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FRIDAY, AUGUST 04, 2006

## Hezbollah not to blame for war, reports show

*Big News Network.com*

Until three weeks ago the border between Israel and Lebanon was relatively quiet.

There had been no major incidents for the six years since Israel ended its 22 year-occupation (since 1978) in May 2000.

Hezbollah patrolled the Lebanese side, and the Israeli army, the Israeli side. The UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) observed.

There were skirmishes, many prompted by Israeli invasion of Lebanese airspace which, according to UNIFIL reports, occurred almost daily.

In 2003, three years after the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, Israeli Brigadier General Meir Caliphi, completed a posting as commander of the Galilee Division saying northern Israel was witnessing one of its more peaceful periods in years. 'When compared to other parts of the country, the north is flourishing,' he said.

He said the only real activity from Hezbollah was when Israeli planes invaded Lebanese airspace and they fired anti-aircraft guns. Only two civilians sustained minor injuries as a result of the shelling, he said.

'It may go against military logic,' Caliphi admitted, 'but I think that it is important to continue with the policy of restraint. So long as we can keep the quiet here.'

Brigadier Caliphi said the Hezbollah was well aware of Israel's ability to respond forcefully if the rockets deployed in southern Lebanon were fired against Israel.

In an extraordinary admission he said any attack would bring havoc to the Lebanese civilian population, and in a reference to proportionality, he inferred any response would be one hundred times that inflicted.

'If rockets fly over the north, it is better that 100 mothers in Beirut mourn than one mother in Haifa. The Hezbollah know that in such a case, we will take off our gloves and it does not want to be viewed as responsible for bringing disaster on Lebanon's citizens,' he said.

Then in an even more extraordinary admission, he threatened another, 'Jenin.'

'They saw that in Jenin we were willing to ravage a refugee camp in order to gain quiet, even if we did not use F-16 aircraft. They know the implications to their region,' he said. The Brigadier General had no qualms about saying that any incursion by Hezbollah could result in an attack on the Lebanon government, and also said Syria could be a target.

Caliphi expressed great confidence in the ability of the Israel Defense Forces to impose quiet in Lebanon. 'Today I feel much more confident about our ability to respond along the northern border. If we are drawn into a confrontation, we will be able to win the fight and create a new situation in which the Hezbollah will not be able to return to its positions along the fence. In such a confrontation, Syria, the Hezbollah and the government of Lebanon could be the targets, and they will have to pay the highest price possible. They are fully aware of the rules of the game,' Caliphi said.

The general also had some respectful comments about the head of the Hezbollah, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah. 'He is rational and smart, and analyzes the situation correctly. I do not underestimate the Hezbollah but take them very seriously,' he said.

Last year, February 18, at the annual meeting of the annual Jerusalem meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Israel's then Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert reportedly pounded the podium and passionately supported Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon.

'Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon is a model which Israel would apply to Gaza and Samaria,' he said. Olmert went on to say Hezbollah 'terrorists' now stationed in former Israeli army positions throughout Southern Lebanon had accumulated 15,000 missiles and mortars in Lebanon.

Continuing to pound on the podium, he said, 'they have never, never, never used missiles against Israel on the northern border since Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in May, 2000.' (It was later pointed out that 5 Katyusha rockets had been fired into northern Israel in the period to 2004, a declassified Israeli army document showed).

Just on three weeks ago, on July 12, the border quiet was interrupted by Hezbollah in a raid on an Israeli military post which

resulted in the capture of two Israeli soldiers. Three others died in the attack.

Five other soldiers were killed that day, four instantly, and one later, when a tank struck a mine. This however, according to Haaretz newspaper, occurred six kilometres inside Lebanese territory.

The Hezbollah attack was staged to capture soldiers to use for a prisoner-exchange with Israel, a strategy adopted by both sides in the past. According to Human Rights Watch, targeting and capture of enemy soldiers is allowed under international humanitarian law.

Immediately on securing the capture of the soldiers, Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, Hezbollah announced it wanted a prisoner exchange.

In the three weeks since that day, news reports, based on statements from various government officials from Israel and the United States, infer Hezbollah began attacking northern Israel with rockets, and it were those attacks that prompted the much repeated mantra by not only Israel, and the U.S., but leaders from a number of other countries, and the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, that Israel has a right to defend itself.

However there is no evidence Hezbollah intended, or indeed started, a sustained rocket attack on Israel.

Indeed on July 12 CNN reported Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah calling for 'direct negotiations' aimed at freeing prisoners from Israeli jails in exchange for the two Israeli soldiers abducted by Hezbollah.

The abduction, Nasrallah told a news conference, is 'our natural, only and logical right,' CNN reported.

'We want our prisoners released,' Nasrallah said, and asserted that the abduction had focused the international community on the plight of prisoners, both Hezbollah members and Palestinians, in Israeli jails.

There are reportedly 9,000 prisoners being illegally held in Israeli jails, including women and under-age children, that have never faced charges or trial. Some have been held for more than thirty years.

Nasrallah said that an Israeli military operation 'will not accomplish the return of the Israeli soldiers' and that 'direct negotiations' are the only way to win their return, reported CNN.

The capture of the two soldiers on July 12 was at a time when Israel was conducting a relentless offensive on Gaza (which is continuing), following the capture of a soldier there, Gilad Shalit, 19, on June 25. A number of high profile air strikes had resulted in the deaths of a number of civilians, including women and children.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said (on July 12) the attack and abductions (by Hezbollah) were an 'act of war' and blamed the Lebanese government, which he said would be held responsible. (Reported by CNN July 12).

On July 12 Israel's Haaretz newspaper said that immediately after the Hezbollah attack, the organization's Al-Manar television station began broadcasting clips calling on Israel to release Lebanese prisoners held in Israel in return for the soldiers.

'Fulfilling its pledge to liberate the [Arab] prisoners and detainees, the Islamic Resistance captured two Israeli soldiers at the border with occupied Palestine,' the Syrian- and Iranian-backed Hezbollah said in a statement.

News reports said when the attack took place that 'simultaneously,' rockets were fired into Israel. Another report described them as 'diversionary.' There were no other reports of firings of rockets or of any casualties.

Haaretz reported July 12 in its coverage of the day's events, 'The IDF also ordered troops deployed on the Lebanon and Gaza borders on high alert in the event that armed groups may attempt to fire Katyusha and Qassam rockets into Israel.'

The call by Hezbollah, broadcast on Al-Manar fell on deaf ears. Israel responded, said CNN, by launching air strikes and sending troops and tanks into southern Lebanon. The following day it dramatically escalated the conflict by repeatedly bombing Beirut International Airport and other targets throughout Lebanon. It even bombed Al-Manar. There were heavy casualties among the Lebanese civilian population. In response Hezbollah began firing rockets at northern Israel.

One of the central issues in this conflict is the status of Hezbollah. Israel has branded Hezbollah as a terrorist group, and successfully persuaded the United States to do likewise. Britain and Australia fell in behind the U.S. and so too did Canada and the Netherlands. Of the 192-member nations of the United Nations however, only six have listed Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

A recent letter sent by 213 members of the U.S. Congress to the European Union demanding it list Hezbollah as a terrorist organization was rebuffed. The EU President Erkki Tuomioja said Wednesday the union would not be complying with the demand.

The Lebanese government regards Hezbollah as a legitimate resistance group. It operates exclusively within Lebanon, was set up

as a result of the 1982 invasion and occupation by Israel, and is largely credited within Lebanon, and internationally, as playing a major part in bringing the Israeli occupation to an end. When Israel did leave in May 2000 it refused to relinquish the Shebaa Farms area which it continued to occupy, arguing the area was Syrian and not Lebanese, which the UN confirms is so. The January 20, 2005 UN Secretary-General's report on Lebanon states: 'The continually asserted position of the Government of Lebanon that the Blue Line is not valid in the Shaba farms area is not compatible with Security Council resolutions.'

Most incidents involving Hezbollah and Israel on the border centered around the disputed Shebaa Farms area. The U.S. State Department in its report on terrorism for 2005 said, 'Hezbollah and Israel clashed twice in this disputed part of the Golan Heights in 2005.' Both Israel and Hezbollah have reportedly lodged a number of complaints about each other's actions.

Hezbollah has not conducted terrorist attacks along the lines of al-Qaeda but maintains it is acting purely as a resistance group. The organization says it forbids its fighters going to Iraq for any reason, and that no Hezbollah units or individual fighters have entered Iraq to support any Iraqi faction fighting the U.S.

Hezbollah has no known links to al-Qaida. It condemned the September 11 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center towers, but remained silent on the attack on the Pentagon.

In 2004, Hezbollah issued a statement condemning the beheading of American contractor Nicholas Berg by al-Qaeda in Iraq, describing it as a 'despicable act' that did 'grave damage to Islam and the Muslims.'

The organization however does support militant groups in the Palestinian territories. Asked by Robin Wright for an article in the Washington Post why he was not critical of a suicide bombing which had occurred at the time of the interview (in 2004), Nasrallah said the issue of what he calls 'occupied Palestine,' was 'complicated.'

He said, 'It is our opinion that in Palestine, women and children need to be avoided in any case. But it came after more than two months of daily Israeli killing of Palestinians, and the destruction of houses and schools, and the siege that is imposed on the Palestinians. There is no other means for the Palestinians to defend themselves. That is why I cannot condemn this type of operation in occupied Palestine.'

Of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, Wright quotes him as asking, 'What do the people who worked in those two [World Trade Center] towers, along with thousands of employees, women and men, have to do with war that is taking place in the Middle East? Or the war that Mr. George Bush may wage on people in the Islamic world?' He added, 'Therefore we condemned this act, and any similar act we condemn.'

But Wright asked, 'what about the Pentagon?'

'I said nothing about the Pentagon, meaning we remain silent. We neither favored nor opposed that act,' Nasrallah replied. 'Well, of course, the method of Osama bin Laden, and the fashion of bin Laden, we do not endorse them. And many of the operations that they have carried out, we condemned them very clearly.'

Hezbollah's activities as pointed out elsewhere almost always relate to military targets. Asked by Robin Wright about the targeting of civilians by insurgents in Iraq, Nasrallah replied, 'It is unacceptable, it is forbidden, to harm the innocent. To have Iraqis confronting the occupation army, this is natural. But if there are American tourists, or intellectuals, doctors, or professors who have nothing to do with this war, they are innocent, even though they are Americans, and it is forbidden. It is not acceptable to harm them.'

Apart from the 1980s almost all attacks Hezbollah is accused of, implicated in, or linked to, were carried out in Lebanon. There were however two bombings in Argentina which attracted Hezbollah linkage, as did one in Saudi Arabia at Khobar Towers, at a U.S. Air Force dormitory. The Khobar Towers attack is one where we have some knowledge as we were advised by an adviser of the Saudi Defense Minister, Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz, at the time, that those involved had been identified and arrested. As is public knowledge the FBI traveled to Saudi Arabia to interview the suspects, but the Saudi government executed them before the FBI's arrival. We were told the suspects all came from the Saudi military.

Hezbollah has denied involvement in these attacks, and insists it does not carry out terrorist attacks. We have no information it has been involved in any car bombings, assassinations, or suicide bombings. Intriguing is that its arch enemy has successfully branded it a terrorist group, and has support from five other nations in doing so, and yet that enemy, Israel, has publicly carried out more car bombings and assassinations, than all of the terrorist groups worldwide combined. It also stands accused of a number of bombings and assassinations for which it denies responsibility. One that has a bearing on the current conflict occurred just over two months ago on May 26 2006, when Mahmoud al-Majzoub, a senior operative in the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, was killed along with his brother in a car bombing. The PIJ, Hezbollah and the Lebanese government blamed Israel.

Two days later, May 28 2006, at 3:40am eight Katyusha rockets were fired from within Lebanon. Three of them hit an Israel Air Force base, slightly wounding a soldier. The attack at the base on Mt. Meiron was

targeted the base previously.

A claim was purportedly made by PIJ claiming responsibility for the firing of the rockets, and saying it was in retaliation for the assassination of al-Majzoub. However the claim was rejected by a PIJ spokesman saying the organization neither had a base in Lebanon, nor did it possess the type of Katshya rockets used in the attack. The PIJ spokesman also said Hezbollah had no information on the attack.

Nonetheless the Israel Air Force began bombing parts of southern Lebanon at about 10:30am the same day. Clashes between Hezbollah and Israeli forces on the border followed but a ceasefire was negotiated by the afternoon, by UNIFIL.

Israel's Minister for Defense, Amir Peretz, said he held the Lebanon government responsible for the outbreak of violence. He said the Lebanon government was responsible for everything that happened in its territory. He called upon it to exercise its sovereignty over southern Lebanon. General Udi Adam, Israel's Chief of the Northern Command, also placed responsibility for the day's events on the Lebanon government.

Lebanon's Prime Minister Fuad al Seniora slammed Israel's violations of Lebanon's sovereignty, blaming it and Israel's continuing occupation of the Shebaa Farms for the violence.

Two years earlier a similar car bombing occurred. A senior Hezbollah official, Ghaleb Awwali, was blown up in his car in Beirut. Israel was blamed by Hezbollah, and most Arab media. A senior Lebanese security official told the Australian Broadcasting Commission, 'networks linked to Israel,' were involved. A statement by a shadowy Sunni Muslim group called Jund Ash Sham (Soldiers of Damascus) said the bombing was part of a plan to eradicate Shiite 'heresy,' but a man claiming to be the group's leader later denied any involvement.

'This statement is a fabrication. We have nothing to do with this operation... and the first party to benefit from it is the Mossad Israeli intelligence agency,' Abu Yussef al-Sharqiyeh told AFP.

Last month Lebanon's daily newspaper, The Daily Star, reported that in June this year the Lebanese Army's intelligence agency uncovered an Israeli spy cell in Lebanon which had managed to carry out several assassinations across the country. Mahmoud Rafeh, was named as the leader of a 'Mossad-linked terrorist network,' and it was reported that he had admitted carrying out assassinations and spying for Israel. Judicial sources told The Daily Star Rafeh admitted receiving a list of names of Lebanese and Palestinian political figures to be assassinated on orders from Israel.

During interrogation, said The Daily Star report, Rafeh admitted to the killing of Islamic Jihad member Mahmoud Majzoub and his brother Nidal in May. He also claimed the killing of Hezbollah officials Ali Hassan Deeb and Ali Saleh on August 16, 1999 and August 2, 2003, respectively, and that of Jihad Jibril, the son of the leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command leader, Ahmad Jibril, in May 20, 2002. However, he denied any involvement in a string of assassinations in Beirut last year including that of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and having any knowledge of who was behind the attacks. Before the current war began on July 12, Military Investigating Magistrate Adnan Bolbol had been expected to begin questioning witnesses in the Mossad case in July, sources told The Daily Star.

There is no doubt there have been simmering tensions between Hezbollah and Israel and certainly some people have been killed along the northern border. Hezbollah's activities within Lebanon however are almost all geared towards military targets. In the six years since May 2000 the attacks have only occurred along the northern border. A number of reports from UNIFIL indicate where incidents have occurred, in some cases they have resulted from Israeli border violations. We have often reported on breaches of Israeli airspace by Israeli planes, and Lebanese territorial waters by Israeli warships.

Hezbollah's fighters, according to most reports, numbered between 300 and 1,000, hardly a force that was posing a threat. Hezbollah officials, in vehemently denying being a terrorist group, maintain their role is to defend Lebanon. Of more concern to Israel has been the build-up of rockets with estimates ranging from 9,000 to 15,000.

The perception currently is that Hezbollah has surprisingly built up this capability, has all these rockets aimed at Israel, wants to wipe Israel off the map, and has begun firing rockets at will. Israel's justification for the offensive it has initiated and expanded is now to 'remove this threat.'

A classic tale of two warring parties, both in their eyes, and the eyes of their respective countries, legitimate defense forces wanting to eliminate the enemy.

The debate goes further in that both parties are trampling all over Lebanon and both running the line that what they are doing is in Lebanon's long-term interests. Israel, and the United States, say they are wanting to help rid Lebanon of its terrorist element. Lebanon conversely wants to rid itself of the Israeli attacks which have gutted the country on a number of occasions since 1978. Lebanon's Prime Minister Fuad Saniora in recent days has thanked and praised Hezbollah. The group's relevance had been declining since May 2000 but was well regarded for its history of resistance. In southern Lebanon it was overwhelmingly successful in recent

bringing about the integration of Hezbollah into the political system, indeed a number of members joined the government. Hezbollah is a giant humanitarian group in Lebanon, and provides social assistance and relief to a vast spectrum of the population. The organization has built a large number of hospitals, clinics, and schools. It also opposes corruption.

An international force is now being proposed, primarily to protect Israeli citizens from cross-border attacks. There is no evidence they needed protection, as even the Israeli side maintained the border was relatively quiet from May 2000 until July 12 2006. The oft-repeated argument now that Israel and the U.S. do not want the post-war situation to return to the status quo conjures up the perception Hezbollah has been raining rockets on northern Israel for years, which is simply not true.

As far as an international force being formed, Israel has already laid out the terms under which it will accept such a force. It has even demonstrated it wants to sign off on its composition, ruling out any involvement by the United Nations.

Historians will know UNIFIL was established in March 1978 for almost the same purposes as what the current force is now being proposed for: 'To confirm Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, restore international peace and security, and help the Lebanese Government restore its effective authority in the area.' Despite the arrival of UNIFIL within four days of the resolution being passed, Israel overran their positions, remained in occupation, and dramatically expanded its occupation, in a major invasion of the parts of Lebanon it did not then occupy, including Beirut, in 1982. It then remained in occupation for a further 18 years.

We are repeatedly told Hezbollah started this war. But what about Israel? Provoked yes, but its response, has been unwarranted. Israel blamed Hezbollah, but went to war on Lebanon. Normally we would say 'with Lebanon,' but Lebanon is not playing any part in this war, it is simply being destroyed. Israel says it is defending itself. Lebanon does not have the means to do so.

Israel bombed the country's airports, including the recently redeveloped Beirut International Airport, the ports, the power stations, the telecommunications towers, residential buildings, commercial buildings, gas stations, bridges, roads, and highways, and in so doing, punctured the Lebanese economy. Several hundred civilians have been killed and thousands more injured: more than 750,000 people have been turned into refugees. On Thursday as the Israel Air Force carried out air raids over Beirut and deeper into Lebanon, commencing at 2:30am, a Lebanese army base was bombed. A Lebanese soldier was killed. On Wednesday, Haaretz newspaper reported, Israel Air Force warplanes raided a Lebanon army base in the south Lebanon village of Sarba. Three soldiers were killed instantly, said a Lebanese official. The Lebanon army is taking no part in the conflict. Israel has said on a number of occasions it is not targeting the Lebanese military. Yet, as of Thursday, 27 Lebanese soldiers have been killed.

Millions have been held hostage to air raid attacks (in Lebanon in particular, but also in Israel). The entire population of Lebanon has been adversely affected in one way or the other. All for the capture of two soldiers? Ironic when the fate of the two abductees could have been resolved by a prisoner-exchange, which will probably be the outcome anyway. If Israel was so concerned about the soldiers why carpet-bomb Lebanon, and even Hezbollah strongholds? Surely the strongholds would have been where the captives were being held.

Certainly Hezbollah triggered a response or retaliation from Israel, but what has followed the capture of two soldiers on July 12 has been far greater than anyone imagined, except perhaps the Israeli army which had a plan which went back at least until 2003, when Brigadier General Caliphi was completing his posting.

To every story, however, there is another side. Gleaned from official Israeli government statements, this is the Israeli side:

'Israel suffered an unprovoked cross-border attack from Lebanese territory. The attack was carried out by the Hezbollah, a terrorist organization which is a party to the Government of Lebanon. The attack was carried out against Israelis citizens, civilians and soldiers, while on sovereign Israeli soil. Hezbollah crossed an internationally recognized border, into Israeli territory, kidnapped two Israelis whom they are still holding hostage, and opened fire with rockets and missiles on Israel's northern villages. Since that time, they have been firing hundreds of rockets a day, over 2,500 so far, against Israeli cities, villages, and always their target is civilians.'

'In these circumstances, Israel had no alternative but to defend itself and its citizens. For this reason, Israel is now reacting to an act of war by a neighboring sovereign state. The purpose of the Israeli operation is two-fold - to free its abducted soldiers, and to remove the terrorist threat from its northern border. While directing its operations against the Hezbollah, Israel also views Lebanon as responsible for the present situation, and consequently, Lebanon cannot expect to escape the consequences.'

'The military operation, code-named 'Change of Direction', has dealt a major blow to Hezbollah. That terror organization has been dislodged from its positions along the border, removing the direct-fire threat (machine-guns, RPGs, recoilless rifles) to Israel's border communities.'

'In addition, the organization's long-range missile system deep inside

systems, headquarters, and infrastructure. The array of Katyusha rockets deployed in southern Lebanon was severely reduced, and the flow of ammunition from Syria to the Hezbollah has been significantly interdicted.'

'At the same time, in the diplomatic arena, the international backing which Israel enjoys in this current operation is unprecedented, as seen in the recent G-8 statement. The international community supports Israel in its operational goals against the Hezbollah and backs the ultimate disarming of that organization.'

'For the first time, conditions have been created to begin implementation of UN Resolution 1559, which calls for the disarming of Hezbollah, its expulsion from the border and the deployment of the Lebanese army along the border. The international community stands ready to take concrete steps to implement this resolution by dispatching a multinational force to deploy along the border with Israel and at the Lebanon-Syria border crossings and to operate effectively to dismantle the organization's military capabilities.'

'Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah, in his press conference after the 12 July attack, presented his list of ransom demands for the release of the abducted Israeli soldiers. It included a demand for the release of Hamas terrorist inmates as well as members of Hezbollah. This is indicative of the fact that the level of coordination of these two Jihadist terror groups is not just ideological but operational as well.'

'Israel is not attacking the government of Lebanon, but rather, Hezbollah military assets within Lebanon. Israel has avoided striking at Lebanese military installations, unless these have been used to assist the Hezbollah, as were a number of radar facilities which Israel destroyed after they helped the terrorists fire a shore-to-ship missile at an Israeli ship.'

'Proportionality must be measured in terms of the extent of the threat. Israel's actions result not just from Hezbollah's unprovoked attack against Israel and the abduction of two soldiers. Israel's military operation is also being carried out against the real and tangible Hezbollah threat against more than a million civilians, throughout northern Israel. The Hezbollah - a terrorist organization dedicated to Israel's destruction - has over twelve thousand missiles targeted against Israel and has launched over 2,500 of them in the past few days. The massive use by Hezbollah of these missiles, causing numerous civilian deaths, hundreds of casualties and widespread destruction makes Israel's actions necessary. One should ask, 'what would other states do when confronted with a threat of this magnitude?'

'Israel has no desire to escalate the military action beyond the present theaters of operation in Lebanon and Gaza. Israel feels that the involvement of Syria and Iran is best addressed, at present, through coordinated diplomatic pressure.'

'Iranian nuclear capabilities will preoccupy the world in the coming months and years. What is happening now is merely a preparation. If the free world is unable to form a united front against Hezbollah, then it will be unable to convince Teheran that it is truly serious about stopping Iran's nuclear weapons program. Regarding Syria, Israel has publicly stated that it does not intend to attack Syrian targets. Syria therefore, has no justification for any intervention in the present operations against Hezbollah. If, however, it does intervene, Israel has stated that its response will be vigorous.'

'Israel regrets the loss of innocent lives. Israel does not target civilians, yet is forced to take decisive action against Hezbollah, a ruthless terrorist organization which has over 12,000 missiles pointing towards its cities. Israel, like any other country, must protect its citizens, and has no choice but to remove this grave threat to the lives of millions of innocent civilians. Had Hezbollah not established such a missile force, Israel would have no need to take action, and had Hezbollah chosen to set up its arsenal away from populated areas, no civilians would have been hurt when Israel does what it obviously must do. The responsibility for the tragic situation lies solely with the Hezbollah.'

'The government of Lebanon bears responsibility for the Hezbollah threat. It provided the Hezbollah with official legitimacy and allowed its armed operations to proceed unhindered. Hezbollah would never have obtained the missiles and military equipment at its disposal had the Lebanese government not allowed this weaponry to reach Lebanon. Hezbollah's threat along Israel's border would not have been possible were it not for the failure of the Lebanese government to deploy its forces in southern Lebanon.'

'Israel has shown restraint for over six years. In May 2000 Israel took the politically difficult decision to fully withdraw from southern Lebanon, having been compelled a few years earlier to establish a security zone there in order to prevent terrorist attacks and rocket shelling into Israeli towns. The UN Security Council acknowledged Israel's complete withdrawal from southern Lebanon in full compliance with Resolution 425. The Lebanese Government was given an opportunity to take full control of the south and establish a peaceful border with Israel. Instead, it chose to succumb to terror rather than vanquish it, and allowed the Hezbollah to occupy the areas adjacent to the border and to accumulate a vast arsenal of rockets and missiles.'

'Israel repeatedly sounded warnings, and called upon the international community to urge Lebanon to reign in the Hezbollah, remove its gunmen from their border positions and dismantle their

demands of the international community to exercise its sovereignty and disarm Hezbollah, and today, the Lebanese people must unfortunately bear the consequences of their government's inaction.'

'Residents of southern Lebanon were warned repeatedly several days in advance of Israeli operations - by radio announcements, by leaflets and even by phone calls - to leave the area, pending an imminent attack by the IDF. Specific instructions were provided about routes and vehicle types, so that those leaving would not be confused with Hezbollah combatants and supplies. The concern for the lives of civilians is an integral part of the IDF operational procedure, which requires extreme care to be taken to minimize harm to the civilian population - often at the cost of operational advantages. For example, the leaflets dropped on 25 July urging residents of Qana to leave their village gave Hezbollah prior warning, which reduced Israel's element of surprise and endangered its own troops.'

'The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is committed to conducting operations in full conformity with the law of armed conflict. These rules are enshrined in the IDF's Manual on the Law of Armed Conflict, which requires that military operations be directed only against military targets, and that only weapons which can be directed at such targets be used. Additionally, the manual requires that, where the risk of incidental injury to civilians outweighs the expected military advantage, the military operation cannot be carried out.'

'Regarding allegations that illegal use has been made of cluster bombs and phosphorous weapons, it should be noted that neither of these types of weapons is prohibited under the Conventional Weapons Convention, to which Israel is a party. Israel stresses that, in all circumstances, it makes strenuous efforts to ensure that military operations are conducted so as to minimize harm to civilians and damage to their property.'

posted 9:03 PM

24 Comments:

**attila3 said...**

second world war is baby of first world war and third world war will be baby of second world war

[Friday, August 04, 2006 9:28:30 PM](#)

**monsterball said...**

You mean you all meet in Malaysia to tell us this that we idiots already know?

SUGGEST YOU ALL SEND FEW THOUSAND "KAMIKASAI" PEOPLE TO FORM HUMAN SHIELD. NOT GO THERE AFTER THE WAR. MALAYSIA BEING SO SMALL COUNTRY...TWO ENOUGH LAH. POOR SOUL...SURE TO DIE OR RETURN LIKE HEROES. ANY VOLUNTEERS?

[Friday, August 04, 2006 9:35:32 PM](#)

**monsterball said...**

Make sure Saudi Arabia people are on the front line and if Israel could not care less...then surely that is the war against ALL MUSLIM COUNTRIES.....NO?

SO SIMPLE TO TEST IT. AFTERALL SO MANY THOUSANDS DIED ALREADY.....ESPECIALLY BABIES AND CHILDREN. WHY TALK SO MUCH? FACE THE FACTS AND CANNOT WIN....BE THEIR "YES MAN" COUNTRY AND ASK YOURSELVES WHY. SIMPLY.....NO TRUE UNITY IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD. That's why expert poker player Bush call you bluff.

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 12:19:48 AM](#)

**khalid al-walid said...**

jews laknatullah are coward. why must you have to kill civilians? the economic structure? infrastructure? ...

you should go after the armed Hezbollah.

hence, you are apt to paper tiger. you are not something like rambo kind of things, as what being portrayed so far.

becoz you are afraid to die!

Muslims do believe life after death. We Muslims are building the momentum to repel the intruder & finally wipe out from world map. That is our mission.

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 12:32:43 AM](#)

**attila3 said...**

Khalid khalid tch tch....

first ask hizbollah to wear military uniform and stay away from civilians....if after all that israel still fire at civilians then u can complain...is that so hard to understand?

if u dont start using ur god given brain it will atrophy

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 1:57:30 AM](#)

**Friend from Texas said...**

*Muslims do believe life after death.*

Then it's best that you and those Muslims on the same wavelength as you proceed directly to the afterlife, a rest of us in peace here in this life.

You won't be missed. Really.

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 6:25:01 AM](#)

**budakmelayu said...**

Monsterball,

Turn your growing gila babi nature in MT to good use step beyond carrying pak lah's balls.....volunteer as "kamikaze" squad to the Middle East to fight the Israelis up to an Israeli tank like the brave Chinese during the 1989...and blow yourself up!!

That way you not only get rid of yourself as biggest r MT but actually show your extreme loyalty to your "t Lah"..much better than the other bastard mustapha

What are you waiting for monsterball? The Arabs in MT badly there...shit, 4 pugs and all...GO MAN GO!!!

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 11:42:20 AM](#)

**scout72 said...**

FFT - one day you make a reasoned argument and to make one that sort of invites people to take potshots mean that as gun shot and the like - before police re flying). I think most religions believe in the afterlife. Christians believe heaven and hell as much as Muslim start on about Buddhist thoughts on re-incarnation. Or should we start another missile throwing exercise

As for Lebanon - as of yesterday Israel has now begun Christian majority areas of Lebanon. And more rock Hezbollah keep streaming over. It is a zero sum game

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 11:50:43 AM](#)

**scout72 said...**

And as for Khalid - please lah - I hope you are being : You obviously are reading from a different Quran as And let us differentiate between Jews and Zionists. Let us not turn this into a Muslim vs Others argument is a multi-faith country and all religions are being hit Israelis. It is an argument over land and justice. Comments like that do injustice to Islam and the Prophet.

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 11:55:20 AM](#)

**scout72 said...**

The irony of this conflict is that the Jewish and Muslim Hebrew and Arabic respectively is "Peace be upon you

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 11:57:48 AM](#)

**banjaran said...**

For those wondering where is the Lebanese army, he

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,122>

...The Lebanese Army is weak not just by neglect, but design, however. Like the Lebanese government, the allocates power and position on the basis of maintaining delicate sectarian consensus that ended decades of civil war. Domestic political stability rather than military effectiveness has been the guiding principle of its development. "The army is a mirror of all the country; its job is to maintain in the country," said Retired General Salim Abu Isma military attaché to Washington and the Managing Editor of Defaiya Defense Magazine. "During the Civil War, even a portion of the army. In the late '80s, we had at least two armies, one Christian, one Muslim."

The makeup and capability of the Lebanese Army remain unthinkable, say military observers and government to forcibly disarm Hezbollah or take control of the south Lebanon. More than one third of the army's personnel drawn from a community in which Hezbollah is overwhelmingly popular. And as long as it is the only force fighting them inside Lebanon, Hezbollah's support would be even weaker it even less likely that the government could order them to move against it. "The Lebanese Army will never be given orders to disarm any militia, especially under these circumstances when Hezbollah is being attacked by Israel," said General Banjaran. "The Lebanese army is not going to fight other Lebanese. It will be civil war...."

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 12:26:10 PM](#)

*scout72 said:*  
*today you make one that sort of invite*

You have endangered my well being by potshots at me.

While I have no problem having anyone challenge or even call names and make over what I wrote and indeed many people harm, by means of potshots, lastik, or another thing altogether and should be

You will be receiving a notice from my soon. They are the same lawyers that newspaper editor who wets his bed every mommy when others express an opinion

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 12:28:22 PM](#)

**darwisigila said...**

Friend from Texas said...

Muslims do believe life after death.

Then it's best that you and those Muslims wavelenght as you proceed directly to rest of us in peace here in this life.

You won't be missed. Really

HEHEHEHE.....SEE U THERE

Jumpa di sana...sana...sana

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 2:00:38 PM](#)

**minuses said...**

On October 22, 2002, Hezbollah's press Nasrallah, said: "If they (the Jews) all us the trouble of going after them wor

This is the true heart of the problem. It be resolved because a significant part world still do not accept Israel's right to the two-state solution beloved of analysts accept the existence of one of those two not a matter of politics to them; it is a non-negotiable.

Until this changes, Israel will remain a siege. Those who seek Israel's elimination and terrorism against Israel and its frie

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 2:26:11 PM](#)

**scout72 said...**

FFtexas - please send the lawyers noti Perdana Menteri, Putrajaya. I believe it thing.....

Make sure they know what the Internet

[Saturday, August 05, 2006 3:27:11 PM](#)

**minuses said...**

One more thing, why doesn't HEZ attack Lebanese in prisons?

At least in Israel, they get visits from that much in Syria.

The 80-year-old Palestinian Mustafa D Ta'an, was released after 20 years' imprisonment arrested in Lebanon following a split in organisation, which had led to a conflict of the organization. Following his arrest: years in solitary confinement and remained detention for about 14 years. Some were tried and sentenced to life imprisonment held without charge or trial.

Fares Murad of the Arab Communist Organization from Sednaya prison after 29 years' imprisonment from serious ailments, including a disease reportedly caused by the "German Chamber with moving parts that stretches the pressure on the victim's neck and legs Shiha, who was arrested with him in 19 be in very poor health, remains in detention Fares Murad and 'Imad Shiha have been International Medical Actions.

[http://prisonersoverseas.com/?page\\_i](http://prisonersoverseas.com/?page_i)

**minuses said...**

Passengers on board an  
Buck from the German  
of the Lebanese Shi'ite  
killing 18 Lebanese peop

The victims were suspec  
targets. Anton

In Marjayoun next to QI  
Lebanese troops are de  
guerrillas using the stre  
more missiles at Israel.  
through the darkened a  
Hizbollah brings yet moi

"Hezbollah came to Ain  
Hanna Amar, a young C  
"They are shooting from  
"Please," he said, "write

<http://cedarsawakening>  
[Saturday, August 05, 2006 5:17](#)

**ProArte said...**

Unfortunately, the Midd  
politics. 'Victory' for one  
another. We see this in  
Shia-Sunni Muslim bloo  
insecurity,blind hatred a

Unfortunately Political I:  
Islam for its own imperi  
killings of Lebanese mat  
of things' whose purpos  
the region. The secular  
down as it is in conflict  
Lebanon.

When Hariri was assasir  
brought together Leban  
in nationwide demonstra  
Syrian inspired. This fin  
driven out of Lebanon. I  
opportunity to flex its m  
of Lebanon forever. The  
retaliation for the 'sham  
chasing them out of Leb  
because they are kindre

The Israel -Lebanon war  
started off as simple kid  
overwhelmingly disprop  
a pretext to 'finish off' I  
over the last 6 years of  
saw as a threat to their

Hezbollah provoked this  
political structure in Leb  
its brand of Shia imperia  
let Israel destroy Leban  
Sunni and Christian secu  
mayhem actually help tl  
calculation is that the re  
over-reaction will garne  
people regarding them  
calculation on the other  
century by destroying it  
areas. The suffering anc  
Hezbollah for provoking  
base.

Both calculations by He:  
might support Hezbollah  
atrocities, but the suppc  
'my enemy's enemy is r

Most Lebanese want the  
their country to be used  
[Saturday, August 05, 2006 8:01](#)

**salahadeen said...**

very informative article,  
hizbullah is not a terrori  
jews,christ n muslim in  
zionist the mother of ter

**monster**  
hi budakr  
You go la  
[Sunday, Aug](#)

**Overdriv**  
I think He  
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[Sunday, Aug](#)

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[Monday, Aug](#)

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