli dead in a rocket attack since eight people were killed in the port city of Haifa on July 16.

The barrage of Hezbollah rockets -- 120 for the day -- displayed the continued ability of the militia to keep northern Israel paralyzed. Cars screeched to a halt as motorists ran for cover at the sound of explosions. Smoke rose over Maalot-Tarshiha and a nearby forest.

Tarshiha is a village of 4,000 Israeli Arabs, both Muslim and Christian, legally attached to the Jewish city of Maalot, which contains roughly 20,000 people, half of them immigrants from the former Soviet Union. The three young men, Muslim Arabs, were killed when a rocket struck next to the rock where they had taken cover.

"They had just parked to go to work," said Capt. Gabby Elyahu of the Israeli border police, as he stood near the foot-deep crater left by the rocket. "They left their car and went to go hide behind the rock, and they were killed."

In Milya, a Christian Arab village nearby, at least 10 people suffered slight wounds when rockets fell Thursday afternoon, said the mayor, Fathi Assaf. In Acre, five people died as they went out from a shelter to look around after an initial wave of rockets. The dead included Shimon Zaribi, 44, and Mazal, his 16-year-old daughter. One body lay on the front lawn by a small stone fence topped with a white-picket extension, covered with a blanket.

"People have been holed up in shelters," said Mayor Shimon Lancry of Acre to Israeli television. "It's difficult, but people understand that soldiers are still fighting in Lebanon, and we will get through this period."

The area of southern Beirut that Israel attacked is the center of Hezbollah's presence in the city. Much of the area is deserted, a ruin of crushed buildings and burned-out cars and trucks. Some of the rubble was still smoking at midday. Most of the residents have fled.

The Israeli Army also released the conclusions of its inquiry into the bombing on Sunday in Qana that resulted in the deaths of 29 civilians sheltering in a basement. The Israelis, in a brief announcement, said that more than 150 rockets had been launched since July 12 "from within the village of Qana itself and the immediate surrounding area" and repeated that "the residents of Qana and the villages surrounding it were warned several times, through various media, to evacuate." The report did not assert that rockets had been launched before the bombing.

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The report said that the army did not know there were civilians in the building. "Had the information indicated that civilians were present in the building, the attack would not have been carried out." The army said it regretted the loss of life.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: Israeli warplanes destroyed a building in the Lebanese border town of Kham yesterday. The Israeli Army says it now has control of about 20 Lebanese villages. (Photo by Joao Silva for The New York Times)(pg. A9)

A woman and two children at the scene of an attack in Acre, Israel. Five Israelis, including a man and his daughter, were killed there yesterday. (Photo by Yonathan Weitzman/Reuters)(pg. A1)Map of Israel highlighting Maalot: More than 100 rockets landed around the Israeli town of Maalot. (pg. A9)

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Thinking Right; Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe

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Byline: JIM WOOTEN

Staff

Body

Tuesday, August 1, 2006, 06:18 AM

Hezbollah and its Iranian and Syrian puppet-masters have won the moment. In provoking Israel to bomb a village, killing 37 children and at least 20 adults, terrorists willing to use civilians as human shields have found the leverage they need to win.

They can't win on the battlefield. Not al-Qaida, not the Baathists in Iraq, not **Hezbollah**, not Hamas, nor Syria, nor Iran nor any other assemblage of jihadists.

Civilian deaths, and especially the deaths of children, are useful to terrorists. They influence world opinion and arm the anti-war left in America with powerful images of the suffering war inflicts on innocents. Those compelling images can shift battlefield advantage, one example of which is Israel's 48-hour suspension of air attacks in southern Lebanon.

It's unfathomable cruelty to use civilians as shields, as **Hezbollah** does, but that is the nature of this enemy. Every death that weakens Israeli or U.S. resolve, and every death that tilts world opinion against the United States and Israel, is of military value.

And if **Hezbollah** fires rockets from civilian areas and draws retaliation killing civilians, it can hope, too, that the attack will encourage the Lebanese to identify with **Hezbollah**. The deaths of **women** and children are all-around victories for terrorists.

And yet, despite the risk, Israel can't sit back and do nothing --- and no matter the consequences, if any, for the November elections in this country, the Bush administration should not lean on Israel to stop pursuing **Hezbollah** until it's rendered militarily inert.

Thinking Right Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe

We are in a long war, both the United States and Israel, and if world and domestic opinion shapes the battlefield, we lose.

Europeans and Americans have lived for decades without having to commit, as the Israelis do daily, to the life-or-death question of which siege, which provocation, which round of suicide bombings is an immediate threat to their survival, and which can be suffered, lest retaliation evoke the disapproval of a "neutral" world quick to judge as "disproportionate" any response unintentionally harming anybody not certified as a credentialed, card-carrying terrorist.

Peace, or the illusion of it, combined in this country with a volunteer army that frees all citizens of the obligation that prior generations shared to put themselves at risk, has nurtured a detachment that carries consequences.

One disturbing consequence is that, just as members of the U.S. Supreme Court think it useful to look to international law for guidance when interpreting the U.S. Constitution, some Americans, and a sizable chunk of the left, now see themselves as arbiters of international disputes.

To the liberal mind, as it has evolved through decades of the tenured professors who took their anti-war, anti-Vietnam radicalism to campus, no nation or culture is inherently superior, except militarily and economically.

The United States does not enter any dispute with moral advantage or intent presumed to be noble. To the left, this country --- but for world opinion and international bodies positioned to temper democracy's predatory impulses, military and economic --- would abuse and exploit, conducting wars for oil simply to avoid the cost and inconvenience of energy independence.

Unlike the Israelis, Americans are now free, as referees in a sporting contest, to sit out conflicts that don't meet their test of worthiness, that happen not to fit in with their lifestyles, that fall on the watch of a president they dislike or that aren't predetermined to be essential to the survival of this country or to the free world.

We are a nation seriously complacent, far too susceptible to photos and to emotion to sustain a war on terrorism against an enemy given to butchery, to suicide as a weapon, and to treating civilian innocents, including women and children, as soldiers on the battlefield.

We are a compassionate people who simply cannot imagine any human inviting an enemy to kill women and children. But that is the face of the evil that we encounter and that Israel encounters in the war on terrorism.

We can recoil in horror. We can pretend that if the militants saw our compassionate side, knew us as we know ourselves, they'd see too, as our anti-war left does, that war is not the answer.

But when confronted with an enemy willing to serve up children, war is the answer. And until Hezbollah is defeated, we should not try to persuade Israel otherwise.

http://www.ajc.com/opinion/content/shared-blogs/ajc/thinkingright/entries/2006/08/01/complacency_wont_subdue_ruthle.html

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Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe

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Staff

Body

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It's unfathomable cruelty to use civilians as shields, as **Hezbollah** does, but that is the nature of this enemy. Every death that weakens Israeli or U.S. resolve, and every death that tilts world opinion against the United States and Israel, is of military value.

And if **Hezbollah** fires rockets from civilian areas and draws retaliation killing civilians, it can hope, too, that the attack will encourage the Lebanese to identify with **Hezbollah**. The deaths of **women** and children are all-around victories for terrorists.

And yet, despite the risk, Israel can't sit back and do nothing --- and no matter the consequences, if any, for the November elections in this country, the Bush administration should not lean on Israel to stop pursuing **Hezbollah** until it's rendered militarily inert.

We are in a long war, both the United States and Israel, and if world and domestic opinion shapes the battlefield, we lose.

Complacency won't subdue ruthless foe

Europeans and Americans have lived for decades without having to commit, as the Israelis do daily, to the life-or-death question of which siege, which provocation, which round of suicide bombings is an immediate threat to their survival, and which can be suffered, lest retaliation evoke the disapproval of a "neutral" world quick to judge as "disproportionate" any response unintentionally harming anybody not certified as a credentialed, card-carrying terrorist.

Peace, or the illusion of it, combined in this country with a volunteer army that frees all citizens of the obligation that prior generations shared to put themselves at risk, has nurtured a detachment that carries consequences.

One disturbing consequence is that, just as members of the U.S. Supreme Court think it useful to look to international law for guidance when interpreting the U.S. Constitution, some Americans, and a sizable chunk of the left, now see themselves as arbiters of international disputes.

To the liberal mind, as it has evolved through decades of the tenured professors who took their anti-war, anti-Vietnam radicalism to campus, no nation or culture is inherently superior, except militarily and economically.

The United States does not enter any dispute with moral advantage or intent presumed to be noble. To the left, this country --- but for world opinion and international bodies positioned to temper democracy's predatory impulses, military and economic --- would abuse and exploit, conducting wars for oil simply to avoid the cost and inconvenience of energy independence.

Unlike the Israelis, Americans are now free, as referees in a sporting contest, to sit out conflicts that don't meet their test of worthiness, that happen not to fit in with their lifestyles, that fall on the watch of a president they dislike or that aren't predetermined to be essential to the survival of this country or to the free world.

We are a nation seriously complacent, far too susceptible to photos and to emotion to sustain a war on terrorism against an enemy given to butchery, to suicide as a weapon, and to treating civilian innocents, including women and children, as soldiers on the battlefield.

We are a compassionate people who simply cannot imagine any human inviting an enemy to kill women and children. But that is the face of the evil that we encounter and that Israel encounters in the war on terrorism.

We can recoil in horror. We can pretend that if the militants saw our compassionate side, knew us as we know ourselves, they'd see too, as our anti-war left does, that war is not the answer.

But when confronted with an enemy willing to serve up children, war is the answer. And until Hezbollah is defeated, we should not try to persuade Israel otherwise.

* Jim Wooten is associate editor of the editorial page. His column runs Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

jwooten@ajc.com

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Islamic Leaders Urge Children To Be Bombers

New York Sun (Archive)

August 16, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 6

Length: 835 words

Byline: STEVEN STALINSKY

Body

"Young Israelis dream of being inventors, and their role models are the Israeli innovators who made it to the Nasdaq. Hezbollah youth dream of being martyrs, and their role models are Islamic militants who made it to the Next World."

- Thomas Friedman, New York Times, August 9

The act of infanticide, the practice of intentionally causing the death of an infant, is rarely practiced today. Yet in the Middle East, it has taken on a new form. Under the direction of some leading Muslim religious figures, some parents in the region are encouraging their children to commit suicide as a religious act - then celebrating it.

Since Sheik Hassan Nasrallah has led Hezbollah, the terrorist organization has put the death of Lebanese children on a pedestal. His Ashura speech of May 1997 praised parents who beseeched Allah to "bless" their children with the honor of martyrdom.

Four months later, Sheik Nasrallah's 18 year-old son became a "martyr" after battling Israeli forces. The Hezbollah leader appeared on Al-Manar TV and thanked Allah for his son's "martyrdom," saying it brought him "the greatest feeling of joy that a father can know."

Many Lebanese Shiites were inspired by his words and to this day they want the same for their children. Sanaa Younes told the San Jose Mercury News on August 3, "He gave his son to Islam. ... It's what every parent would want."

On July 23, another Shiite mother told the Boston Globe, "We are ready to give our children for Sheik Nasrallah."

Hezbollah begins brainwashing young children to be willing to kill themselves from an early age. "Hezbollah," a 1997 book on the terrorist group by a Reuters Middle East correspondent, Hala Jaber, details how the terror organization and its TV channel incite Muslim youth to terrorism: "Al-Manar ... is dominated by religious programs. Pictures and names of martyrs are screened, supported by verses from the Koran which glorify such deaths. The aim is simple: to indoctrinate the minds of the young ... with the idea that those who seek martyrdom will be rewarded with more pleasure than can ever be achieved during this earthly lifetime."

In an interview with the Boston Globe on August 1, two young members of Hezbollah, "Hussein" and "Hamid," described their meticulous training, which began at age 14. Hussein explained, "It is the matter that we are not afraid of death. ... This is the center of the training of a fighter, to make him unafraid of death, so you prefer to die rather than live humiliated."

Islamic Leaders Urge Children To Be Bombers

The mother of a Hezbollah martyr, Bassel Al-Din, appeared on Al-Manar on May 22, 2005. She wept with happiness as she told the channel what happened when her child became a martyr: "Bassel had a wish. ... Whenever I told him I wanted to marry him off, he would say, 'Yes, mother, you'll marry me off like this in paradise.' And indeed, the martyr Bassel got married in paradise. I congratulate the black-eyed virgins who took Bassel from me."

A "Mother's Day Special" on Al-Manar on November 11, 2004, featured comments from many mothers of martyrs. "All I want is martyrdom. I'm willing for all my children to become martyrs," one said.

"It's true I sacrificed a son, but others have sacrificed two or three. I hope more of my sons will become martyrs," another said.

As "Nasrallah, a Name for Arab Children," an article on the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting News Network, reported August 13, over the past month, many parents in the Arab world have become so smitten with Sheik Nasrallah that they are naming their babies after him. This is especially true in the Palestinian Arab territories, where more than 50 newborns have been given the name Nasrallah in the past few weeks.

Sheik Nasrallah's Islamo-infanticide is also popular in Iran, where it originates. The speaker of the Iranian parliament, Gholam-Ali Haddad Adel, praised the "lion cubs of Hezbollah" in a speech that aired July 18 on the Iranian News Channel.

Iran's Fars News Agency covered a July 31 rally by representatives of Lebanese women's organizations who chanted, "Lebanese people are proud of being martyred." Pictures from the rally show Iranian teenage girls sporting the latest suicide belts and holding posters of their heartthrob, Sheik Nasrallah. Some of the girls also carried pictures of female Palestinian Arab suicide bombers such as Hanadi Jaradat and Wafaa Idris.

A daughter of Ayatollah Khomeini, Dr. Zahra Mostafavi, sent a letter to Sheik Nasrallah on July 31 that appeared in the Tehran Times. "The jihad you have commenced at present is not to defend a land alone, but the entity of Islam, Quran, and all Muslims. ... The only bitter and heartrending side of the holy jihad is the martyrdom of the Lebanese and Palestinian hero children ... whose martyrdom is moving for every free man," she wrote.

Until Muslim religious leaders in countries such as Lebanon and Iran speak out against child martyrs, this phenomenon can only be expected to grow.

Mr. Stalinsky is executive director of the Middle East Media Research Institute (www.memri.org).

Load-Date: August 17, 2006

At least 40 killed in Israeli raid on village

The Evening Standard (London)

August 7, 2006 Monday

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London Evening Standard

Section: C MERGE; Pg. 7

Length: 690 words

Byline: BOB GRAHAM

Body

THE relentless slaughter continued in the Middle East this afternoon as 40 people were killed in southern Lebanon during intense aerial and artillery attacks.

Lebanon's prime minister Fouad Siniora spoke in shocked terms as he released details of the latest deaths.

"A horrific massacre took place in Houla village as a result of the intentional Israeli bombardment that resulted in more than 40 martyrs," he said.

Mr Siniora gave details of the deaths during an emergency meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Beirut, called to discuss the regional crisis.

Houla, a village less than two miles inside the Lebanese border which the Israeli military believes was occupied by Hezbollah guerrillas, was among dozens of border settlements subjected to a massive land and air bombardment over the past 24 hours.

Mr Siniora said the deaths followed Israeli air strikes in which several houses were destroyed.

Lebanese security officials said aircraft first destroyed a house where 17 people were sheltering.

Up to six other strikes a short time later then hit four nearby houses where up to 40 people had been staying.

Earlier in the day Israeli Defence Forces had fought several closequarter battles with guerrillas around the village.

The IDF called in air and artillery support to hit the area, where they believed Hezbollah guerrillas were sheltering.

Houla residents who were contacted by telephone said they feared as many as 60 people, including women and children, had been killed. They said most of the people in the houses were shepherds and their families who had refused to flee the fighting and leave their animals behind.

At least 40 killed in Israeli raid on village

Security sources said rescue workers were unable to reach the area immediately because of the intense Israeli bombardment of the area.

All along the border the fighting was stepped up by both sides - as well as the Israeli bombardment of Lebanese villages, 87 Katyusha rockets were fired into northern Israel.

"The wrath of the Israeli people is a shocking sight," said a military spokesman.

"The words 'ceasefire' or 'peace' do not cross our lips now. We do not listen to the international community, we listen to our hearts and our heads and we know what we must do."

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert met his top defence officials today to discuss broadening the air and ground attacks on Lebanon after **Hezbollah** rockets yesterday killed 15 people in northern Israel, including 12 army reservists.

It had been the deadliest day of the war so far for the Jewish state.

There was no announcement after Mr Olmert's talks concluded, although sources claimed defence minister Amir Peretz urged an expanded ground push up to the Litani river 13 miles inside the border, in the wake of yesterday's rocket barrage.

The killing of the 12 reservists has put Mr Olmert under growing pressure to deliver a stinging blow to **Hezbollah** and ensure his country can claim victory once a UN resolution calling for an end to the fighting takes effect.

Through the night and past dawn, Israeli jets flew dozens of sorties into southern Lebanon, attacking suspected **Hezbollah** targets from Tyre on the coast to the capital, Beirut, and the Bekaa Valley close to the Syrian border.

Seven people were killed when a missile hit a house in Qassmieh, said civil defence official Youssef Khairallah, while attacks were also carried out in Naqoura on the border and Ras al-Biyada, between the coastal cities of Naqoura and Tyre.

Lebanese security officials said that a woman and her daughter were killed in an attack near a Lebanese army checkpoint between the villages of Harouf and Dweir, and that four other people died in a raid on Kfar Tebnit.

Air raids on the town of Ghaziyah destroyed three buildings, killing at least one person and injuring 14.

Seven members of the same family died in the southern Lebanese village of Ghazzaniyeh when Israeli jets struck their house this morning.

1,000 dead in Lebanon MORE than 1,000 people have died during Israel's 27-day offensive.

Lebanon said at least 965 people, mostly civilians, were dead - with 75 missing and presumed dead.

Hezbollah is reported to have killed at least 56 Israeli soldiers and 33 civilians.

Graphic

ARTILLERY ONSLAUGHT: ISRAELI TANKS UNLEASH A BARRAGE FROM THEIR BORDER POSITION AT FASUTA TODAY. **HEZBOLLAH** CLAIMED TO HAVE KILLED FOUR ISRAELI SOLDIERS IN HEAVY FIGHTING AT HOULA

At least 40 killed in Israeli raid on village

End of Document

Thousands rally in Lebanon at slain leader's funeral

Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia)

November 23, 2006, Thursday

Copyright 2006 Charleston Newspapers

Section: NEWS; Pg. P3A

Length: 338 words

Byline: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

BEIRUT, Lebanon - Tens of thousands of Lebanese gathered today to bid farewell to an assassinated politician, and his anti-Syrian allies turned his funeral into a powerful show of force against opponents led by **Hezbollah** militants and their backers in Damascus.

The coffin of Pierre Gemayel, wrapped in the flag of his Phalange Party - white with a green cedar emblem - was brought from his hometown and carried through applauding throngs in downtown Beirut to the St. George's Cathedral, where the packed congregation sang hymns.

In a rare move, the head of the Maronite Church, Cardinal Nasrallah Sfeir, left his mountain headquarters to lead the funeral service, in which family and dignitaries, including France's foreign minister and the Arab League secretary-general, were participating. The country's top Shiite politician, Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a top **Hezbollah** ally, also attended.

Nearby Martyrs' Square was packed with tens of thousands of men, **women** and children, waving red-white-and-green Lebanese flags. Some carried posters with pictures of Gemayel, with the words "We want to live" and "Awaiting justice" written on them.

Gemayel supporter Joseph Hanna said he came to the rally to convey a message of support for the government.

"If they have 30,000 rockets, we have 30,000 words. They do not scare us," the 45-year-old car rental shop owner said in reference to **Hezbollah**'s weapons.

Gemayel, a 34-year-old Christian, was killed Tuesday when two cars blocked his vehicle at an intersection as he left a church and assassins shot him numerous times through a side window.

He was the sixth anti-Syrian figure killed in Lebanon in two years, including former prime minister Rafik Hariri, who was slain in a massive bomb blast in Beirut in February 2005.

Gemayel's assassination introduced new tensions into the already dangerous power struggle in Lebanon. Shiites such as **Hezbollah** are backed by Syria and Iran.

The government and its Sunni Muslim and Christian supporters are backed by the United States and the West.

Load-Date: November 25, 2006

Thousands rally in Lebanon at slain leader's funeral

End of Document

US policy in tatters after raid; MIDDLE-EAST CRISIS, Analysis

Australian Financial Review

July 31, 2006 Monday

Second Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 13

Length: 837 words

Byline: Tony Walker JERUSALEM

Body

Israel's attack on a building in Qana, south Lebanon, in which at least 40 people died, many of them women and children, has shocked the world and irrevocably shifted international perceptions of Israel's military campaign.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's careful efforts to calibrate US diplomatic initiatives in the region to give Israel more time to smash Hezbollah is a policy in tatters.

The US faces a mounting region-wide crisis of confidence in its leadership. Its failure to push for an immediate ceasefire has opened the US to criticism it is enabling attacks that are causing widespread civilian casualties and distress.

America's non-response to the rapid deterioration of the Lebanese conflict was greeted initially with incredulity, but is now causing growing anger and disdain.

While moderate Arab states may at first have been appalled by Hezbollah's provocations, Israel's trashing of Lebanon in response to the capture of two of its soldiers has gone far beyond what might have been regarded as a proportional response.

Saudi Arabia, a pivotal Arab state because of its oil wealth, stiffened its criticism of the US and Israeli positions at the weekend, warning of a wider regional conflict unless more concerted efforts are made to stop the fighting.

"If the peace option is rejected due to Israeli arrogance," said a statement from the Saudi royal court, "then only the war option remains, and no one knows the repercussions befalling the region, including wars and conflict that will spare no one, including those whose military power is now tempting them to play with fire."

Rice dined in Jerusalem with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to discuss the latest developments, but there was no indication the US was about to ramp up its diplomatic efforts to bring about a quick cessation of hostilities.

Rice, whose ineffectual performance has drawn criticism both inside the region and at home in the US, told reporters travelling with her that she did not expect to present a comprehensive plan to regional leaders to stop the fighting.

"I don't expect to present somebody with a 'here are the five points you must accept,'" she said. "There has got to be some give and take. This is difficult."

US policy in tatters after raid MIDDLE-EAST CRISIS, Analysis

She was speaking as Israel rejected a United Nations call for a 72-hour ceasefire to allow emergency relief to be distributed in the southern Lebanon war zone, and for civilians trapped by the fighting to be evacuated.

The UN Security Council is due to debate a resolution on Lebanon early this week and Rice is expected to confer with council members in New York on Thursday, but there appears to be no great sense of urgency.

Her faltering mission came against the background of splits emerging in British Prime Minister Tony Blair's cabinet over his continued support for the US providing carte blanche for Israel in Lebanon. Former foreign secretary Jack Straw said it was "very difficult to understand the kind of military tactics used by Israel".

"They have not been 'surgical strikes' but have instead caused death and misery amongst innocent civilians," Straw said after meeting Muslim community leaders.

At a White House meeting on Friday, US President George Bush and Blair continued to resist lending their weight to international calls for an immediate ceasefire, leaving the impression that trans-Atlantic diplomacy was geared to enabling Israel to press on with its attacks against Hezbollah.

Both Bush and Blair spoke of a long-term plan to disarm Hezbollah and evict it from southern Lebanon as part of a more comprehensive UN-sponsored arrangement that would involve the deployment of an international force, but in the meantime Lebanon is being destroyed.

Bush said: "This approach will demonstrate the international community's determination to support the government of Lebanon and defeat the threat from Hezbollah and its foreign sponsors.

"This approach will make possible what so many around the world want to see, an end of Hezbollah's attacks on Israel, the return of Israeli soldiers taken by the terrorists, the suspension of Israel's operation in Lebanon and the withdrawal of Israeli forces."

Rice's statement at a press conference in Jerusalem last week that the destruction of Lebanon amounted to the "birth pangs of a new Middle East" has been widely ridiculed. But it explains why US policy has tilted further towards Israel on this occasion than during previous crises.

Bush and Rice appear to believe that Israel's defeat of Hezbollah would create the circumstances that would facilitate Washington's wider aim of remaking the Middle East, but the problem with this scenario is that the US ally has been unable to inflict a quick kill.

In Lebanon on Saturday, Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah appeared on his group's Al-Manar TV station to taunt Israel over its failure to achieve a swift military victory.

"It's clear that the Zionist enemy has not been able to reach a military victory. I'm not saying that. They said that. The whole world is saying that," Nasrallah said.

Graphic

Israeli troops guard a building hit by rockets in northern Israel (left), a mass funeral of victims of the Israeli offensive in Tyre, southern Lebanon (top) and landmines on board an Israeli armoured vehicle entering Lebanon. Photos: AFP, AP

Load-Date: April 5, 2012

End of Document

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

The Irish Times

August 4, 2006 Friday

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Section: LETTERS; Pg. 17

Length: 1361 words

Body

Madam, - The issuing of a watered-down statement by EU foreign ministers on Tuesday is an appalling indictment of the failings of Western democracy. The West is paralysed by its desire to preserve diplomacy at all costs. The lack of cohesion and the absence of moral conscience on this Middle East crisis is repeatedly demonstrated by the miserable efforts of Condoleezza Rice, Tony Blair and EU foreign ministers.

Meanwhile the innocent citizens of Lebanon are slaughtered. How is it possible to falter before the horror of children's bodies being removed from rubble? Child after child after child. We fail them and we fail ourselves by refusing to challenge US and British support for Israel's war in Lebanon as a severe breach of international humanitarian law. - Yours, etc,

D WATKINS, Clifden, Co Galway.

Madam, - I would like to congratulate Minister for Foreign Affairs Dermot Ahern, who ensured that, along with France and Sweden, Ireland was one of the EU countries calling in the strongest terms for a ceasefire resolution at the EU foreign ministers' meeting on Tuesday.

Now that our Government has rediscovered its conscience on the Middle East, may I urge it to continue along this road, both at an EU and national level? At the EU level there is no excuse any more not to call for the suspension of the Euro-Med agreement which gives Israel favoured trade relations with the EU.

Furthermore, while the plight of Palestinians has been obscured by the equally horrific treatment Lebanon is now receiving from Israel, this plight is only worsened by EU sanctions against the democratically elected government of Palestine; it is past time these sanctions are lifted.

On the national level, delaying the accreditation of a new Israeli ambassador until Israel releases the kidnapped Palestinian parliamentarians and withdraws from Lebanon would send a clear signal as to how unacceptable Israeli behaviour is to Irish people. - Yours, etc,

DAVID LANDY, St Thomas Road, Dublin 8.

Madam, - Vincent Browne (Opinion, August 2nd) pretty much blames Israel for all that is wrong in the Middle East.

He quotes from the Bible and from history but there has to be a point when history is left in the past. The Middle East needs to move on and face the reality of the existence of Israel, existence which is mandated by the United Nations as a sovereign independent state.

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

Why are there so many women and children among the casualties in southern Lebanon? Where are the men? How do you deal with people who are willing to leave defenceless women and children while they go into hiding? What is the point of having a ceasefire and signing yet another peace agreement when the basic principle of Israel's right to exist in peace is not accepted by those who will be party to such an agreement? Such false agreements solve nothing because they fail to address the issue and just postpone the next crisis for a few more years.

At what point will people realise that a stand needs to be taken against state-sponsored terrorism? The state of Lebanon allowed these terrorists to build a state within a state and never asked for help in controlling them.

The UN as usual sits on its hands for years doing nothing and then appeasers, like Mr Browne, want us to believe that there can be a war without civilian casualties.

It seems we have learnt absolutely nothing from the 20th century. From the comfort and safety of our homes in the West we cast judgment on Israel, but when Iran fires a nuclear weapon will we then finally get the message that we ought to have faced up to Muslim terrorists once and for all? By then it will be far too late. - Yours, etc,

DESMOND FITZGERALD, Canary Wharf, London E14.

Madam, - Vincent Browne has shown great courage in speaking the truth about the root causes of the conflict in Palestine. Watch now as the slur of anti-Semitism is hurled at him. Over the years, this has been a persistent tactic of those who wish to keep hidden the truth of what was done to the Arab people of Palestine at the time of the foundation of the state of Israel. - Yours, etc,

MARTIN LOUGHNAN, Skerries, Co Dublin.

Madam, - On reading Michael D Higgins's latest contribution to your Letters page (August 2nd), you would have to conclude that he could survive as a politician only in somewhere like Ireland. We can sit quite comfortably off the west coast of Europe, safe from any real military threat, pontificating to the rest of the world on the rights and wrongs of their actions. People like Michael D Higgins are of no use at all when faced with violence, because they believe in meaningless UN resolutions, statements of condemnation and anti-war protests, but not action. That's not much use if your neighbours, such as Iran, are striving to wipe you off the map.

Israel, like any other state, is responsible for the defence of its citizens and it has every right to continue its actions against Hizbullah until it is satisfied that any threat to its citizens is removed. If Hizbullah members decide to use residential areas to launch attacks, then it is they, and not the Israelis, who are putting Lebanese civilians at risk. - Yours, etc,

KEVIN WINDLE, Glencairn View, Leopardstown, Dublin 18.

Madam, - On April 18th, 1996 the Israeli defence forces were responsible for the massacre of 106 people in the village of Qana - refugees in a UN compound seeking safety from Israel's third invasion of Lebanon - malignantly named "Operation Grapes of Wrath". More than half the dead were children. This was initially claimed by Ehud Barak to be an "unfortunate mistake" but was subsequently proven to be a fully authorised bombardment of the compound with knowing consequences.

Similar scenarios are being played out again and while Israel has an absolute right to defend itself against terrorist attacks, no right of self-defence can be invoked to justify the recent slaughter at Qana, the killing of the UN observers, the hundreds of civilian deaths and the mass destruction of civilian infrastructure in southern Lebanon. Israel's response to Hizbullah is grossly disproportionate and can objectively be described as state terrorism.

There is an immediate need for a ceasefire and a realisation on the part of Israel that its response to conditions in the Middle East is a vital ingredient that sustains Islamofascist organisations such as Hizbullah and Hamas. The past 20 years have seen both these organisations grow in popularity to a point where they are both represented in governments. A sustainable ceasefire or peace is not one that can be defined exclusively by Israel in its own interests. - Yours, etc,

Debate on the crisis in the Middle East

Cllr JIM O'LEARY, (Fine Gael), Parkvale, Dundrum, Dublin 14.

Madam, - Why should Israel kowtow to the United States, Britain and the EU and call a halt to its military activities in Lebanon? Given that it has been terrorised by the belligerent forces of Islamic fundamentalism, its decision to go to war seems logical and entirely reasonable. Certainly, the conflict in Lebanon is far easier to justify than the US-led invasion of Iraq.

We can at least be grateful that the current, limited IDF attacks have served to flush from cover the inherent anti-Semitism of many Europeans, not least in correspondence to The Irish Times. The stark and unpalatable reality is that disproportionate response is the only way to win a war, otherwise all conflicts would result in stalemate.

All right-minded people should support Israel in its actions, and let the Jewish state know that we stand squarely behind them. - Yours, etc,

JOHN DYLAN O'DONOGHUE, Ard Keale, Rochestown, Cork.

Madam, - Further to the report in your edition of August 2nd that Israel is now issuing telephone warnings before it bombs, I would like to commend it for raising its standard of morality to that of the IRA. - Yours, etc,

FINIAN McCLUSKEY, Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan.

Madam, - Martyn Turner's cartoon in your edition of August 1st is deeply offensive - and not only, I am sure, to believing Christians.

Qana is heartbreaking enough without the addition of such gross irreverence towards Christ.

Shame on you for publishing this tasteless effort. - Yours, etc,

SEÁN MAC CÁRTHAIGH, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.

Load-Date: August 4, 2006

Israel suspends air strikes after 50 killed in attack

Daily Post (North Wales)

July 31, 2006, Monday

Mersey Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 23

Length: 698 words

Byline: JON SMITH Daily Post Correspondent

Body

ISRAEL last night bowed to international pressure and agreed to a 48-hour suspension of aerial activity over southern Lebanon after an airstrike killed more than 50 civilians - half of them children.

The suspension of over-flights was announced by US State Department spokesman Adam Ereli. He said Israel has reserved the right to attack targets if it learns that attacks are being prepared against them.

"The US welcomes this decision and hopes that it will help relieve the suffering of the children and families of southern Lebanon," Ereli told reporters travelling with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice who had been on a week-long mission to halt the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

An Israeli government official confirmed that prime minister Ehud Olmert agreed to the 48-hour halt in air strikes on Lebanon.

A US State Department official said Rice had been working on such an agreement for some time before the attack on Qana.

Ereli said Israel would co-ordinate with the United Nations to allow a 24-hour period of safe passage for all residents of south Lebanon who wanted to leave the region.

"We expect that Israel will implement these decisions so as to significantly speed and improve the flow of humanitarian aid," he added.

Rice returned early to Washington with her diplomatic mission derailed after Lebanese leaders told her not to come.

Lebanon's prime minister said his country would not talk to the Americans over anything but an unconditional ceasefire. Ms Rice, in Jerusalem for talks with Israeli officials, said she was "deeply saddened by the terrible loss of innocent life" but stopped short of calling for an immediate end to the hostilities.

However, she made one of her strongest statements yet saying: "We want a ceasefire as soon as possible."

The US has resisted world pressure to call for a halt to the fighting, saying it wants first to ensure a deal is in place that will eliminate Hezbollah guerrillas from Israel's border and bring an international force to southern Lebanon.

Israel suspends air strikes after 50 killed in attack

The missiles struck just after 1am, levelling a three-storey building in Qana where two extended families, the Shalhoub and Hashim, had taken refuge in the basement from heavy Israeli bombardment in the area.

Throughout the day, rescue workers were digging through the rubble, lifting out bodies of women and children. At one point they found a single room with 18 bodies, police said.

"Why are they killing us? What have we done?" screamed Khalil Shahloub, who was helping pull out the dead until he saw his brother's body taken out on a stretcher. The dead included at least 34 children and 12 women, security officials said.

In Beirut, some 5,000 protesters gathered, at one point attacking a UN building and burning American flags.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel "is not in a hurry to have a ceasefire" before it achieves its goals of destroying Hezbollah.

He told Ms Rice that Israel would need 10 to 14 more days to finish its offensive.

"We will not stop this battle, despite the difficult incidents this morning," Mr Olmert told his Cabinet after the strike, according to a participant.

The Lebanese government this week had been putting forward ideas on disarming Hezbollah and deploying an international force in the south. But after the strike, Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said any negotiations on a broader deal were off.

Israel said Hezbollah guerrillas had fired 40 rockets into northern Israel from Qana, wounding five Israelis, before the airstrike.

"We deeply regret the loss of any civilian life and especially when you talk about children who are innocent," said Foreign Ministry official Gideon Meir.

But he accused Hezbollah of "using their own civilians as human shields" and said the military had warned people to leave the area.

The attack drew immediate condemnation with Jordan's King Abdullah II voicing his strongest criticism of his Israeli peace partner.

Meanwhile, Israel launched its second ground incursion into southern Lebanon.

The United Nations World Food Program cancelled an aid convoy's trip to the embattled south, after the Israeli military denied safe passage.

It will help relieve the suffering of the children and families

Graphic

Lebanese rescuers carry the body of a man recovered from under the rubble of a demolished building that was struck by Israeli missiles' Hezbollah supporters smash their way into the main UN building in Beirut

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

Thousands of troops join huge push into Lebanon

The Evening Standard (London)

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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London Evening Standard

Section: C MERGE; Pg. 4

Length: 621 words

Byline: BOB GRAHAM

Body

TENS of thousands of Israeli troops today began a massive push into the area that borders Lebanon and is occupied by Hezbollah guerrillas.

The fighting began shortly before dawn as Israeli Defence Forces massed in the area following global condemnation of the air strikes which have claimed the lives of Lebanese civilians, including women and children.

Today, the 21st day of the offensive, the northern hills resounded with the sound of tanks and heavy armour crossing the border to occupy an area up to the Litani river 18 miles into Lebanon.

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

The decision to change tactics was made at an emergency cabinet meeting last night. Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, a senior cabinet minister, said Israel wants to establish a Hezbollah-free zone in south Lebanon. He added: "This is the same area where we want a multinational force to be deployed."

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

An IDF spokesman spoke of how their force would "use all means at its disposal-in order to protect the citizens of Israel and to create the conditions for the return of the abducted IDF soldiers, Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, to their homes".

He added: "Overnight, IDF forces took control of several strategic positions in Al Teibeh and have been operating in the areas of Al Adeisa and Rab Al-Tiltin. During the past two weeks these areas have been used for the launching of missiles at Israel, resulting in killing and injuring of Israeli citizens."

Thousands of troops join huge push into Lebanon

The heaviest fighting took place within sight of the Israeli border close to the north-eastern town of Kiryat Shimona, one of the most frequent targets for the rockets.

Israeli paratroopers and elite forces could be seen running across open fields as Hezbollah fighters fired on them.

Several Israeli Merkava tanks rushed to the scene and began blasting at a building on a distant hill. Smoke could be seen rising from it as shell after shell was fired. During the operation, Hezbollah gunmen kept up a defensive barrage of non-stop antitank missiles and mortar shells at IDF forces who were making progress slowly, often just a few yards at a time.

Although the Israeli cabinet had predicted a 10-14 day period to "complete its mission", it was also clear the incursion into Lebanon would take weeks rather than days.

The IDF spokesman added: "During the past two days, IDF forces have hit approximately 20 Hezbollah gunmen in this area and uncovered several storage facilities of antitank missiles."

News of the deeper incursion into Lebanon was given today by Israel army radio. A senior government official said ground forces would halt at the Litani river. However some areas north of the river have been warned to evacuate. At the same time the government announced further army reservists to add to the 30,000 troops called to arms a week ago.

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

The push up to the Litani is synonymous - for many in the region - with previous Israeli military operations.

The river has always been considered a natural boundary between the two countries. In 1978, Israel invaded in what became known as the "Litani River Operation" when troops made an incursion as far as the waterway.

That offensive was meant to root out Palestine Liberation Organisation guerrillas but a UN Security Council resolution demanded Israel withdraw.

Israel invaded again in 1982, staging a twoyear war and occupying a southern strip of Lebanon. It withdrew six years ago.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

OPPOSITION, GOVT JOIN HANDS IN SLAMMING ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST LEBANON

The Frontier Star
August 4, 2006 Friday

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Length: 646 words

Body

ISLAMABAD: Opposition and treasury benches in national assembly have joined hands

in slamming Israeli aggression against Lebanon, expressing solidarity with the people of Lebanon besides pledging support to Hezbollah. The ARD legislators announced to set up fund for the people of Lebanon and donate one-month pay to the fund.

Opening debate on situation in Lebanon MMA president Qazi Hussain Ahmad regretted that the whole world was playing the role of glum spectator over Lebanon crisis. Tyrannical forces are backing Israel. Muslim rulers have grown weak. Hezbollah is fighting with Israeli troops with full might. Pakistan army should enjoy popular support if it wants to stay stronger; he said adding army should play its constitutional role. On the other hand, chief of army staff is imposing decisions in the capacity of president. This way the army will remain weak.

He went on to say Hassan Nasrullah has become hero and leader of Muslim Ummah. He is rightfully representing sentiments of Muslims. On the other hand, India is threatening Pakistan with hot pursuit and we are showing nervousness. Our leaders and generals are fearful of war. OIC is keeping mum in the prevailing situation. We will have to evolve planning to face this situation. We will have to forge unity in our ranks other wise no one would be able to escape advancement of Jewish force, Qazi warned.

We should stand besides people of Lebanon, he stressed. Army should accept supremacy of masses. We want restoration of 1973 constitution. . Minister for religious affairs Ejaz Ul Haq said that Israel perpetrated aggression against Lebanon on the excuse of kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers. While 11000 Palestinians are languishing in Israeli prisons and no one is raising voice. . Israeli troops massacred children and women in Lebanese town of Qana. It was sheer tyranny. Hezbollah is part of Lebanon and they are fighting for the defence of their motherland. We appreciate the sacrifices being rendered by them.

He held that the international court of justice should be moved against Israeli barbaric aggression in Qana. Opposition member Shah Mehmood Qureshi said there is awful difference in the thinking of Muslim rulers and masses on Lebanon issue. Legislators of PPP and ARD are setting up relief fund for people of Lebanon and their parliamentarians will donate one-month pay.

Parliamentary secretary for defence Major (Retired) Tanveer Hussain Syed said President Musharraf had strengthened defence of the country otherwise our situation would have not been different from Lebanon. We should not forget Kashmir besides Lebanon and we should come to their aid as well. Opposition legislator Pervez Malik said the role being played by OIC in the prevailing crisis is regrettable.

OPPOSITION, GOVT JOIN HANDS IN SLAMMING ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST LEBANON

MMA legislator Hafiz Hussain Ahmad alleged US is backing Israel. People of Lebanon and Palestine are with Hamas and **Hezbollah** who have defeated US and Israel. The situation will improve if OIC is expelled from ICU. MP Bhindara said he condemns **Hezbollah** for raising state within state. I slam Israel too. Government of Lebanon should fight war if it has to be fought. The completely Muslim world will support it. However, no one will back **Hezbollah**.

Opposition legislator Naheed Khan said UN Security Council and European countries are keeping mum over Israeli aggression. State Minister Malik Ameen Aslam said atrocities being perpetrated in Lebanon is slap on the face of whole humanity. Maulana Merajuddin from FATA said what Israel has done is not a new thing.

Opposition legislator Fauzia Wahab said Israeli aggression is being termed as third world war UK and US are involved in it. Minister of state for foreign affairs Khusro Bakhtiar concluding the debate said the house has represented the sentiments of the whole world. Pakistan will be ahead of all in dispatching peacekeeping forces in Lebanon.

Load-Date: December 6, 2006

End of Document

On streets of Jerusalem, defiant support for war

The Toronto Star
August 1, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A01

Length: 1347 words

Byline: Oakland Ross, Toronto Star With files from the Star's wire services

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Fight the war. Defeat the enemy. Don't give in.

On the streets of west Jerusalem yesterday, defiance was in the air - and almost everybody seemed to be saying the same thing.

Despite mounting civilian casualties in neighbouring Lebanon - including Sunday's horrific loss of 54 civilian lives in a single Israeli aerial attack on the southern town of Qana - it appears the vast majority of people here continue to back their government's determination to continue its three-week-old Middle East war, even in the face of growing international opposition.

This was certainly the view on Ben Yehuda St., a sloping pedestrian walkway lined by gift shops, craft stores, and shwarma stalls, where everyone interviewed by the Toronto Star yesterday - on a typically gorgeous summer afternoon - took essentially the same view.

Enough is enough, they said. It's time to put an end to Israel's "terrorist" enemies now. "There's no question," said Chaya Stern, 27, a clerk in an optician's store. "It's a matter of life and death. Let's end it."

No doubt aware his government enjoys solid and even overwhelming public support for its fight against ***Hezbollah*** guerrillas in southern Lebanon, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert last night rejected any talk of a ceasefire in the coming days and called on Israelis to show patience and resolve.

"We should be ready for pain, tears and blood," Olmert said. "Missiles and rockets will still land in Israel in the coming days."

Hours later, Israel's security cabinet approved widening the ground offensive in Lebanon and rejected a ceasefire until an international force is in place, a participant in the meeting told Associated Press. Air strikes would resume "in full force" after a 48-hour suspension expires, the source said.

On her return to Washington yesterday following a two-day visit to Israel, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said she believes a ceasefire can be negotiated to end the war sometime this week. But a UN official said a meeting scheduled for yesterday on a new peacekeeping force for Lebanon had been delayed "until there is more political clarity."

On streets of Jerusalem, defiant support for war

Following the deaths at Qana, most of them children, the Israeli government announced on Sunday the 48-hour suspension of aerial sorties over Lebanon, but early yesterday the country's air force bombarded positions near the southern Lebanese town of Taibe, apparently in support of Israeli troops on the ground there.

A second Israeli air strike yesterday in the city of Tyre in southern Lebanon killed a Lebanese soldier riding in a car mistakenly thought to be carrying a Hezbollah official. The Israeli military said it regretted the error.

Taking advantage of the reduction in Israeli bombardment, civilians fled battered villages in southern Lebanon, aid convoys headed into the area to deliver supplies, and rescuers recovered 49 bodies from the rubble.

Meanwhile, Israel launched a new ground incursion into Lebanon in the Aita al-Shaab area. An Israeli military source reported "on and off" clashes early today around Aita al-Shaab and Taibe, and Hezbollah said it was resisting another Israeli incursion near the border village of Kfar Kila.

At the main border crossing into Lebanon from Syria, Israeli drones fired at two trucks yesterday and a third truck was destroyed by a warplane, security sources said. Four Lebanese customs officials and the drivers were wounded.

The Israeli army said Hezbollah fired three mortars at northern Israel yesterday, but did not launch a single rocket across the border for the first time since the fighting started.

At the United Nations, a top Lebanese official asked the Security Council for an international inquiry into the raid on Qana and renewed his government's plea for an immediate end to the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.

Elsewhere, Syrian President Bashar Assad called on his army to increase readiness to cope with "regional challenges," saying he was determined to support Hezbollah.

At least 598 people have been killed in Lebanon since the conflict began, although the country's health minister puts the toll at 750, including bodies still buried under rubble. Fifty-one Israelis have been killed in the violence.

People in Jerusalem who spoke with the Star yesterday said they lament the loss of civilian lives in Lebanon - and some were sharply critical of Israeli forces for failing to avoid such casualties - but nobody said it was time to end the war.

Male or female, young or old, all agreed that past efforts to guarantee Israel's security through diplomatic means have failed and that war is now the only option.

"We have tried the other ways," said Victoria Boubida, 29. "There is no other choice."

The so far unnamed war began nearly three weeks ago, after eight Israeli soldiers were killed and two others abducted in a series of surprise Hezbollah attacks along the border. But tensions have seethed between the two sides for many years, fuelled by periodic Hezbollah rocket attacks on civilian targets in northern Israel.

"To say that two kidnapped soldiers caused this is not necessarily accurate," said Lisa Bodziner, 23, a student from Savannah, Ga., who has lived in Israel for the past two years. "I think Israelis have a certain pressure on them to act. Terrorism sucks. In the end, it comes down to Israel having to fight to defend itself no matter who supports it or not."

Hundreds of people were out in the summer sunshine on Ben Yehuda St. yesterday, including shoppers, lollygaggers, and hard-core cafe-dwellers, and it was difficult to imagine that rockets and cannon rounds could be careening back and forth only a two-hour drive to the north.

But the impact of the war was evident even here, as many shopkeepers reported a dramatic decline in business during the past three weeks, mainly attributable to the absence of foreign tourists during what is normally the busiest tourist season of the year.

On streets of Jerusalem, defiant support for war

"You can really feel it," said Daniella Kessler at the Yanni handicrafts shop, where revenue has fallen from more than 80,000 shekels in June to below 60,000 shekels in July.

Despite those numbers, Kessler says that she, too, backs her government's decision to go to war and to stick at it.

While they regret the loss of civilian lives, many here hold Hezbollah and not their own forces mainly responsible for the deaths Lebanon has suffered in the fighting so far.

"It hurts very much," said Stephanie Molcho Saadron, who works in a handicrafts store. "It is innocent citizens dying. But Hezbollah uses these citizens as a human shield. I think the war should continue, but we should be a little bit more careful."

Aware that Israel is running into growing condemnation abroad for its conduct of the war, many people here expressed sadness at being portrayed as villains, but they were nonetheless determined to support their country's cause - to rout what they see as a terrorist threat.

"It's always that way," said Molcho Saadron. "But, as we're not very loved by the rest of the world, it doesn't matter what we do. If it's going to make Israel a safe place, go ahead and do it. It's worth it."

Again and again yesterday, people here repeated the same refrain - talking has not worked in the past, and now all that's left is war.

"There's a saying in Hebrew," said Danny Vassa, who works in a store selling musical instruments. "If someone is going to wake up early to kill you, then you must wake up even earlier to kill him. I'm not sure I agree, but that is the general feeling here."

For the record - albeit reluctantly - Vassa supports his government in the war against Hezbollah. Around Ben Yehuda St., it seems that everyone does.

"The people who think we can talk with Hezbollah, they are wrong," said Becky Dikstein, 21. "It's not like you can talk. There's nothing you can do. They don't have democracy there."

In today's editions, the Israeli daily Haaretz reported Israel is ready to swap two Lebanese prisoners in exchange for the two soldiers whose capture triggered the war. Haaretz quoted government and defence officials as saying such a deal could be part of a ceasefire agreement.

Graphic

RICK MADONIK Toronto star An orthodox Jew prays at the Western Wall in Jerusalem yesterday. The Israeli government enjoys wide public support in the three-week-old Middle East war.

Load-Date: August 1, 2006

Israeli raid kills at least 30 children

Birmingham Post

July 31, 2006, Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 7

Length: 332 words

Body

At least 60 people, more than half children, were killed in an Israeli airstrike that crushed a building yesterday - the deadliest attack of the Israeli campaign.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice returned early to Washington with her diplomatic mission derailed after Lebanese leaders told her not to come.

Israel said it targeted Qana because Hezbollah launched rockets from there.

"The army did not get an order to strike at Lebanese civilians. In Kfar Qana, hundreds of Katyusha rockets are hidden," Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said during his weekly cabinet meeting.

Gideon Meir, a senior Israeli foreign ministry official, said: "We deeply regret the loss of any civilian life and especially when you talk about children who are innocent. This is not the code of conduct of the Israeli army."

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

The attack brought a swift response from Hezbollah - with a vow to retaliate.

"The massacre at Qana will not go unanswered," a spokesman said.

Mohammed Shaloub, a survivor of the attack, said there were 55 people in the house and eight survived.

The bodies of at least 30 children were found, said Abu Shadi Jradi, a civil defence official. Corpses were still being pulled out, placed in plastic bags and loaded in ambulances, he said. He said the army dropped leaflets several days ago telling civilians to leave Qana.

Residents were too afraid to take the road out of Qana, which Israel had attacked repeatedly with rockets and bombs. Charred wreckage and smashed buildings line the road from Tyre to Qana, nine miles away.

Lebanese defence minister Elias Murr disputed allegations that Hezbollah was firing missiles from Qana.

"What do you expect Israel to say? Will it say that it killed 40 children and women?" he asked.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora phoned UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, urging an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to arrange for an immediate ceasefire.

Graphic

Protesters angry over the Israeli air strike in Qana that killed 50 refugees broke into the UN building in the Lebanese capital Beirut yesterday, burning UN and American flags. Around 500 protesters massed outside, pushing through police barricades, smashing windows and breaking into the building. Demonstrators chanted anti US and Israel slogans and denounced Arab governments for not doing enough

Load-Date: July 31, 2006

End of Document

Sporadic violence despite ceasefire

Ottawa Citizen

August 16, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A9

Length: 357 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from The Associated Press

Dateline: EL QLAIAA, Lebanon

Body

EL QLAIAA, Lebanon - Heavily armed Israeli commandos and **Hezbollah** fighters played a dangerous game of cat-and-mouse yesterday in the sidestreets of this Christian village three kilometres from the Israeli border -- sometimes passing unknowingly within 100 metres of each other.

Despite the proximity of those belligerents, neither side violated the United Nations-brokered truce, which began Monday.

However, the eerie calm that has existed between Israel and **Hezbollah** was broken twice elsewhere yesterday. Israel said its troops shot five **Hezbollah** gunmen who tried to approach their positions in two places.

If the truce holds, Israeli military sources told journalists, their forces would be out of Lebanon within 10 days. However, the timetable was heavily dependent upon when a much-expanded UN force and the Lebanese army arrives in the beleaguered south.

Meanwhile, the pullout of the 30,000 Israeli troops that entered Lebanon began yesterday.

Up the hill from El Qlaiaa, Israeli tank and infantry units quit the town of Marjayoun just before dawn.

One thing Israel and Lebanon have agreed on is that residents displaced by the fighting should not return to their homes immediately because of unexploded ordnance and the possibility the war could flare up again.

Israel gave its warning by dropping leaflets on the south from warplanes. Lebanon put the word out on TV and radio.

Despite the risks, virtually nobody who fled the fighting in southern Lebanon heeded these calls. All roads south from Beirut were choked with traffic again yesterday, as they were on Monday.

In Israel, yesterday, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, acknowledging shortcomings in the war preparations and its conduct, began grappling with the political fallout as critics abandoned their wartime unity to attack him for either hitting Lebanon too hard or not hard enough.

Opposition politicians demanded a commission of inquiry into all aspects of the war.

Sporadic violence despite ceasefire

Some critics said Israel should have sent in massive ground forces earlier. Others criticized Israel's final military surge, launched hours before the passage of the UN ceasefire deal Friday, that killed 33 soldiers.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Eric Gaillard, Reuters; Lebanese women holding Hezbollah flags look at the damage to their homes in Beirut's southern suburbs upon returning yesterday.

Load-Date: August 16, 2006

End of Document

Israeli Military Policy Under Fire After Qana Attack

The Forward

August 4, 2006

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Section: News; Pg. 6

Length: 1848 words

Byline: Ori Nir

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

As Jerusalem defends itself against worldwide condemnation over a deadly air strike that killed dozens of Lebanese children, current and former Israeli officials acknowledge that the Israeli military has loosened the restrictions on targeting militants in populated areas.

After an Israeli air force raid Sunday on the Lebanese village of Qana left dozens of civilians dead, many of them children, human rights groups accused Israel of committing a "war crime." Many critics - including Israeli ones - are questioning the military's policy of bombing in densely populated Lebanese areas. As of earlier this week, more than 550 civilians had been killed in Lebanon during the current conflict, with Lebanese officials claiming that the civilian death toll has exceeded 750.

Following the Qana deaths, Israeli authors and intellectuals signed a petition calling for an immediate cease-fire and protesting the killing of civilians. The Association for Civil Rights in Israel called for an official commission of inquiry to investigate the military's bombing policies in Lebanon.

One of Israel's top political commentators, Nahum Barnea of Yediot Aharonot, also raised questions in his column Monday. "I am ashamed," wrote Barnea, whose criticism reverberated in Israel this week. Barnea argued that just because he feels that the war is justified "does not grant me an exemption from torturing myself with questions." The most piercing question, he wrote, "arose when I heard Defense Minister Amir Peretz boasting about how he has freed the army from limitations regarding the civilian population that lives alongside Hezbollah. One can understand the accidental killing of civilians, in the heat of battle. A sweeping order regarding the civilian population of South Lebanon and the Shi'ite neighborhoods of Beirut is rash, injudicious and will lead to disaster. We saw the results yesterday, with the bodies of women and children being brought out of the bombed house in Qana."

Barnea was referring to several statements that Peretz, leader of the left-of-center Labor Party, made in the course of the past three weeks, saying that he had directed the Israeli military not to be deterred by Hezbollah's use of civilians as "human shields." Other Israeli officials also indicated that the military's rules of engagement in the current fighting in Lebanon are more permissive than they have been in the past. Some said that Israel is attempting to "inflict pain" on Lebanon's civilian population to put public pressure on Hezbollah to disarm.

The Israeli military's chief of staff, Dan Halutz, a lieutenant general, was quoted as saying that for every building hit in Haifa by a Hezbollah rocket, Israel would hit 10 high-rise buildings in the Shi'ite residential neighborhoods of Southern Beirut. And Israeli air force pilots indicated that the process of vetting potential targets to minimize the

Israeli Military Policy Under Fire After Qana Attack

chance of hitting civilians is less meticulous in the current bombings in Lebanon than it was in previous bombing campaigns.

"There are efforts, as always, to minimize collateral damage, but less so than when [Israel] bombs in Gaza," said Amos Guiora. A lieutenant colonel (reserve), Guiora is the former commander of the Israeli military's School of Military Law and currently a professor at Case Western Reserve University School of Law. In this case, he said, rockets are launched into Israel by the thousands from a sovereign neighboring country, and therefore "the rules of the game have been significantly changed."

In particular, what's changed are the orders regarding the admissibility of striking buildings or other sites adjacent to residential neighborhoods, from which Hezbollah combatants are suspected to be operating. Hezbollah fighters, according to Israeli military reports and other data, launched rockets from sites adjacent to the building that was hit in Qana on Sunday. In addition, Hezbollah fighters appear to have been launching rockets next to the United Nations observation post in Hiam, in which four international observers were killed by an Israeli strike July 26.

Last week, a colonel, who is an Israeli air force squadron commander gave an unusual interview to Ha'aretz, authorized by the military, in which he laid out some of the bombing policies. Often, he said, one of the militants firing rockets is seen seeking refuge in a residential home in South Lebanon. Such a house, he said, "ought to be struck, even if a family lives in it." Such a family, he said, has allowed combatants into its home, and "hence joined those who are fighting us." The lives of Israeli civilians are more important to him than the lives of Lebanese civilians, the squadron commander said on condition of anonymity, a routine practice for Israeli military officers.

Asked about the air strikes that leveled the pro-Hezbollah Shi'ite neighborhood of al-Dahiya in southern Beirut, the senior officer said that the area was a legitimate target because it was inhabited by Hezbollah personnel and their families.

Some experts on humanitarian international law say that the policies described by the senior air force officer are being justified on a blatant misinterpretation of international law. At the same time, they add, international law is open to broad interpretation regarding the admissibility of striking civilians.

While intentionally targeting civilians or civilian property is forbidden, international law takes a more nuanced approach to the unintentional striking of civilians when pursuing military targets.

Targeting sites that are civilian in nature but used by combatants is permissible as long as such sites provide an "effective" contribution to the enemy's military activities, and as long as their destruction or neutralization provides "a definite military advantage." When targeting such sites, the impact of the attack on civilians must be carefully weighed against the military advantage that the attack serves. Attacks should not be undertaken if the civilian harm outweighs the military advantage, or if a similar military advantage could be secured with less civilian harm, experts say. Each attack on such a target is required to be weighed individually under these criteria - known in international law as the "proportionality" test. The term has been used frequently in the context of the current confrontation, but seldom in the appropriate context of what international law prescribes regarding civilian casualties.

Whether Israel's policies generally pass the proportionality test is a matter of intense controversy.

Michael Walzer, a professor of social science at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, N.J., and a leading authority on morality in warfare, told the Forward that Israel's conduct is well within the confines of international law. "From a moral perspective, Israel has mostly been fighting legitimately," Walzer said. If Israeli commanders ever face an international tribunal, he added, "the defense lawyers will have a good case," mainly because Hezbollah uses civilians as human shields. In several recent articles, Harvard Law School's Alan Dershowitz has advanced similar arguments.

Human rights groups counter that Hezbollah's conduct does not relieve Israel from the responsibility to spare civilians, even if they receive adequate warning to flee before their neighborhoods are struck. To argue the opposite "is a complete misunderstanding of international law and is morally bankrupt," said Kenneth Roth, executive director of the New York-based Human Rights Watch. In a press release issued Monday, the group described the Qana

Israeli Military Policy Under Fire After Qana Attack

killings as "the latest product of an indiscriminate bombing campaign" in Lebanon, and said that the responsibility for the tragedy "rests squarely with the Israeli military." The group's statement argued that Israel had launched indiscriminate bombings that constitute war crimes.

Several groups on the liberal end of the Jewish communal spectrum, including Rabbi Michael Lerner's Tikkun Community, published a full-page advertisement Monday in The New York Times, demanding that all sides "stop the slaughter in Lebanon, Israel and the occupied territories" and that Israel immediately halt attacks on Lebanon, which are "utterly disproportionate to the initial provocation by Hezbollah."

The left-leaning New York based Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring this week sent a letter to President Bush, calling for an immediate cease-fire. "Peace cannot be achieved by a war of attrition, which will only cause the death of more and more innocent men, women and children, and increased hatred on both sides," the letter said.

For the most part, however, few if any of the most influential Jewish organizations are raising any moral objections to Israel's military tactics. None of the major Jewish groups released statements of condolences, sympathy or regret before or after the Qana incident. In fact, three Jewish communal leaders, in recent conversations with reporters, said that given the large number of aerial strikes and artillery shellings in Lebanon, the number of civilian casualties was rather low.

On Monday, during a New York meeting with Israeli Vice Premier Shimon Peres, not one member of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations asked the veteran Israeli politician about the carnage in Lebanon.

Members seemed to agree when Peres noted that whereas some 10,000 civilians were killed in NATO's 78-day air campaign in Kosovo in 1999, the Lebanese civilian death toll is in the low hundreds.

"I see 100% support and not an iota of decrease in support in the Jewish community for Israel's conduct in Lebanon," said Martin Raffel, associate executive director of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs. The council is a policy coordinating organization that brings together 13 national Jewish agencies and 123 local Jewish communities.

Rabbi Irving "Yitz" Greenberg, a leading thinker on the Jewish and Israeli use of power, said that he couldn't find flaws in Israel's conduct. "If I have any criticism of Israel, it is that there was an underestimation of the risk" from Hezbollah, Greenberg said.

As extraordinarily painful and cruel a reality as it is, he added, "there was a need to inflict punishment on the host [Lebanese] population" to turn the population against Hezbollah. Although people in the Jewish community "feel anguish that Jews are killing civilians, they honestly don't think that there is any serious alternative right now," he said.

The distinctly dovish president of the Union for Reform Judaism, Rabbi Eric Yoffie, said that although questions regarding the "appropriate policies to protect [Lebanese] civilians" are warranted, "people are overwhelmingly supportive of this war, across the board" and are confident that Israel's leadership is acting within the requirements of international law.

"We are dealing with a government that is dovish, moderate, and with a defense minister who is a certified moderate," Yoffie said. "We are confident that even if they did make mistakes, they will know how to deal with them and maintain a positive course."

Graphic

IMAGE

Israeli Military Policy Under Fire After Qana Attack

Load-Date: August 11, 2006

End of Document

KILLING CIVILIANS MUST END

The Nation (AsiaNet)

August 5, 2006 Saturday

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Length: 388 words

Body

LAHORE-Lebanon in my view has become a valley of death where human rights are being violated flagrantly. Whatever the justification for attacking other countries may be, among the customary rules, parties that engage in hostilities must distinguish at all times between combatants and non-combatants. Civilians should never be the objects of attacks.

I observe with grief that civilian deaths in Lebanon war are now nearing 1,000 marks, including about 60 victims in Qana alone. Under the international law, warring parties are required to take all feasible precautions to minimise harm to civilians and civilian objects and to refrain from attacks that would disproportionately harm the civilian population and which fail to discriminate between combatants and civilians. Lebanese are being killed, beaten and ill-treated in different ways.

Civilians have been arrested and taken hostage by the Israeli forces. Terrorising elderly, women and children, who suffer psychic trauma from such acts of violence, has become order of the day. Contrary to the Israeli modus operandi, most of the attacks led by Hezbollah prior to July 2006 spared civilians and were directed at Israeli military targets in the occupied Golan Heights or border posts bordering Lebanon.

Something has to be done before it is too late. The world must not let an aggressor continue killing of the innocent civilians. The bloodshed must end. Hezbollah is comprised of Lebanese citizens who see in it and its resistance wing both an effective political party and a stalwart defence force against Israel. The notion that Hezbollah can be disassembled is far from reality. Thus, there must be a plan for bringing the resistance wing of the party under govt control in conjunction with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559.

If compared, the six-year period starting from Israel's withdrawal from South Lebanon in May 2000 and until the Hezbollah operation of last July 12, was more or less placid.

Contrary to superheated commentary in the United States and Israel, which often blurs the lines between the occupied Golan Heights and Israel, there were few attacks on Israeli civilians from across the Lebanese border during the period, and only about six on Israeli soldiers deployed inside Israel. Some of the attacks were in retaliation to Israeli-caused

Load-Date: December 6, 2006

Rice sees possible truce this week; Lebanon is braced for attacks despite pause in airstrikes

The International Herald Tribune

August 1, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 1200 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger and Hassan M. Fattah

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Steven Erlanger reported from Jerusalem and Hassan M. Fattah from Beirut. Helene Cooper contributed from Jerusalem, Sabrina Tavernise from Qana, Lebanon, and John O'Neil from New York.

*

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Monday that she believed a cease-fire between Israel and Hezbollah could be reached this week, and she returned to Washington to work on it after persuading Israel to adopt a limited suspension of its air campaign for 48 hours in the face of an outcry over the raid that killed dozens of civilians in Qana, Lebanon.

Israeli warplanes conducted airstrikes Monday, but Israeli Army officials said they were in support of ground forces and so not covered by the 48-hour halt. And Israel's defense minister, Amir Peretz, made it clear in a speech to Parliament that Israel intended to continue its ground operations against Hezbollah positions in southern Lebanon.

"We must not agree to a cease-fire that would be implemented immediately," Peretz said. "If an immediate cease-fire is declared, the extremists will rear their heads anew."

At the end of a turbulent eight-day trip, Rice laid out what she called an "emerging consensus" for a cease-fire package.

Under the proposal, Israel and Lebanon would agree to a cease-fire as part of a larger pact that would include installing international peacekeepers throughout southern Lebanon.

The Lebanese government would work to disarm Hezbollah, and the United States and other countries would funnel money and send military officials to help train the Lebanese Army so that it could work to prevent future attacks on Israel.

The package described by Rice calls for armed groups to be prohibited where the international force is deployed, and an international embargo against the delivery of weapons to anyone other than the government of Lebanon and the international force.

She said the United States would call for UN Security Council action this week on the package.

Rice sees possible truce this week Lebanon is braced for attacks despite pause in airstrikes

"I have been deeply grieved by the tragic losses we have witnessed, especially the death of children, Lebanese and Israeli," Rice told reporters before heading back to Washington. "Too many families have been displaced from their homes. Too many people urgently need medical care, or are living in shelters."

Rice had been making little progress in her talks on a cease-fire package before news broke Sunday about the raid in Qana. Israel said the raid was aimed at Hezbollah fighters firing rockets into Israel, but the strike collapsed a residential apartment building, crushing civilians who were taking shelter for the night in the basement.

U.S. and Israeli officials said Israel would investigate.

The deaths set off a chain reaction, with protesters in Beirut ridiculing the inaction of Arab governments, ransacking UN offices and burning a U.S. flag.

There were also fresh condemnations worldwide of the Israeli tactics that have left hundreds of civilians dead as it fights Hezbollah, the Shiite Lebanese militia, which vowed revenge for the deaths in Qana.

Headlines of "Carnage" and "Barbaric" filled the front pages of newspapers across the Arab world this morning. In Kuwait, a staunch ally of the United States, several members of Parliament slammed Washington for not acting to stop Israel, Reuters reported. "America condemns terrorism but it also practices it," said one member of Parliament, Khaled al-Adwa. "American policy makers are sons of dogs."

After the strikes, the Lebanese prime minister, Fouad Siniora, made it clear that Rice would not be welcome in Beirut for a planned trip Sunday and demanded an immediate cease-fire.

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

Rice said she had canceled the trip in favor of returning to Washington to work on a UN resolution.

Across southern Lebanon, roads were packed with refugees taking advantage of the limited bombing halt to seek safety in the coastal city of Tyre, while others headed for the country's north, The Associated Press reported.

The limited suspension in airstrikes was announced by the U.S. State Department, and Israeli officials said nothing publicly about it. An Israeli official in the prime minister's office, who did not want to be identified, simply confirmed the State Department statement, saying, "Israel will be suspending aerial activity over southern Lebanon for 48 hours until the end of the Israeli investigation into Qana."

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

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

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

The name of Qana was already burned into the Lebanese memory. Ten years ago, in an eerily similar attack, Israel, saying it was responding to mortar fire, shelled a UN post in Qana where refugees were taking shelter, killing 100 people and wounding another 100.

The attack prompted the United States to embark on eight days of shuttle diplomacy that brought about a cease-fire.

In a speech to the diplomatic corps, Siniora accused Israel of war crimes and asked: "Why, we wonder, did they choose Qana yet again?"

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He asked the diplomats to work at the United Nations for a cease-fire.

"We cannot be expected to negotiate or discuss anything else while the ruthless, pitiless sword of the Israeli war machine continues to drip with the blood of innocent women and children," Siniora said.

At the United Nations, Secretary General Kofi Annan urged the Security Council, meeting in emergency session Sunday, to call for an immediate cease-fire, but instead it passed a resolution saying it "strongly deplores this loss of innocent lives."

Hezbollah has fired nearly 1,900 rockets into Israel, with 19 civilians killed. More rockets were launched Monday morning, but no casualties were reported.

Nearly 750 Lebanese are dead or missing from Israeli airstrikes, according to the Health Ministry.

Israel reported that 33 of its soldiers have been killed, and it estimated that 300 Hezbollah fighters had been killed in ground fighting with Israeli troops.

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

The Israeli Army asserted that the strike had occurred before 1 a.m., hitting next to the building, and that the building collapsed around 7 a.m. Brigadier General Amir Eshel said it was at least possible that the explosion was caused by munitions stored inside the building. "It is possible that various things were stored inside the house, things that ultimately caused an explosion," Eshel said.

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