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# Lessons of the 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War

## Anthony H. Cordesman

with George Sullivan and William D. Sullivan



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## CHAPTER ONE

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### INTRODUCTION

Instant military history is always dangerous and inaccurate, particularly when moving from an effort to describe the fighting to trying to draw lessons from uncertain and contradictory information. That said, reality does not wait for history, and the United States needs to draw what lessons it can from the Israeli-Hezbollah War as quickly as it can. The United States and its allies are already fighting asymmetric wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and a wide range of nations clearly see asymmetric war as a way of overcoming an opponent's advantage in conventional forces. A rush to judgment is inevitable. The United States and its allies clearly need to learn as many of the right lessons as quickly as they can—and to act accordingly.

#### CAUTIONS AND CAVEATS

Fortunately, a great deal of material has become public since the Israeli-Hezbollah War. These sources include the Winograd and Brodet Commissions and the postwar statements of Israeli and Hezbollah officials and commanders. They also include a wide range of media reporting, studies by Israeli and Arab think tanks, and the work of U.S. research centers.

This report draws on a wide range of interviews and personal contacts, on experiences gained during a visit to Israel that was during the war and was sponsored by Project Interchange of the American Jewish Committee, and on later trips to the Middle East and discussions with Arab military officers and officials. It was not possible to make a

matching visit to Lebanon and Hezbollah during the fighting or to interview Hezbollah leaders and fighters. Since the war, however, it has been possible to talk informally to Lebanese officials and officers.

Nevertheless, the history of other wars provides a clear warning that many of the data and “facts” issued during and soon after a conflict owe more to speculation, politics, and ideological alignment than to credible sources. Even official reports on lessons learned can be extremely politicized and notoriously inaccurate. For example, the “Conduct of the War” study issued by the Department of Defense after the Persian Gulf War in 1991 was proven by more recent studies to have painted a totally unrealistic picture of uniform success and was factually wrong in many critical respects. The reader should be reminded that the data and impressions emerging from a war often take several years to confirm. Original sources can take decades to become available, particularly if they are highly classified or if the contents are embarrassing.

### **THE NEED FOR “INSTANT” LEARNING**

That said, the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict, the Iraq War, and other recent conflicts show that every effort must be made to learn from experience. Both Israel and the United States have shown just how dangerous it is to conduct wars based on flawed grand strategies and strategic assumptions. Both have shown that high-technology forces, optimized to defeat conventional enemies, can be vulnerable to asymmetric attacks and can create political problems that offset many of their military advantages.

Like the fighting in Iraq, the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict strongly suggests that the emphasis on high technology, conventional war fighting, or the “revolution in military affairs” that the United States and Israel promoted before such fighting, was fundamentally flawed. This misplaced reliance especially applied to force transformation efforts based on using technology—particularly precision long-range strike capabilities and advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities—as a substitute for force numbers and for human skills and presence.

More broadly, both conflicts illustrate a fundamental lesson of war as old as history itself. Defeating the enemy on the battlefield is never

a strategic or grand strategic end in itself. Effective strategy requires plans and operations that win wars, and not just battles. Grand strategy requires plans and operations that achieve the political ends and goals for which a war is fought. Victory consists of transforming tactical success into lasting political advantage—even more so for optional wars than for existential conflicts. Mere survival or limited tactical advantage can be valid strategic goals in existential conflicts. They are always considered failure and defeat in optional conflicts. Only successful conflict termination and lasting political success can justify and excuse optional and limited wars.

## CHAPTER TWO

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### LESSONS ABOUT WHAT THE WAR DID AND DID NOT ACCOMPLISH FOR ISRAEL

Like the Iraq War, the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict provides a lesson that is all too familiar from most wars in human history: limited wars tend to have far less limited results and far more uncertain consequences than the planners realize at the time that they initiate and conduct such wars. It is difficult to know how many goals Israel achieved by the fighting to date or can keep in the future, but both Israel and Hezbollah face major uncertainties in claiming any form of meaningful victory.

Israel started and fought an “optional war.” It chose to unilaterally escalate after a minor Hezbollah attack on the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) on July 12, 2006, that killed eight IDF soldiers, and Hezbollah abducted two more during a patrol in the northern border area near Lebanon. The IDF reacted to this attack by trying to destroy Hezbollah’s holdings of long- and medium-range rockets, and it did so with considerable initial success.

After this time, however, Israel chose to go much further. On July 13, Israel bombed Beirut airport and established a blockade of Lebanese ports. Israel then went on to escalate the fighting into a major 33-day campaign. Israel bombed the Hezbollah headquarters in Beirut on July 14. Although Lebanese prime minister Fouad Sinoria called for a cease-fire the next day, the fighting continued to intensify, and Hezbollah fired longer-range rockets at targets near Haifa for the first time on July 16. Both the air campaign against targets in Lebanon and the land fighting near the border continued to intensify. Hezbollah

deployed more fighters, land clashes grew more intense, and Hezbollah continued to fire rockets into Israeli territory.

Israel mobilized some 30,000 reserves on July 27. Then Israel expanded the land battle on August 1, and the IDF troops carried out a heliborne raid some 125 kilometers deep into Lebanese territory, striking at a Lebanese leadership target in the Bekaa Valley. Hezbollah fired more than 200 rockets into Israel the next day, the most intense barrage so far. On August 11, Israel made the decision to fully commit its active and reserve forces in an attempt to go far beyond the border area and to seize Southern Lebanon up to the Litani River line.

That decision to launch a ground attack deep into Lebanon came, however, at a time when the international community was pushing hard for a cease-fire and Israel was broadly perceived as having mismanaged the war, produced excessive civilian casualties in Lebanon, and done unnecessary damage to the Lebanese economy. Weeks of indecision about how to shape the ground campaign were followed by a sudden reversal of the decision to attack.

The Israeli cabinet agreed to the cease-fire on August 13, almost immediately after it committed the IDF to a full-scale ground attack. It did so even though Hezbollah had fired a peak of some 250 rockets into Israel. The United Nations–brokered cease-fire went into effect on August 14, and the Lebanese army and a token contingent of UN troops began to move into Southern Lebanon on August 17.

When the war ended, what had begun as a Hezbollah raid into Israel had become a serious conflict. Although the precise numbers may be revised over time, Israeli reports indicate that an attack by Israel initially designed to destroy Hezbollah’s long-range missile force eventually led the Israeli Air Force (IAF) to fly some 15,500 sorties and to attack roughly 7,000 targets. The IDF fired some 100,000 tank and artillery rounds, and it committed at least 15,000 of its troops to attacks in Lebanon, out of a force that rose to well over 30,000.

Although such counts are even more uncertain than the previous data, Israel received some 3,970 Hezbollah rockets in return. The casualty data are somewhat uncertain, but Israel lost 117 to 119 soldiers and 37 civilians. Hezbollah lost 250 to 800 fighters. Various estimates claim some 900 to 1,191 Lebanese civilian deaths.<sup>1</sup>

## ISRAEL'S EVOLVING OBJECTIVES, LEADERSHIP, AND STRATEGY

Like American decisionmakers in the case of the Iraq War, Israeli decisionmakers have not provided a consistent picture of what they sought to achieve by going to war, or what they expected to accomplish within a given amount of time.

Those Israeli failures in strategy and in grand strategy are, in fact, a major conclusion of the Winograd Commission, which Israel set up to examine the conduct of the war. Israel's leadership was divided. Its military was unprepared for Hezbollah's asymmetric military response and had no clear longer-term war plan and strategy. Its civilian leaders were inexperienced, they had no grand strategy for going to war or for conducting the conflict, and both military and civilian efforts were poorly managed and coordinated at the highest levels of decisionmaking.

In a meeting held toward the end of the war, a top Israeli official did, however, seem to sum up the views of Israeli decisionmakers during the fighting. The official claimed that Israel had five objectives in going to war:

- Destroy the "Iranian Western Command" before Iran could go nuclear.
- Restore the credibility of Israeli deterrence after the unilateral withdrawals from Lebanon in 2000 and Gaza in 2005, and counter the image that Israel was weak and forced to leave.
- Force Lebanon to become and act as an accountable state, and end the status of Hezbollah as a state within a state.
- Damage or cripple Hezbollah, with the understanding that it could not be destroyed as a military force and would continue to be a major political actor in Lebanon.
- Bring the two soldiers whom the Hezbollah had captured back alive without major trades in prisoners held by Israel—not the thousands demanded by Nasrallah and the Hezbollah.<sup>2</sup>

It is far from clear that Israel's leaders ever had a real strategic consensus on any aspect of the war, that they had agreed on all of those goals at the time Israel began the fighting, or that they had pursued the goals consistently or with proper coordination. Later interviews

indicate that the IDF may have gone to war believing it could carry out a relatively surgical strike on Hezbollah's long-range holdings of missiles and that it would not have to fight either a major ground campaign or an extended air campaign against Hezbollah targets.

It is also unclear how much of the rhetoric that focused on recovering the captured soldiers was real and how much the capture was used to justify a military operation. Israel may well have broadened its objectives as the war escalated. Only full access to the chronology of what was and was not said at the highest levels of decisionmaking can clarify the perceptions of various Israeli officials and senior officers at the time.

The strategy or strategies that Israel chose in order to pursue its goals are even more uncertain, and they changed and expanded in scope during the course of the fighting. A major debate emerged in Israel shortly after the war over the degree to which the chief of the General Staff, General Dan Halutz, an air force officer and former IAF commander in chief, did or did not exaggerate the capabilities of airpower. Both Israeli military officers and Israel's political leadership placed severe restraints on ground action because of the fear of repeating the Israeli occupation of Southern Lebanon and the war of attrition that followed Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

Many critics felt, during and after the war, that Halutz presented the Israeli cabinet—which generally lacked military and war-fighting experience—with an unrealistic picture of what airpower could accomplish in the initial Israeli attack, and Halutz then proceeded to promise more than it could deliver as the fighting escalated. They criticize Halutz for (a) lacking an understanding of the need for a ground phase and ground battle, (b) exaggerating the ability of airpower to target and destroy an asymmetric opponent, (c) exaggerating the influence that airpower could have in forcing the Lebanese government to take control of the south and to disarm the Hezbollah, and (d) lacking an understanding of the political and grand strategic realities affecting Lebanon and of the Syrian and Iranian influence in that country. Other Israeli officers and experts criticized what many felt was a weak and inexperienced Israeli civil leadership that should have provided the political and grand strategic dimension of war planning and policy. They did not blame the IDF. They also felt the leadership was unwilling to commit to the use of ground

forces until forced to do so by circumstances, and the leadership was incapable of informed and timely decisionmaking. That criticism focused heavily on the personal competence of Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert and minister of defense Amir Peretz.

Some analysts claim that the IDF ground forces did recommend far more decisive ground action and attacks up to the Litani, recommended driving south from positions established above the Hezbollah lines, or both either in the planning for the war or after it escalated. Once again, the Winograd Commission suggests such views are correct to some degree, but no precise record is available as to what officer or official recommended what action at what time, and what debates occurred between them. The most that can be said is that the work of the Winograd Commission that the Israeli parliament established to examine the conduct of the war raised serious issues as whether that leadership ever developed and pursued a consistent strategy and rationale for the war after the initial air attacks.

What does seem clear is that when the IDF became committed to ground action, a number of senior officers warned that a campaign limited to the Hezbollah positions near the Israeli-Lebanese border would be fought on terms relatively advantageous to Hezbollah, would tie IDF forces down in warfare in built-up areas and close-range fighting, and could not be decisive in sealing off Hezbollah forces and defeating them.

Related debates have emerged over the interaction between high-level decisionmaking and the quality of Israeli intelligence before and during the war. So far, however, the problems in intelligence seem to have occurred at the tactical level and do not explain or justify any of the major mistakes at the level of Israel's political leadership or high command.

Those mistakes cannot be explained by the extent to which Israeli intelligence did or did not know (a) the range of weapons transferred to Hezbollah, (b) Hezbollah's readiness and capability, (c) Hezbollah's strength and organization, and (d) the nature of Hezbollah defenses in the border area. A debate also exists over the extent to which the fact that the head of IDF intelligence was an air force officer further biased the conduct of the war and reinforced the limits of General Halutz.

It now seems likely that Israeli intelligence did underestimate the scale and nature of Syrian arms transfers, the number and quality of Hezbollah fighters (particularly “part-time” fighters), and the level of Hezbollah’s training and readiness. The facts do, however, remain unclear, and many contradictory accounts are emerging about the nature of such weapons transfers and the size of Hezbollah’s forces.

Again, only full access to the actual record of official statements and records made during the war can establish exactly what mistakes were made. Since the war, however, the Winograd Commission has shown that both sets of criticisms are valid. As was the case during the October 1973 fighting and throughout the 1982 campaign in Lebanon, Israel’s greatest failures occurred at the top levels of political leadership and command.

At the same time, such problems are scarcely unique. It is an almost universal lesson of the history of war that leaders and commanders go to war without all of the experience they need, have at least partially faulty plans and perceptions, and then differ sharply in their ability to adapt to the realities of war. Leaders and commanders are scarcely the only dimension shaping strategic success, but they are a critical one. In this case, Israel’s political and military leaders lacked the depth and experience they needed, particularly to fight a non-state actor in an unfamiliar form of warfare.

In light of what is known about the challenges Israel faced and its response to those challenges, the following is an analysis of Israel’s accomplishments and failures in achieving the goals identified by Israeli leadership.

### **GOAL 1: Destroy the “Iranian Western Command” before Iran Could Go Nuclear**

Israel did not destroy or gravely weaken Hezbollah as either a military or a political force. That reality became all too clear during the course of late 2006, when Hezbollah capitalized on its political gains to challenge Lebanon’s elected government. At best, the war may have created conditions where the combination of an international peace-keeping force and the Lebanese army will disarm Hezbollah over time and prevent the reemergence of a major missile and rocket threat that

Iran could use to launch chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) weapons. This outcome, however, is far from clear. The war's ultimate outcome will also depend far more on international support for the UN force, as well as on U.S. and Arab aid to the Lebanese government, than on the effect of the IDF attacks.

### **Medium- and Long-range Rockets and Missiles (45- to 220-Kilometer Range)**

Israel did have some important successes at the tactical level, particularly in destroying medium- and long-range rockets in the initial days of the war and in preventing the launch of most surviving systems during the course of the war. Most reports indicate that the IAF probably did destroy most Iranian-supplied medium- and long-range rocket and missile launchers during the first two days of the war, and the IAF seems to have systematically destroyed most remaining Iranian and Syrian medium- and long-range missile launchers that fired missiles during the weeks that followed.

On August 16, the IDF chief of staff said that 90 percent of the Hezbollah long-range rockets had been destroyed. This estimate may be overly optimistic, however, because Hezbollah installed a number of fake rocket launchers with heat signatures to serve as decoys.<sup>3</sup> In September, a senior IAF official touted the quick response of the IAF and stated that 90 percent of medium-range missile launchers that were used were destroyed immediately following the launch of their first weapon.<sup>4</sup>

Israeli experts felt few medium- and long-range launchers remained by the end of the war, and there has been little evidence to contradict their conclusion. Hezbollah has also made no public claims that significant numbers of such missiles survived. The IDF seems to have destroyed the rocket and missile command and control center that Iran helped set up for Hezbollah, but that center seems easy to replace with laptop and commercial communications technology.

Nevertheless, Israeli experts admit that the size of Syrian deliveries of medium-range 220-millimeter (mm) and 302-mm rocket deliveries came as a major surprise to Israeli intelligence. Moreover, it is unclear that Israel had an accurate count of such Syrian-supplied launchers or rockets and missiles before the war, developed such a count during the

fighting, or has as good a count of surviving Syrian-supplied rockets as it has of Iranian-supplied systems.

Israeli experts provided different estimates of the number and performance of the longest-range Iranian-supplied systems—the Zelzal 1 and 2—both during and after the war. Significant contradictions exist among unclassified sources.

Israeli experts also noted that other, more modern systems, such as the Fatah 110, with ranges up to 220 kilometers, might be deployed. They described the longest-range versions of such systems as being able to hit Tel Aviv and “any target in Israel.” They estimated that some 18 of 19 to 21 launchers had been hit during the first wave of IAF attacks, but they noted that Hezbollah might have had more systems and held the systems back under Iranian pressure or as a way to ride out the wave of Israeli attacks.

The Zelzal 1 and 2 were described as artillery rockets, and the Zelzal 3 was explained as a ballistic missile or guided rocket with considerable accuracy. Maximum ranges were uncertain, and payloads were dependent but were put at 115–220 kilometers. The Zelzal 2, with a nominal maximum range of 210 kilometers, would be able to reach targets south of Ashkelon from Southern Lebanon. The Zelzal 3, with estimated ranges of up to 1,500 kilometers, would be able to reach any target in Israel. There is no indication that Hezbollah has ever been given the Zelzal 3 or that any have been fired on Israel.

One key question is, however, how lasting the effect of Israeli strikes will be. Senior Israeli officers and officials admitted during the war that Iran might well be able to infiltrate—in small numbers—much longer-range ballistic missiles with precision guidance systems without being detected by the Lebanese government. Such infiltration would also be undetected by the international peacekeeping force that has been deployed since the end of the war and operates almost exclusively in the south.

Such systems could be deployed north of the area of major Lebanese army and international peacekeeping force operations and could be potentially armed with CBRN weapons. Alternatively, Iran or Syria could wait out the present crisis and could then try to infiltrate such weapons into Lebanon in the years to come. One key limit of any war is that it can deal only with present threats. It cannot control the future.

### **Short-Range Rockets (up to 40-Kilometer Range)**

There is no agreement as to the number of short-range rockets that Hezbollah had when the war began, or how many survived before Hezbollah began to receive resupply following the cease-fire. Israeli officials offered preconflict estimates of more than 10,000 to 16,000 regular and extended-range Katyushas, with a nominal total of 13,000. Errors of 5,000 rockets are easily possible, compounded by the ongoing supply just before the war and the discovery that Syria had supplied more such rockets than Israel had initially estimated.

According to senior Israeli intelligence officers, the IDF estimated that Hezbollah had fired 3,000 Katyushas as of Saturday, August 11; the IAF had destroyed some 1,600; and Hezbollah had some 7,000 left. Both Israeli intelligence and the IAF sources admitted, however, that it was almost impossible to estimate such numbers, to target such small systems, or to do meaningful battle damage estimates.

The Israelis claimed during the war that they had prevented most Iranian and Syrian resupply of such rockets and other weapons, in spite of major Iranian and Syrian efforts during the actual fighting, but noted that they could not be certain. Hezbollah has since maintained broad claims to have had resupply, but it has never provided details. What may be a more telling indicator is that Israel has made no postwar claims to have scored significant victories in directly reducing such a threat.

### **Other Key Hezbollah Weapons**

No one in Israel claimed during the war that Israeli intelligence had an accurate inventory of the prewar and postwar Hezbollah holdings of other types of weapons or even of the types of weapons in Hezbollah hands. Those munitions included mortars, anti-tank weapons (AT-3 Mk II, Konkurs, Kornet, Metis-M, and RPG-29), and anti-aircraft and short-range surface-to-air missiles (SA-7, SA-14, SA-16, and possibly SA-18 and SA-8). IDF intelligence experts said that they could only guess but felt that Hezbollah kept at least several hundred thousand rifles and automatic weapons and maintained from several million to six million rounds of ammunition.

One typical uncertainty is the extent to which Hezbollah received U.S. tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) anti-tank

missiles from Iran and what models were involved. Some reports indicate that the missiles were basic BGM-71As transferred to Iran or built under license. Others say the missiles include a more-advanced Iranian version called the Toophan I. The IDF did capture crates labeled as TOW missiles, but some of them seemed to have 2001 production dates, which would mean that they came from Iran. This finding does not, however, mean such missiles had to be Iranian made. The possibility also exists that some missiles could have been transferred to Iran as part of the 500 Israeli and 1,000 U.S. TOWs shipped to Iran as a result of the Iran-contra arms deal in 1985.<sup>5</sup>

No estimates have emerged as to the number of C-802 anti-ship missiles remaining in Hezbollah hands at the time of the cease-fire, but one Israeli expert has said there were several. The missiles are easy to conceal in trucks and standard shipping containers. The same expert estimated that 24–30 Iranian-supplied “Ababil” unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), which are capable of carrying 40–50 kilograms of explosives with 450-kilometer ranges and which have Global Positioning System guidance, remained in Hezbollah hands. (Hezbollah calls the Ababil the Mirsad-1.)

Such problems illustrate several important lessons of war, as well as the IDF’s inability to estimate the damage it did to Hezbollah. Most intelligence and battle damage assessment (BDA) systems are focused on holdings of major weapons. They are not designed to deal with the number and type of small arms, crew-served weapons, and other smaller systems. They also are not designed to detect or track the shipment of small numbers of larger systems that can have a major effect in asymmetric warfare. This limitation presents major problems for targeting and BDA in fighting non-state actors and asymmetric opponents—where key transfers of technology can achieve surprise and where even the potential transfer of technology can force changes in military behavior. One normally thinks of wars of attrition as beginning with combat. In practice, they can occur at the buildup or preparatory stage as well, using years of effort to create the conditions for asymmetric war and insurgency.

Reacting to such efforts and transfers of weapons and military technology may require substantial shifts in intelligence collection, targeting, and BDA priorities and technology in the future, particularly if—as is suggested later in this analysis—asymmetric opponents learn

from the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict the value of high-technology lighter weapons. Revolutions in military affairs may prove to be just as feasible for non-state actors as for modern military forces, particularly when they can fight limited wars and wars of endurance and attrition. Collapsing the time for decisionmaking and maneuvering may be critical for conventional military forces. Extending it may be equally critical for asymmetric forces.

### **IDF Interdiction, Destruction of Inventory, and Limits on Resupply**

As has been touched upon earlier, no credible data indicate the extent to which the IAF and IDF raids destroyed given levels of the Hezbollah inventory of smaller rockets and other small arms during the war.

Unclassified bombing maps that show the location of Israeli strikes make clear that interdiction of supply and resupply was a major Israeli goal and that large numbers of IAF strikes were conducted to that end. According to one map, Israeli forces bombed some 70 bridges and 94 roads, including Syrian resupply routes into Lebanon from Damascus, roads across the northern border area from Syria into the Bekaa Valley, and roads in northern Lebanon going from Syria to the Lebanese coast and north through the mountains.

The IAF also conducted a massive interdiction campaign throughout the road net in the southern part of Lebanon. That road system goes south of Beirut along the coast to Sidon and Tyre, extends east from the coastal roads to interconnect with roads from Zaleh (which is east of Beirut) to Marjayoun and Nabatiyeh (which are south of Zaleh), and includes the roads south from the Bekaa through Zaleh toward Marjayoun and Khiam. This attack seems to have included numerous strikes on suspect vehicles, many of which were later shown to belong to civilians or to have legitimate relief efforts. Such interdiction efforts, however, suffer from the practical problem that although Syria could use only nine major crossings and fewer road nets to ship arms, this campaign at most helped the IDF track and interdict heavy weapons mounted on vehicles. Those routes had heavy traffic of civilian shipments.<sup>6</sup>

The IDF may have had temporary success in covering large, relatively easy-to-characterize targets moving along those routes, but both the Hezbollah and Lebanese civilians found they could rapidly rig emergency crossing facilities. Furthermore, if any

traffic was allowed along such critical routes, IDF surveillance could, at best, detect open movement of major missiles and rockets on dedicated military vehicles. It could not look inside large trucks and containers.

As for the resupply of smaller systems to Hezbollah, border security is problematic at the best of times, even when troops are heavily deployed along the actual border. That Hezbollah could trigger the war by conducting operations across the 79-kilometer border with Israel illustrates this fact.

The IDF did not have troops along the 375-kilometer Lebanese-Syrian border and certainly did not have the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets to both fight a war and provide even aid surveillance of the border area and main lines of communication to the south. Smuggling and the illicit movement of people has long been endemic across many points on that border. Some 40–60 medium-capacity crossing points exist, depending on the size of the weapon to be moved. Accordingly, the IDF may have been able to monitor bulk movements along such routes, but IDF detection, interdiction, and prevention of movement across the border or through Lebanon was not possible during the fighting.

Border security became even more problematic the moment Israel agreed to allow civilian traffic across the border and toward the south for humanitarian reasons and then agreed to a cease-fire. Shipments of light weapons are virtually impossible for the Lebanese forces, UN peacekeepers, or Israel to monitor during a cease-fire, and small numbers of major weapons can be either concealed or smuggled across the border by bribery.

When Israel ended its air, sea, and land blockade on September 6, 2006, that action virtually ensured Hezbollah's future ability to rearm with at least smaller weapons—although it retained almost significant stocks of such systems throughout the war and the Israeli blockade that followed.<sup>7</sup> The resumption of large-scale shipping and commercial port and land traffic gave Hezbollah the potential opportunity to smuggle in most medium-sized missiles and rockets in commercial vehicles and containers with limited chance of detection. The ships committed to the international force will do what they can, but small, one-time shipments from less-suspect ports are almost impossible to police, and land-vehicle transfers at any volume make effective

vehicle-by-vehicle searches almost impossible even when those doing the search are not sympathizers or corrupt.

*Time* reported on November 24, 2006, that Saudi and Israeli intelligence sources were stating that Iran was successfully rearming Hezbollah through Syria. Israeli intelligence officials said that Hezbollah had replenished half of its prewar supplies of missiles and small arms. Western diplomats in Beirut, however, said that the number was much higher and that Hezbollah supplies were likely already at prewar levels. Hezbollah would not confirm the shipments, but stated, "We have more than enough weapons if Israel tries to attack us again." Saudi intelligence confirmed the reports, saying that trucks supplying small arms and missile components were flooding across the border.<sup>8</sup>

### **Hezbollah Forces and Casualties**

As for the effect of fighting on Hezbollah forces, Israel claimed after the war that Hezbollah had some 600 to 800 killed compared with Hezbollah claims of less than 100 killed during the war and 250 after the conflict. Hezbollah normally does not report any formal casualty figures, but Mahmoud Qomati, the deputy chief of the Hezbollah politburo, stated in December 2006 that "we are proud of our martyrs and some 250 fighters had been killed between July 12 and August 14."<sup>9</sup>

Estimates of casualties vary. According to Israeli analyst Yaakov Amidror, past experience shows that Israeli figures tend to be half to two-thirds of the enemy's real casualties. Thus, when Israel identified 440 dead guerillas by name and address, we can, therefore according to Amidror, estimate the true number of casualties to be as high as 700.<sup>10</sup>

At the same time, Israeli officers and experts made clear during the war that Israel had sharply underestimated the number of trained and combat-capable cadres that existed when the war started; the quality of their forward defenses; and their ability to take shelter, hide, and disperse. Israeli officials also admitted that there is no way to really estimate the number of killed and wounded. Some did feel that significant parts of the key leaders and cadres were killed or captured, but Israel has given no details of such successes since the war has ended, and the few Israeli officers who have claimed serious damage was done to key cadres have never validated any aspect of such claims.

As for Hezbollah, it deliberately does not report on the size of its total forces or casualties.

It is clear that that most Hezbollah fighters survived and that Hezbollah's losses in killed, wounded, and captured were well under 15 percent of the initial force. Estimates of core Hezbollah forces ranged from 2,000 to 3,000 before the fighting started, plus reserves ranging from several thousand to more than 10,000. Discussions with both Israeli and Arab experts also indicate that most Hezbollah casualties were part-time fighters and not key cadres and that such losses may well have been offset by wartime recruiting of less-experienced personnel.

Moreover, even if the highest level of Hezbollah casualties ever cited in IDF claims were correct, the ratio of casualties would scarcely be one that implies a major victory for Israel. Israel lost about 120 soldiers of some 3,000–15,000 troops deployed into combat areas during various periods of the war, plus 39 civilians. Even a best-case loss ratio of 8:1 is scarcely a victory for Israel, given its acute sensitivity to casualties.

This conclusion is particularly true because war provides the best possible training—and often motivation—for the cadres that do survive. War is also a major recruiting tool among young men, both during and after the fighting. Inflows often sharply exceed casualties, and even IDF estimates indicate that this result was the case for Hezbollah. Consequently, Hezbollah may well have better cadres of experienced leaders and fighters than before the war—and at least the same fighting strength it had when the conflict began.

Once again, these problems illustrate several lessons of war that are all too familiar from the fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. The IDF's overall inability to estimate the damage it did to Hezbollah is the rule in asymmetric warfare and not the exception.

As explained earlier, most modern intelligence and BDA systems are not designed to detect or track the numbers, background, and capability of scattered infantry or fighters in asymmetric warfare. Such warfare, indeed, presents major problems for targeting and BDA in fighting non-state actors and asymmetric opponents, where key transfers of technology can achieve surprise and where even the potential transfer of technology can force changes in military behavior. Asymmetric warfare also may require further substantial shifts in intelligence collection, targeting, and BDA priorities and technology.

### **Hezbollah Facilities and Forward Defenses**

The IDF probably did destroy most fixed Hezbollah facilities in both the rear and forward areas. Unless those facilities held large amounts of munitions, however, this supposed success was probably of little value. Hezbollah facilities are not filled with high-technology or valuable equipment, and the IAF and artillery strikes that hit such facilities in populated areas created substantial problems in terms of perceived attacks on civilians and collateral damage. Unless the IDF shows that Hezbollah lost a major amount of weaponry in such attacks, the attacks may have done to Israel as much harm in terms of future hostility as good in terms of immediate tactical benefits.

The IDF estimates that Hezbollah had only one major line of fixed defenses and that those defenses were in areas near the border where the ground war was active after the first few days of the conflict. The defenses included shelters, storage areas, and command posts. Many were probably damaged or destroyed. It is not clear, however, that this action will really have any lasting effect.

Instead, the air-land battle may well have shown Hezbollah that it really does not need such dedicated or purpose-built military defenses and facilities, and that simply taking advantage of normal civilian buildings and built-up areas (a) provides the same cover and facility capability; (b) is much harder to target and predict; (c) provides more ride-out capability for concealed troops; and (d) allows Hezbollah to disperse, maneuver, and adopt a defense-in-depth tactic.

Once again, a combination of the international force and Lebanese army may be able to control Hezbollah and to disarm it in those areas, but the IDF did not achieve its goals during the fighting. One key lesson here is much the same as the lesson that the United States should have learned from Vietnam and Iraq. The only way to actually defeat such an enemy is to clear the area and to hold it indefinitely while sealing off possible exit and dispersal routes and while conducting a constant rear-area security effort. "Clear, hold, and build," however, tends to be a remarkably vacuous tactic in practice. It requires too many men and women for too long at too much cost with too much vulnerability, as well as a scale of civic action and civil-military efforts that is easy to call for but almost impossible to implement in active combat.

## **GOAL 2: Restore Credibility of Israeli Deterrence after Unilateral Withdrawals from Lebanon in 2000 and Gaza in 2005, and Counter Image of Weak Israel**

Deterrence is a matter of perception, which is only partially based on reality. How regional perceptions of the war will evolve over time is still unclear. The war's effect on deterrence is also likely to depend heavily on the type of potential conflict involved. Although Israel did not "win" in any meaningful sense, it showed that it could inflict massive damage with limited losses, and this lesson may well reinforce deterrence in some crises and conflicts—even if Israel's problems in fighting asymmetric warfare does diminish that lesson in others.

### **Retaining a Conventional Deterrent "Edge"**

Before the Israeli-Hezbollah War, Israel's neighbors likely had no doubt about the ability of Israel to defeat any probable combination of the conventional forces of its Arab neighbors or its ability to do massive damage to the fixed facilities of any neighboring country. Arab governments have long been fully aware that Israel retains its conventional superiority, or "edge," against the regular military forces of its Arab neighbors—particularly against the only meaningful threat on its borders: Syria.

Israel has made massive and very public improvements in its forces since 1982, adapting the most modern U.S. technology and tactics available to its own technology and tactics and retaining a nuclear monopoly. No Arab state has been able to match Israel's progress, and Syria has fallen far behind. Furthermore, Israel showed during the fighting that it had massive air superiority. It used the IAF to inflict so much damage on Lebanese civilian targets that it may, if anything, have increased the deterrent effect of this aspect of its conventional edge.

The war has, however, led to a highly visible public debate over the quality of Israel's political and military leadership and the IDF's reluctance to carry out a major land offensive in Lebanon because of the casualties that Israel took from 1982 to 2000. Such discussion inevitably affects deterrence.

### **Creating Uncertainty about Asymmetric Wars and the Ability to Deter Non-state Actors and Wars of Attrition**

The Israeli-Hezbollah War has raised serious questions about Israeli ability to win or deter asymmetric warfare—and win wars of attrition—in ways that defeat non-state actors and prevent hostile states from using such non-state actors as allies or proxies. Some serving Israeli officials and officers claimed during the war that Israel would succeed in deterring such action by both non-state actors like Hezbollah and hostile neighboring states like Iran and Syria.

They felt that this deterrent effect would grow as Arab states and peoples saw the true scale of damage done in Lebanon and once the Lebanese government refused to allow Hezbollah and other non-state actors to operate on Lebanese soil because of the cost and risk. As is discussed later, Israeli officials and officers tended to assume that the result of escalating the air campaign to hit non-Hezbollah targets during the war would create a Lebanese political structure that would be so afraid of future damage that it would rein in Hezbollah. Such Israeli estimates consistently tended to minimize the risk that Lebanon would become more actively hostile to Israel.

Since the war, some of Israel's supporters have repeated this theme. In addition, a number of Sunni Arab officials, officers, and analysts have stated that the war weakened Hezbollah and discredited Iran's and Syria's support for the movement because of the damage done to Lebanon as a whole. They feel Israel may actually have increased some aspects of its deterrent effect against Hezbollah, the Lebanese government, Iran, and Syria despite all the problems encountered during the war. Moreover, some statements by Hezbollah leaders, such as Hassan Nasrallah, do indicate that Hezbollah never expected the level of escalation that occurred and would try to avoid provoking any similar levels of damage. Israel's willingness to escalate its responses, the damage it inflicted, and the relative impunity with which the IAF could act are not factors that leaders can ignore, regardless of popular perceptions.

The effect of war on deterrence, however, is determined by how current and potential opponents react to given uses of force. What is perceived as the excessive use of force can provoke as well as deter. In general, Israeli officials and officers did not seem to understand this risk in interviews held during the war, and many did not understand it

after the conflict. They tended to underestimate the anger Israel's strikes might generate and the fact that the level of damage inflicted might (a) create many more volunteers, (b) make Arab populations far more actively hostile to Israel, (c) strengthen the Iranian and Syrian regimes, and (d) weaken moderate and pro-peace regimes such as Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

Many Arabs also perceive Hezbollah, Iran, and Syria as the "winners," rather than as the "defeated," and the war has probably interacted with the Afghan and Iraq conflicts to encourage (a) hard-line ideological groups, (b) the use of asymmetric warfare, and (c) state support of such groups as tools or proxies. Anger at Israel's "excessive" use of force has been reinforced by the perception that Hezbollah was the only military challenge to Israel that had actually engaged it with any success since 1973. The fact that Hezbollah could continue to fire rockets to the end of the fighting and that its fighters largely survived Israeli attacks constituted "victory" in spite of Hezbollah's tactical defeats.

In balance, the anger, the feeling that the survival of Hezbollah was a kind of victory, and the feeling that Hezbollah was the one Arab force that had successfully fought the IDF have probably combined to weaken Israel's ability to deter asymmetric conflicts, wars of attrition, and non-state actors.

### **Understanding the Uncertain Effect of Any Shift in the Level of Israeli Deterrence**

The question is what any such weakening of these aspects of deterrence will really mean for Israel. The state and non-state actors that oppose Israel's existence are driven by ideologies that are difficult to deter under any conditions. It seems unlikely that Hezbollah will directly challenge Israel in the near future, and the internal divisions among the Palestinians have been so serious that it is not yet clear what the war's ultimate effect will be in stimulating new attacks from Gaza, the West Bank, and the sea.

Israel has been fighting a low-level war with the Palestinians since September 2000 and was already fighting a low-level second front in Gaza when the Israeli-Hezbollah War began. Since that time, however, anti-Israeli movements such as Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) have become so caught up in a power struggle with Fatah

that the effect of the Israeli-Hezbollah War on their actions is not yet clear.

Some Israeli intelligence officers do feel, however, that Hamas and the PIJ have already acquired more-advanced short-range rockets than the crude, homemade Qassam rockets they have used to date. They also see the fighting as giving both radical Palestinian movements and nations such as Iran a strong incentive to smuggle in more-advanced weapons. Israeli naval experts cautioned that more-advanced rockets and missiles might be sea-based.

It is also unclear how much effect the Israeli-Hezbollah War will have on deterring Israel's willingness to initiate and escalate similar conflicts in the future. Yet the war may also inspire Israel to change its defense strategy to reinforce deterrence. Some Israelis felt that Hezbollah's success in attacking northern Israel with rockets showed that Israel needs more defense in depth, that stronger security efforts and barriers will be required to deal with longer-range Palestinian weapons, and that even more separation of the two peoples will be needed. If Israel acts upon such perceptions, that action will scarcely make the war a symbol of improved deterrence, but it will also not weaken Israel's military position.

In broad terms, therefore, the effect of the war on Israeli deterrence may be close to neutral, with the result somewhat more negative than positive. It certainly did not restore Israeli deterrence in any significant sense. It does, however, seem to have altered the balance of deterrence according to the particular threat and type of conflict and to have undercut Israel's ability to deter asymmetric warfare, non-state actors, and the use of proxies.

### **GOAL 3: Force Lebanon to Be and Act Accountable as a State and to End Hezbollah's Status as a State within a State**

As has already been touched upon, Israel had no success during the conflict in forcing Lebanon to become and act as an accountable state or in ending the status of Hezbollah as a state within a state. As could have been predicted before the war, the Lebanese government did not cave in to Israel. Instead, Lebanon turned to the UN and the international community for help. It was action by the international com-

munity and a UN resolution—UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1701—that determined the formal outcome of the fighting.

The cease-fire agreements called for the Lebanese army to deploy troops to the south and to secure Lebanon's borders, but the effect of the agreements depended on the ability and the willingness of the Lebanese government and army to act decisively. As a result, the deployment of the Lebanese army did not cripple or sharply reduce Hezbollah's power or Iranian and Syrian influence. Hezbollah forces remain on the ground in south Lebanon, and Hezbollah has been strong enough to openly confront the Lebanese government.

### **A Weaker, Not Stronger, Lebanese Government**

If anything, the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict has triggered a drift toward a new civil conflict in Lebanon. Following the war, the Lebanese government showed that it had to remain sensitive to Hezbollah's concerns and priorities and to treat Hezbollah as a major political force. In spite of Western efforts to pressure the coalition government into action, the Lebanese government did not seek to immediately disarm Hezbollah and did little to interdict or prevent the low-level resupply of Hezbollah that took place despite UNSCR 1701.

Hezbollah increasingly took advantage of the Lebanese government's weakness and the postwar emergence of Lebanese Shi'ites as the nation's most powerful sect. By the fall of 2006, it began to challenge Lebanon's elected government, and Syria was actively reasserting its influence in Lebanon. In November, Hezbollah triggered a government crisis by causing the resignation of the Shi'ite members and one Christian member of the Lebanese cabinet. Hezbollah then started a series of mass protests calling for the government's resignation in December.<sup>11</sup> A study by the International Crisis Group quoted Nabil Qaouq, the Hezbollah leader in Southern Lebanon, as describing the situation as follows:

The basis of every crisis in the region is Israel's presence. To maximize its security, it must exert pressure on its Arab environment. Israel feels a perpetual need to interfere in Lebanese politics, resorting at some times to military and at others to political domination. Did it not try to alter the domestic political equation by creating Antoine Lahd's South Lebanese Army, imposing President Bechir Gemayel in

1982, and waging a war this summer? All this makes protecting the resistance project absolutely central.

... During the war, we were willing to do anything to avoid disunity; then, immediately after the war, we were hoping that our political opponents would take the new situation into account. But anti-Hezbollah attacks never ceased. And so, we had to ask ourselves: were they not merely instruments in America's hands? Then came the Bristol statement [above], which amounted to surrendering Lebanon's sovereignty for the sake of petty, domestic political interests. Their policies endanger our sovereignty and undermine the spirit of resistance. We cannot accept that the government pay[s] more attention to Feltman [the U.S. ambassador] than to us. And so we decided to end this. For that, we need a national unity government that can guarantee and preserve the victories of the resistance.<sup>12</sup>

### The Effect of UNSCR 1701 and UNIFIL

It was the UN and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) forces, not the Lebanese government and army, that became the postwar key to creating a buffer between Israel and Hezbollah, which was not an Israeli objective in going to war or during the conflict. The UN Security Council passed a cease-fire resolution—UNSCR 1701—on August 11, 2006. This resolution was a compromise developed and sponsored by outside powers that sought to meet both the needs of the Lebanese government and the needs of Israel for conflict termination. Like many resolutions of its kind, UNSCR 1701 called for a great deal of action but provided only limited means to make such actions take place.

The key provisions of UNSCR 1701 were as follows:

- ... 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;
- Upon full cessation of hostilities, *calls upon* the government of Lebanon and UNIFIL as authorized by paragraph 11 to deploy their forces together throughout the South and *calls upon* the government of Israel, as that deployment begins, to withdraw all of its forces from southern Lebanon in parallel;

- *Emphasizes* the importance of the extension of the control of the government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1559 (2004) and resolution 1680 (2006), and of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, for it to exercise its full sovereignty, so that there will be no weapons without the consent of the government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the government of Lebanon;
- *Reiterates* its strong support for full respect for the Blue Line;
- *Also reiterates* its strong support, as recalled in all its previous relevant resolutions, for the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders, as contemplated by the Israeli-Lebanese General Armistice Agreement of 23 March 1949;
- *Calls on* the international community to take immediate steps to extend its financial and humanitarian assistance to the Lebanese people, including through facilitating the safe return of displaced persons and, under the authority of the government of Lebanon, reopening airports and harbors, consistent with paragraphs 14 and 15, and *calls on* it also to consider further assistance in the future to contribute to the reconstruction and development of Lebanon;
- *Affirms* that all parties are responsible for ensuring that no action is taken contrary to paragraph 1 that might adversely affect the search for a long-term solution; humanitarian access to civilian populations, including safe passage for humanitarian convoys; or the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons, and *calls on* all parties to comply with this responsibility and to cooperate with the Security Council.<sup>13</sup>

Somewhat ironically, UNIFIL became the instrument for enforcing UNSCR 1701 although UNIFIL was a force that Israel had constantly criticized in the past for its perceived weakness and ties to Hezbollah. As part of UNSCR 1701, UNIFIL continued to operate according to its original Security Council mandate in resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978) of March 19, 1978. This original mandate gave UNIFIL three tasks:

- Confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon.

- Restore international peace and security.
- Assist the government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area.<sup>14</sup>

UNSCR 1701, however, gave UNIFIL a much wider mandate and the following additional tasks:

- Monitor the cessation of hostilities.
- Accompany and support the Lebanese armed forces as they deploy throughout the South, including along the Blue Line, as Israel withdraws its armed forces from Lebanon.
- Coordinate its activities referred to in [the preceding paragraph] with the government of Lebanon and the government of Israel.
- Extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons.
- Assist the Lebanese armed forces in taking steps toward the establishment [between the Blue Line and the Litani River of an area free of any armed personnel, assets, and weapons other than those of the government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL ... deployed in this area].
- Assist the government of Lebanon, at its request, [in securing its borders and other entry points to prevent the entry in Lebanon without its consent of arms or related materiel].<sup>15</sup>

UNSCR 1701 also authorized UNIFIL to take

... all necessary action in areas of deployment of its forces and as it deems within its capabilities, to ensure that its area of operations is not utilized for hostile activities of any kind; to resist attempts by forceful means to prevent it from discharging its duties under the mandate of the Security Council; ... to protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment; to ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel, humanitarian workers; and, without prejudice to the responsibility of the government of Lebanon, to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.<sup>16</sup>

UNSCR 1701 did, however, charge only the international force to act within the limits of its capabilities. Those capabilities were limited

by the constraints that member countries placed on the force and by its size. UNIFIL had an authorized strength of 15,000 troops, but as of mid-December, it still had only 11,026 military personnel, including 9,127 troops and 152 staff officers and 1,747 members of a maritime task force, assisted by 53 military observers from the UN Truce Supervisory Organization and supported by some 97 international civilian and 308 local civilian staff members.<sup>17</sup> As a result, UNIFIL has taken some limited actions to disarm Hezbollah but has left Hezbollah with most of its prewar military capability and will continue to do so. It has also been unable to stop arms smuggling and to stop Hezbollah from building up new stocks of weapons and a network of small, dispersed facilities.

The Lebanese army has not proved effective in checking Hezbollah or in taking control of Southern Lebanon. It remains weak and has limited effectiveness in spite of postwar aid. The United States, for example, has developed an aid plan to give the Lebanese army some US\$500 million to strengthen its capabilities to deal with Hezbollah, which was in addition to nearly US\$1 billion in other aid to the Lebanese government. This aid package, however, is taking much longer to deliver than was initially expected and will have only a slow effect at best.<sup>18</sup> Past U.S. aid averaged only about US\$2 million to US\$3 million a year before the war. Those figures help explain why the United States had to provide some US\$44 million after the war to enable the Lebanese army to move approximately 8,000 of its troops south.<sup>19</sup>

In practice, the future of efforts to control and to disarm Hezbollah depends far more on the outcome of the growing confessional tensions and struggles within Lebanese politics than on the outcome of the Israeli-Hezbollah War, UN action, or the Lebanese army. The result of the war may well be that Israel's action has further polarized Lebanon on confessional lines, raising Shi'ite power and consciousness and the power of Hezbollah within Lebanon, but leaving a weak and divided state.

### **The Broader Effect of the War on the Status of Hezbollah**

Much will also depend, however, on how long and how well Hezbollah can capitalize on its claims of victory and on being the one force that can "fight the Arab fight" compared to the extent to which the Lebanese people—including the Shi'ites—ultimately do react by

blaming Hezbollah for the damage, casualties, and humanitarian crisis during the war.

Lebanon has reported that the war produced some 1,110 civilian dead and 3,700 civilian wounded and has claimed that 980,400 Lebanese were displaced at the peak of the fighting. It has claimed that the war cost Lebanon US\$2.4 billion to US\$6 billion worth of damage, including some US\$398 million damage to electric facilities and key infrastructure equipment, as well as the war's destroying more than 150,000 residences. Other sources have claimed that the war ended with some 1 million Israeli cluster bomblets scattered throughout the country as a lasting threat.

Some claims regarding displacements and economic damage seem to be exaggerated, but many Lebanese, Arabs, Iranians, and others outside Israel perceive the claims as accurate and real. The question is whether they see such claims as attributable only to Israel or also to Hezbollah. Most Lebanese were reluctant to express such concerns and anger toward Hezbollah during the war, but it was clearly an issue even in the Shi'ite south. In what appeared to be an effort to soften such backlash against Hezbollah within Lebanon, Hezbollah leader Nasrallah admitted after the war that he had miscalculated the Israeli response to the kidnapping. He said that he had not expected such a harsh response and that had he known, he would not have carried out the attacks.<sup>20</sup>

Since that time, any backlash against Hezbollah has increasingly varied by sect and confession, with Christians, Druze, and Sunnis more willing to blame Hezbollah, Iran, and Syria than are Shi'ites. Following the war, for example, a poll for the French-language newspaper *L'Orient-Le Jour* found a nearly even split among Lebanese citizens about whether Hezbollah should be disarmed. The poll discovered that 51 percent of those surveyed wanted Hezbollah to disarm, with the remaining 49 percent opposed. There also were stark differences among Lebanon's various religious groups. The poll found that in the Shi'ite community 84 percent of respondents favored Hezbollah's remaining armed. In contrast, 79 percent of Druze and 77 percent of Christians thought that Hezbollah should be disarmed. A slight majority among Sunnis—54 percent—favored disarmament.<sup>21</sup>

In August 2006, however, other polls revealed that 87 percent of Lebanese supported Hezbollah's resistance against the invasion, in-

cluding 80 percent of Christians and Druze. Even the Maronite Catholic patriarch, the spiritual leader of one of the most pro-Western sects in Lebanon, joined Sunni and Shi'ite religious leaders in condemning the Israeli "aggression" and hailing "the resistance, mainly led by Hezbollah." Lebanese Hezbollah scholar Amal Saad-Ghorayeb observes that "these findings are all the more significant when compared to the results of a similar survey conducted just [four months prior], which showed that only 58 percent of all Lebanese believed Hezbollah had the right to remain armed, and hence, continue its resistance activity."<sup>22</sup>

Hezbollah has also helped defuse any backlash among its own supporters by rushing aid into damaged areas. Moreover, Arabs and Muslims outside Lebanon may be far more willing to blame Israel alone for all of the casualties and damage. As a result, much of the "backlash" effect that the fighting has on Hezbollah, Iran, and Syria outside Lebanon now seems more a product of whether Arabs see Israel as the major threat or fear a potential rise of Shi'ite power rather than a result of the outcome of the fighting.

#### **GOAL 4: Damage or Cripple Hezbollah, Given That It Could Not Be Destroyed as a Military Force and Would Continue to Be a Major Political Actor in Lebanon**

For all the reasons discussed earlier, the IDF did not do enough damage to Hezbollah to seriously cripple or destroy its military capabilities and has not created an environment where Hezbollah will not be able to get better weapons, including long-range missiles, in the future.

Israel used the wrong battle plan. It seems to have sharply exaggerated what airpower could do early in the war, and it sharply underestimated Hezbollah's ability to survive and fight a ground battle. The IDF then fought a long and protracted battle for Hezbollah's forward defenses to deny it a line of sight into Israel and repeatedly attacked Hezbollah-dominated towns and small cities that Hezbollah could lose and then reinfiltate.

By the time the IDF finally did begin to drive deep into Lebanon and toward the Litani River on August 11, it was too late for a short land campaign to win a meaningful victory against a dis-

persed Hezbollah force. In its rush to act before a cease-fire, the IDF had to advance along predictable lines for terrain reasons and through positions where Hezbollah could choose to ambush advancing Israeli ground forces or to disperse. Although Israel's ground forces won every clash, they took enough casualties for Hezbollah to score significant perceptual "victories" of its own.

Many Hezbollah fighters—almost certainly 70 percent or more—survived the fighting, and new recruits who acquired immediate combat experience almost certainly more than offset such losses. Much of the Hezbollah force inventory survived, probably including some medium- and long-range missiles. IAF claims that it destroyed most such systems have never been validated or described in detail. Hezbollah's holdings of medium-range, Syrian-supplied systems clearly surprised Israeli intelligence, and later IAF claims that "90 percent of long-range rockets which fired were destroyed immediately (after firing)" may or may not be valid, but they do not explain the inventory that remained after the cease-fire.<sup>23</sup>

If Hezbollah is ever crippled as a military force, it will be because of follow-on developments after the war. Such crippling will be because of the international peacekeeping force, the actions of that force, some new degree of political unity in Lebanon, and efforts to help the Lebanese army move south with some effectiveness. It will not be because of IDF military action during the war. None of those events seem likely to occur because of—or in the immediate aftermath of—the war.

Quite frankly, the current trends in the Lebanese army and international action seem likely to leave Hezbollah a strong asymmetric force, resupply seems likely to occur for at least small to medium-sized weapons, and new types of more-advanced anti-tank guided missiles and short-range air defense weapons seem likely to be smuggled in. The prospect also exists that Syria may stockpile longer-range ballistic missiles and may train Hezbollah to use them on a short-notice basis, thereby allowing rapid insertion into Lebanon with little warning.

#### **GOAL 5: Bring Back Alive the Two Soldiers that Hezbollah Had Captured without Major Trades for Prisoners Held by Israel**

The Israeli effort to recover the soldiers taken in the Hezbollah attack that triggered the war was a feature of the UN resolution and the

cease-fire, but it was only one of several conflicting goals. As the following excerpts show, UNSCR 1701 did not give the return of Israeli prisoners a special priority:

- *Expressing* its utmost concern at the continuing escalation of hostilities in Lebanon and in Israel since Hezbollah's attack on Israel on 12 July 2006, which has already caused hundreds of deaths and injuries on both sides, extensive damage to civilian infrastructure and hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons;
- *Emphasizing* the need for an end of violence, but at the same time *emphasizing* the need to address urgently the causes that have given rise to the current crisis, including by the unconditional release of the abducted Israeli soldiers;
- *Mindful* of the sensitivity of the issue of prisoners and *encouraging* the efforts aimed at urgently settling the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel.

In any case, the war did not achieve the objective that was the original *casus belli*. Despite the cease-fire and UN resolution, the soldiers were not returned. In November, the Red Cross reported that it was unable to deliver letters to the families and was unable to discover or receive any evidence that the soldiers remained alive.<sup>24</sup> In early December, reports surfaced that both soldiers had been seriously injured, one critically, in the attack. Hezbollah continued to demand an exchange of prisoners but had not provided any proof that the kidnapped soldiers remained alive.<sup>25</sup>

Like other aspects of the war, this failure may have weakened some aspects of Israeli deterrence. The course of the war again exposed Israel's acute sensitivity to kidnappings and even limited casualties. It reinforced the message—delivered during the period when the peace process was still active—that an extremist movement can halt negotiations and peace efforts by triggering a new round of terrorist attacks. It communicated a dangerous sense of Israeli weakness at a military and diplomatic level and showed that an extremist movement may be able to lever Israel into action by a token attack.

At the same time, the importance of any such messages should not be exaggerated. Israel's sensitivity to casualties and hostages is relative and closely tied to the seriousness of the threat and conflict it faces. It is highest in an optional war such as the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict.

Arab governments understand this philosophy even if some non-state actors may not. For all of Israel's problems during the Israeli-Hezbollah War, its casualties were probably around one-sixth those of Hezbollah; it was inhibited more by its own strategic and tactical decisions than by the quality of Hezbollah fighters, and it may still prove to have won if the international force and Lebanese army do actually carry out all terms of the cease-fire.

### THE GOALS OF HEZBOLLAH: SMALL AND LARGE

The fact that Israel gained little, if anything, from the war does not mean that Hezbollah won serious strategic gains. Statements by Hezbollah leaders point to the fact that Hezbollah did not anticipate the degree to which Israel would react against the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers on June 12. On August 27, approximately two weeks after the cease-fire, Nasrallah said, "We did not think, even 1 percent, that the capture would lead to a war at this time and of this magnitude." The deputy head of Hezbollah's politburo, Mahmoud Qomati, stated that the party "did not expect the response would be of this magnitude."<sup>26</sup>

Despite Hezbollah's underestimation of the *degree* of Israeli reaction, however, the degree of Hezbollah's military preparedness before the conflict is evidence that the *shape* of Israeli military operations was anticipated. Amir Kulick, researcher at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, estimates that Hezbollah was able to anticipate the heavy artillery campaign that was to define Israel's strategy throughout the war, as well as the need for ground defense.<sup>27</sup>

In 1993, during Operation Accountability, Hezbollah was taken by surprise by Israel's "fire-intense effort," having prepared initially for face-to-face combat with Israeli troops. By the 1996 Operation Grapes of Wrath, the group had learned to rely primarily on rockets rather than ground warfare as its first line of defense. Those lessons led to the entrenchment of Hezbollah's three lines of artillery defense and its network of ground forces, which had been strategically established to engage Israel in a war of attrition that would reach deep into Israeli territory, stall Israeli ground incursions, and inflict as many Israeli casualties as possible.<sup>28</sup>

As for Hezbollah's goals in the fighting, statements made by Hezbollah suggest that its ultimate strategic goal has always gone far

beyond the full withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon, including the disputed Shebaa Farms. Hezbollah's goal remains Israel's ultimate destruction. This goal has been a consistent and strategic one for more than two decades. In February 16, 1985, what many believe to be Hezbollah's founding document was published in the Lebanese newspaper *Al-Safir*. It stated that Hezbollah's mission was the destruction of Israel: "Our struggle will end only when this entity [Israel] is obliterated. We recognize no treaty with it, no ceasefire, and no peace agreements, whether separate or consolidated."<sup>29</sup>

The secretary-general of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah, has reiterated this position on numerous occasions, saying in an interview with the magazine *Middle East Insight* in early 2000:

I am against any reconciliation with Israel. I do not even recognize the presence of a state that is called "Israel." I consider its presence both unjust and unlawful. That is why if Lebanon concludes a peace agreement with Israel and brings that accord to the Parliament, our deputies will reject it; Hezbollah refuses any conciliation with Israel in Principle.<sup>30</sup>

Later that year, in an interview with Egyptian television, he stated that Hezbollah's "principal objective" was the "destruction of Israel and the liberation of Palestine and Jerusalem."<sup>31</sup> This goal is unachievable given the disparity of power and leverage between Hezbollah and Israeli forces.

Hezbollah's political gains within Lebanon, however, may be a different story and may be a more serious and pragmatic goal for Hezbollah's leaders. After Israel left Lebanon in 2000, Nasrallah made a speech to his supporters celebrating Hezbollah's victory and highlighting what he saw as the strengths of the Lebanese people. He said, "In order to liberate your land, you don't need tanks and planes. With the example of martyrs, you can impose your demands on the Zionist aggressors.... Israel may own nuclear weapons and heavy weaponry, but, by God, it is weaker than a spider's web."<sup>32</sup>

In the period leading up to the war, Nasrallah continued to emphasize the relative lack of will and the weakness of the Israeli public. As the war would show, he underestimated the resolve of Israeli civilians to withstand rocket attacks in much the same way that Israel underestimated the skill and resolve of the Hezbollah fighters. The two sides shared a mutual contempt that led to strategic and tactical failures on

both sides. On May 23, nearly three weeks before the onset of fighting, he made a speech on Hezbollah's Al Manar TV station in which he said:

Another weakness is that both as individuals and as a collective, they are described by Allah as "the people who guard their lives most." Their strong adherence to this world, with all its vanities and pleasures, constitutes a weakness. In contrast, our people and our nation's willingness to sacrifice their blood, souls, children, fathers, and families for the sake of the nation's honor, life, and happiness has always been one of our nation's strengths.<sup>33</sup>

On the day of the kidnapping, Nasrallah praised those who had carried out the attack and emphasized the limited goals of that action by mentioning the prisoners:

First of all, I have to address the heroic mujahidin, who fulfilled the promise today. This is why their qualitative operation is called "Operation true promise." I thank them and kiss their foreheads and hands. With the blessing of these lofty foreheads and hands, the foreheads of us all will remain high, and no shackle will remain in the hands of people in the occupation prisons. Today is the day of loyalty to Samir al-Qintar, Yahya Skaf, Nasim Nisr, and all brothers, detainees, and prisoners in the occupation jails.<sup>34</sup>

Such statements show that although the destruction of Israel may be the publicly stated ultimate goal of Hezbollah, its leadership recognizes the importance of intermediate, lower-level goals and may well give them much higher real-world priority. It does seem likely that Hezbollah hoped to engage Israel in an extended artillery campaign on Israeli domestic territory to achieve two shorter-term goals:

- Weakening the resolve of Israelis to engage with Hezbollah forces by bombarding Israeli territory as often and as deeply as possible and by increasing Israeli military casualties on the ground
- Weakening the image of Israel as being militarily invincible by limiting Israel's ability to accomplish its strategic goals and by inflicting damage as often and as deeply as possible into Israeli territory

The war did not clearly achieve even such limited goals. Moreover, if the kidnapping of the soldiers that set off the conflict was an attempt

to gain bargaining chips, Israel escalated rather than bargained. This reaction forced Nasrallah to redefine the measure of success, harkening back to his statements upon the withdrawal of Israel in 2000 and emphasizing the importance of resistance: “The victory we are talking about is when the resistance survives. When its will is not broken, then this is victory.... When we are not defeated militarily, then this is victory.”<sup>35</sup>

On the day that the cease-fire went into effect—August 14—Nasrallah spoke on Al Manar saying that the goals of resistance and survival that he had mentioned during the war had been achieved: “First of all, I do not want to assess or discuss in detail what we are currently witnessing, but I want to say briefly and without exaggeration that we stand before a strategic and historical victory for Lebanon—all of Lebanon, for the resistance, and for the whole nation.”<sup>36</sup>

Following the war, however, Nasrallah admitted that he had made a mistake in judging the likely Israeli response to the initial kidnapping. In an interview on Lebanese television on August 27, approximately two weeks after the cease-fire, he said: “You ask me, if I had known on July 11 ... that the operation would lead to such a war, would I do it? I say no, absolutely not.”<sup>37</sup>

It is only since civil tensions in Lebanon have escalated that Hezbollah has gone back to making more sweeping claims about victory. For example, in an interview in September, Nasrallah reiterated that the goals of survival and resistance he had described during the war had been achieved, and he urged Lebanese civilians to celebrate the victory over Israel.<sup>38</sup> As is the case with Israel, the law of unintended consequences may well do more to determine the final grand strategic outcome of the war for Hezbollah than did any of its strategy, plans, and tactical action. Again, the lesson of limited, optional wars seems to be that they are far easier to begin than to control and terminate on lasting, favorable terms.

## Notes

1. Israeli Defense Force sources as quoted by Alon Ben-David, “Israel Introspective after Lebanon Offensive,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, August 22, 2006, 18–19.

2. The ground rules for all interviews and conversations held in Israel and with Lebanese and other Arab officials preclude identifying the name, title, date, and often organization or service of the individual involved.

3. "Deconstructing Hizbullah's Surprise Military Prowess," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, November 1, 2006.
4. Barbara Opall-Rome, "Sensor to Shooter in 1 Minute," *Defense News*, October 2, 2006, 1, 6.
5. See Barbara Opall-Rome, "Did Hezbollah Fire US Missiles at Israeli Tanks?" *Defense News*, September 4, 2006, 1.
6. Peter Spiegel and Laura King, "Israel Says Syria, Not Just Iran, Supplied Missiles to the Hezbollah," *Los Angeles Times*, August 31, 2006.
7. Scott Wilson and Edward Cody, "Israel to End Blockage of Lebanon," *Washington Post*, September 7, 2006.
8. Elaine Shannon and Tim McGirk, "Iran and Syria Helping Hizbollah Re-arm," *Time.com*, November 24, 2006.
9. "Hezbollah Official: 250 Militants Killed during Lebanon War," Associated Press on <http://www.haaretz.com>, December 15, 2006. Lebanese police reports put the total at only 70 during the war.
10. Joshua Brilliant, "Analysis: Hezbollah's Recovery Timetable," United Press International, September 7, 2006.
11. For a detailed analysis of the events in Lebanon immediately following the war, see International Crisis Group, "Lebanon at a Tripwire," *Middle East Briefing* 20, Beirut/Brussels, December 21, 2006.
12. *Ibid.*, 11.
13. See Appendix C for full text of UNSCR 1701.
14. Adapted from UN document, *UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, Mandate*, 2006, <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unifil/mandate.html>.
15. UNSCR 1701, paragraphs 8, 11, and 14.
16. *Ibid.*, paragraph 12.
17. UNIFIL, "Facts and Figures," 2006, <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unifil/facts.html>.
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19. Robin Wright, "US Readies Security Air Package to Help Lebanon Counter Hezbollah," *Washington Post*, December 22, 2006.
20. David Makovsky, "Israel's Policy and Political Lessons from the War," in *Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizballah War: A Preliminary Assessment*, *Policy Focus* no. 60 (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2006): 2.

21. Ibid., 19.
22. Noam Chomsky, "Lessons of Lebanon," *Information Clearing House*, September 12, 2007.
23. Israeli Defense Force sources as quoted by Alon Ben-David, "Israel Introspective after Lebanon Offensive," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, August 22, 2006, 18.
24. Jack Khoury and Assaf Uni, "Red Cross: No Signs of Life from Abducted IDF Troops in Lebanon," *Haaretz* (Tel Aviv), November 29, 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com>.
25. Amos Harel, "Report: Soldiers Captured by Hezbollah Seriously and Critically Hurt," *Haaretz* (Tel Aviv), December 6, 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com>.
26. Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, "Hizbollah's Outlook in the Current Conflict, Part One: Motives, Strategy and Objectives," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Policy Outlook no. 27 (August 2006); 2.
27. Amir Kulick, "Hizbollah vs. the IDF: The Operational Dimension," *Strategic Assessment* 9, no. 3 (November 2006).
28. Ibid.
29. Makovsky, "Israel's Policy and Political Lessons from the War," 6.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., 9.
33. Ibid.
34. "Understanding the Present Crisis," <http://www.upc.org.uk>.
35. Makovsky, "Israel's Policy and Political Lessons from the War," 7.
36. <http://www.upc.org.uk>.
37. Makovsky, "Israel's Policy and Political Lessons from the War," 18.
38. Ibid.

## CHAPTER THREE

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### **MAJOR LESSONS REGARDING STRATEGY AND THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR**

The Israeli-Hezbollah War illustrates several important lessons regarding strategy and the conduct of modern war. Many are familiar from both past conflicts and the current fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. These are, however, lessons that nations—including the United States—seem to find extraordinarily hard to learn.

#### **RETHINKING DETERRENCE, INTIMIDATION, AND THE POLITICAL, PERCEPTUAL, IDEOLOGICAL, AND MEDIA DIMENSIONS OF WAR**

The full text of the Winograd Commission findings remains classified, but both the unclassified portions of its reports and the usual host of leaks make several things clear. Like the United States in Iraq, Israel went to war focused on its own values and perceptions—not those of its Hezbollah enemy, the Lebanese state it was seeking to influence, the Arab states around it, or the broader perceptions of Europe and the outside world. Israel saw its war as just, but it made little effort to justify that war to the outside world as a key element of strategy, tactics, and the practical execution of battle.

The Israeli government and Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have always tended to see war in terms of their own internal politics and perceptions and to ignore those of other states, cultures, and religions, particularly when dealing with hostile Arab states and movements. The result is that Israel has relied far too much on force and far too little on information operations and politics, and it has repeatedly

made strategic mistakes it could have avoided with a more realistic perception of how its enemies and other nations and peoples perceived its action.

In this case, Israel seems to have felt it could deal with Hezbollah relatively simply through winning tactical victories and could intimidate or persuade the Lebanese government by military attacks. Moreover, Israel assumed that its planned defeat of Hezbollah on the battlefield would counter Arab and Islamic anger and would lead to only limited problems with outside states. None of those assumptions reflected a realistic understanding of the political, perceptual, and ideological motives of the actors outside Israel. The failure to understand those motives also meant that Israel failed to reinforce deterrence, failed to intimidate, and failed to win the media battles of the war.

As has been discussed in the preceding chapter, restoring the credibility of Israeli deterrence after its perceived erosion following the unilateral withdrawals from Lebanon and Gaza and after years of tolerating low-level attacks and harassment with limited response was one of Israel's key goals. Israel's plan seems to have been to show how well it could both defeat Hezbollah and threaten an Arab government that tolerated the presence of a non-state threat.

Israel, however, was dealing with a non-state actor (Hezbollah) and two state actors (Iran and Syria) that were not Western and that operated with very different values and goals from those of Israel. Israel found during the war that Hezbollah could offset any immediate Israeli successes in striking against Hezbollah's medium- and long-range missiles with determined attacks by shorter-range missiles and could and would force the IDF to fight it on the ground. This discovery should not have come as a surprise. Not only had Israel fought Hezbollah on similar terms in the past, but also Hezbollah leaders had already declared how they would respond. Following the withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, Hassan Nasrallah compared the Israeli strength to that of a spider web. He argued that the apparent strength of Israel was a mirage. He said that the will to fight and die was more important than any weapons systems, and in this area Hezbollah held the advantage.<sup>1</sup>

Israel had every historical reason to understand the confessional politics of Lebanon and the probable real-world behavior of the

Lebanese government and army. Its strategic defeat in the 1982 war—and the long aftermath of that defeat between 1982 and 2000—should have eliminated any illusions regarding how Lebanon would perceive Israel's actions and react to them. Israel should never have been surprised when a weak Lebanese government did not respond by trying to control Hezbollah but rather turned to the international community and when that Lebanese government used efforts to intimidate it to launch political attacks on Israel. Israel found that its own unwillingness or inability to attack or intimidate Iran and Syria—Hezbollah's main suppliers—encouraged them to support Hezbollah and provide resupply.

The Israeli government also failed to perceive the political and perceptual realities shaping the behavior of its Arab neighbors. It quickly wasted its initial ability to get Egyptian, Jordanian, and Saudi government support against Hezbollah by overescalating and by being unable to convince the world it was controlling collateral damage and civilian suffering. Israel alienated the peoples of those governments that had reason to fear Hezbollah and Iran and the governments as well. At the same time, the Israeli government's and the IDF's tactical failures and indecisiveness sent a message of weakness and vulnerability to a mix of nations more focused on revenge, anger, and religion than the cost-benefits of war fighting.

Such problems were compounded by the fact that Israel fought its media battle largely in terms of an effort to influence its own political parties and public as well as its strongest outside supporters. Its information operations were parochial and were based on the assumption that it could not alter the perception of Arab, European, and other neutral and hostile media.

Israel does face prejudice and media bias in the political dimension of war, but—to put it bluntly—those biases are as irrelevant to the conduct of war as are similar perceptions of the United States as a crusader and occupier. That prejudice is as irrelevant as complaints that the enemy fights in civilian areas, uses terror tactics, does not wear uniforms, and engages in direct combat. Nations fight in the real world, not in ones where they can set the rules for war or perceptual standards.

Israel's failure to fully understand the political and perceptual aspects of modern war is just as serious and dangerous as America's fail-

ure has been in Iraq, in the war on terrorism, and, to some extent, in Afghanistan. The same is true of Israel's focus on domestic politics and perceptions. Modern nations must learn to fight regional, cultural, and global battles to shape the political, perceptual, ideological, and media dimensions of war within the terms that other nations and cultures can understand, or they risk losing every advantage that their military victories gain.

### **FIGHTING IN CIVILIAN AREAS AND THE PROBLEM OF COLLATERAL DAMAGE**

Israel's problems in fighting the political and perceptual battle were compounded by the fact that Hezbollah used Lebanon's people and civilian areas as both defensive and offensive weapons. Israel certainly saw this risk from the start. Although the IDF did attack Lebanese civilian targets early in the war, its attacks were generally limited. It established procedures for screening strike requirements and for intelligence review of possible civilian casualties and collateral damage.

The problem for Israel—as for the United States and its allies in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan—is that good intentions and careful procedures and rules of engagement are not enough:

- First, there will always be real mistakes in targeting and knowing when to strike. This reality is particularly true when insufficient human intelligence exists to supplement the information available from technical intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (IS&R) platforms.
- Second, the United States is just beginning to get to the point where unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), real-time nets, intelligence review of targeting, and small standoff weapons such as Hellfire and 250-pound guided bombs can be used with the level of control and reliability needed. Even so, a significant number of weapons will be delivered off target. Israel has less sophistication and fewer resources. The ratio of failures and malfunctions will, therefore, be higher.
- Third, opponents can always manipulate the facts on the ground. They can claim the targets were innocent, that more women and

children were killed than occurred, or that a target has religious or medical significance, for example. They also are not engaging in a global credibility contest. They are manipulating propaganda to reach an audience that is already hostile to Israel and more than willing to believe in Israeli callousness and conspiracy theories.

- Fourth, this warfare is political as much as tactical. For all the reasons outlined earlier, local, regional, and global perceptions of the legitimacy of how force is used are critical, as are perceptions of the legitimacy of military action during and after the war.

As is sometimes the case with the United States in Iraq, and with NATO in Afghanistan, Israeli failure to understand such realities and to conduct a major information operation and media campaign focused on hostile and neutral perceptions, rather than on Israel's supporters or sympathizers, has been and is one of the IDF's greatest and most consistent weaknesses.

This result is especially true when an IDF chief of staff makes an inexcusable political mistake as serious as publicly threatening to "set Lebanon back twenty years."<sup>2</sup> That statement showed a critical lack of understanding of both Arab and world public opinion, as well as a lack of understanding the problems of finding international support that would arise from such reactions.<sup>3</sup>

War is not fair; it is expedient, and a non-state actor is virtually forced to use human shields as a means of countering its conventional weakness. Furthermore, Islamist extremist movements do so as an ideological goal, seeking to push populations into the war on their side. The IDF did not seem to fully understand the problems of collateral damage and, therefore, failed to appropriately adjust its objectives.<sup>4</sup>

The lesson is simple and brutally clear. No senior officer or official is fit to serve in a modern military force who does not understand the political and perceptual nature of war, the need to conduct information operations tailored to neutral and hostile audiences as well as sympathetic ones, and the need to do everything possible to show that the use of force is justified and "legitimate."

### **Civilians as the First Line of Hezbollah Defense**

One of the tactics that Hezbollah used to fortify its position along the border was to prepare "friendly" villages in the south of Lebanon to

use as safe havens and fortresses in the event of an Israeli assault. Israeli intelligence officers complained that Hezbollah used civilians' homes in southern villages to store small arms, rockets, and other supplies, while using the villages as staging areas for cross-border rocket attacks. Although some evidence indicates that much of this action was taken largely without the consent—or even knowledge—of the local residents, other analysts suggest that the inhabitants of Southern Lebanon had, since 2000, seen a third Israeli invasion of Lebanon as inevitable. Still others suggest that Hezbollah had begun to fortify the southern villages as early as 1996, before the Israeli withdrawal to the “security zone” along the border.<sup>5</sup>

Hezbollah built its facilities in towns and populated areas, used civilian facilities and homes to store weapons and to carry out its activities, and embedded its defenses and weapons in built-up areas. It learned to move and ship in ways that mirrored normal civilian life. This pattern becomes all too clear from Israeli imagery showing how Hezbollah deployed its rockets and mortars in towns and homes; it rushed into private houses to fire rockets and rushed out.

Hezbollah does not seem to have followed the Taliban example of deliberately mixing fighters with ordinary civilians and women and children, using them as “shelters” and then deliberately publicizing the civilian dead while claiming no combatants were present. Mere proximity, however, is enough—particularly when fighting occurs in built-up and populated areas. Civilians and battles of propaganda and perception are the natural equivalent of armor in asymmetric warfare.

Israel, the United States, and all powers that rely on the legitimacy of the ways they use force must get used to the fact that opponents will steadily improve their ability to use civilians to hide, to deter attack, to exploit the political impact of strikes, and to exaggerate damage and killings. The laws of war can become a weapon when one side tries to manipulate them to push its opponent to go from making every effort to minimize civilian casualties to totally avoiding such casualties. Civilians become cultural, religious, and ideological weapons when the United States is attacking different cultures. The gap between the attacker and attacked is so great that no amount of explanation and reparations can compensate.

During the war, Israeli officials were frustrated by an inability to sufficiently jam or otherwise disrupt Hezbollah's ability to broadcast to its audience. Although Israeli forces were able to strike Hezbollah antennas and to penetrate some of its broadcasting, blocking satellite communication proved difficult because Hezbollah frequently switched signals to avoid such subterfuge. Shuki Shacur, an IDF reserve brigadier general, commented that after the war "we're likely to see more effort invested in denying Hizbollah its ability to use this means of communication."<sup>6</sup>

### **The Unavoidable Limits of Intelligence, Targeting, and Battle Damage Assessment**

The Israeli experience in Lebanese towns and small cities had many similarities with the problems that the United States and its allies face in Iraq and those that NATO faces in Afghanistan. All have been forced to fight an enemy that is often impossible to distinguish from civilians or that is so embedded in their midst that no way to separate the enemies and civilians is possible in terms of air strikes or land attacks. This indistinguishability is particularly true of the fighting in populated areas and street-by-street combat.

Modern intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and assets such as UAVs and modern sensors can help and so can advanced training, use of armor, and focused tactical intelligence help—particularly when supported by human intelligence (HUMINT) on the ground. The truth, however, is that modern technology does not provide the kind of sensors, protection, and weapons that can prevent a skilled force from forcing Israel or the United States to fight that skilled force in populated areas and thus to exploit civilians and collateral damage at the same time.

The Israeli imagery used in air strikes and in preparing for and conducting the land battle worked to cover only a very small front by American standards in Iraq and Afghanistan. It had very high density and persistence, and sensor command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C<sup>4</sup>I) quality was close to that available to U.S. forces. This imagery technology is a tremendous advancement over that used in the past to help targeting avoid collateral damage. But it falls far short of the ability to provide the kind of real-time tactical advantage necessary to avoid having to react immediately and

often in ways that kill civilians or damage civil facilities. This advantage can come only when technology is supported by enough HUMINT to clearly characterize the target—something that is difficult or impossible to achieve without local allies.

The problem in close combat in urban areas is only one of the issues involved. As in Vietnam, there is no easy route to interdicting supply. Stopping resupply and reinforcement means attacking infrastructure, ranging from local to national. When medium- and long-range missiles are involved, “proportionality” also means limited or no restraint.

In the case of artillery and air strikes, it is sometimes possible to achieve a 10-meter accuracy against a global positioning system, or GPS, coordinate. Like the United States, however, Israel has found that significant numbers of weapons go astray, that modern sensors cannot tell the difference between many types and uses of military and civilian vehicles in an asymmetric war, and that a civilian often looks exactly like an insurgent or terrorist.

### **The Special Problems of Mines, Cluster Bombs, and Area Munitions**

In addition, reports after the war suggested that Israel used phosphorus and cluster bombs, weapons that are widely considered to be particularly harmful to civilians. Israel admitted that it used phosphorus bombs during the war. The IDF asserted, however, that such munitions were used only on military targets in open ground and in conformance with international law. Lebanon made third-party reports and claims, however, that phosphorus munitions were used against civilians.<sup>7</sup>

White phosphorus is often used to mark targets or combat areas. Its use against military targets is not prohibited, but human rights groups often condemn its use because of the harsh injuries it causes. Israel initially argued it did not use such rounds against military targets, but acknowledged in late October that it had used them against military personnel. A number of reports indicate that such rounds caused limited civilian casualties.<sup>8</sup>

Cluster bombs are much more dangerous for civilians because of their lack of precision, the high number of individual munitions within a warhead, and the fact that rounds that do not explode on contact

remain live and can explode later if picked up or disturbed by civilians. Because those bombs are generally used by firing a high number of munitions, which leads to a high number of unexploded munitions, long-term dangers persist around the battlefield. As of September 7, 2006, the United Nations had cataloged 12 deaths and 61 reported injuries from unexploded ordnance in Lebanon, all but five of which were linked to cluster submunitions.<sup>9</sup>

Israel was widely reported as using cluster bombs during the war, and the unexploded ordnance continued to cause deaths after the cessation of hostilities. One source claims that cluster bombs were fired against as many as 770 to more than 800 sites. The same source claims that some 45,000–50,000 unexploded bombs and munitions had been removed by mid-October but that civilian casualties continued to rise and hundreds of thousands of bomblets remained. Other estimates put the number of unexploded rounds discovered as of October at 58,000. Experts claimed that up to 30–40 percent of the bomblets dropped by Israel failed to explode on impact.<sup>10</sup>

Arms control advocates argued that Israel violated international law by using cluster munitions in civilian areas.<sup>11</sup> Initially, Israel denied using cluster bombs against such targets. In November, however, the IDF admitted to targeting populated areas with cluster munitions.

Furthermore, cluster bombs were fired from multiple-launch rocket systems (MLRS), which are far less accurate than precision-guided bombs—often impacting some 1,200 meters from their intended target—although Israel claims that its Ramam trajectory correction system makes its rockets more accurate than the standard MLRS round.<sup>12</sup> The army chief of staff claimed that this use was against his orders. Nevertheless, one of the MLRS battery commanders claimed that the targets were “General Staff targets”, referring to the office of the Chief of Staff. The officer further claimed that because of the inaccuracy of the launchers, they were told to “flood” the area.<sup>13</sup> (Israel also fired bomblets at military targets from its tanks, which used a new wide-area-dispersal 105-millimeter [mm] anti-personnel/anti-matériel round called “Rakefet,” but it is unclear that any such bomblets have been included in reports of cluster munitions.)

The estimates vary of the number of cluster bombs dropped and the percentage of duds among those dropped. However, the use of cluster bombs has further damaged perceptions of Israel’s conduct of

the war. In addition to the direct damage caused by cluster bombs, their use casts doubt on Israel's overall concern for Lebanese civilians. When an accident occurs, an argument that Israel was taking precautions to protect civilians is harder to sustain if reports continue, even after the war has ended, of civilians being injured or killed by cluster bombs.

The situation has been made worse by the fact that Israel first denied such weapons were used in civilian areas and the IDF spokesman claimed that "the use of cluster munitions against built-up areas was done only against military targets where rocket launches against Israel were identified and after taking steps to warn the civilian population." Minister of Defense Amir Peretz had to admit in November, however, that the IDF had discovered there had been "irregularities" in the IDF's use of such weapons and that Brig. Gen. Michel Ben-Baruch had found that cluster munitions had been used in ways that violated the order of Chief of Staff Dan Halutz.<sup>14</sup>

Human Rights Watch reports that Hezbollah also used cluster bombs against civilian targets during the war in the 122-mm rockets it fired almost randomly into Israel, some of which contained 39 Type 90 (MZD) submunitions each.<sup>15</sup> Some of those rounds landed in Lebanese territory, and Israeli police identified at least 113 Type 81 cluster rounds that hit Israeli civilian areas (a total of more than 4,400 submunitions).

Also unclear is how many casualties claimed to have come from cluster bombs really came from unexploded mines laid years earlier or during the war. Syria, Hezbollah, and Israel all laid or redeployed mines in the area, although most had been cleared between 2002 and 2004.

In the years leading up to the war, Hezbollah extensively mined the high-speed highways of approach that Israel would have logically used to press into Southern Lebanon during an invasion. One of the massive anti-tank mines destroyed an Israeli Merkava on the first day of the war, forcing Israel to carry out its ground assault through the countryside rather than along the main roads. This change in plans, according to some analysts, caused the Israeli ground assault to proceed much slower than it had in 1982.<sup>16</sup>

In October, two British companies were contracted by the United Arab Emirates to clear Southern Lebanon of explosives. The effort

was expected to cost US\$65 million. According to one estimate, it could require clearing about 1 million unexploded bomblets from cluster bombs, land mines, and other kinds of unexploded munitions.<sup>17</sup> Other estimates put the total at several hundreds of thousands.

What is not clear is whether Israel made additional use of mines during the conflict. On November 24, an explosion wounded two European disposal experts working to clear explosives from Southern Lebanon. A report by the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Center in Southern Lebanon stated that an Israeli anti-personnel mine was responsible and that it was part of a minefield laid during the recent conflict. The UN report stated that the type and age of the mines showed that they were laid recently and were Israeli. IDF officials expressed doubt that the mines were theirs, suggesting that the mines were laid by Hezbollah or Syria and could have been from older conflicts. However, the officials would not comment on whether the IDF had laid any mines in Lebanon during the conflict.<sup>18</sup>

These developments raise serious questions about the future ability to use area munitions in populated areas, particularly ones that are not self-disarming if they do not immediately explode. Mapping all potential target areas for important political and religious points is difficult to impossible, and real-time location of civilians is absolutely impossible. High-intensity operations cannot be designed to support humanitarian needs in many cases. Moreover, battle damage assessment methods and technology against anything other than military weapons and vehicles, or active military facilities, remain too crude to clearly distinguish how much collateral damage was done or how many civilians were hurt.

### **Rethinking the Force Transformation**

The key issues for Israel, as well as for the United States and its allies, are what can be done to change this situation in ways (a) that show the world that every effort has been made to reduce civilian casualties and collateral damage; (b) that provide convincing proof that such efforts have been made; and (c) that provide near real-time evidence to refuel false claims of atrocities, civilian casualties, and the excessive use of force.

Truly existential conflicts may remain at least a partial exception to such constraints on the use of force, but even existential conflicts have

political, perceptual, and grand strategic aftermaths. In optional and limited wars, Western nations must learn how to fight in built-up and populated areas in ways that do as much as possible to deprive the enemy of the ability to force modern military forces to fight at the enemy's level, as well as in asymmetric ways that deprive conventional forces of their technical advantages and give the enemy the initiative. This change not only involves altering tactics and targeting but also means funding suitable IS&R assets; putting HUMINT in the loop; having dedicated cells to warn when given targets or when targeting data prevent special sensitivities; and using small, reliable, precision weapons wherever possible. It also means tailoring information operations to fight what will inevitably be a global battle to prove that targeting is valid and that every effort is being made to reduce civilian casualties and collateral damage.

The IDF may well be able to adapt. The Brodet Commission has looked beyond the narrow issues of the Israeli-Hezbollah War and has recommended comprehensive changes based on the conclusion that "the Israel Defense Forces and the entire defense establishment suffer from a multidimensional crisis: budgetary, management, organizational, cultural, and strategic."<sup>19</sup>

It has radically increased its defense budget and has cancelled the planned further cuts in ground forces.<sup>20</sup> It has a new minister of defense, Ehud Barak, with practical combat experience in dealing with asymmetric threats.<sup>21</sup> The IDF has a new, ground forces-oriented chief of staff. The land forces commander, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Gantz, has called for new training methods, a new emphasis on decisive maneuver, and a reorganization of many elements of Israel's land forces.<sup>22</sup> Israel is restructuring its entire training program, with a major new training center for asymmetric warfare in the Negev and major exercises in the Golan.<sup>23</sup> No one can predict Israel's level of success, but the country is clearly making a massive effort to adapt to the threats posed by forces like the Hezbollah and is extremely unlikely to repeat the mistakes of 2006.

*The goal must also be to learn what cannot be done and to avoid setting goals for netcentric warfare, intelligence, targeting, and battle damage assessments that are impossible, or that are simply too costly and uncertain to deploy.* Modern military powers need to approach these problems with ruthless realism at the political, tactical, and technical levels.

They need to change their whole set of priorities affecting tactics, technology, targeting, and battle damage to give the same priority to avoiding both unnecessary civilian casualties and collateral damage as is given to directly destroying the enemy.

Modern military powers need to reexamine their use of precision strike capabilities, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and concepts such as “effects-based operations” from the ground up. This approach means working with local allies and improving HUMINT to reduce damage and political effects. It also means developing real-time capabilities to measure and communicate what damage has actually been done. Such powers must make massive use of information operations to defeat hostile lies and exaggerations. Again, those powers need to focus on hostile and neutral audiences even more than on friendly ones.

### EXAMINING AND DEFINING “PROPORTIONALITY”

At a broader strategic level, the Israeli-Hezbollah War serves as a lesson regarding the need to demonstrate that the use of military force is properly proportionate to the causes and nature of the conflict. Israeli analyst Yaakov Amidror noted that the 2006 war with Lebanon

... made everyone around us ... understand that there are some red lines that if (they) will be crossed, by the Syrians, or the Palestinians or the Lebanese, the retaliation ... will be (dis)proportional in purpose. We're not looking for proportional retaliation. As a little country fighting terrorists, guerrilla organizations, and other states, we cannot allow ourselves to react proportionally, and that is a very important message to the people around us. They understand it. We know they understand it.<sup>24</sup>

In general, Israel does seem to have made an effort to keep its military actions proportionate to the threat in terms of the laws of war *if* one looks beyond the narrow incident in the northern border area that triggered the fighting and considers six years of Hezbollah military buildup as a major threat that could target all of Israel with major Iranian and Syrian support. Lebanon's internal weaknesses and divisions are not a defense in international law and the laws of war, and Lebanon's failure to act as a state, to implement UN Security

Council Resolution 1559, and to disarm Hezbollah deprived it of any rights as a nonbelligerent.

The problem is, however, that Israel failed to make an effective effort to explain why it escalated and the nature of the threat it faced: the laws of war do not shape perceptions and current international moral standards value judgments. Israel also pushed proportionality to its limits—and beyond—by attacking civilian targets that were not related to Hezbollah in an effort to force the Lebanese government to act, and Israel failed to explain the scale of the Hezbollah threat in defending its actions.

This failure to come to grips with the need to show that the use of force was properly proportionate was as serious as the failure to show that Israel was making every effort to limit civilian casualties and collateral damage. Public opinion polls showed a major shift in European opinion against Israel, and some 63 percent of Britons and 75 percent of Germans polled found Israel's actions to be "disproportionate."<sup>25</sup>

These problems were compounded by the debates over the issue of Israeli use of weapons like cluster bombs, where unexploded rounds have been notorious sources of after-action civilian casualties ever since the Vietnam War.<sup>26</sup> Israel was accused of war crimes by Amnesty International in a report that exaggerated what were very real problems.<sup>27</sup>

The United States and its allies must not repeat this mistake, although the United States and NATO have done a better job of demonstrating proportionality in Iraq and Afghanistan than Israel did in Lebanon. They must develop clear plans and doctrine regarding proportionality and must be just as ready to explain and justify their approach and to show how they are acting to limit civilian casualties and collateral damage. Above all, they must not fall into the trap either of trying to avoid the laws of war or of being so bound by a strict interpretation that they cannot fight.

#### **PURSUING A DECISIVE STRATEGY WITHIN THE PLANNED LIMITS OF THE WAR**

No nation can force a strategy on reality or determine the limits and escalatory nature of a conflict when the enemy and the course of battle

can do so much to alter events. The Israeli-Hezbollah conflict does, however, provide a clear lesson in the need to make every effort both to develop a decisive strategy that should be pursued in combat if at all possible and to pursue that strategy consistently within the planned limits of the war. Israel instead seems to have let the tactical course of events dominate its strategy or lack thereof.

During the war, it was never clear from discussions with Israeli officials exactly what the real original battle plan was, how much the Israeli Air Force (IAF) did or did not exaggerate its capabilities, and how much the IDF pressed for a decisive land campaign. The Winograd Commission is rightly critical of this failure, which seems to have occurred both at the level of all senior members of the government and at every level of the high command of the IDF. It does appear that the IDF escalated without a clear plan for any contingency other than immediate success and then failed to pursue a decisive strategy and battle plan within the limits it sought.

Senior retired IDF officers made this point publicly after the war. For example, Gen. Yoram Yair, the former commander of the Parachute Brigade, stated, “The IDF did not demonstrate maintenance of the objective in this war.... The principles of war were neglected; we haven’t seen initiative, persistence, onslaught, concentration of effort, nor artifice.”

Yair was charged with leading a probe of the conduct of Division 91 in the war, but wound up overstepping his original mandate to present a series of systemic problems, not merely problems in the single division. In his investigation, he found the following:

- A failure to identify targets and define clear missions
- A lack of comprehension at all levels that this was a war, not merely a security operation
- Brigade commanders who stayed in the rear, behind computer screens, instead of leading their troops in the field
- An absence of clear hierarchy, with officers of all ranks discussing issues with each other without really knowing who was in charge
- Problems in terminology and in the army’s organizational culture
- An erosion in the professional capabilities of commanders and soldiers, stemming mainly from cuts in training

Additionally, Yair cited an unacceptable gap between the lofty ideas formulated at command headquarters and the field commanders' lack of determination to carry out the mission at all costs. Common complaints included instructions to "fight carefully" and a pause in fighting every time injuries were sustained.<sup>28</sup>

On January 16, 2007, former IDF chief of staff Dan Shomron presented the Knesset Foreign Affairs Committee with the conclusions of his investigation into the conduct of the IDF general staff during the war. According to Shomron, the second Lebanon War was carried out with no clear objective, and the IDF was unable to translate into a military operation the instructions by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to prevent rockets from being fired at Israel. He further pointed out that the threat of rockets being fired at Israel from Southern Lebanon remains a threat today. Nevertheless, he believed the general staff serving at the time of his comments would be able to rehabilitate the IDF.<sup>29</sup>

Maj. Gen. Ugi Sagi, the retired head of Aman (Israeli military intelligence) stated, "While not foreseeing the hard Israel response, Hezbollah was prepared for this war and Israel wasn't. Israel had only prepared a response, a limited operation, but wasn't prepared beyond that. The ground forces found themselves unprepared, unqualified, unfamiliar with the terrain and mostly not focused on the objectives."<sup>30</sup>

Israel's top acting commanders admitted some of those criticisms were valid. Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, said as much in an interview he gave to *Yediot Aharonot* at the end of September:

On that evening (July 12), we did not know we were going to war with Hezbollah. Rather, we were talking about an unrestrained response to Hezbollah's provocations ... [and] we need to speak truthfully. I did not assess, nor did anyone else to the best of my knowledge, that the military campaign would get where it got.... [T]here were very good things, there were less good things, and there were bad things.... I try to ask myself if I am convinced that my decision making processes were correct. I ask myself how such a gap was created between expectations and reality, between what I said and how (my words) were perceived. It's this gap that separates expectations from reality that explains the magnitude of the disappointment.<sup>31</sup>

The initial Israeli air campaign against Hezbollah's medium- and long-range missiles did make clear sense from both a strategic and tactical perspective, although some Israelis argue that Israel might have been better off waiting and launching a war limited solely to the major missile threat. The missiles were a serious threat, and the attack upon them seems to have been relatively well executed—subject to the fact that the IDF did not fully understand the threat because it did not detect the scale of Syrian missile deliveries.

The escalation of the air campaign that followed and the course of the later ground campaign, however, make far less sense. As an analysis by Ze'ev Schiff points out, Israel had the choice of ending the war on July 18—its sixth day—when Chief of Staff Halutz and the head of Military Intelligence, Amos Yadlin, told Prime Minister Olmert and the security cabinet that Israel had achieved almost all of its initial aims in the war. At that time, Hezbollah and the Lebanese government were offering a cease-fire, and Israel might well have won additional concessions. Nevertheless, the war went on for 28 more days, and the government waited another week before mobilizing Israel's reserves.<sup>32</sup>

Fighting to take a narrow perimeter in Lebanon of two to five kilometers in the border area overlooking Israel could never end up being a decisive campaign or hope to halt even the Katyusha threat. Unclassified wall maps in the Israeli Ministry of Defense clearly showed that many launch sites were to the rear of this perimeter, allowing Hezbollah to retreat with ease, and there was no prospect of holding the perimeter without constant Hezbollah reinfiltration and attack. This situation essentially forced the IDF to fight Hezbollah on its terms in urban warfare.

Israeli political leadership, the IDF top command, or both seem to have chosen the worst of all possible worlds. They escalated beyond the air campaign in ways that could not have a decisive strategic effect and dithered for weeks in a land battle that seems to have been designed largely to minimize casualties and avoid creating a lasting IDF presence in Lebanon. In the process, the IDF had to fight and refight for the same villages and largely meaningless military objectives, given the Hezbollah's ample time to reorganize and prepare.

When the IDF finally did decide to go for the Litani River, it signaled its advance for at least two days and then had to advance along

routes predictable because of the terrain. It did not conduct operations from the north to seal off the Hezbollah line of retreat and had to fight in a rushed operation with no time to deploy enough forces to search out stay-behinds or to securely occupy enough space to be sure what levels of Hezbollah strength did or did not remain.

At the same time, the air campaign continued to escalate against targets that sometimes involved high levels of collateral damage and very uncertain tactical and military effect. The result was to give the impression that Israel was not providing a proportionate response—an impression compounded by ineffective (and often unintelligible) efforts to explain IAF actions to the media. At times, it seemed the strategy was one of escalating until the international community had to act on Israel's terms, rather than fighting the enemy. Such a strategy—at best—ignored the serious limits on Israel's ability to compel any international action and the Lebanese government's ability to meet all its goals once a cease-fire was signed.

One possible reason for this lack of preparation was an underestimation of the enemy and an assumption that superior military power and the ability to escalate would overcome the lack of planning. Then IDF chief of staff Halutz reportedly said after the war that the cabinet ministers expected that Hezbollah could not last more than two weeks. Within that time, they expected Hezbollah to fold and everything to work out.<sup>33</sup>

## **RECONCILING MILITARY AND POLITICAL AIMS INTO A COHERENT WAR-FIGHTING EFFORT**

These lessons, in turn, reinforce the importance of another classic lesson of the war: political and military leaders must pursue common objectives and must operate from a realistic, common understanding of how the objectives can be achieved. The previous analysis indicates that Israel's political and military leaders lacked this realism in many areas, did not have a common understanding, and came to let events dictate much of the way in which Israel came to fight the war.

Clearly, very different views exist about the details of what happened in the Israeli leadership, views that have been partly clarified by the publicly released material coming from the Winograd Commission. A number of sources indicate, however, that—from the very beginning

of the war—Prime Minister Olmert and Chief of Staff Halutz had difficulty agreeing on both the aims of the war and the means of fighting it. From the information available, the Israeli cabinet seems to have had a better grasp than did Halutz of the political backlash that could come from far-ranging attacks on the Lebanese infrastructure. Halutz, however, seems to have had a more realistic understanding of what the fighting could actually accomplish. He expressed doubt that Israel could either recover the kidnapped soldiers or stop the Katyusha attacks. The cabinet seemed to think such objectives were achievable. The differences do not appear to have been resolved either before or during the conflict.<sup>34</sup>

Another example of this inability to develop an integrated and realistic military and political viewpoint is provided in a report by Ze'ev Schiff in *Haaretz*.<sup>35</sup> Schiff reported that Halutz and the director of Israeli military intelligence told the security cabinet on July 18 that Israel had achieved most of its aims of the war. This assessment suggested that the war could have been ended at that point, a week into the conflict. Schiff reports that there was no vote in the cabinet about taking action to end the conflict, and why this option was apparently ignored remains unclear.<sup>36</sup>

The previous analysis suggests variations of these problems continued during the rest of the fighting. It indicates that Israel's cabinet and commanders did not reconcile their political and military goals as Israel proceeded to escalate the air war while accepting a land war of attrition in fighting Hezbollah only in its forward positions near the border with Israel.

Such problems may explain the failure to decide when to begin a broader ground offensive and the decision to call up the reserves virtually at the end of the war. One possible reason for these delays is that the most senior Israeli commanders kept telling Israel's political leaders that airpower would be more effective than it was.

As the previous analysis has shown, however, there are contradictory views of what happened. Moreover, Halutz made many public statements indicating that airpower alone could achieve decisive results, and this overreliance on airpower may have contributed to the delay in the use of ground forces.<sup>37</sup> Near the end of the war, however, Halutz suggested that he might not have insisted enough on the need to begin a ground offensive earlier in the conflict.

Other sources blame the cabinet—specifically the prime minister and minister of defense—for a lack of decisiveness and understanding of the political and military options. Accordingly, it is possible that the civilian side was responsible for the failure to tie Israel’s evolving tactics to clear political objectives. It is also possible, however, that both civilian and military leaders failed to understand the need to reconcile the political and military aims of the war and came to react to events on a day-to-day basis when they were forced to act.

On January 17, 2007, Halutz announced his resignation as chief of staff, reportedly over the protests of Ehud Olmert, who had privately asked him to reconsider the decision. The move was welcomed, however, by many government officials and even some members of the reserve forces who had criticized his management of the war. One official in the Defense Ministry remarked that “[Defense Minister Amir] Peretz didn’t try to convince the chief of staff to remain in his position, and honored his decision. Halutz needed to do this a long time ago.”<sup>38</sup> Less than two weeks later, Ehud Olmert and Amir Peretz agreed to the appointment of Gabi Ashkenazi, a retired major general, to replace Halutz as the IDF chief of staff.<sup>39</sup>

The same lesson reemerges from virtually every war ever fought. The quality of the civil-military leadership directing a war, its sophistication and level of realism, and its ability to operate as a team are absolutely critical to victory. The United States has found this lesson to be equally critical in the case of the Iraq War, and it is difficult to think of modern wars in which civil-military coordination did not become a critical test of war-fighting capability.

## **PREPARING FOR CONFLICT ESCALATION, ALTERNATIVE OUTCOMES, AND “PLAN B”**

The Israeli-Hezbollah War illustrates another classic lesson of war: nations must plan from the start for the possibility that they will not succeed in dictating the course of events. One of the reasons for Israel’s strategic failures seems to have been that it had no clear plan to deal with the possible contingencies that could emerge after its initial air strikes on Hezbollah’s missile forces.

The Israeli officials interviewed during the war differed significantly over how much they had planned and had prepared the IDF for

conflict escalation. Outside experts did not. They felt that the Israeli government rushed into a major attack on Hezbollah and Lebanon with little preparation and detailed planning, that the battle plan put far too much faith in airpower, and that the government was averse to examining another major land advance into Lebanon or broadening the conflict to put pressure on Syria.

Only access to the historical record can determine the facts. There was, however, broad criticism that the government and IDF did not properly prepare the active forces and reserves for a major land attack or for the possibility of a major escalation that required such an attack. The government and IDF were criticized for never examining “Plan B”—what would happen if things went wrong or if a major escalation was required.

As was mentioned earlier, IDF chief of the General Staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, admitted, “I did not assess, nor did anyone else to the best of my knowledge, that it would get to where it got.” Overall, he assessed the performance of the IDF during the war as “average” although he later said that Israel was “ahead on points.”<sup>40</sup> Dan Meridor has said, however, that the General Staff had, in fact, engaged in a simulation of a scenario similar to the actual events leading to the war several years earlier. The outcome of the simulation was inconclusive, but Meridor claimed that the cabinet failed to learn from this exercise.<sup>41</sup>

Even during the war, a debate emerged in Israel over the potential deterioration of the IDF as a fighting force after years of acting as a garrison force dealing with low-level threats in Gaza and the West Bank. Serious questions have emerged over how effective the IDF has been in reorganizing the reserves, training them, and funding equipment.

It now seems clear that the IDF did not properly prepare to support a major ground operation in Lebanon at any point during the war, was forced to rush the training of the reserve units it called up, did not properly supply them, and was not capable of providing proper logistic and service support once it did decide to drive toward the Litani in the last days of the war. By some accounts, the General Staff and the Israeli government waited far too long to mobilize the reserves for a *possible* ground invasion. Even with foreknowledge of low reservist readiness and training, some argued, this delay resulted in valuable time lost, which could have been used in preparing the force for the eventual ground invasion and for replenishing equipment and depot shortages.<sup>42</sup>

Israel has found many problems with the readiness of its ground forces since the war, which are described in the next chapter. What is not yet clear is (a) just how serious these problems in IDF readiness really were, (b) how much they affected the situation in Lebanon, and (c) how many of the tactical problems that occurred in ground operations were simply the result of the following: indecisive planning; a lack of any clear commitment to even fully prepare for large-scale war fighting; and a failure to decide on a clear operational concept that left many active and reserve units simply in road positions without either a clear offensive contingency mission or proper instructions to provide for rear-area security, regrouping, and support of the forces in place. Ground forces are designed to attack or defend; they are not designed to “dither.”

### **PREPARING FOR CONFLICT TERMINATION**

Another lesson of war that both Israel and the United States need to learn is that the outcome of war is determined by the nature of conflict termination and not by tactical victories; thus, preparing for conflict termination is a critical part of grand strategy, strategy, and tactics. Israel failed to act on this lesson when going to war with Hezbollah, just as the United States failed to act on it when going to war in Afghanistan and Iraq.

A number of Israeli experts stated during the war and after it that the Israeli government was too inexperienced to fully address the effect of various scenarios on conflict termination. The experts felt the government and senior leadership of the IDF had hopes for conflict termination but no clear plan.

These problems were all too apparent from what senior Israeli officials and officers said during the war. Depending on the official, officer, or outside expert briefing on such issues, Israeli hopes seem to have been a mixture of some or all of the following: (a) that Hezbollah would be easily defeated, (b) that the Lebanese government or army would act, (c) that the Lebanese people and Arab world would blame Hezbollah, and (d) that Israel could get UN resolutions and a UN-sponsored international peacemaking force that would support its efforts. As for Israel’s broader image in the world, Israel seems to have hoped that victory would be its own justification—to the extent that it focused on the issue at all.

Some officials claimed that the war was always supposed to take eight weeks and weaken Hezbollah, not destroy it. Yet several Israeli experts claimed that some of the same officials estimated at the start of the war that it would last no more than two weeks and that Hezbollah would be destroyed as a military force.

In retrospect, Israel again demonstrated why it has always been better at defeating the enemy than at translating its defeat of its enemies into lasting strategic and grand strategic gains. At the same time, the lesson that the Israeli-Hezbollah War teaches about conflict termination is the same lesson that the United States should have learned from its victory in the Gulf War in 1991 and from its defeat of Saddam Hussein in 2003. A war plan without a clear and credible plan for conflict termination can easily become a dangerous prelude to a failed peace.

### **THE SHIFTING ROLE OF STATE SPONSORS AND NON-STATE ACTORS: IRAN, SYRIA, AND HEZBOLLAH**

The Israeli-Hezbollah War has highlighted the importance of the interaction among non-state actors, asymmetric warfare, and the role of state actors. Iran and Syria clearly helped shape the conditions that made the war possible. Hezbollah would never have emerged as a major force in Lebanon without the arms transfers, training and advice, and financial support of Iran and Syria. Those countries continued to provide intelligence support during the war and some arms transfers.<sup>43</sup> At least one source reports that they have since helped Hezbollah restore its short-range arsenal to its previous level.<sup>44</sup>

Many, if not most, insurgent movements have had the support of outside powers. In this case, Iran and Syria were able to project power in ways that Israel could not directly counter and that did not create the conditions where Israel could use decisive force against Hezbollah's sponsors. Moreover, this form of power projection allowed Iran and Syria to push Israel into a low-level war of attrition while it gradually transformed Hezbollah into a serious threat.

It is important to note that far more is involved here than the support of "terrorism." Like al Qa'ida and the Islamist extremists in Afghanistan and Iraq, Hezbollah is an ideological and religious movement that may use terrorism but that also seeks power through

the broader use of force. State actors that support it are not supporting terrorism per se, but a movement that serves their interests and that ultimately will transform itself into an insurgency or a political movement that seeks to control the state. As such, Hezbollah can become a major asymmetric threat without a major investment, without involving its state sponsors in conflict, and without becoming a direct proxy. (In fact, states can benefit from sponsoring even ideologically hostile non-state actors as long as such movements present greater problems for the enemies of their sponsors than for the sponsor.)

At the same time, no *servicing* Israeli official, intelligence officer, or other military officer who briefed during the war said that Hezbollah acted under the direction or command of Iran or Syria. Israeli officials and officers were, however, able to provide considerable evidence that Iran and Syria clearly played major roles in creating the conditions that led to the war and that shaped its course.

Iran and Syria conducted a massive buildup of Hezbollah's arms over a period of more than half a decade. Iranian 747s routinely off-loaded arms in Syrian airports, and Syria made major arms transfers of its own, provided trucks for the Iranian arms, and shipped in arms and armed vehicles through the north and across the Bekaa Valley. Iran did have advisers—evidently from the al Quds force—present with Hezbollah, and some of their documents were captured, although Syrian advisers evidently were not present.

Their absence does not mean that Syria had no influence or control over Hezbollah. Syria could certainly have halted the supply at any time. And Iran set up a rocket and missile targeting and control center for Hezbollah and may well have retained control over the Zelzals in an effort to preserve an eventual nuclear option or limited Israeli retaliation. The nature of meetings between commanders and officials from all three sides was described as uncertain, as was the exact role of the Hezbollah-Iranian-Syrian intelligence center that began to operate in Damascus during the war.

There were, however, other outside influences. In mid-November, a UN report suggested that more than 700 Islamic militants traveled from Somalia to Lebanon to help fight during the war. The report stated that, in return, Hezbollah provided training, and Iran and Syria provided weapons. In addition, Iran attempted to trade arms for uranium from Somalia. Of the fighters who came to Lebanon, at least

100 were confirmed as having returned to Somalia by September. An uncertain number of fighters were thought to have stayed in Lebanon for advanced training.<sup>45</sup>

The issue of who was using whom may best be answered by saying all of the actors involved—Hezbollah, Iran, and Syria—benefited from using each other. Israelis felt Nasrallah had initiated on his own the attack on the Israeli patrol that took two prisoners and that Iran and Syria were forced to support him after Israel massively escalated. Israeli officials did not endorse the theory that Iran forced Hezbollah to act to distract attention from its nuclear efforts.

### **STRATEGY AND THE CONDUCT OF WAR: THE LESSON OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

One lesson that the United States does need to learn from Israel is the need to openly hold a nation's leadership and senior commanders responsible for their decisions in war and to make them publicly accountable. Nations should learn from their military and strategic mistakes as quickly as possible, and one key aspect of this learning process is to hold political and military leaders fully and openly accountable for their actions.

As has already been mentioned, Israeli experts both inside and outside government do not agree on the extent to which the government and the IDF mismanaged the war, but none claimed that the war had gone smoothly or well. Most experts outside government felt that the problems were serious enough to force a new commission or set of commissions to examine what had gone wrong and to establish the facts. Unlike the United States, Israel has since taken tangible action to begin to investigate the problems and weaknesses in its strategy and war fighting. By the middle of October, the IDF had set up 10 different internal commissions to investigate various failings during the war. In addition, the Israeli cabinet had launched its own investigation.<sup>46</sup>

The main disagreements over the nature of Israel's strategic and military mistakes and over who should be held responsible for Israel's conduct of the war came to focus on the following issues:<sup>47</sup>

- Whether the Israeli government's lack of military and foreign policy experience crippled its ability to plan and to criticize the weaknesses in the plans presented by the IDF.

- Whether those failures were compounded by political opportunism and a focus on domestic politics reinforced by a false impression (a) that Israel was simply too strong to face a major challenge and (b) that the Lebanese government could easily be coerced into acting as a state and using its army to take control of a rapidly defeated Hezbollah.
- Whether the IDF's top leadership had too many air force officers who promised that airpower could achieve rapid and decisive results and who ignored the need to prepare for a ground war because a major land offensive was so unpopular after Israel's withdrawal in 2000.
- Whether many of the problems Israel experienced were the result of the lack of IDF preparation of the army for an offensive as a major contingency, the lack of training of the active forces to deal with the insurgency they were certain to face—at least on the forward line, and the lack of preparation and training of the reserves.
- Whether both the political leadership and the IDF failed to develop an effective concept for securing enough of Southern Lebanon from the Litani River to the border that could suppress Hezbollah Katyusha attacks, avoid being bogged down by fighting Hezbollah on its strong line of border defenses and fortified villages, and ensure in-depth security.
- Whether Israeli intelligence failed to characterize the threat in terms of Hezbollah's reaction and willingness to fight; the numbers and capabilities of Hezbollah forces; the quality of preparation of its forward defensive line; and its holdings of missiles, rockets, and advanced lighter arms such as anti-tank weapons and surface-to-air missiles.
- Whether Israeli intelligence failed to assess how Hezbollah would react when the IDF launched a major air attack and struck at its border positions.
- More broadly, whether Israeli intelligence misjudged how the Lebanese government and army would react when they were attacked in an effort to coerce them to move south, and how the Arab and Muslim world would react when IDF forces were seen to be vulnerable.

- Whether the political leadership and the military and intelligence services failed to see that attacks on Hezbollah and Lebanon could (a) weaken, not reinforce, Israel's overall deterrence of the Iranian, Arab, and non-state threat; (b) weaken support for Israel in Europe and elsewhere; and (c) stimulate a new wave of Arab and Muslim support for fighting Israel.
- Key issues that arise over the ability to predict the effect of attacking Lebanese versus Hezbollah; the control of collateral damage and attacks on civilians; and the overall handling of the political, perceptual, and media sides of the war—which all Israelis outside government characterized as bad to dismal.
- The lack of (a) effective emergency planning in the north to deal with evacuations resulting from the rocket attacks, (b) key issues like firefighting, and (c) other key defensive and civil defense measures.

It should be stressed that many serving Israeli officials and officers still reject some or all such criticisms in spite of the postwar revelations of the Winograd Commission and the Brodet Commission and in spite of the internal review and lessons-learned efforts within the IDF. These officials and officers provided a different picture of events during the fighting and have done so since the war has ended. As later chapters show, Israel also had many areas of tactical success.

What is interesting about the Israeli approach, however, is the acceptance in Israel that that major problems and reverses in war fighting need immediate official examination and that such criticism should begin from the top down. Patriotism and the pressures of war call for every effort to be made to win, not simply for support of the political leadership and military command until the war is over.

The United States, in contrast, is usually slow to criticize and then tends either to focus on the president on a partisan basis, or—far more often—to punish subordinate commanders without explicitly examining the actions of policy-level officers and the high command. The United States does not have a tradition of independent commissions and total transparency (all of the relevant cabinet and command meetings in Israel are videotaped).

Worse, the U.S. military tends to investigate and punish from the bottom up. At least since Pearl Harbor (where the search for scapegoats was as much a motive as the search for truth), the United States has not acted on the principle that top-level and senior officers and

civilian officials must be held accountable for all failures and that the key lessons of war include a ruthless and unbiased examination of grand strategy and policymaking.

### **DEBRIEFING TEAMS, THE PUBLIC DEBATE, AND THE WINOGRAD COMMISSION**

The conclusion of the July War was followed by harsh open criticism of the conduct of the war by a wide range of serving and retired Israeli officials, officers, and experts. It sparked a noisy public debate over where to place immediate blame for what many believed to be an unsuccessful campaign. Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert and key members of his cabinet became a focal point for this criticism, and such criticism intensified with time. Although Olmert had survived three no-confidence votes as of early May 2007, his government remained under scrutiny as the Winograd Commission—the government-appointed body charged with investigating the conduct of the war—continued its efforts into the spring of 2007.

#### **Early Debriefings and the Question of Doctrine**

The end of 2006 and early 2007 brought the initial findings from debriefing teams that had been established to assess the performance of the IDF during the “war with Hezbollah.” IDF chief of staff Halutz appointed some 40 inquiry teams following the war to examine various aspects of IDF operation before and during the 33-day war. Many saw these debriefing exercises as a needed catalyst to reshuffle the army’s senior ranks, as well as a push for the IDF to rewrite its doctrine.

Those efforts showed that the IDF had major changes in its doctrine, force structure, readiness, and training during the years before the war. The changes were explained in an update of key aspects of the IDF’s doctrine that was issued in April 2006—three months before the Lebanon campaign.

The new doctrine was adopted by then chief of staff Lt. Gen. Moshe Ya’alon, who had overseen deep cuts in ground forces in favor of increased aerial power and reliance on air strikes. Those shifts in the IDF’s training, force structure, and doctrine were given a further boost with the appointment of air force officer General Halutz, who became the next chief of staff in 2005.

Such changes became the subject of intense criticism following the 2006 war. Maj. Gen. Gadi Eizenkot—general officer commanding Northern Command and head of IDF Operations Directorate until shortly after the war—described them as “a virus [that] had infiltrated IDF’s basic doctrine,” sharply criticizing their development by the IDF Institute for Campaign Doctrine Studies.<sup>48</sup> His analysis of the underlying principles of the updated doctrine was presented in a January 2007 article by *Jane’s Defence Weekly*:

The institute developed an alternative “conceptual framework” for military thinking, replacing traditional notions of “objective” and “subjective” with new concepts like “to” and “conscious burning” of the enemy. The doctrine’s aim was to recognize the rationale of the opponent system and create an “effects-based” campaign consisting of a series of “physical and cognitive appearances” designed to influence the consciousness of the enemy rather than destroying it. Based on this doctrine, the IDF was to rely on precise stand-off fire, mostly from the air, using ground manoeuvres only as a last resort.<sup>49</sup>

Other senior officers referred to such shifts as a period of “aerial arrogance” in the IDF. *Jane’s Defence Weekly* detailed the dissatisfaction with the new doctrine following the war with Hezbollah:

The recently adopted doctrine recognised the weakness of the ground forces, which for the past six years have hardly trained and have been occupied fighting Palestinian insurgents, who represent no real challenge to IDF capabilities. “The continuous occupation in the territories has not only damaged training, procedures, combat techniques, but has also damaged the IDF mentality,” said Levin. The IDF’s undisputed success in suppressing Palestinian terrorism increased commanders’ self-confidence and drove them to underestimate their Lebanese opponent.

Moreover, the doctrine’s new jargon, which became widespread as a growing number of officers were educated on it, “created confusion in terminology and misunderstanding of basic military principals”, as several inquiry teams pointed out.

All the debriefing teams were due to conclude work by the end of December 2006, and in early January 2007 the General Staff will convene for a workshop that will review the findings and decide on the required changes in doctrine, structure, and force building.

The assessment of several senior IDF sources is that they have no alternative but to completely rewrite the doctrine and perhaps reverse some of the structural changes conducted in recent years. The General Staff is expected to decide on considerably increased investments in ground forces, both in training and equipment.<sup>50</sup>

### **Winograd Testimonies and the Interim Report**

The Winograd Commission, chaired by retired judge Eliyahu Winograd, was established by the government of Israel shortly after the 2006 war with Lebanon to investigate the shortcomings and failure of the Israeli government and armed forces in the execution of the war and to draw lessons for future operations. The purpose of the commission, as outlined by the commission itself, was as follows:

On September 17, 2006, the Government of Israel decided, under section 8A of Basic Law: The Government 2001, to appoint a governmental commission of examination “To look into the preparation and conduct of the political and the security levels concerning all the dimensions of the Northern Campaign which started on July 12, 2006.” Today we have submitted to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence the classified interim report, and we are now presenting the unclassified report to the public.... The Commission was appointed due to a strong sense of a crisis and deep disappointment with the consequences of the campaign and the way it was conducted.<sup>51</sup>

To this end, the Winograd Commission began hearing witness testimony on November 2, 2006. During this process, the committee read through piles of classified army and government documents and heard testimony from 70 of the country’s most important military and political figures. Those called to testify included former intelligence chief Maj. Gen. Amos Malka, IDF chief of staff Dan Halutz, and Vice Premier Shimon Peres. The first stage of the committee’s work wrapped up on February 1, 2007, with the seven-hour testimony of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.<sup>52</sup>

Those testimonies had not been made public by late March 2007, although the decision to release the testimonies to the public had been made in mid-February of that year. The delays prompted the High Court of Justice to issue a warning that the commission’s procrastination

verged on contempt of court, and it was decided that the testimonies would be released two weeks after the committee's interim report was delivered to Ehud Olmert on April 30, 2007.<sup>53</sup> Excerpts of various testimonies were, however, leaked to the Israeli press prior to that date, which revealed a behind-closed-doors blame game and foreshadowed what many already expected would be a highly critical interim committee report.

In his testimony to the commission, Shimon Peres stated that he would not have gone to war had the decision been his. Rather, he went on, "In general, war is a very difficult thing and one can't control all situations. There are very difficult surprises. A war is a competition of making mistakes, with the biggest mistake being the war itself."<sup>54</sup> Peres not only distanced himself from the decision to go to war but also criticized IDF preparation and readiness: "I would not have come up with a list of goals for the war, because setting goals complicates things. If you say, for example, the first goal is to release the captives, you are in fact leaving yourself to the mercy of the enemy. Afterwards, I also thought that the IDF was not prepared for this war."

On April 30, 2007—the date the Winograd Commission released its Interim Report to Ehud Olmert—a press release was posted to the commission Web site outlining the initial findings of the investigation and placing primary responsibility for the failings of the summer 2006 on the prime minister, the minister of defense, and the outgoing chief of staff.<sup>55</sup> Many findings bear a grim resemblance to the mistakes of the Bush administration and its senior military leadership during the Afghan and Iraq wars, as well as those of the Blair prime ministership in Britain.

10. The main failures in the decisions made and the decision-making processes can be summed up as follows:

- a. The decision to respond with an immediate, intensive military strike was not based on a detailed, comprehensive, and authorized military plan, [which was] based on careful study of the complex characteristics of the Lebanon arena. A meticulous examination of these characteristics would have revealed the following: the ability to achieve military gains having significant political–international weight was limited; an Israeli military strike would inevitably lead to missiles fired at the Is-

raeli civilian north; there was not other effective military response to such missile attacks than an extensive and prolonged ground operation to capture the areas from which the missiles were fired—which would have a high “cost” and which did not enjoy broad support. These difficulties were not explicitly raised with the political leaders before the decision to strike was taken.

b. Consequently, in making the decision to go to war, the government did not consider the whole range of options, including that of continuing the policy of “containment,” or combining political and diplomatic moves with military strikes below the “escalation level,” or military preparations without immediate military action—so as to maintain for Israel the full range of responses to the abduction. This failure reflects weakness in strategic thinking, which derives the response to the event from a more comprehensive and encompassing picture.

c. The support in the cabinet for this move was gained in part through ambiguity in the presentation of goals and modes of operation, so that ministers with different or even contradictory attitudes could support it. The ministers voted for a vague decision, without understanding and knowing its nature and implications. They authorized to commence a military campaign without considering how to exit it.

d. Some of the declared goals of the war were not clear and could not be achieved, and in part were not achievable by the authorized modes of military action.

e. The IDF did not exhibit creativity in proposing alternative action possibilities, did not alert the political decision-makers to the discrepancy between its own scenarios and the authorized modes of action, and did not demand—as was necessary under its own plans—early mobilization of the reserves so they could be equipped and trained in case a ground operation would be required.

f. Even after these facts became known to the political leaders, they failed to adapt the military way of operation and its goals to the reality on the ground. On the contrary, declared goals

were too ambitious, and it was publicly stated that fighting will continue till they are achieved. But the authorized military operations did not enable their achievement.

11. The primary responsibility for these serious failings rests with the Prime Minister, the minister of defense, and the (outgoing) Chief of Staff. We single out these three because it is likely that had any of them acted better, [then] the decisions in the relevant period and the ways they were made, as well as the outcome of the war, would have been significantly better.

12. Let us start with the Prime Minister.

a. The Prime Minister bears supreme and comprehensive responsibility for the decisions of “his” government and the operations of the army. His responsibility for the failures in the initial decisions concerning the war stem from both his position and from his behavior, as he initiated and led the decisions which were taken.

b. The Prime Minister made up his mind hastily, despite the fact that no detailed military plan was submitted to him and without asking for one. Also, his decision was made without close study of the complex features of the Lebanon front and of the military, political, and diplomatic options available to Israel. He made his decision without systematic consultation with others, especially outside the IDF, despite not having experience in external-political and military affairs. In addition, he did not adequately consider political and professional reservations presented to him before the fateful decisions of July 12th.

c. The Prime Minister is responsible for the fact that the goals of the campaign were not set out clearly and carefully, and that there was no serious discussion of the relationships between these goals and the authorized modes of military action. He made a personal contribution to the fact that the declared goals were over-ambitious and not feasible.

d. The Prime Minister did not adapt his plans once it became clear that the assumptions and expectations of Israel’s actions were not realistic and were not materializing.

e. All of these add up to a serious failure in exercising judgment, responsibility, and prudence.

13. The Minister of Defence is the minister responsible for overseeing the IDF, and he is a senior member in the group of leaders in charge of political–military affairs.

a. The Minister of Defence did not have knowledge or experience in military, political, or governmental matters. He also did not have good knowledge of the basic principles of using military force to achieve political goals.

b. Despite these serious gaps, he made his decisions during this period without systemic consultations with experienced political and professional experts, including outside the security establishment. In addition, he did not give adequate weight to reservations expressed in the meetings he attended.

c. The Minister of Defence did not act within a strategic conception of the systems he oversaw. He did not ask for the IDF's operational plans and did not examine them; he did not check the preparedness and fitness of IDF, and did not examine the fit between the goals set and the modes of action presented and authorized for achieving them. His influence on the decisions made was mainly pointillist and operational. He did not put on the table—and did not demand presentation—of serious strategic options for discussion with the Prime Minister and the IDF.

d. The Minister of Defence did not develop an independent assessment of the implications of the complexity of the front for Israel's proper response, the goals of the campaign, and the relations between military and diplomatic moves within it. His lack of experience and knowledge prevented him from challenging in a competent way both the IDF, over which he was in charge, and the Prime Minister.

e. In all these ways, the Minister of Defence failed in fulfilling his functions. Therefore, his serving as Minister of Defence during the war impaired Israel's ability to respond well to its challenges.

14. The Chief of Staff (COS) is the supreme commander of the IDF, and the main source of information concerning the army, its plans, abilities, and recommendations presented to the political echelon. Furthermore, the COS's personal involvement with decision making within the army and in coordination with the political echelon were dominant.

a. The army and the COS were not prepared for the event of the abduction despite recurring alerts. When the abduction happened, he responded impulsively. He did not alert the political leaders to the complexity of the situation and did not present information, assessments, and plans that were available in the IDF at various levels of planning and approval and which would have enabled a better response to the challenges.

b. Among other things, the COS did not alert the political echelon to the serious shortcomings in the preparedness and the fitness of the armed forces for an extensive ground operation, if that became necessary. In addition, he did not clarify that the military assessments and analyses of the arena were that a military strike against Hezbollah will with a high probability make such a move necessary.

c. The COS's responsibility is aggravated by the fact that he knew well that both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defense lacked adequate knowledge and experience in these matters, and by the fact that he had led them to believe that the IDF was ready and prepared and had operational plans fitting the situation.

d. The COS did not provide adequate responses to serious reservation about his recommendations raised by ministers and others during the first days of the campaign, and he did not present to the political leaders the internal debates within the IDF concerning the fit between the stated goals and the authorized modes of actions.

e. In all these, the Chief of Staff failed in his duties as commander in chief of the army and as a critical part of the political-military leadership, and exhibited flaws in professionalism, responsibility, and judgment.

15. Concomitantly, we determine that the failures listed here, and in the outcomes of the war, had many other partners.

a. The complexity of the Lebanon scene is basically outside Israel's control.

b. The ability of Hezbollah to sit "on the border," its ability to dictate the moment of escalation, and the growth of its military abilities and missile arsenal increased significantly as a result of Israel's unilateral withdrawal in May 2000 (which was not followed, as had been hoped, by The Lebanese Army deploying on the border with Israel).

c. The shortcomings in the preparedness and the training of the army, its operational doctrine, and various flaws in its organizational culture and structure were all the responsibility of the military commanders and political leaders in charge years before the present Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Chief of Staff took office.

d. On the political-security strategic level, the lack of preparedness was also caused by the failure to update and fully articulate Israel's security strategy doctrine, in the fullest sense of that term, so that it could not serve as a basis for coping comprehensively with all the challenges facing Israel. Responsibility for this lack of an updates national security strategy lies with Israel's governments over the years. This omission made it difficult to devise an immediate proper response to the abduction, because it led to stressing an immediate and sharp military strike. If the response had been derived from a more comprehensive security strategy, it would have been easier to take into account Israel's overall balance of strengths and vulnerabilities, including the preparedness of the civil population.

e. Another factor which largely contributed to the failures is the weakness of the high staff work available to the political leadership. This weakness existed under all previous Prime Ministers, and this continuing failure is the responsibility of these PMs and their cabinets. The current political leadership did not act

in a way that could compensate for this lack and did not rely sufficiently on other bodies, within and outside the security system, that could have helped it.

f. Israel's government in its plenum failed in its political function of taking full responsibility for its decisions. It did not explore and seek adequate response for various reservations that were raised, and [it] authorized an immediate military strike that was not thought-through and suffered from over-reliance on the judgment of the primary decision-makers.

g. Members of the IDF's general staff who were familiar with the assessments and intelligence concerning the Lebanon front, and the serious deficiencies in preparedness and training, did not insist that these should be considered within the army, and did not alert the political leaders concerning the flaws in the decisions and the way they were made.

16. As a result of our investigation, we make a number of structural and institutional recommendations, which require urgent attention:

a. The improvement of the quality of discussions and decision making within the government through strengthening and deepening staff work, strict enforcement of the prohibition of leaks, improving the knowledge base of all members of the government on core issues of Israel's challenges, and orderly procedures for presentation of issues for discussion and resolution.

b. Full incorporation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in security decisions with political and diplomatic aspects.

c. Substantial improvement in the functioning of the National Security Council, the establishment of a national assessment team, and creating a center for crises management in the Prime Minister's Office...<sup>56</sup>

The preview of the commission's findings concluded that

19. The IDF was not ready for this war. Among the many reasons for this, we can mention a few: Some of the political and military elites in Israel have reached the conclusion that Israel is beyond the

era of wars. It had enough military might and superiority to deter others from declaring war against her; these would also be sufficient to send a painful reminder to anyone who seemed to be undeterred; since Israel did not intend to initiate a war, the conclusion was that the main challenge facing the land forces would be low intensity asymmetrical conflicts.

20. Given these assumptions, the IDF did not need to be prepared for “real” war. There was also no urgent need to update in a systematic and sophisticated way Israel’s overall security strategy and to consider how to mobilize and combine all its resources and sources of strength—political, economic, social, military, spiritual, cultural, and scientific—to address the totality of the challenges it faces.<sup>57</sup>

It is still unclear how much effect such criticisms will have at the top. The calls for Olmert’s resignation, which began soon after the conclusion of the war, increased as the content of early Winograd testimonies was leaked to the public and as debriefing teams established by the government to investigate specific aspects of the war raised questions over the leadership capabilities of the government responsible for overseeing the war. Calls for the resignation of both Olmert and his defense minister, Amir Peretz, were further spurred on by the January 17, 2007, resignation of IDF chief of staff Dan Halutz, who was criticized for his overreliance on airpower in favor of ground operations during the war.

On May 1, 2007, just a day after the Winograd Commission released its interim report to the Israeli government, Coalition Chairman Avigdor Yitzhaki spoke with several members of the ruling Kadima Party over the replacement of Ehud Olmert as prime minister. That same day, Marina Solodkin, a Kadima member of Knesset, declared that Olmert “must go home.” She added that “the report that was published yesterday was so serious that according to what was written there, [Olmert] has to resign.... Olmert made very big mistakes during the war. He acted with a blatant lack of responsibility.”<sup>58</sup>

The final outcome of such reports, however, remains unclear. Israel’s overall political structure and leadership in every party is unquestionably weaker and less competent than at any time since Israel’s independence. It is still unclear that a better alternative is available.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

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### **TACTICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND OTHER MILITARY ASPECTS OF THE WAR**

It is important to stress that some key details of the tactics, technology, and other aspects of the fighting during the Israeli-Hezbollah War are not yet clear. Reliable historical and military data can easily take several years to emerge, and sometimes it is impossible to resolve conflicting indicators and evidence. Several major tactical and technical lessons of the Israeli-Hezbollah War, however, do seem to have emerged.

#### **HEZBOLLAH'S MILITARY ORGANIZATION AND TACTICAL IMPERATIVES**

To understand such lessons and the interaction between the Israeli and Hezbollah forces, one must understand the differences between the forces that Hezbollah deployed and Israel's far more conventional forces.

Hezbollah's military wing was organized horizontally. It was also broadly organized into two types of fighters: the so-called elite or regular fighters, who number about 1,000 men and who were often given advanced weapons training; and the village fighters, whose numbers are difficult to estimate because they often include local men only loosely affiliated with Hezbollah.

During the fighting with Israel, Hezbollah further organized its fighters into small, self-sufficient teams capable of operating independently and without direction from high authority for long periods of time. Although an elaborate system of radio call signs, a closed cellu-

lar phone system, and two-way radios allowed these teams to stay in touch with their higher units, a great level of wartime decisionmaking leeway was given to the junior ranks, largely mitigating the *need* for such communication.<sup>1</sup>

According to some, this decentralized command structure represented a departure from an exceedingly hierarchical structure more typical of Arab militaries. Middle East analyst Kenneth Pollack noted that historically it has been “commonplace for even the most minor issues to be referred up the chain of command, overburdening the top leaders and further slowing reaction times.”<sup>2</sup> As for its counterparts in Chechnya, Iraq, and Afghanistan, Hezbollah’s looser structure may have worked to its distinct advantage during the 2006 war, allowing units the flexibility necessary for quick reaction and adjustment to Israeli offensives. Figure 4.1 shows Hezbollah’s assessed military command structure from July to August 2006.

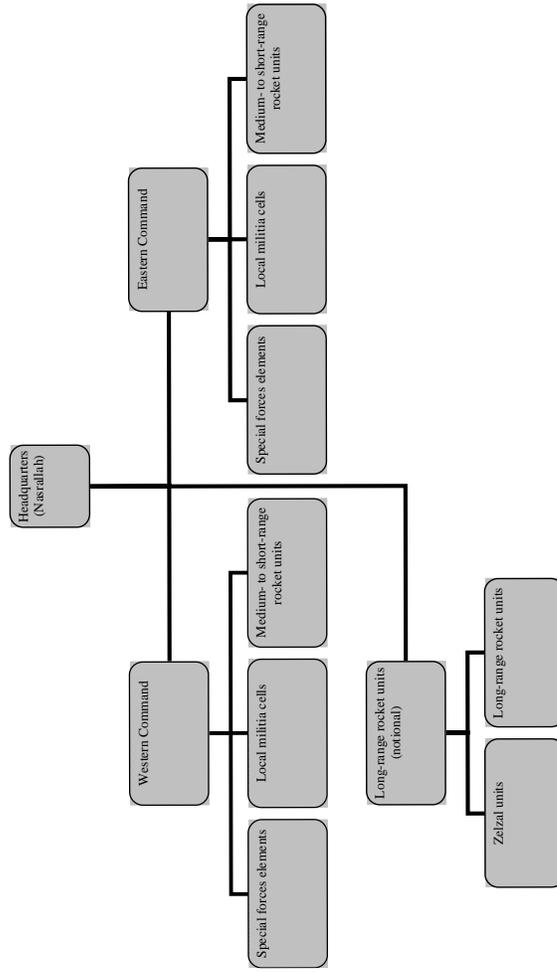
### **The Role of Village Fighters**

Hezbollah forces had radically different wartime strategic and tactical goals from those of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). According to a report by Andrew Exum at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Hezbollah’s goal during the July War was to “remain intact as a cohesive fighting force while at the same time inflicting as many enemy casualties as possible. In short, it was a mission of survival.” As mentioned earlier, Hezbollah had turned much of Southern Lebanon—and its villages—into a fortified “safe zone” for operations against any Israeli invasion. Hezbollah’s mission in those villages, according to United Nations official Timur Goksel, was “to bleed the IDF, not defeat it.”<sup>3</sup>

Exum offered the following analysis of Hezbollah’s use of asymmetric village warfare:

The Israeli ground attack began on July 17 with a series of initial probes along the border near the village of Maroun al-Ras. Immediately, the IDF discovered that its Hizballah adversaries were dug-in and capable of mounting a strong defense of the village. Maroun al-Ras became, in effect, a harbinger of what was to come for the IDF in southern Lebanon. Not until July 23 could the IDF declare Maroun al-Ras under Israeli control, and the vicious fight that took place in

Figure 4.1  
Hezbollah Military Command Structure, July–August 2006



Source: Adapted from Jeffrey B. White, "Military Implications of the Israeli-Hezbollah War in Lebanon," in *Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizballah War: A Preliminary Assessment*, Policy Focus no. 60 (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2006), 36.

the village and its environs resulted in the deaths of six IDF soldiers and the wounding of eighteen more.

Hizballah's tenacity in the villages was, to this observer, the biggest surprise of the war. As has been mentioned already, the vast majority of the fighters who defended villages such as Ayta ash Shab, Bint Jbeil, and Maroun al-Ras were not, in fact, regular Hizballah fighters and in some cases were not even members of Hizballah. But they were men, in the words of one Lebanese observer, who were "defending their country in the most tangible sense—their shops, their homes, even their trees."

All the same, the performance of the village units was exceptional. Their job—to slow and to bleed the IDF as much as possible—was carried out with both determination and skill. In Maroun al-Ras, nearby Bint Jbeil, and other villages, Hizballah made the IDF pay for every inch of ground that it took. At the same time, crucially, Hizballah dictated the rules of how the war was to be fought. Or as one observer put it, "This was a very good lesson in asymmetric warfare. This was not Israel imposing its battle on Hizballah but Hizballah imposing its battle on Israel." The narrow village streets of southern Lebanon do not lend themselves to tank maneuver, so the IDF would have to fight with infantry supported by armor, artillery, and air power. This kind of fight negated many of the IDF's natural advantages and forced the IDF ground forces to fight a very different kind of battle than the one for which they had trained.<sup>4</sup>

Exum also, however, noted the limitations of this style of fighting:

The decentralized way in which Hizballah organized its forces, however, carried with it advantages and disadvantages. The autonomy given to Hizballah's small-unit commanders afforded them great flexibility and encouraged them to take the initiative against their opposite numbers in the IDF. In addition, the lack of a significant "logistical tail" allowed them to be more or less self-sufficient during the course of the war. Hizballah's small units had enough water, food, and supplies to last them through the course of the five-week war.

But the decentralized way in which Hizballah arrayed its forces prevented its units from supporting one another in the way that the

IDF's small units were able to do. In a battle, every man and every unit sees his own battle. In Hizballah's case, this is certainly true because individual units had few resources available to allow them to know—in the midst of the fighting, despite their communications gear—what their sister units were encountering and how to help them. Also, though Hizballah's small units displayed a great deal of mobility within their villages and individual areas of operations, Hizballah's decentralized organization forced them to fight a more or less static defense. There was no question of units retreating or moving forward to support other units because the Israeli Air Force (IAF) had successfully isolated the villages and fortifications from which they were fighting.

But what is “withdrawal” for a unit organic to the village from which it fights? Dismissing reports that Hizballah had withdrawn units into Syria after the fighting turned against it, former UN official Timur Goksel scoffed, “For a guy fighting in Ayta ash Shab, ‘withdrawal’ means going home, putting your AK-47 under the bed, and changing your clothes.”<sup>5</sup>

### **DON'T FIGHT THE ENEMY ON ITS OWN TERMS**

As has been touched upon earlier, Hezbollah's capabilities in asymmetric warfare were compounded by strategic and tactical failures that led the IDF to engage Hezbollah on its own terms. Counterinsurgency warfare and stability operations often do have to be fought partly on the terms imposed by an opponent, but the IDF voluntarily chose a strategy of fighting that attacked Hezbollah in its strongest forward positions and limited the IDF's ground operations to relatively static, head-on operations in close urban warfare where the IDF's advantages in weapons and technology were least effective.

The IDF also chose to fight in ways where it could not inhibit Hezbollah dispersal, infiltration, and resupply by fighting in depth and could not bypass and envelop Hezbollah positions from the rear. The IDF also gave Hezbollah ample strategic and tactical warning when it finally did decide to move north.

The IDF had focused on air operations and “police” actions against the Palestinians, whereas Hezbollah planned for the kind of fighting that actually occurred. In the years leading up to the 2006 confronta-

tion, Hezbollah had spent much of its time preparing and shaping the landscape of Southern Lebanon for possible conflict. Tactics such as suicide bombings had been long on the decline as Hezbollah become a more mature guerilla force, largely thanks to armaments and tactical training received from Iran. As one Israeli general put it, "Hezbollah had spent the years from 2000 to 2006 thinking about the coming war in *tactical* terms." In other words, Hezbollah had thought about the conflict in terms of *how* the IDF would fight and what types of weapons, personnel, and tactics the IDF would use.<sup>6</sup>

Even at the end of the war, when Israel finally did engage its large ground operation and intended to drive toward the Litani River, the IDF still played into Hezbollah's hands. Despite having known for nearly two weeks before the end of the war that the international community was planning to deploy a multinational force to Lebanon, Israel waited until the day the cease-fire was ready to be signed to begin the offensive. In addition to the rushed nature of the attack, the geography of the region forced it to advance along predictable lines. This narrow area of attack and the terrain provided Hezbollah with the time and cover to prepare ambushes for IDF troops. The ambushes resulted in losses of armor and significant Israeli casualties; 34 soldiers died in the last two days of the conflict.<sup>7</sup>

Hezbollah proved to be better trained and more ready than most guerrilla forces, which may say a great deal about the quality of Iranian training and doctrine in this area. The IDF, however, fought in ways that substantially increased Hezbollah's effectiveness. The IDF also, ironically, fought in ways that almost certainly increased total IDF and Israeli casualties. In seeking to avoid becoming bogged down in Lebanon, it fought a long battle of attrition with minimal maneuver.

Israel's mistakes have broader implications for the changes needed in U.S. and other Western forces, which have made somewhat similar mistakes in Iraq and Afghanistan. Wars against political and ideological enemies are almost impossible to win by attacking their combat forces. Such enemies do more than fight wars of attrition; they carry out ideological, political, and media battles of attrition. There almost always are more leaders and more volunteers. They can disperse, pause, outwait, and adapt.

A senior U.S. officer and a government expert commenting on the war drew the following lessons about the ways in which Israel's behavior

played to Hezbollah's strengths, noting parallels between the lessons that Israel should learn and the lessons that the United States should draw from Iraq and Afghanistan:

I believe in the ultimate goal here, but I do not believe we are realistically assessing our enemy. First of all, I disagree that Hizb'Allah are fanatics. The party is relatively moderate when compared to Al Qaeda, and has differing aims. We demonized Shaikh Fadlallah in the '70s and '80s, when we should have brought him into the fold—his message was a tocsin, and we ignored it. This war has only served to radicalize a population that was essentially moderate, in a country that is already democratic, and highly educated. We are also ignoring the fact that a percentage of the Shia'a population [has] U.S. passports—the Lebanese have a long history of U.S. emigration, going back to the 19th century. This is a potential OpSec nightmare.

The Iranian Revolution and the kidnapping and subsequent murder of Imam Moussa Sadr were the first indications of the Shia'a battle/desire for regional influence. The Shia'a have long been marginalized within Islam, and they see this as their time in history. Hizb'Allah is the manifestation of this, and the seeds were sowed by the Israelis during the occupation in the 1980s. Nasrallah has aspirations to lead Lebanon and make it a Muslim state. He also knows that leading Lebanon can give him regional influence. He has no real goal to destroy the [United States], per se. But he now perceives—and I think in the case of this war, rightly so—that the [United States] is solidly urging Israel to prosecute this war in this manner. Lebanon has been used as an international proxy for years—they know a regional “cluster” when they see it.

Controlling Hizb'Allah is the correct goal—this is not the way to do it. Every time Israel prosecutes a war in this manner—and the Lebanese are calling this “the Sixth War”—they make Hizb'Allah stronger. It's not working. We must first resist the temptation to lump every Islamic-oriented organization into one mold. We cannot fight an enemy we do not understand—or worse, misunderstand. It is not “all one war.” That is a fundamental misunderstanding of the dynamics of the Middle East. Is there interaction (training, men, matériel) between some factions? Yes. Is there exploitation of regional conflicts by groups like Hizb'Allah? Yes. But this is not “one war” any more than the Middle East is one set piece.

The Israelis may well have attempted to avoid civilian casualties, but the fact is they have a long history of indiscriminate bombing in Lebanon, and their opponents—the PLO and Hizb’Allah—have a long history of placing arms and fighters within urban areas, hospitals, mosques, and apartment buildings. The locals know this—I can give you endless examples of streets which were deserted because everyone knew a certain place or building would be a target.

The fact remains, the Israelis killed thousands of men, women, and children in West Beirut in previous wars—and that’s without considering Sabra and Shatila. This war was a blatant attempt to destroy as much of the south as possible, and as much of the Shia’a areas as possible. They have rationalized this by warning all residents to flee, knowing full well many of them can’t. They intended to empty and isolate the south in order to prosecute a ground war against Hizb’Allah combatants, but the first [casualties] of war are the old and the sick and the poor. Nasrallah knows this, he used it, he exploited it, and Israel walked right into it. Did he mobilize Hizb’Allah to get these people to safety? Of course not—he used them, and to great effect.

Israel did, in fact, avoid a great number of civilian casualties. Less than 1,000 people died in a month of serious fighting. Also, all Hizb’Allah militia are listed as “civilian” deaths. But the number is immaterial; dead babies, no matter how many, feed into the collective memory of the Lebanese. During the Israeli bombing raids on Saida and west Beirut in the 1980s, it was not uncommon for 125–150 people (civilians) to be killed at one time when urban areas were indiscriminately bombed. This is a country that went through 15 years of civil war, and then occupation by Israel AND Syria. Even one dead baby evokes those collective memories and fears. That is why the south truly emptied out when the Israelis invaded—almost 1 million people displaced. All those memories and fear were made real, and people fled. Even as it reduced civilian casualties, Israel evoked and entrenched fears as strong as those of the Holocaust.

Leaflets were dropped by Israel telling people to flee north, when the Israelis had already bombed every main bridge leading out. They warned the residents of Maryjoun to flee, then bombed the convoy leaving. Were there bad guys in the convoy? Undoubtedly. But whether they like it or not, what they are doing smacks

of ethnic cleansing to the people here on the ground, and by prosecuting the war as they have, they have exacerbated the problem. Al Jazeera and Al Manar are acting as a TSU [technical support unit] for every insurgent and resistance group in the Arab world—we know this. We know how popular they are, even among moderate Arabs. The Israelis knew the public perception was being manipulated by Nasrallah in order to enlarge his power base and increase his national influence—and they played right into it.

It is pointless for us, with our Western sensibilities, to point out that Hafiz al Assad's brutal massacre at Hama was far worse than what the Israelis did here. That is brutality within the greater *umma*; this is war against the common enemy.

It is far too simplistic, and just plain wrong, to blame ... a "hostile global media." Many of them are ill-informed. Some of them have agendas. Fox News is as biased as Al Jazeera. There is also good, solid reporting. Don't kill the messenger, and don't lump them all together. What the good reporter on the ground sees is what the indigenous population is seeing—listen to the message and use it. Listen to what Al Jazeera says, and learn about your enemy from it.

The Israelis left the village of Rmaish—a Christian village—untouched. It is essentially the only town on the border or parallel to the Litani that was left undamaged. The nuns and the residents took in all the Muslims and Christians from all the surrounding villages and fed and sheltered them. Yet within one day of the ceasefire, the Shia'a in the destroyed villages are asking why Rmaish remained untouched, and implying Israeli collaboration. This is not the fanatical teachings of radical Islam—this is the memory of the Lebanese of the brutality that all sides—including the Christians—exhibited during the civil war. The convent at Rmaish has the emblem of the Lebanese Forces stenciled on the exterior walls.

Now, the Forces are the new, vogue manifestation of Christian nationalism. But if you are Muslim and older than 30, you think of Sabra and Shatila. The Israeli occupation of 1982 and subsequent actions are having the effect of driving the Christians out of the South. No support from the West is coming to these people. The one solid source of intel and cooperation, and it's systematically being driven out. If Israel wanted to ensure a solid Hizb'Allah population on its border, then it has accomplished its goal.

Israel went in without adequate ground intel to take out Hizb'Allah's missile capability; it did not fail because it didn't wage a serious war. Yes, they could have nuked every square inch of the south and put 200,000 boots on the ground—and that's probably what it would have taken if you consider waging serious war simply the use of massive brute force.

... This was a very serious war, especially if you are Lebanese. The infrastructure of the country is essentially destroyed. Almost 100 bridges and overpasses have been bombed in a country that is only 4,000 square miles. The entire southern section of Beirut has been leveled—home to over 300,000 people. Most of Lebanon south of the Litani is flattened. It looks like Dresden—mile after mile after mile. Every main road is bombed. And you know who is rushing in to help these people? Hizb'Allah. Nasrallah has vowed to rent a home for every displaced Shia'a family, and rebuild their destroyed houses. Hizb'Allah has unlimited funds—unlimited—and they use them in the classic Muslim Brotherhood model of public support and dependence in the absence of strong central government. The Amal militia (Shia'a) was handing out packages of sweets to every person returning through Sur. The day after Nasrallah's "victory" speech, Hizb'Allah flags and banners were flying from every lamppost.

The Israeli bombing has fostered as siege mentality that plays into the "victimization of the Arabs" that is the message of every truly radical group. Waging war in this manner fosters radicalization—it does not eliminate it.

Because of this de facto scorched earth policy, Lebanon's economy is in shambles, except for the money flowing into the south through Hizb'Allah and the huge amounts of reconstruction money that will be funneled through Hizb'Allah by the UAE [United Arab Emirates], Saudi, and other Arab countries, which will send massive aid. The central economy will take the biggest hit, further weakening the ability of the central government to exert control.

Israel waged a serious war; it did not wage a smart one. It is necessary to exploit the enemies' weaknesses, and those are not necessarily all military.

"If you must go to war, go with everything you've got. From Day One. In war, the only bargain at any price is victory."

This war had excellent strategic operations, planning, and theory—but was poorly prosecuted. The last time Israel success-

fully invaded, they had over 100,000 boots on the ground. They started this war with 10,000 boots and figured air support and spec ops would win the war. Spec Ops was badly utilized and the victim of poor recon and ground intel.

IDF soldiers have nowhere near the level of commitment and across the board training the central cadre of Hizb'Allah has. The fighters are well trained; they were prepared; and, like the Iranians, they have solid, long-range planning and operational staff in place. Their C4 [command, control, communications, and computers] is very sophisticated. They have an impressive technology set piece (they purchased a lot from the Russians through cutouts) and have excellent satellite capabilities. Their command and control was not—I repeat not—taken out by Israeli commandos. I will explain that further when I see you.

Without going into details on open source, the Spec Ops potential was underutilized and needed better recon and intel support. There were so many ways to support and enhance the chances of victory before putting boots on the ground. As it is, the Israelis strengthened Nasrullah's power base and set themselves up for an ongoing problem—with U.S. encouragement.

The officer commented:

The war has strategic value of great consequence because, whether it is true or not, the Islamic world believes that the lessons of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Lebanon are that the Western world is vulnerable. The Islamic populations—formerly torn by the clash of cultures and chagrined by their powerlessness—now have heroes, and the madrassas are undoubtedly now filled with tall tales designed to inspire the next echelon of fighters, spoiling for the next fight.

As you point out, it is now unmistakable that we need to dramatically shift our thinking to prepare for this form of warfare. The QDR [Quadrennial Defense Review]—pre-scripted and irrelevant—has to be consigned to the dust bin. (I see no evidence that either the administration or military leaders are showing any imagination in this regard.)

The definition of warfare has to be expanded (more accurately, we have to revert to the wisdom of the ancients) to emphasize the economic, political, diplomatic, and informational. Requirement

must dictate mission, ... mission must dictate [and] plan, and organization must follow all. We are mal-positioned and, what's worse, we seem culturally incapable of adapting. Very troubling.

Such views should not be disregarded. The problem of fighting an enemy like Hezbollah is not simply to avoid fighting it tactically on its own terms and allowing it to fight—as Sir Rupert Smith has warned—below the level of competence of conventional forces. The problem is also fighting such an enemy in ways that give it religious, cultural, political, and perceptual advantages—and that highlight the alien nature of Israel or the United States.

## READINESS AND PREPARATION

Since the war, Israeli sources have made all too clear that IDF ground forces had slipped badly in terms of both readiness and training in the years before the war. The fact that readiness is always at least as important as force numbers and technology is scarcely a new lesson of war. The same is true of the dangers in shaping a force around the wars that a nation wants to fight, rather than around the wars that it may have to fight or that events and the enemy may dictate. Nevertheless, IDF readiness for the land battle was much more uncertain than many observers anticipated. In some ways, this outcome should be expected. No amount of training or discipline can substitute for combat experience, and the IDF had dealt only with a poorly armed and disorganized Palestinian resistance since 1982.

According to Ze'ev Schiff writing in *Haaretz*, the recent focus on peacekeeping and security hindered the IDF's ability to effectively prosecute offensive operations. The army lacked initiative when confronting even minor obstacles. Having consistently acted as a police force, the army often searched for reasons not to attack and avoided taking the offensive.<sup>8</sup> Despite the failures of the reserve and the lack of training, however, it is important to note that all of the IDF's elite parachute and infantry brigades were committed, as were many of the best armored brigades. Much of the fighting during the war was done by Israel's best troops.<sup>9</sup>

The IDF did not really prepare its active land forces for the specific fighting they encountered in moving into Lebanon and found its reserves

needed at least a week of maneuver training to get ready for the eventual thrust toward the Litani. Strikingly enough, Brig. Gen. Yossi Heiman, the departing commander of the IDF's infantry and paratroops, stated after the war that he and others had failed to prepare IDF troops for such wars before the war and that he and other commanders now regretted a "certain sense of failure and missed opportunities. We were guilty ... of the sin of arrogance."<sup>10</sup>

The failure to plan for alternatives to the initial reliance on airpower seems to have extended to delays in proper preparation for using ground forces after the war had actually begun. More seriously, although Israel watched Hezbollah build up on its northern border for six years, Israel's overall quality of readiness, training, and preparation for a possible war seems to have been dictated by the fact that it did not want to fight another land war in Lebanon, rather than the fact that it might well have to fight such a war.

### **Logistics**

The IDF's Logistics Corps was unable or unready to meet the IDF's needs in combat—perhaps because senior commanders and politicians never gave the proper guidance to prepare for the ground war that the IDF might have to fight. Maj. Gen. Avi Mizrahi, the head of the IDF Logistics Directorate, has been quoted as saying, "In some cases, we could not secure a land route for supplies, so we sought other ways, such as airlift supplies." The same article, however, quotes an unnamed Israeli commander as saying, "We have found ourselves operating without a logistic tail."<sup>11</sup>

Reservist accounts make clear that many went to war without proper equipment, including such vital items as night sights for sniper rifles.<sup>12</sup> Basic supply items were missing from depots. Reserve units reported being supplied inadequately and with old equipment, and even being short of food and water.<sup>13</sup>

Logistics problems were not limited to the supply of forward areas but included the existence of the necessary munitions. In particular, the IAF suffered from a lack of ammunition and smart bombs during the war. This shortage grew worse during the war, but the shortage was already a problem before the war began. The IAF was particularly concerned about possible involvement by Syria, which would have further strained the supply.<sup>14</sup>

### Reserves and Reserve and Active Training

Although IDF's debriefings on the second Lebanon War were initially scheduled to begin coming out by the end of calendar 2006, some of the committees involved finished their work sooner because of the urgency of their findings. Among the findings, was the need for greater readiness and increased training for reservists, a process that was to begin by fall 2007.<sup>15</sup>

Training of reserve units had significantly decreased over the previous six years.<sup>16</sup> Many IDF officers and reservists felt that both this training and the small unit and squad training were inadequate both before and during the war. Most reserve units required a rushed week's maneuver refreshing training during the war in preparation for the attack into Lebanon, and few felt that training was adequate.

Key complaints included the following:

- Poor preparation and training of the reservists in Division 91, which helped lead to the abductions that caused the war
- Problems in the armored reserve division that fought largely on the eastern front in the last week of the war, which included poorly prepared officers who gave confusing orders, constant changes in mission, and serious shortfalls in the leadership of the divisional headquarters
- Lack of preparation for combining tank movements with combat engineering and barrier clearing
- Poor preparation and readiness of infantry units, and poor preparation for evacuation in the reserve infantry division
- Problems in cooperation with the IAF, particularly in managing airlifting during the last two days of the fighting and in coordinating helicopter support and movements after a helicopter was hit by Hezbollah<sup>17</sup>

Training for rear-area security and movement readiness were conspicuously weak during visits to the front. Many units complained of poor logistics and service support in areas as elementary as water supply after they crossed the Lebanese border—a lack of forward-area supply that is particularly serious when units are in physically demanding combat.

IDF investigations later found serious problems with the performance of reserve units during the war. In one armored reserve division, reservist

officers criticized what they called deadly failings. They said the division suffered from (a) confusing orders, (b) repeated changes in mission, (c) ineffective divisional headquarters, and (d) poor performance in the tank brigade. In a reserve infantry division, there was criticism of the leadership and tactics that led to soldiers being killed in a house by anti-tank rockets. In the same division, there were problems of indecision about methods of evacuating wounded.<sup>18</sup>

As a result, the IDF planned to make rapid increases in the amount of training for both reservists and active-duty soldiers.<sup>19</sup> *Haaretz* reported at the end of November that the IDF ground commander, Maj. Gen. Benny Gantz, had announced during a meeting at the Tze'elim training base that the IDF was planning to increase the training of reserve units by 30 percent as a result of their performance during the war, which meant requiring 80 days of reserve training from soldiers every three years and 95 days from commanders.<sup>20</sup>

The planned increase could run into problems with a new law, however, scheduled to become effective in 2008, which is intended to reduce the amount of time reserve soldiers serve. The law would reduce service time for soldiers to 45 days every three years and for commanders to 70 days.<sup>21</sup>

### **More Live Training**

Another lesson—and one very similar to one that the U.S. army learned in developing its program at Fort Irwin—was the need for realistic, live training. Formal training and simulators were found to be inadequate substitutes for actual physical training and experience in working as teams and in dealing with the hardships in the field.

As a result, the IDF's ground forces command raised its training budget from 550 million shekels in 2006 to 830 million shekels in 2007. Brig. Gen. Uzi Moskovich, the commander of the army's National Ground Training Center, stated, "For the next two years at least, we have decided to concentrate on bolstering combat qualities and the readiness of our fighting forces.... This is a direct and very prominent lesson from the Lebanon War."<sup>22</sup>

The IDF planned major increases in live fire training up to the brigade level, including joint exercises with the IAF. It also planned two divisional exercises for 2007—both maneuvers to be conducted at Israel's Matbat Tactical Training Center in the Negev—and urban warfare training at a new urban warfare training center. These trainings

will evidently involve the use of digital training systems similar to those used by U.S. forces. They will include use of a new Ra'am Tactical Battle Group Trainer and the Tzayad (Hunter) digital command and control system to link the various elements of the red-blue combat teams together.

More experimental live-action training will be involved, however, of a kind that such systems are not ready to fully simulate, thus testing the possible tactical and training lessons of the war. The core activity will be live, rather than virtual training, and will emphasize (a) close urban combat against Hezbollah-like forces; (b) the practical use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), helicopters, and other platforms; and (c) tank crew training. One goal is to use this experience to redesign simulator training both to respond to the lessons of the war and to provide a way of rapidly providing refresher training in rear areas when preparing for and conducting actual offensives.

### **Leadership**

The lack of preparedness extended to the upper levels of the officer ranks. Not only did most of them lack real combat experience, but also the IDF had not offered a course for division commanders in the previous 16 years. A military task force investigating the senior leadership found that senior officers lacked the appropriate initiative and skills for field command and that they were acting more as administrators than as combat commanders.<sup>23</sup>

During the war, this lack of preparation led to several command breakdowns from the general headquarters down. In the Northern Territorial Command, Maj. Gen. Udi Adam was essentially replaced when a representative of the chief of staff was sent to the command to help manage the war. Anecdotal evidence suggests such breakdowns occurred throughout the chain of command.<sup>24</sup>

In one typical e-mail, an Israeli summarized the attitudes of a battalion commander fighting in Lebanon as follows:

I have known Danny [a pseudonym] for many years but never have I seen him as angry as now. He is a commander of a reserve battalion in the armored corps and a moshav farmer in civilian life. His epaulets rank him as major. Tall, muscular, bulky, in his late forties, he cuts a dashing figure speeding in his armored jeep through a

curtain of diesel fumes and whirling dust alongside his clanking, snorting column of Merkava tanks returning to base from Lebanon.

Danny is angry at the last three chiefs of staff—Ehud Barak, Shaul Mofaz, and Moshe Ya'alon—for having neglected the land forces in favor of the air force, for sacrificing ground mobility on the altar of high-tech wizardry, and for squandering tank specialists in the nooks and crannies of the Intifada.

Danny is angry at them for slashing the army budget by 13 percent, and for downgrading the reserves by a whopping 25 percent. To be in top form, a tank reservist needs a five-day refresher exercise each year. Most hardly got that [refresher] in the course of three years, others in the space of five, and yet others none at all.

Danny is angry at the rushed fashion [in which] his reservists were mobilized, with depleted provisions, outdated equipment, and insufficient supplies. Their transition from family normality to a place of hazard and death was too abrupt to allow for battle conditioning. His reservists, living by a bond that is impossible to describe and impossible to break, had too little time to pound themselves into front-line discipline through tough exercise, ruthless discipline, and absolute obedience. Some were so out-of-shape [that] they caved in under the grueling stress.

Danny is angry at the lack of aptitude of the younger enlisted recruits. They were] tankists by designation but drafted into the Intifada as foot soldiers by necessity; their stance was not that of tank crews but of crack commandos. Full of drive and guts, they know more about tracking down terrorists in the labyrinths of the refugee camps in Jenin and Nablus than [about] a tank's maneuverability, technology, and self-protection mechanisms in Lebanon.

Inevitably, the first such crews to cross the blue line had little notion of how to function in the forbidding and grim terrain of the fractured Lebanese battlefields, with their steep hills, dry stream beds, twisting roads, [and] deep ravines, and [with] Hezbollah's formidable anti-tank arsenal.

Danny is angry at the armchair pundits for disparaging the formidability of Israel's main battle-tank, the Merkava. Its latest version, the Merkava 4, is perhaps the finest in the world. Born of necessity in the seventies when countries refused to sell Israel their main-line tanks, a brilliant armor tactician named General Israel

Tal conceived the Merkava whose latest innovative design combines maximum fire power and maneuverability with paramount crew safety. There is no such thing as an impregnable tank, but the Merkava 4 is the closest thing to one.

Now in its fourth generation, the Merkava 4 proved its mettle in the harshest tank battle of the war. [It] fought in a precipitous gorge west of the crook of the Litani River in the central sector—the battle of Wadi Saluki.

Two of the eight Merkava 4s were knocked out of commission and their commander was mortally wounded [when] caught in the sights of long-range, Russian-made, Syrian-supplied, laser-beamed, self-propelled Kornet anti-tank missiles, with their lethal dual warheads that penetrate the armor and then detonate incendiary blasts within. But the reserve commander saved the day, rushing to the rescue of the other six by leading their climb up sheer slopes to the top of the gorge—an ascent [that] few other tanks in the world could navigate. In all, four crewmen died in the battle of Saluki, a battle which was an unqualified triumph of the Merkava 4. Had those tanks been of an earlier generation [and] not equipped with state-of-the-art technology and active self-protection mechanisms, 50 crewmen might well have perished.

Danny is angry at being caught off-guard by a highly sophisticated, well-armed guerrilla force, [which had been] shielded by civilians in villages now lying coated with brown dust from the shattered walls of houses and pockmarked with the debris of battles which time and again one of our generals declared to have been won—places where our wounded were slow to be rescued, [and] where the smell of unbathed, dehydrated men lingered long for lack of logistics, mingling with the stench of blood and medicine and dead bodies.

Danny is angry at the initial reports claiming the enemy was decisively beaten and that Hizbullah's retreat was a rout and a flight. He was suspicious at the lack of the signs of disorganized retreat: why so few prisoners? Where were the jettisoned boots, the dumped weapons and ammunition along the roadsides? Who in Military Intelligence knew of the fight-to-the death doctrine of the fanatical foe, or of the ten-meter deep bunkers and tunnels [that were] impervious to the greasy black puffs of the 130,000 bursting shells

which rained down on them through the hot summer sky of this futile campaign?

Danny is angry at the strutting Napoleonic pomposity of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Defense Minister Amir Peretz at the war's start and at their unrealistic war goals, not least [of which was] the return of our two kidnapped soldiers.

Standing now amid the tumbled shambles of Israel's hopes, they remain magically unperturbed with a marvelous incapacity to admit error. All is laid at the door of the generals: had but the prime minister been told this, retreat would have been an advance; had but the defense minister been told that, defeat [would have been] a victory.

Danny is angry at a government whose conduct of the war was marked by sluggishness, negligence, divided counsel, and fatal misjudgments. Lax management at home translated into lax management in the field, causing contrary and confusing orders. Once divinity of doctrine was questioned by the troops, there could be no return to perfect faith. And thus it was that on the very eve of the cease-fire, the cabinet squirmed uncomfortably through a long summer morning and afternoon, unready and unwilling to grasp the nettle until it was too late, until there was hardly any point anymore to what they said and did, until more young men had to die.

Like a fated creature blown by the winds of Homeric gods, they did not change direction. Cutting losses, removing blunder, altering course—these are repugnant to this government, to any government. Admitting error is out of the question. Everyone has an alibi.

Danny is angry most of all at the shirkers of Shenkin Street—a metaphor for the bon ton, chattering, elitist draft dodgers who mock and scoff and sneer and leer at every symbol of Jewish patriotism which he and his fellow reservists cherish.

A wise prince ought always be a good asker, said Machiavelli. What Israel needs now are great askers. Danny and his angry men are the greatest askers of all.

Anger is always biased, and small unit commanders are denied access to the “big picture.” Those factors, however, do not make anger irrelevant or mean that the comments born of anger can be disregarded. This philosophy is particularly true when so many such comments

were validated by the Winograd Commission, other internal studies in the IDF, and independent sources.

Also important to note is that senior Israeli military analysts like the late Ze'ev Schiff have publicly criticized the leadership of the IDF, particularly Division 91. Schiff reported that the IDF had trained its forces largely as a “large police force” and in ways that sharply reduced their willingness and ability to fight. It had not conducted a course for division commanders in 16 years—although Chief of Staff Halutz ordered one to be taught after the war—and had created a force whose “senior officers were more military administrators than combat commanders, and who used military gibberish that other units had difficulty understanding.”<sup>25</sup>

Military forces must prepare for the wars they may have to fight, not for the wars they *want* to fight. They must also prepare, knowing that nothing about the history of warfare indicates that peacetime planners can count on predicting when a war takes place or how it will unfold.

## **HIGH-TECHNOLOGY ASYMMETRIC WARFARE**

The fighting with Hezbollah showed just how well a non-state actor can do when it obtains advanced arms and has strong outside support from state actors like Iran and Syria. This lesson may be a particularly important one if it leads to the transfer of more-advanced light weaponry to the insurgents in Iraq and forces like the Taliban in Afghanistan. Certainly, it is a lesson that hostile forces seem almost certain to take seriously, given the near real-time exchange of lessons between various Islamic extremist movements through the Internet and the attention that hostile state actors now pay to the lessons of asymmetric warfare.

Israeli officials and officers have not been consistent about the scale or nature of the technology transfer to Hezbollah or about how many weapons it had, and various outside sources have often provided conflicting information. In broad terms, however, Israeli and other sources seem to agree on a number of points.

### **Hezbollah Rocket and Missile Forces**

The use of small tactical rockets showed that new tactics coupled with older weapons can play an equally important role in asymmetric

warfare. In practice, Israel found that it faced a serious local threat from some 10,000–16,000 shorter-range regular and extended-range versions of the 122-millimeter (mm) Grad-series Katyusha. Most were small artillery rockets with individual human-portable launchers. Most had relatively small warheads. Some are improved versions with a range of 30–40 kilometers (19–25 miles), but many have ranges of 19–28 kilometers (12–18 miles) that can strike only about 11–19 kilometers (7–12 miles) into Israel unless launched right at the border.<sup>26</sup>

Such systems can easily be fired in large numbers from virtually any position or building, and Hezbollah had some capacity for ripple fire that partly made up for the fact that such weapons were so inaccurate that they hit at random, could be aimed only at town-sized targets, and had very small warheads. They were, however, more than adequate to force substantial evacuations, paralyze local economic activity, and drive the Israelis who remained to shelters.

*Hezbollah Rocket Forces.* As mentioned earlier, Hezbollah was able to launch a surprising number of shorter-range rockets into Israel right up until the final day of fighting, when Hezbollah managed to fire 250 rockets into northern Israel before the cease-fire took effect on August 14, 2006. Hezbollah could never threaten Israel with an invasion or directly challenge Israeli conventional superiority; it could, however, threaten and attack Israel in other ways.

Hezbollah could not match this success with its longer-range rockets because the IAF was able to destroy nearly all Hezbollah's medium-range rockets. Jeffrey B. White of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy estimates that, depending on where they were deployed in relation to the border, Hezbollah's long-range rockets had the initial capability to strike area targets (essentially cities, towns, and major military facilities, if they could be located) as far south as the Tel Aviv–Jerusalem corridor. Because sustained firepower could be inflicted only by the shorter-range rockets, and because Hezbollah had probably never intended to deploy longer-range rockets close to the border, the primary threat was to the civilian population and economic activity north of the Haifa–Tiberias line.<sup>27</sup>

Exum feels this limitation may have raised strategic questions for Hezbollah—and its sponsors in Iran—over the investment made in

training and equipping its fighters to use the more devastating longer-range rockets:

Hizballah's rockets did not have their desired effect of breaking the will of the people of northern Israel and instead—as is often the case with aerial bombardments—stiffened the resolve of the population under fire. This result is a strategic loss for both Hizballah and Iran, who in the event of an Israeli attack on Iran proper, had counted on Hizballah's rockets in Lebanon as being a way of launching an effective counterattack.

In addition, although Hizballah enjoyed great success launching its short-range rockets into Israel, its medium-range rockets were almost entirely destroyed by the IAF. Particularly successful were the IAF's efforts to cripple Hizballah's ability to deliver the mid- and long-range rocket volleys against targets beyond Haifa that Nasrallah had promised on July 14. The early air assault on the second day of the war, for example, "knocked out fifty-nine permanent launchers of the intermediate Fajr missiles and Zelzal missiles in thirty-four minutes." Because the katyusha attacks really have only a psychological effect, the fact that Hizballah was not able to launch many of its longer-range weapons toward targets deep in Israel's interior should be cause for concern in both the Dahye and Tehran, given that so much time and energy was expended acquiring them and training Hizballah in their use.<sup>28</sup>

At the same time, Hezbollah's mere possession of the longer-range rocket capabilities posed a serious psychological threat to the Israeli public and remained a factor that the Israeli military could not ignore. Meanwhile, much of the success that Hezbollah had in terms of deploying its shorter-range rocket capabilities has been credited to the preparation and training, as well as the simple and decentralized structure, of its rocket teams:

Hizballah's success in maintaining a high rate of fire throughout the conflict is a testament above all to the planning that took place before the war but also to the dedication and skill of the fighters involved. Without question, the way in which the rocket teams both maintained and used their weapons was impressive. But they were aided by the preparations [that] Hizballah had made prior to

the war, entrenching their short-range rockets in underground positions built to evade detection and withstand bombardment.

Once again Hizballah gave its leaders a large degree of autonomy here, often leading the rocket teams to their katyusha launchers in the first days of the war, giving simple mission-type instructions, and then not returning until after the fighting had ceased.

The Hizballah fighters in the border fortifications also must be mentioned alongside the rocket teams because they, like the rocket teams, were often stranded in areas separated from villages and thus away from any organic lifeline. Nonetheless, thanks to determination and also good prewar logistical planning, the fighters in fortifications such as those in the Labboune area south of Naqoura were able to continue launching rockets into Israel until the cease-fire took effect on August 14, 2006, despite being, essentially, behind IDF lines.<sup>29</sup>

The more-numerous medium-range rockets remained a greater threat because they could be fired in a concentrated salvo from a single-launch vehicle. Also, the Syrian 220-mm and 302-mm rockets had enhanced fragmentation warheads that were designed to kill and wound exposed personnel. Meanwhile, by their very numbers and small detection signature, the short-range rockets posed the most-serious threat. Capable of being launched singly or in groups, being launched remotely or with timers, being difficult to detect before launch, and requiring minimal crew and logistics support structures, these World War II-era weapons would prove among the more-effective rockets in Hezbollah's arsenal during the conflict.

Jeffrey White sums up the effectiveness of Hezbollah's rocket arsenal as follows:

Whatever the system, however, inherent limitations existed. The rockets were essentially inaccurate, needing to be fired in mass or over a sustained period of time to inflict real damage. Hizballah did not have the ability to adjust or coordinate its rocket fires in a more than rudimentary fashion, leaving results largely to persistence and chance. Although Hizballah rockets had no real tactical and operational value other than as bomb magnets, they were a psychological and political weapon with strategic effects, and that is how they were used.<sup>30</sup>

Table 4.1 shows the effectiveness of Hezbollah's rocket attacks on northern Israel in terms of numbers of rockets and resulting casualties.

*The Effect of Rocket Fire on the Fighting.* Figures differ slightly about the number of rockets that Hezbollah fired during the war. Overall, Israeli police reports indicate that Israel was hit by a total of 4,228 rockets during the 34 days of the war, killing 53 people and leading to at least the temporary evacuation of up to 1 million Israelis. (A September 2006 report by the Congressional Research Service estimated that Hezbollah fired between 4,000 and 5,000 rockets during the conflict, representing only a third of the group's total rocket arsenal.<sup>31</sup>)

Hezbollah was able to maintain a consistently high rate of fire during the conflict in spite of IDF operations. For the first week and a half, Hezbollah maintained a rate of about 150 to 180 rockets a day. Although the rate dropped to about 100 strikes a day during the end of July, it then began to climb again during the beginning of August.<sup>32</sup>

Such firings had little individual lethality. Israel did, however, suffer significant cumulative casualties and suffered serious economic damage in the north. For example, the town of Qiryat Shemona took some 370 hits (about one-tenth of all rockets fired), and much of the north was evacuated, sheltered, or came to an economic halt. A total of 2,000 apartments were damaged, some 10–15 percent of the businesses in the north could not meet their August payroll, the overall economic cost quickly rose to billions of dollars, and early postwar predictions put the national cost as a drop in Israel's GDP growth from 6 percent to 4.5 percent.<sup>33</sup>

**Table 4.1 Effect of Hezbollah Rocket Attacks**

Rockets landing in northern Israel	3,790
Rockets hitting communities	901
Civilians killed in action	42
Civilians wounded	4,262
Civilians treated for shock and anxiety	2,773
Civilians killed per rocket	0.01
Civilian casualties (all types) per rocket	1.9

Source: Yaakov Katz, "IDF Report Card," *Jerusalem Post*, August 24, 2006.

One way that Hezbollah tried to increase the lethality of the rockets was to fit them with antipersonnel warheads. According to Human Rights Watch, Hezbollah used Chinese-made cluster munitions. In addition to documenting several attacks, Human Rights Watch reported that Israeli police had counted 113 cluster rocket hits.<sup>34</sup>

The attacks, however, were only part of the story, and the war is a warning that far more sophisticated rockets, ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and UAVs are part of the evolving threat of asymmetric warfare. Israeli officers and officials made clear, however, that Israel's real reason for going to war was the steady deployment of medium- and longer-range systems and the potential creation of a major Iranian and Syrian proxy missile force that could hit targets throughout Israel.

That force included Syrian Ra'ad rockets with a maximum range of 45 kilometers and systems such as the Fajr 3 and Fajr 5, which have ranges of 45–75 kilometers and are capable of striking targets as far south as Haifa and Naharia. The IAF was able to destroy most of the Iranian Fajr 3 launchers the first night of the war, but the IDF did not know the Syrian rockets were present.<sup>35</sup>

The Fajr 3, or Ra'ad, has a range of 45 kilometers, a 45–50 kilogram warhead, a 220-mm to 240-mm diameter, a 5.2-meter length, and a weight of 408 kilograms.<sup>36</sup> A total of some 24–30 launchers and launch vehicles, carrying up to 14 rockets each, seems to have been present. The IAF feels it destroyed virtually all launchers that fired after the first few days, but Israeli officers did not provide an estimate of how many actually survived.

Such weapons also included the Syrian 302-mm Khaibar-I or M302 artillery rockets with a range of up to 100 kilometers and a 100-kilogram warhead, and the Fajr 5, which is a 333-mm rocket with a range of 70–75 kilometers. The IAF again feels that it was able to destroy most of the Iranian Fajr 5 launchers the first night of the war, but the IDF again did not know the Syrian 302-mm rockets were present.

The Fajr 5 is launched from a mobile platform with up to four rockets per launcher and has a maximum range of 75 kilometers, a 45-kilogram explosive, a 333-mm diameter, a 6.48-meter length, and a weight of 915 kilograms.<sup>37</sup> A total of some 24–30 launchers and launch vehicles seems to have been present. Once again, the IAF feels it destroyed virtually all launchers that fired after the first few days, but Israeli officers did not provide an estimate of how many actually sur-

vived, and Hezbollah was able to continue using the remaining mobile platforms for the duration of the war.<sup>38</sup>

Hezbollah had several tactics to help increase the survivability of its rocket forces in the face of IAF airpower. First, to limit the effect of interdiction effort, Hezbollah maintained the majority of its rocket arsenal in theater. Second, to protect rocket launchers, some were mounted on pneumatic platforms that could be lowered into holes in the ground after firing. To further lower the heat signature, crews would then cover the launcher with a fire-retardant blanket. After the Israeli response, typically in a minute or two, the battery could be raised to fire again. Crews also used timers to ensure their own safety before the missiles were launched.<sup>39</sup>

The level of Hezbollah capabilities with the Zelzal 1, 2, and 3 and other possible systems has been described earlier. These missiles have ranges of 115–220 kilometers. The Zelzal 2 is known to be in Hezbollah hands and illustrates the level of technology involved. It is a derivative of the Russian FROG 7 and has a range in excess of 115 kilometers, which some sources put as high as 220 kilometers. It has a 610-mm diameter, an 8.46-meter length, and a weight of 3,545 kilograms.<sup>40</sup> It requires a large transporter-erector-launcher vehicle with a large target signature.

Table 4.2 indicates the range and size of various rockets that are likely to be in the Hezbollah arsenal.

### **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles**

Both sides used UAVs during the fighting. During the war, Hezbollah launched four UAVs at Israel, one of which crashed on takeoff. The UAVs were all described as the Mirsad-1, which is variously identified as Hezbollah's version of the Iranian Mohajer-4, the Iranian Ababil, or, less likely, an independent Hezbollah-developed UAV. The first launch was on August 7 and was shot down by the IAF off the Lebanese coast by Tyre.

The second and third launches were both on the evening of August 13. The second crashed shortly after takeoff. According to *Defense News*, a fourth launch crashed soon after entering Israeli air space.

Reports suggested that the UAVs were carrying explosives, and the evening launches suggest they may have been fitted with night-vision cameras for navigation in the dark.<sup>41</sup> Israeli intelligence officials

**Table 4.2 Hezbollah Rockets and Missiles**

System	Range (kilometers)	Warhead weight (kilograms)	Caliber (millimeters)
Zelzal 2	210	600	610
Nazeat 6	130	90	355.6
Nazeat 10	125	240	450
Fajr 3	43	90	240
Fajr 5	75	175	333
M-21*	20	19.4	122
NORINCO 107-mm Type-63	10	18.9	107

Source: *Jane's Armour and Artillery*, various editions, and [www.janes.com](http://www.janes.com).

Notes: A significant amount of uncertainty exists regarding the capabilities of Iranian and Syrian missile and rocket systems, many of which have their roots in Soviet-era technology. This uncertainty extends to whether there are, in fact, more names than there are distinct systems. Syria and Iran likely use different names for the same or similar systems, and Iran itself may have more names than systems. Further uncertainty exists about which systems have, in fact, been transferred to Hezbollah.

The rockets can be fitted with different warheads, varying both in kind and in size. Changing the warhead affects the weight and, therefore, the range of the weapon.

\*The oft-cited name Katyusha is used to refer to the smaller-caliber rockets. The majority are thought to be of the 122-mm variety, either based on or with similar capabilities to the M-21. The M-21 is a Soviet-era Russian rocket. The Type-63 107-mm rocket is a Chinese-designed weapon, which is also thought to have made it into the Hezbollah arsenal through Iran, Syria, or both.

identified at least one downed drone as being armed with 10 kilograms of explosives.

According to a senior IAF official, the IAF was able to detect the small signature of the incoming Hezbollah UAVs by making creative adjustments to multiple radars. Following the detections, F-16 pilots were able to shoot down the UAVs using Python-5 missiles. Reports from one engagement suggest the UAV was detected by the pilot within sight range. Then, at an altitude of less than 2,000 feet and at low speed, the pilot fired the Python missile and destroyed the target. IAF officials were pleased with the ability of their forces to adapt to and successfully engage the threat posed by UAVs.<sup>42</sup>

Israel had far more capability than did Hezbollah. During the war, Israel took full advantage of its much larger complement of UAVs. The

IDF used the full variety of UAVs available to it, including the Hermes 450S Zik, the Shoval (Heron-1/Crusher), and the Searcher-2. The IDF's first tactical UAV, the Skylark, also made its debut. It flew more than 500 reconnaissance flights. It was incorporated at the battalion level as a soldier-launched UAV that was capable of flying up to 10 kilometers away.<sup>43</sup> According to the IAF, Israeli UAVs flew 16,000 hours. Eighty percent of the time was used for aerial intelligence collection.

According to Isaac Ben-Israel, a retired IAF major general, "This was the first large-scale use of UAVs, not only for providing a continuous presence over the entire battle area, but [also] in [assisting the direction and delivery of] smart munitions to these very small, well-hidden, moving targets."<sup>44</sup> He further applauded the way that the IAF used UAVs and other means to confront the network of threats presented by Hezbollah, saying:

This is not like a targeted killing where we have two weeks to plan. Here, there's only a matter of seconds between the time the terrorists emerged to launch these missiles to the time when they returned to their hiding places among innocent civilians. Those medium-range missile launchers became suicide launchers. They were destroyed either before or immediately after they fired their first missile.<sup>45</sup>

Another UAV expert was very pleased with the performance of the UAV forces. He was pleased with the ability to maintain 24-hour operations. Additionally, he was impressed with the ability to disseminate the vast amount of data collected by such operations.<sup>46</sup>

### **Anti-armor Systems**

Hezbollah made extensive use of anti-armor weapons against both IDF armored targets and IDF infantry. The typical Hezbollah anti-tank team during the July War was composed of two men highly trained in their weapons systems and two or three other men who usually served as less-skilled "porters" for the others. Hezbollah's most-skilled anti-tank fighters never saw any action during the war because they were lying in wait along the Litani River with the expectation that the IDF assault would penetrate much deeper—and more quickly—than it did. The teams that did see action, however, had a significant degree of success, as outlined by Andrew Exum:

On August 10, an IDF armored column descended into Wadi Salouqi—a deep north-south valley that bisects southern Lebanon—and met with disaster. Forty-eight hours earlier, the IDF unit had been given orders to cross Wadi Salouqi and seize the town of Ghandourieh. But for reasons unknown, the unit was told to halt movement just as its lead vehicles reached the bottom of the valley. The unit then turned around and headed back to a position west of At-Tayyabah while it awaited further orders. The delay in the IDF movements gave its adversaries all the time they needed to prepare a defense of the valley. Hizballah moved antitank teams into the valley on both sides and waited for the IDF to try again.

Accordingly, as the commander leading the column reached the bottom of the valley on August 12, his tank was destroyed by an improvised explosive device. The rest of his unit then came under heavy fire from Hizballah antitank units burrowed into the steep slopes of the valley. Eleven IDF tanks were hit by Hizballah antitank missiles, while eight crewmen and four other soldiers were killed. The casualties made up over a tenth of all IDF casualties in the July War.

Unaware that the tank unit had been held up for forty-eight hours, one neutral observer caustically commented that the unit's commander should have been a cook—not a tank commander—in the IDF. But chalking up the disaster of Wadi Salouqi merely to Israeli incompetence ignores one of Hizballah's great tactical successes of the July War: its use of a wide variety of antitank weapons that consistently created problems for the IDF on the ground.<sup>47</sup>

According to early reports, Hezbollah made extensive use of anti-tank rockets, firing more than 1,000 at Israeli tanks and infantrymen.<sup>48</sup> The IDF faced both older anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) threats like the AT-3 Sagger (Malyutka), AT-4 Spigot (Fagot), and AT-5 Spandrel (Konkurs)—each of which is a wire-guided system but which become progressively more effective and easier to operate as the model number increases.<sup>49</sup> The IDF also faced far more advanced weapons like the tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) Toophan, Russian AT-13 Metis-M 9M131, which requires only that the operator track the target, and the AT-14 Kornet-E 9P133, which is a third-generation system that can be used to attack tanks fitted with explosive reactive armor as well as bunkers, build-

ings, and entrenched troops.<sup>50</sup> Many of the systems bore serial numbers that showed they came directly from Syria, but others may have come from Iran.

The AT-14 is a particularly good example of the kind of high-technology weapon that the United States may face in future asymmetric wars. It can be fitted to vehicles or used as a crew-portable system.<sup>51</sup> It has thermal sights for night warfare and tracking heat signatures, and the missile has semi-automatic command line-of-sight (SACLOS) guidance that is also laser beam-riding. It flies along the line of sight to engage the target head-on in a direct attack profile. It has a nominal maximum range of 5 kilometers. It can be fitted with tandem, shaped-charge, high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT) warheads to defeat tanks fitted with reactive armor or with high explosive or incendiary warheads for use against bunkers and fortifications. Maximum penetration is claimed to be up to 1,200 millimeters.

Other systems include a greatly improved version of the 105.2-mm rocket-propelled grenade called the RPG-29, or Vampire. This system is much heavier than most previous designs, with a tandem warhead. It is a two-person-crew weapon with a 450-meter range and has an advanced 4.5-kilogram grenade that can be used to attack both armor and bunkers and buildings. Some versions are equipped with night sights.<sup>52</sup>

The IDF often saw such weapons used with tactical skill, and few technical errors, reflecting the ease with which third-generation AT-GMs can be operated. They did serious damage to buildings as well as armor. Hezbollah also showed that it could use the same “swarm” techniques often used in similar ambushes in Iraq to fire multiple rounds at the same target at the same time. In addition to effectively using their ATGMs against armored targets, Hezbollah fighters also used them to great effect against massed infantry and local buildings.

Overall, Hezbollah also showed considerable proficiency in getting the most out of the older-generation anti-tank weapons, although proficiency often consisted of “swarming” the firing of a number of weapons at targets crossing predetermined points, particularly when the firing occurred at long ranges.<sup>53</sup> In the face of those approaches, the IDF armored forces encountered great difficulties. One of the key problems was that tanks were often asked to operate by themselves in difficult terrain. In such terrain, tanks are much more effective when supported by infantry, engineers, and artillery.<sup>54</sup>

IDF sources initially estimated that at least 500 ATGMs were fired during the fighting. They reported that a total of 60 armored vehicles of all types (reports that these were all tanks are wrong) had been hit as of August 11. Most continued to operate or were rapidly repaired in the field and restored to service. Only 5–6 of all types represented a lasting vehicle kill.

Although some sources simply talk about 20 tanks being destroyed, another source provides the following more detailed account:

- Tanks involved: 400
- Tanks hit: 48 (estimate based on reports of “a few dozen” tanks hit)
- Tanks damaged: 40
- Tanks penetrated: 20
- Tanks destroyed: +5 (estimate based on reports of “a few dozen” tanks hit)
- Crewmen killed: 30<sup>55</sup>

Later reporting produced different numbers. Some estimates put the number of ATGMs and heavy anti-tank rockets at more than 1,000. According to work by Alon Ben-David, the IDF concluded after the cease-fire that some 45 percent of the IDF’s main battle tanks that had been hit by ATGMs during the war suffered some form of penetration. A total of some 500 Merkavas were committed to battle. Roughly 5 were destroyed by underbelly mines and tactics. Some 50 Merkava 2, 3, and 4 tanks were hit, and 21 were penetrated. A total 11 did not result in fatalities, but 10 other penetrations caused 23 crew casualties. ATGMs also produced major infantry casualties, particularly when IDF reservists bunched inside a building hit by an ATGM.<sup>56</sup>

One of Israel’s leading defense analysts provides the following description of the effect of the Hezbollah ATGMs and other anti-tank weapons:

... We knew the organization had advanced anti-tank rockets; the IDF’s Military Intelligence even acquired one. We also understood that Hezbollah was positioning anti-tank units; however, we failed to understand the significance of the mass deployment of these weapons.

The result: Anti-tank weapons caused most of the IDF casualties in the war—nearly all the Armored Corps' casualties and many from the infantry units. More infantry soldiers were killed by anti-tank weapons than in hand-to-hand combat. Many of the infantry soldiers who lost their lives because of anti-tank weapons entered houses in the villages; the rockets penetrated the walls, killing them.

... Hezbollah used seven different types of rockets in the war—four of them the most advanced available and all produced by Russia and sold to Syria. The most advanced rockets can penetrate steel armor of 70-centimeter to 1.2-meter thickness. After the armor has been pierced, a second warhead explodes inside the tank. MI acquired one of these rockets and understood that Hezbollah was positioning anti-tank units. However, the IDF was inadequately prepared for this development.

Four Israeli tanks hit large landmines. Three of the tanks, which lacked underbelly protective armor, lost all 12 crewmembers. The fourth had underbelly protective armor; of its six crew members, only one died.

Anti-tank missiles hit 46 tanks and 14 other armored vehicles. In all these attacks, the tanks sustained only 15 armor penetrations while the other armored vehicles sustained five, with 20 soldiers killed, 15 of them tank crew members. Another two Armored Corps soldiers, whose bodies were exposed, were killed. In another location, Wadi Salouki, Hezbollah carried out a successful anti-tank ambush, hitting 11 tanks. Missiles penetrated the armor of three tanks; in two of them, seven Armored Corps soldiers were killed. Two of the other tanks were immobilized.<sup>57</sup>

Important uncertainties exist in these numbers and in the conclusions that should be drawn from them. Another problem in assessing the effect of such weapons is that the IDF moved slowly and erratically along easily predictable lines of approach where Hezbollah literally had weeks to prepare ambushes. No data indicate how many missiles of what type failed or how much fighting took place in urban areas or strong points. Every armored system is vulnerable, and much depends on the quality of maneuver and support. Moreover, the issue arises as to what IDF casualties would have been without armored support. At this point, it is far easier to draw lessons than support them with facts.

Table 4.3 summarizes the capabilities of anti-tank weapons reported to be possessed by Hezbollah.

An incident involving Israeli anti-tank weapons raises another kind of concern for future fighting. During the fighting in Lebanon, Hezbollah forces captured an intact Rafael Spike MR ATGM. The Spike MR has a nose-mounted device that gives it fire-and-forget capability. The IDF subsequently expressed concern that this weapon could be transferred to Iran where it would be used to both improve Iranian ATGMs and improve countermeasures against the Spike family of anti-tank weapons.<sup>58</sup>

One response that the armored crews had for the anti-tank tactics of Hezbollah was a tank round developed by Israel Military Industries. The 105-mm antipersonnel and antimatériel round for the Merkava main battle tank saw its first extensive use in the battles against Hezbollah's anti-tank efforts.<sup>59</sup>

In response to the success of Hezbollah during the war, the IDF announced after the war that Merkava Mark IV tanks would be fitted with the Israeli-developed active armor system Trophy. When fully functional, the system would identify incoming threats and destroy them before impact.<sup>60</sup>

### **Anti-aircraft Systems**

The IAF lost only one aircraft to hostile fire in some 15,500 sorties, although it lost four aircraft to accidents. The accidents involved three Apache helicopters and an F-16. The F-16 crashed after losing a tire on takeoff. One AH-64D Longbow was lost to a technical glitch, and two AH-64As were lost to a midair collision apparently caused by pilot error. The one combat loss was a CH-53 transport helicopter. It had just landed troops and was taking off when it was hit by a Chinese version of the Russian SA-16.<sup>61</sup>

In addition to the high number of combat missions, the IAF successfully performed more than 110 rescue sorties with Black Hawk helicopters. Those missions extracted 360 soldiers. According to the IAF, two-thirds of the missions were conducted during daylight or full moons. The missions during high-visibility conditions faced the greatest risk of anti-aircraft attacks from Hezbollah.<sup>62</sup>

Israeli intelligence estimated, however, that Hezbollah at least had the SA-7 (Strela 2/2M or Grail) and SA-14 Gremlin human-portable

**Table 4.3 The Hezbollah Anti-tank Threat**

System	Minimum/ maximum range (meters)	Penetration (mm) (behind ERA)	Guidance system	Warhead
AT-14 Kornet-E	?/5,000	1,200 (1,100)	SACLOS/laser	Tandem shaped charge (HEAT)
T-13 Metis-M	80/1,500	1,000 (900)	SACLOS/wire	Tandem shaped charge (HEAT)
AT-7 Metis	40/1,000	460	SACLOS/wire	Shaped charge (HEAT)
AT-5 Konkurs	75/4,000	925	SACLOS/wire	Tandem shaped charge (HEAT)
AT-4 Faktorias	70/2,000	480	SACLOS/wire	Shaped charge (HEAT)
AT-3 Malyutkas	500/3,000	400	SACLOS/wire	Shaped charge (HEAT)
Milan	400/2,000	352	SACLOS/wire	
TOW	600/3,700	800	SACLOS/wire	
RPG-29	460	750 (650)	Manual	Tandem shaped charge (HEAT)
RPG-7	500	330	Manual	Shaped charge (HEAT)

Sources: <http://www.janes.com>; [www.army-technology.com](http://www.army-technology.com); <http://www.fas.org>.

Notes: ERA = explosive reactive armors; SACLOS = semi-automatic command line-of-sight guidance; HEAT = high-explosive anti-tank warhead.

surface-to-air missile (SAM) system, probably had the SA-16 Gimlet, and might have the SA-18 and a token number of SA-8s.<sup>63</sup> The SA-14 and SA-16 are much more advanced than the SA-7 but still possible to counter with considerable success.

The SA-18 Grouse (Igla 9K38) is more problematic. According to the Federation of American Scientists, it is an improved variant of the SA-14 that uses a similar thermal battery/gas bottle, and the same 2-kilogram high-explosive warhead fitted with a contact and grazing

fuse. The missile, however, is a totally new design and has much greater operational range and speed. It has a maximum range of 5,200 meters and a maximum altitude of 3,500 meters, and it uses an infrared guidance system with proportional convergence logic; it has much better protection against electro-optical jammers.<sup>64</sup>

Possibly, Hezbollah may have been given a few SA-8 Gecko (Russian 9K33 Osa) SAM systems that are vehicle-mounted, radar-guided systems with up to a 10-kilometer range and with six missiles per vehicle.<sup>65</sup> The IDF was concerned that those systems could allow Hezbollah to set up “ambushes” of a few IAF aircraft without clear warning—a tactic where only a few SA-8s could achieve a major propaganda victory. This concern, coupled with the risk of SA-16 and SA-18 attacks, forced the IAF to actively use countermeasures to an unprecedented degree during the fighting. The IAF also relied more heavily on armed UAVs to provide air-attack capabilities.<sup>66</sup>

There are also reports that Iranian experts and members of the al Quds force met repeatedly in Damascus during the war with Hezbollah representatives to discuss providing better surface-to-air defenses.<sup>67</sup> The conversations covered the potential transfer of the Chinese QW-1 human-portable SAMs, as well as more C-802s. They may have covered the training and transfer of substantially more advanced air defenses once the fighting was over. These missiles might include the Mithaq-1, a low or very-low altitude human-portable SAM system that Iran has just begun to mass produce.

### **Low Signature, Asymmetric Stealth**

The IDF thus faced a potential threat from advanced short-range air defense (SHORAD) systems, most of which are not vehicle mounted, which are low-signature weapons, are very difficult to characterize and target, and are easy to bury or conceal in civilian facilities. Israel was surprised, for example, that Hezbollah had acquired more than 200 night-vision sets from Iran, which seem to have been part of a 250-set shipment of military units that Britain had sold Iran to monitor its border for the war on drugs.<sup>68</sup>

Stealth is normally thought of as high technology. It is not. Conventional forces still have sensors that are geared largely to major military platforms and operate in environments when any possible target becomes a real target. None of the conditions applied to most

Hezbollah weapons, and the problem was compounded by the fact that a light weapon is often easier to move and place without detection in a built-up area than is a heavy one.

This signature issue applies to small rockets like the Qassam and Katyusha that require only a vestigial launcher that can be placed in a house or covert area in seconds and fired with a timer. Israeli video showed numerous examples of Hezbollah fighters rushing into a home, setting up a system, and firing or leaving in less than a minute.

It also applies to UAVs. Israel's normal surveillance radars could not detect the Iranian UAVs, and the IDF was forced to rush experiments to find radar that could detect such a small, low-flying platform. (It may be an artillery counterbattery radar, but Israeli sources would not confirm this surmise.)

It is not clear how much this low signature issue contributed to the ability of two IAF F-16Cs to shoot down an armed Ababil with an air-to-air missile on August 8. The Ababil did penetrate within 15 kilometers of Haifa, flying south. It can fly up to 300 kilometers per hour and carries up to a 45-kilogram payload. Its height at the time it was shot down is unclear, but it does not seem to have low-altitude terrain avoidance features.<sup>69</sup> The system has a maximum range of 150 to 450 kilometers, depending on mission profile and payload, and a ceiling of 4,300 meters. If it had not been intercepted, it could have hit a target virtually anywhere in Israel, although its global positioning system (GPS) guidance gives it at best a 10-meter accuracy and its payload is limited.

### **Technological Surprise**

Top-level Israeli intelligence personnel and officers stated that most aspects of the Hezbollah buildup did not surprise them in the six years following Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. Some sources indicate that over the years Israeli intelligence had built up an extensive network of informants inside Hezbollah that monitored land and naval arms transfer and that the Mossad, Shin Bet, and Aman even had "sleeper cells" in the forward area that provided targeting data during the fighting.<sup>70</sup>

Mossad officials stated that they had tracked the deployment of some 13,000 Katyushas; far more sophisticated Iranian medium- and long-range artillery rockets and guided missiles (Zelzal-3); better

SAMs, such as the SA-14, SA-16, and possibly SA-8 and SA-18; the CS-801 anti-ship missile; and several more capable anti-tank weapons, such as the AT-3 Sagger Two and Kornet. They also identified the armed UAV that Hezbollah used to try to attack Israel on August 8, 2006, as the Iranian Ababil-3 Swallow (Hezbollah Mirsad-1).<sup>71</sup>

Israeli intelligence officials also stated that they knew some 100 Iranian advisers were working with Hezbollah and that they knew Iran not only maintained high volumes of deliveries but also had created a Hezbollah command center for targeting and controlling missile fire with advanced command and control assets and links to UAVs. They noted that they had warnings of better sniper rifles, night-vision devices, and communications, as well as of technical improvements to the improvised explosive devices (IEDs), bombs, and booby traps that Hezbollah had used before the Israeli withdrawal.

Nevertheless, Israeli officers and experts made clear during the war that the IDF did face technological surprises and uncertainty in several important areas. In some cases, this uncertainty may have been because Israeli intelligence was overclassified and not disseminated to field commanders in the Northern Command and Division 91.<sup>72</sup> It is equally possible, however, that tracking the details of transfers of small weapons is simply too difficult, and Hezbollah did succeed in deceiving Israeli intelligence in a number of areas.

Some Israeli sources claimed that Israeli intelligence was surprised by the fact that Hezbollah had the C-802 and could operate it. Some claim that Israeli intelligence did not know Hezbollah holdings of UAVs and that some had been armed. Other questions arise about knowledge of the transfer of AT-5s, AT-13s, and AT-14s.<sup>73</sup>

There seems to be a broader consensus that while Israeli intelligence helped the IAF target visible Hezbollah observation posts, it either underestimated Hezbollah development of defensive positions near the Israeli border or failed to properly communicate such knowledge. Although sources disagree on the full details, Hezbollah built up a net of advanced defensive positions near the Israeli-Lebanese border, or “Blue Line.”

Those positions included bunkers, tunnels, and firing positions connected by fiber-optic communications, organized into some 150 combat grids, with some positions located less than one kilometer from the border. They were supported by satellite telephone com-

munications and the use of coded messages on Hezbollah broadcast services. Hezbollah also had created concealed rocket stores in farm basements and village houses and had created a network of farmers hired to fire rockets from such positions—a part-time network of Hezbollah “fighters” that Israeli intelligence detected only during the fighting.<sup>74</sup>

Some sources claim that some positions had erectable rocket launchers that were concealed by foliage but that were normally some five meters underground, held as many as 10 rockets, and could be fired remotely or with automatic timing devices.<sup>75</sup> These launchers were sometimes camouflaged using fire-retardant blankets to conceal their infrared signature. (This use of blankets, wet surfaces, and other heat emitters or barriers dates back to Vietnam, and variations have been used in Iraq and by the Taliban in Afghanistan.)

IDF intelligence seems to have done a better job of tracking Iranian missile transfers than Syrian ones. Syria evidently supplied nearly as many medium-range artillery rockets—220 mm and 302 mm—as Iran, plus a major portion of the Katyushas. The RPG-29 anti-tank weapon and possible deployment of more-advanced anti-tank guided weapons were not anticipated. It was not possible to determine how advanced the SAMs going to Hezbollah forces were. It was not possible to determine the exact types and level of capability for Iran’s long-range missile transfers because the three types of Zelzal are so different in performance, and other Iranian systems (including ones with much better guidance) are similar to what Israel calls the Zelzal 2 and 3.

The fact that Israel faced some degree of technological surprise should not, however, be a source of criticism unless there is evidence of negligence. If a lesson is to be drawn from such surprise, it is that surprise is almost unavoidable when deliveries are high and when many weapons are small or are delivered in trucks or containers and are never seen used in practice.

Surprise is even more unavoidable when rapid transfer can occur in wartime or when new facilities are created, such as the joint Iranian-Syrian-Hezbollah intelligence (and advisory?) center that was set up during the fighting in Damascus to give Hezbollah technical and tactical intelligence support. *The lesson is rather that the war demonstrates a new level of capability for non-state actors in using such weapons.*

### **Cost**

One key aspect of such transfers that has been disguised by propaganda-oriented, unclassified, intelligence reporting is how cheap such transfers were for Iran and Syria. The United States and Israel sometimes quote figures for the cost of the arms transfers that reach the billions of dollars and talk about US\$100 million to US\$250 million in Iranian aid per year.

Such cost estimates are absurd and disguise the real lesson: just how easily and cheaply nations like Iran and Syria can arm non-state actors. The bulk of the weapons involved were disposable or surplus, and transfers put no strain of any kind on either Syria or Iran. The truth is that such weapons can be transferred as systems that are surplus, are of marginal value, and are little more than a sunk cost. Some six years of buildup and arms transfers may have cost Iran and Syria close to US\$50 million to US\$100 million in all.

This point is critical. Even with relatively advanced weapons, playing the spoiler role in arming non-state actors is cheap by comparison with other military options. The United States must be prepared for a sharp increase in such efforts as its enemies realize just how cheap and easy this option can be.

### **Reevaluation of the Level of Tactical and Technological Risk in the Forces of Asymmetric and Non-state Actors**

Experts such as Sir Rupert Smith have stressed the risk posed to modern military forces and states by opponents that fight below the threshold at which conventional armies are most effective. Iraq has shown that even comparatively small transfers of technology, such as motion sensors, crude shaped charges, and better triggering devices, can have a major effect in increasing the ability of insurgents and terrorists.

Hezbollah raised this effort to fight below the IDF's threshold of conventional competence to a whole new level, thus operating with effective sanctuary in a state and with major outside suppliers—which movements such as al Qa'ida, the Taliban, and insurgents and militias in Iraq have largely lacked. This effort is only the tip of the iceberg. Hezbollah does not seem to have used the advanced SAMs mentioned previously, but the very threat forces IAF fighters and helicopters to use countermeasures constantly. Hezbollah's use of ATGMs and

RPG-29s not only inhibits Israel's use of armor, but also sharply reduces its ability to enter buildings and requires dispersal and shelter.

The simple risk of long-range rocket attacks requires constant air and sensor coverage in detail over the entire Hezbollah launch front to be sure of hitting launchers immediately. The IDF's task also could grow sharply if Iran or Syria sent Hezbollah longer-range rockets or missiles with precision guidance—thereby allowing one missile to do serious damage to a power plant, desalination plant, or refinery or fuel storage facility with little or no warning.

The lesson here is not simply Hezbollah tactics to date. It is the need to survey all weapons systems and technology that insurgents and terrorists could use in future strikes and wars with the thesis that technology constraints are sharply weakening. The United States and its allies face proliferation of a very different kind. It is to explore potential areas of vulnerability in U.S. forces and tactics that non-state or asymmetric attackers can exploit; can carefully examine the holdings of state sponsors of such movements; and can reexamine Web sites, training manuals, and other sources of information to track the sharing or exploration of such technology.

Like Israel, the United States and its other allies face long wars against enemies that have already shown they are highly adaptive and will constantly seek out weaknesses and the ability to exploit the limits of conventional war-fighting capabilities. The United States must anticipate and preempt when it can and must share countermeasure tactics and technologies with its allies.

### **THE PERFORMANCE OF THE IAF: KEEPING THE ROLE OF AIRPOWER IN PROPORTION**

During the war, the IAF operated under very favorable circumstances in terms of its matériel superiority over the enemy. Hezbollah did not have an air force and lacked the most advanced surface-to-air missiles. The greatest success for the IAF arose from its well-executed first strike. This attack relied on accurate intelligence and successfully destroyed a large percentage of Hezbollah's long-range missiles. The air force had predicted before the war that the short-range missiles would prove more difficult to find and destroy, and this prediction was borne out by events.

The IAF had responsibility for the area north of the Litani River during the war. South of the Litani, it shared responsibility with the Northern Command. South of the Litani, the IAF was faced with problems that likely would have been more effectively dealt with by combined air and ground offenses. North of the Litani, however, operations were limited to the air throughout the war. One of the more serious failures in those areas was the inability of the IAF to effectively interdict Hezbollah supply lines. The IAF moved slowly on attacking the smuggling of rockets and launchers from Syria. The IAF also failed to make any movement against trucks using the coastal road to bring Hezbollah fighters into the theater from northern Lebanon.<sup>76</sup> One reason for the slow response or nonresponse regarding Hezbollah's supply lines was likely a concern about hitting civilians and legitimate aid supplies, as did happen after interdiction operations began.

As has been touched upon earlier, a number of Israeli experts have criticized the chief of staff of the IDF, the head of intelligence, and the head of the air force for being too narrowly air oriented and for presenting unrealistic estimates of what airpower can accomplish. It is far from clear that such critics had actual knowledge of the events involved, what the officers involved actually said, their direction from Israel's political leaders, or the other facts necessary to draw such conclusions.

Those perceptions have been compounded by the fact that IAF successes in dealing with the Hezbollah long-range missile threat occurred in the first days of the war and received little public discussion and attention. The IAF then conducted nearly two weeks of air strikes without a clear ground component in which it conspicuously failed to halt Hezbollah rocket attacks while it equally and conspicuously hit Lebanese civilian targets and caused extensive civilian casualties, serious collateral damage, and massive Lebanese evacuations.

Only after two weeks did the IDF commit two brigades into land battles against Hezbollah's forward lines of defense in places like Bint Jbeil and Marun al-Ras. After 29 days of fighting, the cabinet approved a major land campaign to secure Southern Lebanon—a campaign actually executed on August 11, when a UN cease-fire was already pending. This campaign then had to be halted on August 13, when Hezbollah was still actively fighting the IDF and capable of launching nearly 200 rockets.<sup>77</sup>

### **The Scale of the IAF Airpower Effort**

As has been touched upon earlier, the IAF flew some 15,500 sorties, including some 10,000 fighter sorties, and attacked a total of about 7,000 targets. Nevertheless, airpower had not only failed to prevent the delivery of some 4,000 Hezbollah rockets against targets in northern Israel—the most visible Hezbollah threat and the one of greatest immediate concern to the Israeli people—but also failed to exercise the desired coercive effect on the Lebanese government.

The Lebanese government predictably turned to the international community for aid. It was unwilling and unable to risk civil war by committing the Lebanese army to try to secure the south—particularly an army whose maintenance standard meant that many of its trucks, armored personnel carriers, and helicopters were not on line, which prevented it from using its mobility even for unopposed movement into a severely damaged road net.

Israeli prime minister Olmert has since claimed that the IDF never proposed a major ground offensive until the fourth day of the war, while General Halutz has claimed, “I never said an aerial campaign would suffice to prevail. The original plan was to combine an aerial campaign with a ground maneuver.”<sup>78</sup>

### **The Quality of IAF Execution**

The work of the Winograd Commission and of internal IDF studies has largely confirmed that Israel overestimated what airpower could do and did not integrate its use of airpower into a meaningful war plan or concept of joint operations. Any final judgments about IAF planning and execution, however, will need to be based on a full examination of the record. This need is particularly true because other critics argue the Israeli land forces were deeply divided between advocates of a sweeping envelopment of Hezbollah from the north and south, isolating the area south of the Litani River, and others who argued that the IDF land forces would become bogged down in another occupation and war of attrition.

The war showed some of the strengths of airpower, as well as its weaknesses. As for U.S. and NATO forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, the war showed the survivability and freedom of action that airpower currently gives states in fighting non-state actors. This freedom of action might erode relatively quickly if non-state actors acquired and used

large numbers of SHORADs. By August 10, however, the IAF had flown some 8,000 fighter sorties and 1,600 attack helicopter sorties with no losses to combat. At the end of the war, it had flown some 15,500 sorties, including some 10,000 fighter sorties. It also had flown more than 110 rescue sorties, using Black Hawk helicopters to extricate 360 soldiers. Most such missions were flown in daylight or full moon conditions, where helicopters are more vulnerable, and 59 troops were evacuated from active battle areas.<sup>79</sup>

Its air defense countermeasures may have erred on the side of caution—and probably did lead to mission profiles that were more costly to operate and had some effect in limiting combat effectiveness because of altitude and attack-profile limits. However, the IAF lost only one aircraft in combat and four in accidents. Three AH-64 Apaches were lost. One was an AH-64 Longbow that was lost as a result of a technical problem, and two AH-64As were lost in a midair collision caused by pilot error. An F-16 crashed during takeoff after a tire failure. The only combat loss was a CH-53 transport helicopter that had just unloaded ground troops and was struck during take off by a Chinese QW-1 light SAM. (The QW-1 is a copy of the Russian SA-16).

Reports indicate that the IAF lacked sufficient stocks of smart weapons and was forced to use dumb bombs and area weapons such as cluster bombs.<sup>80</sup> The IAF does not seem to have had significant numbers of smart bombs and did not have small precision bombs—such as the 250-pound bomb that the United States has introduced in the fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan—or to have trained its targeting, intelligence, battle management, and pilot officers in carrying out the kind of missions necessary to make the maximum reduction in civilian casualties and collateral damage without compromising mission effectiveness. This failure may have contributed to the strike on Qana, where 28 civilians were killed, including 14 children.<sup>81</sup>

Nevertheless, the IAF seems to have flown with considerable effectiveness—at least in missions supporting Israel's land operations. IDF army officers at the front noted that most such sorties were flown with delivery accuracies approaching 10 meters, and close air support was extremely responsive. They also noted that in spite of the shallow front, air and artillery operated closely together.

The IDF was also able to deconflict air support and artillery missions, as well as fixed- and rotary-wing missions, with high levels of

effectiveness. It fired well over 40,000 artillery rockets, and some estimates go as high as 100,000 or more. The rockets were often targeted interchangeably with air strikes, and precision GPS fire and target location allowed the 10-meter accuracies for many air and artillery strikes. (These data are average accuracies; substantial error can take place in individual cases.) Table 4.4 details IAF air operations during the conflict.

### Missile and Rocket Attacks and Suppression

The IAF understood from the start that it could not effectively target and suppress the firing of short-range rockets, and it clearly communicated this fact to Israel's decisionmakers.<sup>82</sup> At the same time, it reacted quickly to the fact that Israel sharply underestimated Syrian deliveries of medium-range rockets.

It was able to create 24-hour/7 day-a-week sensor and attack coverage over much of Southern Lebanon and to attack and destroy almost all major Hezbollah missile launchers within minutes after they fired. It helped to improvise radar coverage to detect low-signature Hezbollah UAVs and to include them in its air defense activities.

The IAF created what it came to claim as the world's first "boost phase launch intercept" force. This force combined the use of UAVs

**Table 4.4 Israeli Air Operations**

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Total sorties	15,500
Combat sorties	10,000
Combat helicopter sorties	About 2,000
Reconnaissance flights	More than 1,300
Transport flights	About 1,200
Targets struck	More than 7,000
Types of targets struck	Headquarters, bases, rocket launchers (300), Hezbollah-associated structures (1,800), Hezbollah-associated vehicles (270), bridges (350)

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Sources: Eli Ashkenazi, Ran Reznick, Jonathan Lis, and Jack Khoury, "The Day After: The War in Numbers," *Haaretz* (Tel Aviv), August 18, 2006, and Israeli Defense Forces.

and advanced command and control assets with on-call attack aircraft that could deliver precision-guided ordnance almost immediately after a medium-to-large rocket or missile system was detected either in movement or after firing a round.<sup>83</sup>

The IAF made extensive use of three UAVs: Hermes 450S Zik, Searcher-2, and Shoval (Heron)-1. They were kept active for some 31 days, flying more than 16,000 hours. This schedule is the equivalent of 21 UAVs flying around the clock. Some 13,000 hours were spent on intelligence and targeting missions, and the IDF claims that more than 100 launchers were destroyed, an average of 1 per 160 UAV flight hours, or 3 per day. The result was that Israeli UAVs not only provided continuous coverage over the battlefield but also were deployed in dense enough numbers to provide targeting even for relatively small, dispersed systems. In fact, one lesson that the IAF seems to have drawn from this experience is that UAVs should be adapted to allow midair refueling to provide more mission time and to reduce the risk of loss on launch and recovery.<sup>84</sup>

A senior IAF official is quoted as claiming that the resulting “sensor to shooter loop” enabled the IAF to destroy more than 90 percent of the medium-range launchers that Hezbollah actually used in combat and that “This was a concept we planned for before the war, but it was further developed during the fighting.... It was a learning process, but after a few days, we believe that in more than 90 percent of the cases, we ensured that those launchers fired their first and last missile.”<sup>85</sup> Such claims now seem to be exaggerated and only affect the launchers that fired, not those that Hezbollah did not use. There is little question, however, that the IAF’s overall performance in this mission was impressive.

At the same time, this same officer cautioned that missions against smaller missiles were extremely difficult to target and coordinate: “It’s not like targeted killing operations where we know who to look for, we know where he is, and we watch over a period of mission. In those missions, we have time.... Here, targets are concealed. The terrorist comes out to the veranda of his high-rise apartment building, launches, and returns to the house. If we don’t detect him immediately, we lose him.”

### **Problems in Interdiction and Compellance**

As has been discussed earlier, it is less clear what the IAF accomplished in interdiction missions, and how well it carried out missions such as attacking Hezbollah supply routes, facilities, and hard targets. Some preliminary reports indicate that it hit a large number of targets that were suspect but not confirmed and that Hezbollah dispersal and evacuations turned many into “empty holes.” The IAF’s ability to attack Hezbollah’s leadership seems to have been very limited.

Like virtually all air forces and air operations before it, the IAF also seems to have grossly exaggerated its ability to use airpower to coerce and intimidate governments and political behavior. Lebanon did not react to IAF efforts to force it to deploy south and to shut down Hezbollah in ways favorable to Israel. There certainly is no evidence that IAF strikes did more than make Lebanese leaders (a) turn to the international community for support in forcing Israel to accept a cease-fire, (b) provoke Hezbollah leaders to even more-intense efforts, and (c) produce a more-hostile reaction in the Arab world. The advocates of escalation to intimidate and force changes in behavior at the political level are sometimes right; far more often, they are wrong. More often than not, such attacks provoke more hostility and counterescalation.

If there is a lesson here, it is that from Giulio Douhet<sup>86</sup> to the present, the advocates of airpower clearly have had no better political understanding of the compellance aspect of airpower than has any man on the street—and probably less. They tend to sharply exaggerate its ability to influence or intimidate leaders and politicians and to act as a weapon of political warfare.

### **Problems in Battle Damage Assessment and Effects-based Operations**

Discussions with IAF personnel also indicate that it has the same continuing problems with making accurate battle damage assessments (BDAs) during combat that have characterized it since its creation and that were major problems in the 1967, 1973, and 1983 wars. These problems, moreover, still characterize U.S. and other NATO country air forces.

The technical and analytic state of the art for both targeting and BDA still have severe limitations, and air forces almost inevitably make exaggerated claims in the heat of battle. These limitations are particularly clear in the record of postwar examinations of the actual effect of past air attacks on rear-area targets, whether they are fixed enemy facilities, enemy supply routes and logistics, or leadership targets.

All of these issues will need full study. If a potential lesson can be drawn about airpower on the basis of the limited data now available, it is that war planning and execution by all services and branches must be based on the best joint warfare solution possible and on a ruthlessly objective examination of the strengths and limits of each military tool as confirmed by BDA. The United States already follows this doctrine, but even the United States still has single service and single branch “dinosaurs.” Some species that are not yet extinct should be.

### **MISSILE, ROCKET, OR CRUISE MISSILE DEFENSE**

Hezbollah did not use lethal enough rocket and missile systems during the actual fighting to ever threaten the security of Israel, although it did produce casualties and disrupt civilian life and the Israel economy in the areas that came under attack. Israel was attacked only by unguided artillery rockets using conventional and simple cluster warheads, plus a small UAV with GPS guidance, a range of 450 kilometers, and a 30- to 40-kilogram payload. As a result, the effect of such attacks is more psychological and disruptive than physical.

This experience scarcely, however, provides Israel with guarantees for the future. Even if it did succeed in destroying virtually all of Hezbollah’s medium- and long-range rockets, Iran and Syria can supply both much longer-range and more-precise guided missiles with larger payloads. Rockets can be equipped with crude to sophisticated chemical, radiological, and biological warheads. Virtually any use of any form of such weapon would have a major political effect even if its military effect was limited. A variety of systems exist that could easily be launched from commercial ships from outside the Israeli navy’s normal patrol zone or could be smuggled into range in pieces.

Unlike ballistic missile systems, most kinds of rockets that Hezbollah used in Lebanon also present special problems for defense. Most are not high-apogee systems such as the Scud or Shahab that provide

the warning and intercept time needed by many antimissile missiles. Many also have very low signatures and little preparation time. Hezbollah made excellent use of shoot-and-scoot tactics, often using towns and buildings as cover. Its four UAV attacks were more token than serious, but they were a warning that low-signature, short-range cruise missiles with precision guidance could have a very different effect.

The obvious lesson is that the United States and its allies need not only missile defenses, but also defenses against cruise missiles, UAVs, artillery rockets, and short-range, low-apogee-flight-time ballistic missiles. In practice, however, providing such defenses presents the same cost-effectiveness problems as any other investment in military technology. It is easy to advocate such systems, but many of today's candidates are impractical or too expensive, and at best they seem to be only a partial solution.

Both cost and effectiveness are key issues that need close examination when new calls come for rushing into the immediate deployment of anti-tactical ballistic missile and rocket systems, or for funding various laser and energy weapons like the Tactical High Energy Laser (THEL). It is remarkably easy to make such proposals work on paper and to soak up large amounts of development money with little or no practical outcome.

For example, some have claimed that just five THEL systems "could protect all of northern Israel. The systems could be produced and fielded in 18 months. The first unit would cost about US\$150 million, but additional ones would be much less expensive."<sup>87</sup> Such claims are easy to make, but the practice has a history of (a) massive cost escalation, (b) programs that stretch out for years, (c) steady cutbacks in the test and evaluation programs used to validate such systems, and (d) highly uncertain real-world effectiveness. On balance, the advocates of missile defense have roughly the same historical credibility as members of the Flat Earth Society. Active missile defense is a costly and uncertain option, not a new form of religion.

There also is an ongoing debate in Israel about what, if any, approach should be used to deal with short-range rockets, which are easy and cheap to fire in large volleys. One possible Israeli effort to combat the short-range Katyusha rockets is based on Israel Military

Industry's artillery rocket, which is comparable to the Katyusha itself. The system, termed Magic Shield, is unguided and depends on exploding volleys of such systems near the incoming rocket. Other Ministry of Defense research and programs in the IDF Short-Range Ballistic Missile Defense program concentrate on developing a cheap self-guided system. These programs include the Kela David (David's slingshot) interceptor missile, which is designed to hit incoming rockets and missiles at ranges of 40–250 kilometers.<sup>88</sup>

Some Israeli analysts also argue that a fully effective defense may require a mixture of measures where direct missile, rocket, or cruise missile defenses are only part of the effort. Such a broader effort would mean denying state and non-state threats the ability to stockpile such weapons where possible and developing clear deterrent offensive threats where the enemy is deterrable or targetable. It would include the further development of the kind of quick-reaction strike capability that the IAF created after the first few days of war by refocusing its sensors and by deploying a 24/7 air-strike capability to at least hit major, high-signature launchers immediately after they first launch. Also, capability is immediately needed to provide the best possible detection and characterization of even the most limited chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear warhead and to identify exactly what systems have been used in attacks.

There is nothing wrong with creating active missile defenses, provided they can be made cost-effective. This war, however, is another warning that they will never by themselves be an effective method of defense against the full spectrum of possible threats.

### **ACTIVE ANTI-ARMOR VERSUS MORE ARMOR**

A number of Israelis argue that the war shows the need for much more advanced approaches to defending armor, such as the ability to detect and intercept incoming anti-tank weapons and to respond with automatic countermeasures and fire-intercepting systems. Some Israeli experts are already arguing that explosive reactive armor is no longer adequate and for immediate deployment of the Rafael Trophy armor protection section that was designed for the Merkava 4 but never deployed.<sup>89</sup>

The real-world lessons may well be more complex. Like rushing out to fund active rocket and missile defenses, everything depends on real-world cost-effectiveness. The fact that a tactical and technical problem exists is never proof of the need for an untested and uncosted solution, which is particularly true because adding such systems to an armored fleet is so expensive. Other solutions may prove both more valuable and cost-effective.

Many of Israel's losses of armored weapons occurred because those systems were the only ones with enough protection to be thrust into combat under such unfavorable tactical conditions. Armored spearhead operations were the alternative to other forms of combat that would have cost far more lives if armor had not taken the hits it did. At the same time, many of the losses that did occur were caused by poor preparation, training, and tactics.

One key question is the trade-off between more armor and better armored protection. The key lesson may really be to preserve heavy armored systems and to acquire more armor for urban, counterinsurgency, asymmetric, and logistical and rear-area operations. This strategy may well involve some investment in better warning systems and uparmoring, but no force can afford everything, particularly investments in unproven systems.

The IDF seems to have reached this same conclusion even though Israel was considering canceling production of the Merkava before the war. The shift as a result of the fighting is summarized as follows in quotes from an article by Barbara Opall-Rome in *Defense News*:

“Before the war, they spoke about a new concept in the IDF where there would be no more large wars, whatever that means, and that the Air Force would deal with the bulk of future threats.... The way this war was executed did a disservice to the tanks; they weren't employed correctly. When you send in a small force of tanks into a village where there's no front and no rear—and where terrorist cells are still operating—you're going to take hits. Tanks need to be incorporated as part of a full combined arms force package.... But I expect now, if they analyze this war correctly, they'll understand clearly why things happened the way they did.... And one of the lessons is that the tank and heavy armor will remain the central element of

the ground force structure, with a continued role of primary importance in the future battlefield.” (Haim Erez, a retired IDF major general and chairman of Israel’s Armored Corps Foundation)

“Each war proves anew to those who may have had their doubts the primacy of the main battle tank. Between wars, the tank is always a target for cuts. But in wartime, everyone remembers why we need it, in its most advanced, upgraded versions and in militarily significant numbers.” (Yehuda Admon, retired IDF brigadier general and former manager of the Merkava tank program)<sup>90</sup>

Other IDF experts have reiterated that the war has shown the need for heavily armored and defended troop transports and fighting vehicles. As a result, the Israeli-Hezbollah War may have taught the IDF that forces fighting today’s asymmetric wars need heavy armor and plenty of it.

This lesson is similar to the one that the United States has drawn as part of its ongoing effort to uparmor and to better arm its fighting and support vehicles in Iraq. The lesson calls into question the value of many of the elements of a U.S. Army’s Future Combat Systems program that emphasizes light armor and that highlights the value of legacy systems like the M-1 main battle tank. The United States has made steady increases in the deployment of heavier systems like the M-1, Bradley, and Stryker to replace systems such as the Humvee and lighter armored vehicles, and those “legacy” systems now seem to be an increasingly critical aspect of fighting asymmetric wars.

Nations like Canada have reacted similarly to the fighting in Afghanistan. The Taliban has used far less sophisticated anti-armor weapons than Hezbollah has, but the fighting in the south has still forced Canada to deploy its main battle tanks to deal with the threat posed by the Taliban. It has also forced other NATO nations to sharply restrict movement by unarmored vehicles and to use lighter armored vehicles, including systems like scout cars and armored personnel carriers that are only lightly armored.

Other nations seem to have broadened this lesson about the need for more armored and defensive firepower to cover the need to arm and uparmor logistics vehicles and to find new ways to protect convoys and forces moving in rear areas. Unlike the IDF battles against Hezbollah, forces in Iraq and Afghanistan have found that securing rear areas against infiltration is virtually impossible and that attacks

involve combinations of anti-tank weapons and systems such as improvised explosive devices. The result is that logistics forces have had to become fighting forces, and no movement is safe without such capabilities.

### NAVAL FORCES AND READINESS

The Israeli navy played a major role in securing the Israeli coast against both Hezbollah and various Palestinian threats during the war and in enforcing a blockade against naval resupply. It spent some 8,000 ship hours in carrying out those missions during the war. What is still not clear, however, is why Israel's most modern Sa'ar-class flagship, the *Hanit*, could be hit by an anti-ship missile. The *Hanit* is one of three Israeli Sa'ar 5-class ships. It was completed in 1995 and was one of Israel's most modern and capable ships. It should have had high capability to defend itself against such an attack.

The basic facts are clear. Hezbollah forces attacked the *Hanit* with two anti-ship missiles on July 14. In addition to the attack on the *Hanit*, Hezbollah claimed successful missile strikes on Israeli navy ships on August 1 and 12. Israel denied that any ships had been hit. Shortly after the claim on August 12, however, Jane's witnessed an unexplained plume of smoke on the horizon southwest of Tyre.<sup>91</sup>

One of Israel's top defense analysts, the late Ze'ev Schiff, described what happened as follows:

Two days into the war, Hezbollah hit the destroyer INS *Hanit* with a surface-to-sea missile that Iran provided the organization. Four members of the crew were killed and others were injured, while the navy's flagship suffered serious damage. The following day, the head of the navy appointed a committee of inquiry. More than six weeks have past and the war has ended but the public has still not heard the findings of this committee of inquiry.

In an inquiry that we held, it turns out that the intelligence branch at the General Staff had issued a warning to the navy, long before the incident, that it should assume the Hezbollah arsenal contained a Chinese-made C-802 missile. The navy concluded otherwise and rejected the warnings. Because the conclusions of the committee of inquiry have not yet been made public, it is not known whether the above-mentioned incident has been included in the report.

The meeting during which the intelligence warning was made took place on April 21, 2003, in the offices of naval intelligence. The navy personnel were given the intelligence that China had sold Iran a C-802 surface-to-sea missile and that the Iranians carried out improvements to one type of the missile. Intelligence assumed that if the missile was in the Iranian arsenal then Hezbollah was also likely to receive it. The conclusion at intelligence was that unless this conclusion could be firmly discounted, then Israel should carry on under the assumption that Hezbollah had such a missile.

A similar sort of warning was issued by intelligence to the air force over the SA-18, a Russian-made surface-to-air missile. The air force acted accordingly and even though the missile was not fired in Lebanon, the pilots were instructed to operate as if the missile was in the Hezbollah arsenal.

This is not what happened in the navy. They concluded that the Chinese missile that had been sold to Iran was not in Hezbollah's hands. This conclusion proved to be false. To this must be added the neglect to operate one of the warship's significant defensive countermeasures: the Barak antimissile system. Even though the destroyer entered a war zone and cruised along the Lebanese shores, the crew forgot to turn on the automatic operation system of the Barak. The result was that no effort was made to intercept the Iranian-Chinese missile, and unobstructed it struck its target. It is believed that an Iranian crew launched the missile from the Lebanese shore, or at least was involved in the attack.

Unlike this failure, the navy was successful in deploying the naval commandos in successful raids on the Lebanese shores. The commandos embarked on a series of raids, destroying rocket launchers and other targets. The navy did not carry out major landings of seaborne forces. An American naval source expressed surprise at this.<sup>92</sup>

Since Schiff wrote those comments, a number of other facts have emerged. The two missiles seem to have been C-802s, although some experts outside Israel still feel it is possible that they were the smaller C-701. According to Global Security, the Yingji YJ-2 (C-802) is powered by a turbojet with paraffin-based fuel. It is subsonic (0.9 Mach), weighs 715 kilograms, has a range 120 kilometers, and carries a 165-kilogram (363-pound) payload. It has a small radar cross section and

skims about 5 to 7 meters above the sea surface when it attacks the target. It has good antijamming capability. In contrast, the C-701 is less than half the size of the C-802 with a cruising speed of 0.8 Mach and a range of approximately 15 kilometers.

The first missile flew a high-attack trajectory, might have been fired as a decoy, and missed the *Hanit*, striking a cargo ship 60 kilometers offshore. The second missile hit the *Hanit* under her stern, started a fire, and killed four sailors. Possibly the missiles and launcher were truck mounted in vehicles small enough to be easily concealed in a garage or camouflaged and deployed in a parking lot or empty space.

IAF forces later destroyed a Lebanese military coastal radar in response to the attack. Some reports suggest that the coastal radar would have been integral to the use of a C-802 or C-701. According to Jane's, however, the radar would not have been needed for the attack because the C-802 is a fire-and-forget missile, using its own onboard active radar, and the C-701 uses television guidance.<sup>93</sup>

The second missile struck the *Hanit* when it was not using active countermeasures. This factor was critical because the ship's antimissile capability consists of 64 Barak point-defense missiles; a 20-mm Phalanx close-in, rapid-fire cannon; 20-mm and 7.62-mm machine guns; and a sophisticated passive system consisting of chaff, decoy expendables, and jamming devices.<sup>94</sup>

A later Israeli investigation found that all of these systems were turned off. One reason for the systems' being turned off may have been that the radar for the Barak system was functioning at less than 50 percent accuracy during the time of the attack.<sup>95</sup> A preliminary report by the committee investigating the incident blamed both the *Hanit's* commander and the senior leadership of the Israeli navy. The crew, however, had turned three other antimissile systems off, and a majority was in the ship's mess hall eating their Sabbath dinner. The officer who turned the Barak system off also did not report the malfunctioning radar to the ship's captain or inform him of the decision to turn off the missile defense system.<sup>96</sup>

Several other factors may have affected the *Hanit's* vulnerability. The ship was under admiralty orders to keep close to the Lebanese coast to enforce the blockade. The combined lack of active countermeasures and the proximity to the coast may also have partly reflected navy

intelligence's belief that Hezbollah either did not possess advanced anti-ship missiles such as the C-802 or lacked the ability to use them.

Army intelligence stated after the attack, however, that it had warned navy intelligence that Hezbollah might have possessed such weapons.<sup>97</sup> An IDF statement said,

the investigation shows that despite the fact there was no specific intelligence regarding the weapons held by Hezbollah, there was certain information received by the Israeli Navy in the past, which could have led to the operational assumption of a possibility that the enemy holds coastal ammunition. Accordingly, it would have been advisable to operate in a way that would preclude this threat.<sup>98</sup>

Like the previous discussion of the transfer of relatively high-technology land and air defense weapons to Hezbollah, this experience provides an important lesson about the potential importance of high-technology weapons, intelligence, and the need to change operating methods to anticipate such weapons transfers. The need to prepare for technological surprise has always been a key lesson of war. Table 4.5 shows the Israeli naval operations in numbers.

### **INFORMAL NETWORKS AND ASYMMETRIC "NETCENTRIC WARFARE"**

Like insurgent and terrorist groups in Iraq and Afghanistan—and in Arab states threatened by such groups, including Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia—Hezbollah showed the ability of non-state actors to fight their own form of "netcentric warfare." That is, Hezbollah acted as an informal and adaptive "distributed network" of small cells and units that were acting with considerable independence and were capable of

**Table 4.5 Israeli Naval Operations**

Steaming hours off Lebanon coast	8,000
Times guns fired	2,500
Types of targets engaged	Rocket launching sites, launchers, weapons stores, roads, Hezbollah infrastructure and radars, fuel depots, and the coastal road

*Source:* Israeli Defense Forces, "7,000 Targets in Lebanon," September 3, 2006.

rapidly adapting to local conditions using media reports, verbal communication, and the like.

For command purposes, Hezbollah divided Southern Lebanon into several sectors composed of about 12 villages each. As has been noted earlier, those sectors were then divided into subsectors of 2 or 3 villages each. Communication among the sectors and back to Beirut was through a land-based, fiber-optic communications system that proved resistant to interception and interference. If communications had broken down, each individual section, including subsectors would have had the authority to act independently. Within subsectors, mobile fighters communicated with each other through line-of-sight walkie-talkies and through improvised codes that were based on their knowledge of the area and of each other that were difficult for outsiders to crack.<sup>99</sup>

In addition to the geographic distinction, Hezbollah forces were divided into two branches. The key branches consisted of regulars and a group of “village guards,” although there also seem to have been senior command and technical cadres, communications experts, and part-time fighters who were paid sleepers and were activated to fire rockets or for other limited, specialized purposes.

The regulars were full time, experienced, well trained, highly disciplined, and highly motivated. Those forces manned the bunkers and were used in active fighting as well. Several hundred of them were divided into units of about 15 or 20 men. The regular units wore military uniforms and were responsible for the weapons requiring more training, such as the artillery rockets and the more-advanced anti-tank missiles. They also provided snipers.<sup>100</sup>

According to Israeli sources, Hezbollah’s rocket forces in the south were divided into 150 silos or “kill-boxes.” Each of the silos was concealed by foliage and consisted of up to 10 launchers that were raised by hydraulics and often fired by a timer. Those launchers were controlled through more than three dozen hardened bunkers throughout Southern Lebanon. On the ground, the silos were protected by land mines, surveillance sensors, and Hezbollah units that were prepared to ambush approaching troops.<sup>101</sup>

The second group, the “village guards,” was largely made up of veteran guerrilla fighters with experience during the Israeli occupation.

The forces were both disciplined and motivated, as were the regulars, but they served only part time and did not wear uniforms. The irregular troops remained in their home villages after the majority of civilians had left. They provided a reserve of fresh troops to face the IDF as it advanced. The local knowledge that those fighters possessed provided them with clear advantages in this area over Israeli forces.<sup>102</sup>

Rather than have to react faster than the IDF's decision cycle, they could largely ignore it, waiting out Israeli attacks, staying in positions, reinfiltrating or reemerging from cover, and choosing the time to attack or ambush. Forward fighters could be left behind or sacrificed, and "self-attrition" became a tactic substituting for speed of maneuver and for the ability to anticipate IDF movements.

Skilled cadres and leadership cadres could be hidden, sheltered, or dispersed. Rear areas became partial sanctuaries despite the IAF's actions. Aside from Nasrallah—who survived—no given element of the leadership cadre was critical.

Even the Al Manar television station had developed redundancies that enabled it to survive a direct hit from the IAF. After the IAF hit its five-story headquarters in Beirut, even coming back to strafe the ruins, the station was off the air for only two minutes.<sup>103</sup>

A strategy of attrition and slow response substituted for speed and efficiency in command and control. The lack of a formal and hierarchical supply system meant that dispersed weapons and supplies that had been accumulated over six years—the equivalent of "feed forward logistics"—ensured the ability to keep operating in spite of IDF attacks on supply facilities and resupply.

The ability to fight on local religious, ideological, and sectarian grounds that the IDF could not match provided extensive cover and the equivalent of both depth and protection. As noted earlier, the civilians became a defensive weapon; the ability to exploit civilian casualties and collateral damage became a weapon in political warfare; and the ability to exploit virtually any built-up area and familiar terrain as fortresses or ambush sites at least partially compensated for IDF armor, air mobility, superior firepower, and sensors.

The value and capability of such asymmetric netcentric warfare and comparatively slow moving wars of attrition should not be exaggerated. The IDF could win any clash, and it might have won decisively with different ground tactics. Nevertheless, asymmetric netcentric

warfare also should not be ignored. The kind of Western netcentric warfare that is so effective against conventional forces has met a major challenge, and one it must recognize.

### TERRAIN AND FORTIFIED POSITIONS

Several classic tactical lessons can be relearned from the fighting. Terrain played a significant role in the conflict. The battles were fought over broken, rocky ground with scattered brush and tree cover and with dominating hills overlooking dry wadis and gorges. Among the features were population centers ranging from a couple of houses to small cities. Hezbollah, often with the advantage of local knowledge, made effective use of natural cover in addition to its extensive prepared positions.<sup>104</sup>

In addition to the natural terrain, the villages and small cities along the border were used to great effect by Hezbollah forces. In Bint Jbeil, the narrow streets proved dangerous terrain for IDF armor. Hezbollah used ambushes and IEDs against incursions by IDF tanks. Further complicating the problem was the lack of helicopter support caused by fear of advanced SAMs, especially the SA-18. In the other villages along the border, Hezbollah forces took advantage of the upper floors of buildings to attack the IDF forces that were moving below in the usually narrow streets.<sup>105</sup>

As has been noted earlier, the extent of the Hezbollah defensive positions seems to have surprised the IDF at the beginning of the war, although this surprise was more a failure to distribute intelligence in the field than one of collection and analysis. During the six years since the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000, Hezbollah constructed a large and sophisticated series of bunkers and firing positions.

One of the more developed bunkers extended 40 meters underground and covered an area of two kilometers. This bunker had medical facilities, weapons stockpiles, running water, and supplies and accommodations for fighters to remain for weeks without resupply. According to sources, both the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the IDF had significantly underestimated the extent of the construction before the war began. One UNIFIL officer commented to Jane's about the large bunker mentioned above: "We never saw them build anything. They must have brought the cement in by the spoonful."

Yet, according to a November 2006 postwar assessment conducted by Andrew Exum of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy:

Although the positions had been largely destroyed by the IDF prior to the author's visit to southern Lebanon in November 2006, large blocks of concrete suggested sophisticated bunker systems built up over an extended period of time. In one spot, south of Naqoura and within view of both the Mediterranean and the Israeli border, a Hizballah position with 18 inches of concrete overhead cover had been built a mere 20 meters from a UNIFIL position and just 100 meters from an IDF position.<sup>106</sup>

The failure to understand the extent of Hezbollah military infrastructure was not local, but rather extended the length of the border. Jane's suggests that it was representative of a serious failing by Israeli intelligence.<sup>107</sup>

Terrain also proved problematic for the IDF in its final offensive of the war. The broken ground limited the possible avenues of attack to only a couple of wadis, and after operations began, it was clear which one the IDF was going to use. The terrain combined with the fact that the IDF delayed the operation until the end of the war provided Hezbollah fighters with ample time to prepare ambushes. As the armored column advanced up Wadi Salouqi, the lead tank was destroyed by an IED, and the remaining tanks came under attack from rocket-propelled grenades and mortars. During this encounter, Hezbollah managed to hit 11 tanks and to kill eight crewmen along with four other soldiers.<sup>108</sup>

A further problem for the IDF was a lack of firsthand knowledge about the terrain in which it was fighting. At the lower levels in the army, the commanders and men were inexperienced with fighting in Lebanon or against Hezbollah. One report suggested that no one at company level or below in the regular units had fought in Lebanon.<sup>109</sup>

The lack of firsthand knowledge about the terrain and the adept use of cover by Hezbollah highlight the need to plan for the full effect of terrain and climate and for the use of "fortifications" in the form of both existing built-up areas and the creation of military barriers.

As a result of the lessons, the IDF's work plan for 2007 called for developing capabilities in the "subterranean domain." As a senior IDF official told Jane's in January 2007:

We expect the subterranean domain to become even more central in asymmetric warfare.... Derived from classic guerilla tactics, Hezbollah and the Palestinian organizations recognize the advantages of subterranean warfare and are investing in their capabilities. Although we haven't seen any tunnel in the West Bank yet, we expect this method to appear there as well shortly.<sup>110</sup>

The IDF's Southern Command had already established a "tunnels unit" in 2002 with engineers specializing in detecting and destroying tunnels. It was largely a response to the heavy use of tunnel systems during the second intifada. Initially dug to import and transport arms, the tunnels were later used to launch attacks against IDF forces. The cross-border attack and kidnapping of IDF corporal Gilad Shalit on June 25, 2006, at the Kerem Shalom Gaza border crossing is one such example. The subterranean systems in Southern Lebanon likewise forced the IDF to send in ground troops to clear the tunnels of rockets and combatants.

As of early 2007, the IDF was exploring options to clear the tunnels without the use of ground troops to plant explosives. Early ideas included the use of bomb-planting robots or liquid explosives that could be poured into the tunnel systems.<sup>111</sup>

## **HEZBOLLAH COMMUNICATIONS VERSUS HEZBOLLAH ELECTRONIC WARFARE**

Hezbollah showed it could maintain effective command, control, and communications for two- or three-man squad operations in dispersed combat with considerable competence. Those methods of communications have been described earlier and illustrate how well the carefully prepared asymmetric opponents can preserve their command, control, and communications systems in warfare.

One commentator claims that Hezbollah went further and developed significant electronic warfare capabilities:

American electronic warfare experts are in Israel to find out how Hezbollah's Iranian systems neutralized Israeli EW [electronic warfare]. They are interested in four areas.

1. The Israeli EW systems' failure to block Hezbollah's command and communications and the links between the Lebanese command and the Syria-based Iranian headquarters.

2. How Iranian technicians helped Hezbollah eavesdrop on Israel's communications networks and mobile telephones, including Israeli soldiers' conversations from inside Lebanon.

3. How Iranian EW installed in Lebanese army coastal radar stations blocked the Barak antimissile missiles aboard Israeli warships, allowing Hezbollah to hit the Israeli corvette Hanith.

4. Why Israeli EW was unable to jam the military systems at the Iranian embassy in Beirut, which hosted the underground war room out of which Hassan Nasrallah and his top commanders, including Imad Mughniyeh, functioned.

Until the watershed date of July 12, 2006, when the Hezbollah triggered the Lebanon War, Israel was accounted an important world power in the development of electronic warfare systems—so much so that a symbiotic relationship evolved for the research and development of many U.S. and Israeli electronic warfare systems, in which a mix of complementary American and Israeli devices and methods were invested.

In combat against Hezbollah, both were not only found wanting, but had been actively neutralized, so that none performed the functions for which they were designed. This poses both the [United States] and Israel with a serious problem in a further round of the Lebanon war and any military clash with Iran.

Both intelligence services underestimated the tremendous effort Iran invested in state-of-the-art electronic warfare gadgetry designed to disable American military operations in Iraq and IDF functions in Israel and Lebanon. Israel's electronic warfare units were taken by surprise by the sophisticated protective mechanisms attached to Hezbollah's communications networks, which were discovered to be connected by optical fibers which are not susceptible to electronic jamming.

American and Israeli experts realize now that they overlooked the key feature of the naval exercise Iran staged in the Persian Gulf last April: Iran's leap ahead in electronic warfare. They dismissed most the weapons systems as old-fashioned. But among them were the C-802 cruise missile and several electronic warfare systems, both of which turned up in the Lebanon war with deadly effect.

Information warfare in a media rich environment is just as critical as the battle itself because it brings the international community into play.

At this point, too little data are available to confirm the details of Hezbollah's capabilities. There has, however, been little or no Israeli discussion of any significant Hezbollah electronic warfare capabilities.

## INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES

One constant lesson of war is that the quality of war fighting depends heavily on the quality of intelligence analysis before, during, and in terminating the war. Both sides had considerable intelligence capabilities, but both also had significant limitations.

### Israel

Israel had very advanced technical intelligence assets, many of which have been discussed earlier in some detail. It also made serious mistakes in strategic intelligence analysis and some aspects of tactical intelligence in spite of those assets. The failures to properly analyze and predict the behavior of the Lebanese government and Hezbollah's overall advances in war-fighting capability are the most important examples of such failures.

For six years following the IDF's withdrawal from its "security zone" in Southern Lebanon, Israel's intelligence community (including Mossad, Shin Bet, and Aman) conducted surveillance of Hezbollah's activities along the border. During that time, Hezbollah was observed to receive shipments of sophisticated arms from Iran through Syria. Observation posts also observed the construction of fortification along the Blue Line.<sup>112</sup>

According to Jane's, although the IDF was surprised by the size and sophistication of Hezbollah bunkers and tunnels, extensive information about their location was acquired by Israeli intelligence. Dossiers included information on Hezbollah's bunker and communications networks along the border, and Mossad agents who had infiltrated Hezbollah networks offered additional information on weapons transfers and bunker locations. At the outbreak of the war, the Mossad agents used chemicals to "plant" targets, which were then taken out by Israeli air forces. As a result, within 365 hours of the outbreak of war, most of the strategic missiles and important command and control networks were destroyed.<sup>113</sup> Analysts have pointed out that Hezbollah failed to strike deeply into Israel largely as a result of the IAF's ability to knock out more than 150 launchers early.<sup>114</sup> Israeli

intelligence was also able to identify and successfully target the majority of long-range rocket sites and depots at the beginning of the war with the help of Mossad sleeper cells.<sup>115</sup>

According to one source, however, this information was deemed secret, and the relevant maps and other intelligence did not reach commanders in the field until later in the war. Officers in the field were aware such intelligence was available but did not have access to it until a week after ground operations had begun. There was a plan to transfer the necessary information to the relevant units, but it was not carried out in time.<sup>116</sup>

According to Jane's, Israeli intelligence knew and reported that Hezbollah possessed advanced anti-tank weapons. However, the IDF was not properly prepared for the tactical use of anti-tank rockets by Hezbollah because IDF leadership did not anticipate Hezbollah's creative and effective use of them in mass attacks.

Some sources argue that some of the IDF's failures of the war may initially have been unfairly attributed to a lack of adequate intelligence. This information suggests, however, that the problems were more with the proper use of the information. An additional problem confronting Israel's military intelligence (Aman) arose from the involvement of Iran. According to one report, Aman lacked sufficient numbers of Farsi speakers to listen to communications between Hezbollah and Iranian officers.<sup>117</sup>

### **Hezbollah**

It became increasingly clear during the process of postwar assessment that Hezbollah had placed increased importance on the role of intelligence. According to analysis by Jane's, the group had improved internal security in the years leading up to the war to help prevent infiltration by Israeli agents, as well as increased intelligence efforts within Israel. Meanwhile, Iran was providing the group with more-advanced intelligence-gathering equipment, such as reconnaissance drones and eavesdropping equipment.<sup>118</sup>

Nevertheless, the quality of Hezbollah intelligence and the level of intelligence support provided by Iran and Syria are uncertain. Before the war, Hezbollah made substantial efforts to improve its intelligence gathering. It focused on IDF troop movements and used the information to help plan the raid on July 12 that sparked the conflict.

With the help of Syria and Iran, Hezbollah set up listening and observation posts along the border. Those posts were supplied with expensive and advanced equipment. Another intelligence effort was to set up a clearing center to analyze publicly available information within Israel.<sup>119</sup>

Israeli intelligence believed Hezbollah and Iranian intelligence capabilities to be closely connected. In addition to supplying aerial drones to Hezbollah, Iran was believed to have helped Hezbollah develop a signals intelligence capability. For example, Brig. Gen. Gal Hirsch, commander of the IDF's 91 Division, told reporters on July 25, 2006, that Israeli soldiers found rooms full of Iranian-made equipment during the battle of Bint Jbeil. Although the sophistication of the equipment was uncertain, Hezbollah had apparently managed to send text messages to residents in northern Israel warning them to leave their homes to avoid being targeted, much the way the IDF advised residents of Southern Lebanon to evacuate their homes.<sup>120</sup>

IDF secure communications include Wi-Max tactical radios made by Israel's Tadiran Communications, the Mountain Rose terrestrial cellular network by Motorola-Israel, and the satellite links provided by Israeli spacecraft Amos-1 and Amos-2.<sup>121</sup> Israelis did not, however, always rely on secure communications.

According to a report in *Haaretz*, Hezbollah intelligence was able to listen to cell phone conversations and read messages sent to pagers.<sup>122</sup> Avi Dichter, a former director of Shin Bet and a current internal security officer, acknowledged that Hezbollah possessed a sophisticated infrastructure and technology for listening to Israeli communications. He also said that Israel found indications that Hezbollah tried to listen to Israeli cellular phones. However, he denied that they were successful and asserted that Israel maintained superiority.

The director of the C<sup>4</sup>I Branch in the IDF General Staff, Maj. Gen. Udi Shani, emphasized the security of Israeli communications, stating, "The enemy had scanners and extraordinary capabilities to sit on our systems. But everything that was encrypted was not compromised. That I can say with certainty."<sup>123</sup>

In addition to Hezbollah's own listening posts, it had set up an "open source" intelligence collection and analysis center to examine Israeli and outside media, and it received intelligence passed on from

Syrian posts. Syria has long had an intelligence-sharing agreement with Russia and recently signed one with Iran. Under the agreements, Iran and Russia help set up listening posts, and the intelligence is shared between Syria and the country helping to construct the posts.<sup>124</sup>

Besides the signals intelligence, Hezbollah sought to develop agents within Israel. Some patterns in the rocket attacks during the war—such as an attack targeted on the IAF base at Zefat some 15 kilometers from the border—suggest that Hezbollah had developed effective military intelligence sources within Israel. A retired Lebanese army general, Salim Abu Ismail, suggested that Israel was not prepared for this aspect of Hezbollah activity, saying, “If Hizbullah’s military capabilities—especially its missile arsenal and its ranges—were not a mystery for the Israelis, their intelligence capabilities were certainly a real surprise for them.”<sup>125</sup>

It seems doubtful, however, that Israel could not have believed before and during the fighting that at least some “tourists” would act as agents or that some Israeli Arabs would not act as Hezbollah intelligence sources. One of the iron laws of political and ideological warfare, as well as conflicts involving mixed populations where some people have the same ethnic or sectarian background as the enemy, is that intelligence agents always exist and are active.

## Notes

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21. Ibid.

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44. Barbara Opall-Rome, "Sensor to Shooter in 1 Minute," *Defense News*, October 2, 2006, 1, 6.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Exum, "Hizballah at War: A Military Assessment," 11.
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<http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/land/row/at3sagger.htm>; for the Spandrel, see <http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/land/row/at5spandrel.htm>.

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70. “Israel Intelligence in the Second Lebanon War,” *Jane’s Intelligence Digest*, September 15, 2006.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

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### **THE LESSONS OF THE LAW OF UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES**

#### THE "ONGOING?" EFFECT OF THE FIGHTING

The Israeli-Hezbollah War has had a brutal cost to Lebanon in both lives and economic damage. It has been less costly to Israel in lives than in resources, but its longer-term strategic effect may be to encourage asymmetric attacks that do far more damage in the future. The economic costs to Lebanon have been described earlier. The supplemental defense costs for the war to Israel reached some 27 billion shekels (US\$6.5 billion) by September 2006. This additional expenditure is massive for a country whose planned annual defense budgets were then 33.5 billion shekels in 2006 (US\$8.0 billion) and 34.3 billion (US\$8.2 billion) in 2007.

What is more important in terms of the lessons of war is that the Israeli-Hezbollah War marks the third time in less than a quarter of a century that Israel drastically miscalculated the strategic and grand strategic consequences of major military actions in Lebanon. In 1982, Israel's minister of defense, Ariel Sharon, orchestrated the escalation of a border struggle with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) into a battle with Syria and the seizure of both Southern Lebanon and the outskirts of Beirut. Sharon's effort was to reshape Lebanon's political structure in ways that brought it firmly under the control of a Lebanese Maronite warlord, Pierre Gemayel.

The 1982 invasion produced a major tactical victory. It also, however, almost immediately saw the collapse of Israeli political hopes with the death of the warlord it had backed and the almost inevitable reassertion of Lebanon's confessional divisions and politics. Israel became locked into an occupation in the outskirts of Beirut that tied it to

Lebanese massacres of Palestinian civilians in refugee camps in Sabra and Shatila and that created political and military pressures that, in turn, forced the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to retreat into Southern Lebanon. What appeared to be a major defeat of the PLO eventually led to its relocation and the reassertion of its political and military power in the intifada.

The 1982 invasion also laid the seed of a long and enduring struggle with Lebanon's Shi'ites. Although the Shi'ites initially greeted advancing IDF forces as liberators from the Palestinian occupation of Southern Lebanon, Israeli indifference and hostility, as well as the creation of a "Christian" enclave under Israeli control in Southern Lebanon, helped create the Hezbollah and eventually locked Israel into a long war of attrition as Hezbollah and other Shi'ite forces sought to drive Israel out of Lebanon.

Nearly two decades later, Israel made another major strategic and military miscalculation. It decided in 2000 to withdraw its forces from Lebanon. It could not, however, negotiate a peace or a firm border and security settlement with a Syrian-dominated Lebanese government. The "Southern Lebanese Army" it had created and funded collapsed, and Israel was forced to rush out of Lebanon in ways that made Hezbollah seem the victor and that forced the collapse and Israeli abandonment of the enclave it had created. Instead of peace, Israeli withdrawal brought a "victorious" Hezbollah to the Israeli "Blue Line" or border.

The Israeli escalation of the 2006 war took place on terms very different from its 1982 invasion. The later escalation was the result of united action by Israel's political and military leaders and was not driven by a "rogue" minister of defense. Israel used airpower to try to change the strategic and political character of Lebanon, rather than a major land invasion. The approach still, however, reflected fundamentally false assumptions about the strategic and political behavior of Lebanon and about the vulnerability of Hezbollah.

In spite of the reinforcement of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and the deployment of Lebanese army forces into Southern Lebanon, Israel is no more secure today than it was before the fighting. The success of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 depended on extraordinary cooperation from Hezbollah, Israel, and the Lebanese government and army. It assumed that clashes between

Israel and Hezbollah will not escalate to new major rounds of fighting, that Iran and Syria would not succeed in resupplying new and provocative weapons, and that an international peacemaking force could be truly effective. It also did not anticipate the risk of a Hezbollah-driven political crisis in Lebanon, civil war, and reassertion of Syria's role in Lebanon.

As a result, both Israel and Hezbollah now see the cease-fire and security arrangements as presenting a dangerous mix of risk and opportunity. The result of the fighting is a peace process that may turn into a war process at any time; thus each side must be ready to defend against the other while trying to exploit the terms of the cease-fire. The fighting may also have triggered internal power struggles in Lebanon that could make Hezbollah a dominant force in Lebanese politics or could trigger a new round of confessional power struggles. Both sides certainly see the risk of a new round of fighting and are already adapting their goals, strategy, and tactics for such a possibility.

The rules of engagement that a reinforced UNIFIL will ultimately adopt if there is a violent Hezbollah resurgence in the south or a new round of fighting remain unclear. So far, both the UN force and Lebanese army have made only limited efforts to disarm Hezbollah and have had only limited success in preventing resupply.

As in 1982, the success of the U.S. military advisory effort that is supposed to strengthen the Lebanese army will depend on Lebanese political unity, which now seems unlikely. As a result, the U.S. effort seems more likely to have to focus on correcting critical problems in readiness and operational capability in the existing forces than on creating new facts on the ground in the south or along Lebanon's borders. It also seems likely to confront the same serious confessional differences between the Lebanese and the lack of political unity and direction, as well as potential Syrian and Iranian pressure to prevent the development of an effective national force.

Israel also faces broader strategic problems as a legacy of the war. The prospect is very real that even if the Israeli-Hezbollah War does not rekindle, it has generated forces in the Arab world that will thrust Israel into a broader, four-cornered struggle with radical Arab elements, as well as pose growing political problems for moderate Arab states.

Hezbollah's performance may well lead both Shi'ite hard-liners and the growing neo-Salafi Sunni extremist elements in Lebanon to

keep up a steady pace of terrorist attacks. Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad forces that now dominate Gaza will learn and adapt, and Israel may face a new level of conflict, or “front,” on the West Bank if the same anti-Israeli forces can succeed in stepping up their activity there. The Israeli-Hezbollah War has shown all forms of hostile state and non-state actors that Israel and Israelis are vulnerable. Syria and Iran have strong incentives to keep up covert pressure. Both Sunni and Shi’ite transnational movements have a new incentive to attack Israeli targets inside and outside Israel.

The war also interacts with other regional conflicts. Iranian and Syrian support for Hezbollah has won some degree of popular support but has raised the growing concern among Arab regimes—such as those of Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia—about Iran’s growing strategic influence and the risk of a Shi’ite crescent that could include Iran, Syria, and a Shi’ite-dominated Iraq and Lebanon. The war also interacts with the resurgence of al Qa’ida and other neo-Salafi Sunni extremist movements that not only oppose Israel and secularism but also often see Shi’ite movements such as Hezbollah and all Shi’ites as apostates and polytheists, rather than as legitimate members of Islam.

One of the lessons of this experience may well be that asymmetric wars generally involve far more than asymmetric methods of fighting: they often involve asymmetric ideologies and values. As in Vietnam, those values can have such a strong effect on the outcome of the fighting that even major tactical victories become irrelevant, particularly when one side can easily fight a war of attrition and the other cannot, as well as when populations remain political and ideologically hostile to the tactical victor.

In this sense, Israel may prove to have been no more blind to the grand strategic and strategic realities in Lebanon than the United States has been to similar realities in Iraq and Afghanistan. The assumption that an opponent will react to tactical defeat by behaving as if it had values similar to its attacker has proven wrong in most of Europe’s conventional wars, where Western nationalism and ideologies drove the behavior of both sides. Lasting anger, hatred, and irredentism have been the rule and not the exception.

Going to war against an opponent with a different culture, political system, and set of religious beliefs and values is even more likely to produce such results. The political, ideological, and perceptual asym-

metries between opposing sides can easily become the dominant dimension of war and can evolve in ways that make those asymmetries steadily more important—almost regardless of the outcome of the fighting. Blindness to this reality, in addition to a belief in a common or universal set of values, becomes a recipe for defeat.



## APPENDIX A

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### THE WAR IN NUMBERS

- Days of fighting: 33
- Israeli casualties: 119 service personnel, 42 civilians
- Lebanese casualties: at least 900 civilians and 500 Hezbollah fighters
- Rockets fired on Israel: 3,970
- Israel Air Force (IAF) sorties: 15,500
- Targets struck in Lebanon: 7,000
- Hezbollah rocket launchers destroyed: 126
- Israeli main battle tanks destroyed: 20 (6 to mines and 14 to anti-tank guided missiles—all Merkava Mark 2, 3, or 4)
- IAF aircraft shot down: 1
- IAF aircraft lost in accidents: 4
- Israel navy operational hours: 8,000
- Israel Defense Forces artillery shells fired: more than 100,000

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*Source:* Israel Defense Forces Publication, August 21, 2006, cited in Alon Ben-David, "Israel Introspective after Lebanon Offensive," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, August 22, 2006.

APPENDIX B

THE ARAB-ISRAELI BALANCE

FORCES IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI "RING" STATES IN 2006

Category or Weapon	Israel	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Lebanon
<b>Defense Budget 2006</b>					
(in \$ current billions)	7.69	1.36	1.0	2.9	0.66
<b>Arms imports: 1997–2000</b>					
(US\$millions)					
New orders	5,000	600	600	6,300	0
Deliveries	5,000	500	500	3,800	200
<b>Arms imports: 2001–2004</b>					
(US\$millions)					
New orders	4,800	300	1,100	6,500	0
Deliveries	3,400	300	500	5,900	0
<b>Mobilization Base</b>					
(% of total population)					
People aged 0–14	27	37	35	33	27
People aged 15–64	64	58	62	62	66
People aged 65+	10	4	4	5	7
<b>Military Personnel</b>					
Total active	168,300	307,600	100,500	468,500	72,100
(conscripts)	(105,000)	—	—	—	—
Total reserve	408,000	354,000	35,000	479,000	—
Total	576,300	661,600	135,500	947,500	85,100
Paramilitary	8,050	108,000	10,000	330,000	13,000
<i>Land Forces</i>					
Active military					
personnel	125,000	200,000	85,000	340,000	70,000
(conscripts)	(105,000)	—	—	—	—
Reserve military					
personnel	380,000	280,000	30,000	375,000	—
Total active and reserve					
military personnel	505,000	480,000	115,000	715,000	70,000

Category or Weapon	Israel	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Lebanon
<i>Land Forces (Continued)</i>					
Main battle tanks	3,657	4,600 (1,200)	1,120 (168)	3,855	310
AIFVs, armored cars, light tanks	408	2,200	226	520	0
APCs/reconnaissance/- scouts	10,419+/408/0	2,400	1,350	5,162	1,335
World War II half-tracks	3,000-3,500	0	0	0	0
ATGM launchers	1,225	4,190+	670	2,672	130
Self-propelled artillery	620	430	399	489	0
Towed artillery	456	1,530	94	526	147
Multiple rocket launchers	224	480	0	498	25
Mortars	4,132	710	740	2,415	369
SSM launchers	100(7)	72	0	42	0
Anti-aircraft guns	0	2,060	395	674+	10+
Light SAM launchers	1,250	4,335+	992+	2,096	20
<i>Air and Air Defense Forces</i>					
Active Air Force					
military personnel	35,000	40,000	15,000	20,000	1,000
Active Air Defense					
command	3,000	60,000	3,400	80,000	0
Air Force Reserve					
military personnel	24,500	70,000	—	10,000	—
Air Defense Command Reserve					
military personnel	15,000	—	0	70,000	0
Aircraft					
Total fighter, FGA, reconnaissance					
reconnaissance	381	534	100	485	6
Fighter	199	390	85	334	0
FGA/fighter	376	0	0	0	0
FGA	177+	136	15	131	6
Reconnaissance	5	8	0	20	0
Airborne early warning	2	0	0	4	0
Electronic warfare	31	0	0	7	0
Fixed wing	?	0	0	3	—
Helicopter	?	10	0	4	—
Maritime					
reconnaissance (MR)	3	0	0	2	0
Combat capable trainer	26	96+	0	73	8
Tanker	5	0	0	0	0
Transport	63	22	14	41	2
Helicopters					
Attack or armed	95+	71	20+	115	2
SAR, ASW	7	—	—	15	—
Transport and other	166	120	75	111	38
Total	268+	191	95+	241	40

(continued)

Category or Weapon	Israel	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Lebanon
<i>Air and Air Defense Forces, Aircraft (Continued)</i>					
SAM forces					
Batteries	25	150	17	702	0
Heavy launchers	66+	848	992+	628	0
Medium launchers	0	60	0	36-54	0
Anti-aircraft guns	815	1,225+	395	2,000	—
<i>Naval Forces</i>					
Active military					
personnel	8,000	7,600	500	8,500	1,100
Reserve military					
personnel	3,500	4,000	—	20,500	0
Total active and reserve					
military personnel	11,500	11,600	500	29,000	1,100
Naval commandos,					
Marines	300	0	0	0	0
Submarines	3	0	0	4	0
Destroyers, frigates,					
corvettes	3	2	0	11	0
Missile	3	2	0	10	0
Other	0	0	0	1	0
Missile patrol	12	10	0	25	0
Coastal, inshore patrol	32	20	20	48	32
Mine	0	5	0	15	0
Amphibious ships	2	3	0	12	2
Landing craft,					
light support	2	4	0	9	—
Fixed-wing combat aircraft	0	0	0	0	0
MR or MPA	0	0	0	0	0
ASW, combat helicopter	0	25	0	27	0
Other helicopters	—	—	—	—	—

Source: Adapted from data provided by International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance* (London: Routledge, various editions).

Notes: Figures in parentheses show additional equipment known to be in long-term storage. Some Syrian tanks shown in parentheses are used as fire points in fixed positions.

AIFV = advanced infantry fighting vehicle; APC = armored personnel carrier; ASW = anti-submarine warfare; ATGM = anti-tank guided missile; FGA = fighter ground attack; MPA = maritime patrol aircraft. SAM = surface-to-air missile; SAR = search and rescue; SSM = surface-to-surface missile; — = no data available; ? = data uncertain; + = more than.

APPENDIX C

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**TEXT OF UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1701**

**RESOLUTION 1701 (2006)**

Adopted by the Security Council at its 5511th meeting, on  
11 August 2006

*The Security Council,*

*Recalling* all its previous resolutions on Lebanon, in particular resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 520 (1982), 1559 (2004), 1655 (2006), 1680 (2006), and 1697 (2006), as well as the statements of its president on the situation in Lebanon, in particular the statements of 18 June 2000, of 19 October 2004, of 4 May 2005, of 23 January 2006, and of 30 July 2006;

*Expressing* its utmost concern at the continuing escalation of hostilities in Lebanon and in Israel since Hezbollah's attack on Israel on 12 July 2006, which has already caused hundreds of deaths and injuries on both sides, extensive damage to civilian infrastructure, and hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons;

*Emphasizing* the need for an end of violence, but at the same time *emphasizing* the need to address urgently the causes that have given rise to the current crisis, including by the unconditional release of the abducted Israeli soldiers;

*Mindful* of the sensitivity of the issue of prisoners and *encouraging* the efforts aimed at urgently settling the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel;

*Welcoming* the efforts of the Lebanese prime minister and the commitment of the government of Lebanon, in its seven-point plan, to

extend its authority over its territory, through its own legitimate armed forces, so that there will be no weapons without the consent of the government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the government of Lebanon, *welcoming also* its commitment to a UN force that is supplemented and enhanced in numbers, equipment, mandate, and scope of operation, and *bearing in mind* its request in this plan for an immediate withdrawal of the Israeli forces from southern Lebanon;

*Determined* to act for this withdrawal to happen at the earliest;

*Taking due note* of the proposals made in the seven-point plan regarding the Sheba farms area;

*Welcoming* the unanimous decision by the government of Lebanon on 7 August 2006 to deploy a Lebanese armed force of 15,000 troops in south Lebanon as the Israeli army withdraws behind the Blue Line and to request the assistance of additional forces from UNIFIL, as needed, to facilitate the entry of the Lebanese armed forces into the region and to restate its intention to strengthen the Lebanese armed forces with material as needed to enable it to perform its duties;

*Aware* of its responsibilities to help secure a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution to the conflict;

*Determining* that the situation in Lebanon constitutes a threat to international peace and security;

1. *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;

2. Upon full cessation of hostilities, *calls upon* the government of Lebanon and UNIFIL as authorized by paragraph 11 to deploy their forces together throughout the South and *calls upon* the government of Israel, as that deployment begins, to withdraw all of its forces from southern Lebanon in parallel;

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of the extension of the control of the government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1559 (2004) and resolution 1680 (2006), and of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, for it to exercise its full sovereignty, so that there will be no weapons without the consent of the government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the government of Lebanon;

4. *Reiterates* its strong support for full respect for the Blue Line;

5. *Also reiterates* its strong support, as recalled in all its previous relevant resolutions, for the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders, as contemplated by the Israeli-Lebanese General Armistice Agreement of 23 March 1949;

6. *Calls on* the international community to take immediate steps to extend its financial and humanitarian assistance to the Lebanese people, including through facilitating the safe return of displaced persons and, under the authority of the government of Lebanon, reopening airports and harbors, consistent with paragraphs 14 and 15, and *calls on* it also to consider further assistance in the future to contribute to the reconstruction and development of Lebanon;

7. *Affirms* that all parties are responsible for ensuring that no action is taken contrary to paragraph 1 that might adversely affect the search for a long-term solution, humanitarian access to civilian populations, including safe passage for humanitarian convoys, or the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons, and *calls on* all parties to comply with this responsibility and to cooperate with the Security Council;

8. *Calls for* Israel and Lebanon to support a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution based on the following principles and elements:

Full respect for the Blue Line by both parties;

- Security arrangements to prevent the resumption of hostilities, including the establishment between the Blue Line and the Litani River of an area free of any armed personnel, assets, and weapons other than those of the government of Lebanon and of UNIFIL as authorized in paragraph 11, deployed in this area;
- Full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, and of resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), that require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon, so that, pursuant to the Lebanese cabinet decision of 27 July 2006, there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than that of the Lebanese state;
- No foreign forces in Lebanon without the consent of its government;
- No sales or supply of arms and related materiel to Lebanon except as authorized by its government;

- Provision to the United Nations of all remaining maps of land mines in Lebanon in Israel's possession;

9. *Invites* the Secretary-General to support efforts to secure as soon as possible agreements in principle from the government of Lebanon and the government of Israel to the principles and elements for a long-term solution as set forth in paragraph 8, and *expresses* its intention to be actively involved;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to develop, in liaison with relevant international actors and the concerned parties, proposals to implement the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, and resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), including disarmament, and for delineation of the international borders of Lebanon, especially in those areas where the border is disputed or uncertain, including by dealing with the Sheba farms area, and to present to the Security Council those proposals within 30 days;

11. *Decides*, in order to supplement and enhance the force in numbers, equipment, mandate, and scope of operations, to authorize an increase in the force strength of UNIFIL to a maximum of 15,000 troops, and that the force shall, in addition to carrying out its mandate under resolutions 425 and 426 (1978),

- a. Monitor the cessation of hostilities;
- b. Accompany and support the Lebanese armed forces as they deploy throughout the South, including along the Blue Line, as Israel withdraws its armed forces from Lebanon as provided in paragraph 2;
- c. Coordinate its activities related to paragraph 11 (b) with the government of Lebanon and the government of Israel;
- d. Extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons;
- e. Assist the Lebanese armed forces in taking steps toward the establishment of the area as referred to in paragraph 8;
- f. Assist the government of Lebanon, at its request, to implement paragraph 14;

12. Acting in support of a request from the government of Lebanon to deploy an international force to assist it to exercise its authority throughout the territory, *authorizes* UNIFIL to take all necessary action in areas of deployment of its forces and as it deems within its capabilities, to ensure that its area of operations is not utilized for hostile activities of any kind, to resist attempts by forceful means to prevent it

from discharging its duties under the mandate of the Security Council, and to protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations, and equipment [in order to] ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel, humanitarian workers, and, without prejudice to the responsibility of the government of Lebanon, to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General urgently to put in place measures to ensure UNIFIL is able to carry out the functions envisaged in this resolution, *urges* member states to consider making appropriate contributions to UNIFIL and to respond positively to requests for assistance from the Force, and *expresses* its strong appreciation to those who have contributed to UNIFIL in the past;

14. *Calls upon* the government of Lebanon to secure its borders and other entry points to prevent the entry in Lebanon without its consent of arms or related materiel and *requests* UNIFIL as authorized in paragraph 11 to assist the government of Lebanon at its request;

15. *Decides* further that all states shall take the necessary measures to prevent, by their nationals or from their territories or using their flag vessels or aircraft,

a. the sale or supply to any entity or individual in Lebanon of arms and related materiel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment, and spare parts for the aforementioned, whether or not originating in their territories; and

b. the provision to any entity or individual in Lebanon of any technical training or assistance related to the provision, manufacture, maintenance, or use of the items listed in subparagraph (a) above, except that these prohibitions shall not apply to arms, related material, training, or assistance authorized by the government of Lebanon or by UNIFIL as authorized in paragraph 11;

16. *Decides* to extend the mandate of UNIFIL until 31 August 2007, and *expresses its intention* to consider in a later resolution further enhancements to the mandate and other steps to contribute to the implementation of a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Council within one week on the implementation of this resolution and subsequently on a regular basis;

18. *Stresses* the importance of, and the need to achieve, a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on all its relevant

resolutions including its resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973;

19. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

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*Source:* United Nations, <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unifil/unifilDrs.htm>.

APPENDIX D

MAP OF SOUTH LEBANON AND UNIFIL DEPLOYMENTS



Source: United Nations, Lebanon—UNIFIL—Documents, December 31, 2006. <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unifil/docs.html>.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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**Anthony H. Cordesman** holds the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at CSIS. He is also a military and defense analyst for ABC News and a frequent commentator on National Public Radio and the BBC. He has served in various senior positions at NATO, the State Department, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Energy, as well as on several assignments in the Middle East.

Cordesman is the author of more than 50 books and has published extensively on the military balance in the Persian Gulf and in Asia, asymmetric warfare and weapons of mass destruction, strategic threats and national missile defense, and U.S. national security policy, including a four-volume series on the lessons of modern war. His most recent books include *Salvaging American Defense* (Praeger/CSIS, 2007); *Chinese Military Modernization*, with Martin Kleiber (CSIS, 2007); *Iran's Weapons of Mass Destruction*, with Khalid R. Al-Rodhan (CSIS, 2006); *Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric Wars*, with Khalid R. Al-Rodhan (Praeger, 2006); *The Global Oil Market: Risks and Uncertainties*, with Khalid R. Al-Rodhan (CSIS, 2006); and *The Challenge of Biological Terrorism* (CSIS, 2005). He has been awarded the Department of Defense Distinguished Service medal and is a former adjunct professor of national security studies at Georgetown University.

**George Sullivan** is a legislative assistant for Congressman Jose Serrano of New York, handling foreign affairs, defense, and trade issues. Prior to his current position, he was a researcher at the Burke Chair, where he focused primarily on the Iraq insurgency and conflict in the Levant. Sullivan received his B.A. in mathematics from the University of Chicago and later earned an M.Sc. in political theory from the London School of Economics, where he completed a thesis on the moral difficulties arising from humanitarian interventions.

**William D. Sullivan** was a research associate at the Burke Chair at the time of this writing, working on Middle East energy and security strategies as well as domestic and overseas U.S. defense issues. He joined CSIS in 2004 with the Eastern Europe Project to study narcotics and weapons trafficking in the Western Balkans. In 2005, Sullivan joined the CSIS International Security Program to focus on a Department of Defense initiative seeking to reorganize the U.S. military's reserve component. Prior to joining CSIS, Sullivan was a member of a portfolio advisory and publishing group in McLean, Virginia. Sullivan is a graduate of the University of Virginia with a B.A. in politics and English literature and is currently pursuing an advanced degree in international business and economic law at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.



## Lessons of the 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War

By Anthony H. Cordesman with George Sullivan and William D. Sullivan

The 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War marked the third time in less than a quarter of a century that Israel conducted major military actions in Lebanon. As the authors point out, however, it also marked the third time that Israel miscalculated the strategic consequences of intervention in Lebanon. This book assesses all aspects of Israel's goals in the war, from crippling the Iranian influence in Lebanon, to ending Hezbollah's status as a "state within a state," to liberating two captured Israeli soldiers. The tactics used to achieve those goals, explain the authors, did not serve a plausible grand strategy, and the result was to generate forces in the Arab world that will thrust Israel into a broader, four-cornered struggle with radical Arab elements.

The authors discuss major lessons regarding the conduct of the war, its tactical and technological aspects, and the lessons of the "Law of Unintended Consequences." Israel's grand strategy and strategic assumptions were fundamentally flawed, showing that conventional forces can be vulnerable to asymmetric attacks and can create political problems that offset many of their military advantages.

At a time when the United States is involved in asymmetric wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, both the United States and its allies need to learn the lessons of the Israeli-Hezbollah War as quickly as they can—and act accordingly. This volume provides a timely assessment of flawed war planning, overreliance on high-technology conventional warfare, and a strategy that underestimated the strength of the enemy.

**Anthony H. Cordesman** holds the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at CSIS. He is the author of more than 50 books on national security policy.

**George Sullivan** is a legislative assistant on Capitol Hill and a former researcher at the Burke Chair.

**William D. Sullivan** was a research associate at the Burke Chair and is at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

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