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*in our democracy, political will is a renewable resource*  
 From a speech at the Sierra Club, given Sept 9, 2005

-- Al Gore

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Israel disregarding Ceasefire

Posted by : ilyana on Sunday, August 13, 2006 - 02:35 PM PST



According to the Scotsman, Israel has continued her offensive into Lebanon, essentially ignoring the UN's resolution for a ceasefire.

.. Israel's army chief Lt General Dan Halutz said yesterday he expected a ground offensive to continue for another week.

Israel is standing outside the wishes of the nations of the world and pummeling Lebanon. Bush is backing Israel's "right to defend herself". **What about Lebanon's right to defend her 25 civilians being killed to one Israeli?**

And that is a ratio from August 2:  
<http://www.choicechanges.com/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=665>

Google "civilian casualties, Lebanon" yourself and see that figure is not being covered in the mainstream of news coming out of the War zone now.

**Hours after UN ceasefire, rockets rain down and Israel carries on offensive**

CHRIS STEPHEN IN NEW YORK AND RICHARD GRAY

AIR strikes and artillery attacks brought further bloodshed and destruction to Lebanon yesterday as Israel defied a UN resolution for a ceasefire by tripling the number of its troops in the country.

Long columns of Israeli tanks, armoured personnel carriers and troops streamed over the Lebanese border in a massive operation, provoking fears a peace deal may collapse before it even comes into force.

The Israeli government decided to wait until today before it would vote on the UN Security Council resolution to deploy 15,000 peacekeepers to the region, almost two days after it was agreed.

Conflicting reports from Israeli military chiefs ranged from the promise of an end of the offensive from early on Monday to a pledge to continue attacking Hezbollah positions well into this week, until the international peacekeeping force arrives.

Last night, the move to escalate the ground war by Israel sparked international anger from world leaders. Prime Minister Tony Blair called for an "immediate ceasefire" between the two sides. But after 32 days of conflict in the Middle East crisis, the death toll continued to rise as bombs and missiles rained down on both sides. More than 50 Israeli helicopters airlifted hundreds of Israeli troops into Lebanon as the army made its deepest thrust yet, pushing towards the Litani River, 13 miles inside the border. Israel said its troops had killed more than 40 Hezbollah fighters in the previous 24 hours, but the guerrilla group denied any

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deaths yesterday. Hezbollah said it killed seven Israeli soldiers and destroyed 21 tanks in heavy ground fighting in the south, while more than 100 soldiers were wounded in the heavy fighting. Claims it had downed a helicopter with a missile were confirmed by Israel last night.

Air strikes killed up to 20 in Lebanon, including 15 civilians in the village of Rachaf, four miles from the Israeli border, just hours after the Security Council unanimously passed the resolution to end the war.

Further air strikes hit Beirut's suburbs, the Beirut-Damascus highway, electricity pylons near Sidon, and the southern city of Tyre. Hours before the UN vote, Israeli aircraft fired rockets at a convoy of hundreds of civilian cars fleeing the south, killing at least seven people and wounding 36. Hezbollah rockets hit a house in northern Israel, injuring at least five people yesterday afternoon.

The UN resolution calls for the "immediate cessation" of hostilities by both sides to allow a French-led multinational force to be deployed along the Israel-Lebanon border, along with an equal number of Lebanese troops. The force will have the power to suppress attacks launched from the area by either side under Chapter 6 of the UN charter.

It is hoped the first contingent of troops will arrive in the next couple of days once both sides agree to the ceasefire.

The escalating violence has left peace prospects for the region on a knife edge. Since the fighting began last month, at least 1,061 Lebanese and 124 Israelis have been killed, most of them civilians.

The conflict has also paralysed aid efforts needed to reach 100,000 people trapped in southern Lebanon.

Last night, diplomats and world leaders reacted with dismay at the accelerated fighting. "It is supposed to be immediate," said one western official in New York. "The language does not call for a cessation when you feel like it."

Blair yesterday joined French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in calling for hostilities to end immediately. Blair said: "The hostilities on both sides should cease immediately now that the resolution has finally been agreed by the whole of the international community."

"It is tragic that so many innocent lives, Lebanese and Israeli, have been lost over the past weeks. We must now take the steps necessary to ensure it is never repeated."

President George Bush welcomed the UN resolution, but continued to blame Hezbollah for bringing an "unwanted" war to the region. In a statement he said: "Hezbollah and its Iranian and Syrian sponsors have brought an unwanted war to the people of Lebanon and Israel, and millions have suffered as a result. I now urge the international community to turn words into action and make every effort to bring lasting peace to the region."

Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah insisted his group would abide by the ceasefire but would continue fighting as long as Israeli troops remained in southern Lebanon.

The Israeli Cabinet was not due to meet until later today when Prime Minister Ehud Olmert will urge his Cabinet to approve the resolution. But Israel's army chief Lt General Dan Halutz said yesterday he expected a ground offensive to continue for another week.

Yesterday's massive offensive was seen as a cynical race to seize territory and capture Hezbollah strongholds before the onset of a ceasefire.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan is spending the weekend in consultation with both Israeli and Lebanese governments trying to ensure that the ceasefire plan is not derailed by Israel's new offensive. Under the resolution an arms embargo will also be imposed on Hezbollah.

Britain is also setting aside £6m to help with reconstruction of Lebanon's battered infrastructure, with dozens of roads and bridges cut by the Israeli bombing.

Yesterday civilians in Lebanon greeted news of the ceasefire with caution, fearing the resolution would be rejected. Shoe store owner Naji Abi Asaad, 30, from Beirut, said: "This is an encouraging step but it is only talk at the moment. We have suffered a lot, so this is a good step but we have to wait for the implementation on the ground."

Original article can be read at:

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