Stepping into the Fog: A Comparative Analysis of Israel Conducting Joint Forcible Entry Operations in the Middle East

A Monograph

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Abstract

Stepping into the Fog: A Comparative Analysis of Israel Conducting Joint Forcible Entry Operations in the Middle East, by MAJ Jared C Larpenteur, US Army, 47 pages.

The United States has engaged in conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan for over fifteen years; during this time US adversaries have learned that they cannot compete with the US military in conventional means. Thus, adversaries have developed their strategies and tactics into hybrid warfare. The characteristics of the battlefield have drastically changed in the last several decades and now begs the question as to whether the planning considerations for a Joint Forcible Entry (JFE) look differently on a modern battlefield with a hybrid threat? The ongoing conflicts between Israel and the various Arab state and non-state actors in the Middle East show examples of what planning considerations would look like for conducting a JFE into a complex environment contested by a hybrid threat. By examining Israeli operations in the 2006 Second Lebanon War, Operation Cast Lead, and Operation Protective Edge this project will identify key planning considerations that determine relative success or failures for forcible entry operations contested by a hybrid threat.

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Acronyms

2LW	Second Lebanon War
A2AD	Anti-Access/Area-Denial
ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
AOR	Area of Responsibility
ARCIC	Army Capabilities Integration Center
BDE	Brigade
CENTCOM	Central Command
COIN	Counter Insurgency
FM	Field Manual
HQ	Headquarters
IAF	Israeli Air Force
IDF	Israeli Defense Force
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IO	Information Operations
JFE	Joint Forcible Entry
JRTC	Joint Readiness Training Center
LSCO	Large Scale Combat Operations
NDS	National Defense Strategy
OCL	Operation Cast Lead
OPE	Operation Protective Edge
OPFOR	Opposing Force
PA	Palestinian Authority
RPG	Rocket-Propelled Grenade
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations

Illustrations

Introduction

> On the day we proclaimed the State in May 1948 I said that our hand was extended in peace and good neighborliness. I read the Declaration at 4:30 p.m. and at twelve midnight their armies went into action against us.
>
> —David Ben-Gurion, First Prime Minister of Israel, *Israel: Years of Crisis Years of Hope*

Over countless years Israel has expended sweat, blood, and treasure ensuring the survival of its most precious resource, the people. Even today Israel receives constant threats from non-state proxy actors. For example, from 2001 to 2017 Israel has received over 8,775 rocket attacks.[1] Additionally, between 2000 and 2005, 146 suicide bombing attacks successfully impacted Israel's soil.[2] Over 70-years of conflict Israel had relatively successful campaigns in a conventional approach; however, adversaries watched and adapted over time. Through these 70-years Israel has learned valuable lessons in warfare, that the US military should learn. In the past the United States capitalized on the hard lessons by Israel. For example, the costly lessons of the 1973 Yom Kippur War led to the development of the US AirLand Battle doctrine.[3] Overtime adversaries found innovative ways to gain an advantage against superior forces and technology. These new and creative ways often referred to as a hybrid threat has allowed adversaries to catch larger opponents off guard. Now, as in 1973 the United States should look to Israel's hard-earned experience to learn lessons for future conflicts.

On 14 August 2006, as United Nation's Resolution 1701 went into effect, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) withdrew from southern Lebanon. The seven-week conflict, known as the Second Lebanon War (2LW), resulted in 66 IDF soldier deaths, $55 million loss of infrastructure,

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[1] Jewish Virtual Library, "Rocket & Mortar Attacks Against Israel," accessed September 27, 2018. https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/palestinian-rocket-and-mortar-attacks-against-israel.

[2] Yoram Schweitzer, "The Rise and Fall of Suicide Bombings in the Second Intifada," *Strategic Assessment* 10, no. 3 (October 2010): 39–48.

[3] John S. Brown, "The Maturation of Operational Art: Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm," in *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art*, ed. Michael D. Krause and R. Cody Phillips (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 2007), 439.

and $443 million loss of economic activity.[4] Israel use to perpetual conflict found themselves unprepared to face Hezbollah's hybrid warfare and to conduct a forcible entry conducted into a complex environment. The US military should learn how to conduct a Joint Forcible Entry (JFE) into an environment contested by a hybrid threat from Israel. To conduct a JFE into an operationally complex environment, a military must retain the flexibility to adjust to definable military objectives, maintain a high level of readiness, and integrate across all operating domains that enhance rapid tempo to achieve decisive results.

Hybrid warfare brings an asymmetric approach to circumvent and attrite conventional forces by contesting all operating domains on the battlefield. Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Operations* defines a hybrid threat as the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorists, or criminal elements unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects.[5] Although mostly see at the operational and tactical levels of war that not only contest military operations but have effects in domains such as cyberspace, the electromagnetic spectrum, political platforms, and informational environments.[6] Comparatively to Israel's struggle, US adversaries have also created hybrid threats that contest their positions of relative advantage.

While the United States has endured long engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan, its adversaries learned that competing with the US military in simple conventional means and capabilities does not work. Therefore, future operational environments will see enemies that have adapted to contest vulnerabilities in all operating domains. At a 21st Century Conference, now retired General George Casey stated, "A hybrid threat is a complex and difficult challenge more

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[4] Raphael S. Cohen et al., *Lessons from Israel's Wars in Gaza*, Brief: Summary of *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017), 8.

[5] US Department of the Army, *Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 1–3.

[6] Frank Hoffman, *Conflicts in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars* (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007), 8.

difficult than large tank armies maneuvering across Europe, I believe we are going to see more hybrid threats and less tank battles."[7] The course of warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan shifted the operational framework to the tactical level which allowed strategic adversaries such as Russia, China, and Iran to gain positional advantage causing the US Army to reevaluate doctrine.[8] To defend the people of Israel against these emerging hybrid threats, the IDF take steps that resemble the United States' doctrinal definition of a JFE.

If diplomacy fails within a complex environment and a military approach becomes necessary, the JFE is often one of the first options the commander considers. A JFE allows the commander to seize the initiative allowing for the continuous landing of troops for follow-on operations or a more dominant approach to achieve a decisive result.[9] One could point to either the Korean War, Panama, or Grenada as the last time US forces conducted large-scale JFE into a contested environment. The characteristic of the battlefield has drastically changed in the last several decades, and this begs the question as to whether the planning considerations for a JFE look differently on a modern battlefield contested by a hybrid threat? To avoid costly ways to learn hard lessons the United States needs to study Israel's forcible entry operations into a hybrid threat.

The continual conflict between Israel and the various Arab state and non-state actors in the Middle East provide material that demonstrates the struggle to compete in a complex environment. The IDF faces a hybrid threat from proxy non-state actors such as Hezbollah and Hamas daily. Even during the writing of this monograph between 8 to 11 August 2018, Israel and

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[7] George Casey, "Building Army 21st Century, May 28 2009" (video), *C-SPAN*, accessed September 6, 2018, https://www.c-span.org/video/?286651-1/building-army-21st-century.

[8] Michael D. Lundy, "Foreword," in US Department of the Army, *Field Manual (FM) 3-0, Operations,* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2017).

[9] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), I–1.

Hamas exchanged rocket fire after Hamas launched six rockets into the Israeli town of Sederot.[10] Therefore, the Israeli military experience provides ample lessons for operating in complex environments.

The IDF experience in the Middle East does not provide the perfect analogy for a large-scale JFE. The IDF operate differently from the US military out of a necessity of the environment that surrounds Israel. For example, the IDF does not have the same constraints in the logistical arena that the United States would confront conducting expeditionary operations.[11] However, Israel's conflicts offer valuable lessons about conducting JFE into a complex environment regarding technology, operational concepts, and deterring hybrid threats. This monograph will examine the IDF operations in the 2006 Second Lebanon War, Operation Cast Lead in 2008-2009, and Operation Protective Edge in 2014 looking through the lens of conducting a JFE into a complex environment. The goal of this monograph is to expand the planning considerations for a JFE, outlined in Field Manual (FM) 3-0 *Operations* so that division staffs can conduct innovative planning for large-scale combat operations (LSCO) with the opening move of a JFE.

2006 Second Lebanon War

> They're [Hezbollah] not fighting like we thought they would, they're fighting harder. They're good on their own ground.
>
> —IDF soldier, Battle of Maroun al-Ras, *We Were Caught Unprepared*

At 9:05 am on 12 July 2006, Hezbollah initiated Operation True Promise at the border between Lebanon and Israel intending on kidnapping an Israeli soldier. Hezbollah attacked several different points creating multiple dilemmas for the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) using

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[10] Jack Khoury, Yaniv Kubovich, and Noa Landau, "Israeli Army Lifts Restrictions on Gaza Border Communities After Quiet Night," *Haaretz*, August 11, 2018, accessed September 11, 2018, https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/gaza-israel-hamas-cease-fire-after-200-rockets-two-palestinians-dead-1.6361801?utm_campaign=General&utm_medium=web_push&utm_source=Push_Notification.

[11] Raphael S. Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge: Lessons from Israel's Wars in Gaza* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017), 2.

rockets, anti-tank missiles, mortars, and sniper fire. At border mark number 105, twenty

Hezbollah fighters attacked their primary target, an Israeli patrol with two Humvees conducting a

routine border security mission.[12] Hezbollah successfully kidnapped two reserve soldiers: Ehud

Goldwasser and Eldad Regev.

In response to the kidnappings, the IDF entered southern Lebanon to retrieve Goldwasser

and Regev, sparking the 2006 Lebanon War.[13] As the IDF entered Lebanese territory less than

two hours after the abduction, an Israeli Merkava tank struck an improvised explosive device

(IED) killing the four-tank crewman. As the first unit arrived at the Merkava, mortar rounds

rained down on the soldiers showing that Hezbollah had planned for an IDF forcible entry into

Lebanon.[14] The ensuing conflict lasted thirty-four days resulting in Israel withdrawing forces and

failing to achieve their end state. This case study examines Hezbollah as a hybrid threat, analyzes

the IDF operations, and recommends planning considerations for conducting cross-border

forcible entry operations in a complex environment.

Who is Hezbollah

Hezbollah is an Iranian proxy that was once seen as a resistance movement throughout

much of the Arab world and more recently developed into a quasi-state entity with a political

structure. Hezbollah originated in the Bekaa valley as a merger of several groups fighting against

the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon in June 1982. Hezbollah continues to receive funding

from Iran and training from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. Traditionally, Hezbollah uses

terrorism as its primary means for example the US Embassy and Marine barracks bombing in

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[12] William M. Arkin, *Divining Victory: Airpower in the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 2007), 1.

[13] Greg Myre and Steven Erlanger, "Israelis Enter Lebanon After Attacks," *The New York Times,* July 2006, accessed September 27, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/13/world/middleeast/13mideast.html.

[14] Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, *34 Days: Israel, Hezbollah, and the War in Lebanon* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 12-13.

Beirut in 1983, hijacking of TWA flight 847 in 1985, and the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association building bombing in 1992.[15]

In the ensuing years, Hezbollah started to resemble a non-state actor becoming politically active in Lebanon with a governing and military wing. Hezbollah pursues three goals: the elimination of imperialist powers in Lebanon, the destruction of Israel and liberation of Jerusalem, and an established Islamic regime.[16] Furthermore, Iran dictates three objectives to Hezbollah: instill the religious ideology of Islamic revolutionary Iran, improve the social and economic status of the Shiite community in Lebanon, and reinforce Iran's military power.[17] In 2006, Hezbollah held fourteen seats in the Lebanese parliament and two ministers serving on the cabinet.[18]

After Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000, Hezbollah embraced hybrid warfare making conventional changes to its military branch. Hezbollah transformed from a pure guerilla army in what Hezbollah's Secretary-General, Hasan Nasrallah, called a new army. Nasrallah stated, "It was not a regular army but was not a guerilla in the traditional sense either. It was something in between."[19] Hezbollah's command structure covers four territories in Lebanon: the Beirut headquarters (HQ), Badr command, Bekaa Command, and the southern command known as Nasr command.[20]

The Beirut HQ provides administrative responsibility of the military, governance, and general staff managing logistics, personnel, and intelligence. Additionally, the Beirut HQ runs propaganda through al-Manar television and al-Nour radio. The Badr command has military

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[15] Arkin, *Divining Victory*, 19-21.

[16] Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 38-40.

[17] Harel and Issacharoff, *34 Days*, 30.

[18] Arkin, *Divining Victory,* 20.

[19] Scott C. Farquhar, *Back to Basics: A Study of the Second Lebanon War and Operation Cast Lead* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, May 2009), 6.

[20] Arkin, *Divining Victory*, 20-21.

responsibility for the area North of the Litani River South of Beirut. The Bekaa command has responsibility for the training and logistics of the military wing. Lastly, the Nasr command holds the military responsibility for the area south of the Litani River.

In 2006, the IDF encountered the Nasr command upon entry into southern Lebanon. The Nasr command had roughly 1,000 regular soldiers and 3,000 reservists organized into battalions. The battalions have networked communication systems, intelligence, and rockets. With Iranian training, Hezbollah learned to move under cover of darkness and maintained listening posts with commercial scanners using Hebrew speakers to monitor Israeli radio communications and cell-phone calls.[21]

Hezbollah's infrastructure, structure, capabilities, and integration with the Lebanese Government allowed the organization to act as both a conventional and guerilla force. Hezbollah's infrastructure consisted of tunnels, underground command centers, observation posts, prepared bunkers, preplanned targets, launch sites, minefields, and weapon caches. Moreover, Hezbollah integrated the infrastructure and capabilities into villages and individual homes. In an interview on al-Manar TV in May 2006, Nasrallah stated, "The organization's operatives live in their houses, in their schools, in their mosques, in their churches, in their fields, in their farms and in their factories. You can't destroy them in the same way you would destroy an army."[22] For example in 2006, the IDF found a bunker complex in southern Lebanon 40 meters underground covering an area of 2KM, with firing positions, operation rooms, medical facilities, and air conditioning.[23] Hezbollah's capabilities consisted of surface-to-surface rockets with missiles ranging up to 210KM, anti-tank missiles, mortar systems ranging to 8KM, anti-aircraft weapons,

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[21] Mohamad Bazzi, "Hezbollah Cracked the Code," Pakistan Defence, last modified September 18, 2006, accessed October 12, 2018, https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/hezbollah-cracked-the-code.2258/.

[22] Arkin, *Divining Victory*, 21.

[23] Ibid., 26-30.

and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV).[24] The IDF underperformed in this operational environment contested by a hybrid threat, which begs the question, what happened?

What Happened in Southern Lebanon

On 12 July 2006, Israeli political and military leaders met to discuss a response to the abductions of Goldwasser and Regev. Both levels of leadership did not want to send a large ground force into Lebanon, instead opting to rely on airstrikes and limited ground raids.[25] Israel's leadership decided on three goals for the political end state. First, release the abducted soldiers to Israel unconditionally. Second, stop the firing of missiles and rockets into Israel. Lastly, enforce United Nations resolution 1559, which placed pressure on Lebanon to control Hezbollah, disarm militias, and secure its southern border.[26]

Israel's air campaign began on 12 July, targeting Hezbollah rockets, shutting down the runways of the Beirut Rafic Hariri International Airport, interdicting the Beirut Damascus highway, and al-Manar TV station.[27] Israeli planners believed that the air strikes would force the Lebanese government to act, compel the release of the captured soldiers, and deter further Hezbollah aggression. Additionally, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) also blocked Lebanese airspace while the Israeli Navy blockaded all Lebanese ports.[28] In response, Hezbollah increased rocket attacks into Israel which showed that the air campaign had a reverse effect.[29] Despite Israeli intelligence reports showing Hezbollah still holding positions against the raids, Israel cabinet members expanded the air campaign to bomb Dahiye, the central location for Hezbollah's tactical

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[24] Arkin, *Divining Victory*, 28-38.

[25] David E. Johnson, *Hard Fighting: Israel in Lebanon and Gaza*. (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2011), 56.

[26] The United Nations Security Council, "United Nations Resolution 1559" (The United Nations, September 2, 2004), accessed February 7, 2019, https://www.un.org/press/en/2004/sc8181.doc.htm.

[27] Harel and Issacharoff, *34 Days*, 86.

[28] Johnson, *Hard Fighting*, 60.

[29] Harel and Issacharoff, *34 Days*, 87.

HQ. Skeptics believed that the act of bombing the residential area of Dahiye would escalate the conflict.[30]

Actions on the ground showed inaccuracy in intelligence and proved the air campaign did not work. On 12 July, Israel sent special operation forces from the Shaldag unit to seize Rajar. Despite establishing control over Rajar on 14 July, the special operations units still faced resistance from Hezbollah. One IDF officer stated, "We expected a tent and three Kalashnikovs, that was the intelligence we were given. Instead, we found a hydraulic steel door leading to a well-equipped network of tunnels."[31]

On 17 July, the IDF launched its first large-scale ground force near Maroun al-Ras, to establish a foothold in southern Lebanon for follow-on operations. The decision to continue using limited ground raids with a large force caused confusion between political and military objectives. As stated by Giora Eiland, former head of Israel's National Security Council, "The ministers asked the army what it intended to do. The officers answered: We'll attack and see what happens."[32] As Israeli objectives became clear, Hezbollah used their mobility and integrated tunnel systems to reinforce villages, choke points, and avenues of approach.[33]

The IDF Maglan unit came under attack near Maroun al-Ras and became surprised by Hezbollah's preparations and fighting skills.[34] In response, the IDF called additional units to Maroun al-Ras, using recon from the Golani Brigade, multiple tank formations, and a battalion from the Paratrooper Brigade. Despite the additional units, Maroun al-Ras remained unsecured as

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[30] Johnson, *Hard Fighting*, 61.

[31] Uzi Mahnaimi, "Humbling of the Supertroops Shatters Israeli Army Morale," *TimesOnline.Co.Uk*, August 27, 2006, accessed December 4, 2018, https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/humbling-of-the-supertroops-shatters-israeli-army-moral-qstrm566ljd.

[32] Harel and Issacharoff, *34 Days*, 90.

[33] Arkin, *Divining Victory*, 25.

[34] Johnson, *Hard Fighting*, 68.

Hezbollah had success outmaneuvering the IDF with integrated mortar, rockets, and anti-tank weapons.[35]

In response to the unsuccessful air and ground campaign, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Chief of Staff Dan Halutz decided to deploy the Israeli reserves on 21 July. The call on 21 July surprised the reserves and resulted in a chaotic deployment causing logistical support to lag. In some cases, support lagged by forty-eight hours.[36] Despite the call for the reserves, Halutz's ground plan remained unchanged without a consolidated effort to achieve a military objective. Instead, the effort of the reserves looked more symbolic rather than practical as mirrored by the remarks of a general on Halutz's staff, "The goal is not necessarily to eliminate every Hezbollah rocket. What we must do is disrupt the military logic of Hezbollah."[37]

With the reserves, the IDF advanced further north on 23 July, engaging militants near Bint Jbeil, the largest town near the Lebanese-Israeli border. The Golani and Paratroopers Brigades, and forces from the armored corps planned to attack from the north killing as many Hezbollah fighters as possible using only limited raids. However, before the attack, Halutz ordered the troops to occupy the town of Bint Jbiel from the south. The change in plans forced the IDF into the teeth of Hezbollah and resulted in eight soldiers killed forcing the IDF to withdraw.[38]

By 5 August, three weeks into the war, the IDF had roughly 10,000 soldiers in Lebanon and had only managed to penetrate four miles from the border. By 8 August, Israel sustained 61 deaths while some estimates reported 184 Hezbollah fighters killed.[39] On 11 August, the UN Security Council approved Resolution 1701, which implemented a cease-fire, effective on 14 August. Despite the cease-fire, Olmert and Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz decided to

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[35] Johnson, *Hard Fighting*, 68.

[36] Farquhar, *Back to Basics,* 16.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Johnson, *Hard Fighting*, 68-69.

[39] Farquhar, *Back to Basics,* 17.

expand the war ordering divisions north to the Litani River. None of the orders ever addressed the political or military objectives but continued to follow the limited attack strategy with more force.[40]

Before the 11 August UN resolution 1701, Israel operated cautiously trying to avoid causalities playing into Hezbollah's strategy. After 11 August, Israel saw an end in sight. Wanting to save face they took an aggressive approach before the official cease-fire on 14 August. As the strategy turned aggressive, the actual military and political objective never changed. On 11 August, the airborne reserve division advanced north along the coastal road to Dbel and Qana. In Dbel, the unit faced opposition when two anti-tank missiles killed nine soldiers. By the time the official cease-fire went into effect, the paratrooper division had only advanced seven miles North of the border.[41]

The 91st Division, received orders after 11 August to move northwest from Bint Jbeil toward the coast to destroy pockets of Hezbollah fighters. However, the 91st officers did not understand their goals, nor did they have a timeline for the mission. As a result, some of the 91st battalions stayed static for days waiting on orders to move.[42] The 162nd Division, fought in the eastern sector of Lebanon driving West from Metulla to seize Ghandoruiyeh. To provide cover for the tank formations, Brigadier General Guy Tzur, the commander, ordered an air-assault by the Nahal brigade to provide overwatch on the high ground overlooking the Saluki Wadi. On 12 August, the Nahal brigade reported that they had the area secure. However, as tanks from the 401st Brigade began crossing the wadi, an IED struck the convoy initiating a Hezbollah anti-tank ambush. In the ensuing chaos, commanders did not have a common operating picture which resulted in Northern Command denying air support and artillery due to concerns of fratricide. When the ambush ended, anti-tank missiles had struck 11 Merkava tanks killing 11 IDF

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[40] Farquhar, *Back to Basics,* 17.

[41] Ibid., 18.

[42] Ibid.

soldiers.[43] This example shows that the division did not have experience integrating tanks and infantry.

On 13 August, a day before the cease-fire, the IDF conducted airborne operations to extend control to the Litani River. The decision could have ended terribly, as the soldiers became surrounded; however, the cease-fire on 14 August saved the forces.[44] As the cease-fire agreement went into effect on 14 August, the IDF death toll had risen to 120 and more than 1,000 wounded. The reported number of Hezbollah killed estimated from 250 to 800 fighters. Hezbollah claimed victory because they could continue to fire rockets and remained armed after the cease-fire. The dismal performance tarnished the IDF reputation because of the indecisiveness at all levels of leadership.[45]

Analysis of the Operation

Hezbollah used a hybrid force to defend against conventional forces using integrated tunnels, bunkers, IEDs, and anti-tank units to delay, attrite, and exhaust IDF ground units. Hezbollah's hybrid formation forced Israel into two options avoid ground operations that exposed its borders or fight attrition warfare by entering Lebanon.[46] Hezbollah enjoyed tactical success throughout the war, but once Israel made bold decisions after 11 August, Israel started to make progress. This example shows that a hybrid force can only sustain constant pressure from a significant force for so long.

Maintaining the limited attack approach throughout the war caused the four IDF divisions in Lebanon to operate in a piecemeal fashion. All four-divisions conducted uncoordinated brigade and battalion size raids to accomplish collective objectives linked to strategic goals.[47] Due to

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[43] Farquhar, *Back to Basics*, 19-20.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Johnson, *Hard Fighting*, 78.

[46] Farquhar, *Back to Basics,* 8-9.

[47] Raphael D. Marcus, *Israel's Long War with Hezbollah: Military Innovations and Adaptation Under Fire* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2018), 192.

budget cuts and reallocation of resources to an ongoing counter-terrorism campaign, divisions had not trained collectively for four or five years. As a result, divisions had desynchronized logistics and were ill-equipped for high-intensity warfare and maneuver.

Synthesis with Elements of JFE

Given the complexity of conducting a JFE, the initiating force needs a preponderance of training and clear military objectives. Israel's performance shows that air power alone is not decisive. Therefore, in a complex environment precision airpower coupled with combined-arms ground maneuver is the only feasible course of action. As a result, after the Second Lebanon War, the IDF started to conduct more training on offensive and defensive fundamentals that integrated all operating domains.[48]

Given the risk of forcible entry operations, forces need high-intensity training and synchronized logistical capabilities. Forcible entry operations demand careful planning and thorough preparation. Operations need synchronization for rapid execution with leader initiative at every level to deal with uncertainty.[49] The US Army has identified the JFE challenge placing it as a top priority at the Army Capabilities Integration Center (ARCIC). ARCIC states that the US Army needs formations that can rapidly deploy into contested environments, quickly transition to operations, and sustain a high operational tempo to destroy or defeat enemy forces.[50]

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[48] Farquhar, *Back to Basics,* 20-23.

[49] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), I-1.

[50] Army Capabilities Integration Center (ARCIC), "Army Warfighting Challenges #12," accessed November 14, 2018, http://www.arcic.army.mil/Initiatives/armywarfightingchallenges.

Figure 1. Drive to the Litani. *Source:* Matt Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared: The 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War,* Long War Series: Occasional Paper no. 26 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 2008), 53.

Operation Cast Lead

Understanding Middle Eastern politics is like playing three-dimensional chess underwater, with all the pieces moving simultaneously.

—Sir Mark Allen, *Gaza Under Hamas*

A thorn in Israel's side, the Gaza Strip has caused instability in the region creating a complex environment. An area roughly twice the size of Washington, D.C. the Gaza Strip, holds 1.8 million people in twenty-five miles long and 3.7 to 7.5 miles wide rectangular land mass and the third most population dense territory in the world.[51] The result of many administrative changes brought instability to the region with high unemployment rates, water shortages, and

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[51] US Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook — Central Intelligence Agency," accessed September 2, 2018, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html.

power blackouts creating civil unrest.[52] Today, 80% of Gaza inhabitants are descendants of refugees from the 1948 Arab-Israeli War where Egypt became responsible for the administration of the area.[53] Seized by Israel during the 1967 Six-Day War, the Gaza Strip transferred administration from Israel to the Palestinian Authority (PA) as part of the Oslo accords signed between 1994 and 1999.[54]

The 2005 IDF withdrawal from the Gaza Strip created a power vacuum giving rise to hostile groups trying to control the region and better their situation. Between 2000 and 2008, 12,000 rocket attacks and multiple suicide bombings impacted Israel, resulting in the deaths of more than 1,100 Israelis.[55] After the 25 January 2006 Gaza elections, the Islamic group Hamas, assumed the governmental office of Gaza. Hamas did not have experience in government nor understood the requirements that go along with the office which led to further strife with Israel.[56]

Diplomacy failed between Hamas and Israel resulting in Operation Cast Lead. Despite a June 2008 informal ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, Hamas continued to violate the agreement with sporadic rocket and mortar fire.[57] When diplomacy fails, and military involvement becomes necessary, the JFC considers a JFE as an option for an opening move to seize the initiative.[58] Thus, in response to 132 rockets launched into Israel on 24 and 25 December 2006 the IDF executed Operation Cast Lead on 27 December 2006 to gain the initiative in the war against Hamas.[59]

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[52] Brenner, *Gaza Under Hamas*, 18.

[53] Norman G. Finkelstein, *"This Time We Went Too Far": Truth and Consequences of the Gaza Invasion* (New York: OR Books, 2010), 15.

[54] US Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook — Central Intelligence Agency."

[55] The State of Israel, *The Operation in Gaza, 27 December 2008 - 18 January 2009: Factual and Legal Aspects* (Tel Aviv, July 2009), 1, 14.

[56] Brenner, *Gaza Under Hamas*, 29–32.

[57] Finkelstein, *"This Time We Went Too Far,"* 49.

[58] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication (JP) 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations*, vii.

[59] Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*, 24–25.

Who Is Hamas

Once seen as a symbol for a free Palestine, Hamas has developed into an authoritarian government body with conventional and unconventional military means. Hamas is an acronym for Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya, or "Islamic Resistance Movement," translated from Arabic meaning, "zeal."[60] Since its existence, Hamas has pushed an agenda to destroy and inflict terror upon Israel and establish a Muslim state over all the territories of historic Palestine. The Hamas charter begins by declaring: "Israel will arise and continue to exist until Islam wipes it out."[61] Hamas developed in 1988 because of the first intifada and grew into a terrorist organization, political party, and religious movement.[62]

Hamas gained a political foothold in Gaza with the death of Yasser Arafat in November 2004. Before Arafat's death, the people viewed Hamas as the Muslim provider because of successful terrorist attacks and a social welfare network. Hamas stayed away from Palestinian politics because it did not agree with Arafat's willingness to negotiate with Israel. With the death of Arafat, Hamas saw an opportunity to challenge its political rival, Fatah and announced its intention to participate in the January 2006 Palestinian municipal elections and won.[63]

By 2007, Hamas had gained complete control of Gaza, forcing out all PA and other political factions such as Fatah by violent force. Hamas' military wing, the Iss al-Din al-Qassam Brigade, carried out the violent takeover and by 2008 Hamas forces had grown to 20,000 fighters and considered the most organized and effective militia in the Palestinian territories.[64] The Qassam Brigade organized into territorial battalions with roughly 2,000 operatives. The battalions

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[60] Joshua L. Gleis and Benedetta Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas: A Comparative Study* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 2.

[61] Hamas, "Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) of Palestine," trans. Muhammad Maqdsi, *Journal of Palestine Studies* 22, no. 4 (1993): 122–134.

[62] Gleis and Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas*, 2.

[63] Ibid., 124–125.

[64] Farquhar, *Back to Basics*, 24.

conduct large-scale training operations with oversight from Iran and Syria. The training consists of advanced weaponry with mounted formations, underground systems, and IEDs. The weapons smuggled in comprise of different manufactured rockets with ranges from 20KM to 40KM. The Qassam arsenal consists of locally made rockets, mortars both imported and locally made, anti-tank weapons, IEDs, mines, machine guns, anti-aircraft weapons, night vision devices, listening equipment, communication equipment, and large amounts of ammunition.[65]

Throughout Hamas' rise to power, Israel exhausted every option to resolve conflict. In April 2004, Prime Minister Sharon announced that Israel would disengage from Gaza, and by September 2005, all Israeli troops had pulled away from the Gaza Strip.[66] Additionally, Israel sent multiple letters to the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, and in 2008, sent 29 letters to the UN Secretariat, regarding the increase in rocket and mortar attacks from Hamas.[67] In addition to the diplomatic appeals, Israel with several members of the international community instituted more economic sanctions against Hamas, while at the same time endeavoring to supply the Palestinian population in Gaza with humanitarian relief.[68]

As Israel tried to resolve a conflict diplomatically, Hamas continued to smuggle weapons and attack targets in Israel. On 25 June 2006, Hamas attacked an IDF post in Israel by crossing through a tunnel near the Kerem Shalom border crossing. This action resulted in two IDF soldiers killed, four wounded, and the capture of an IDF soldier Corporal Gilad Shalit.[69] On 19 December 2008, Hamas announced the end of the June 2008 ceasefire and launched dozens of rockets prompting Israel to initiate Operation Cast Lead.[70]

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[65] The State of Israel, *The Operation in Gaza*, 28–31.

[66] Finkelstein, *"This Time We Went Too Far,"* 21.

[67] The State of Israel, *The Operation in Gaza*, 20–21.

[68] Israel Supreme Court, *Jabar Al-Bassiouni v. The Prime Minister of Israel*, 2008, accessed November 1, 2018, http://elyon1.court.gov.il/verdictSearch/EnglishStaticVerdicts.html.

[69] The State of Israel, *The Operation in Gaza*, 22.

[70] Ibid., 23.

What Happened in Gaza

Learning lessons from the 2006 Lebanon War, Israel started to develop a campaign plan for the Gaza Strip. Upon realizing Hamas's take over and hostile intentions in Gaza, the IDF began to prepare a campaign plan in 2007.[71] Israel's campaign plan consisted of two distinct phases: an air campaign and an air-land battle with limited aims that defined achievable objectives. Operation Cast Lead objectives defined by the Israeli Defense Minister in 2008, Ehud Barak, consisted of attacking Hamas' leadership, infrastructure, and "force Hamas to stop its hostile activities against Israel."[72] Operation Cast Lead's opening phase started with an aerial bombardment on 27 December 2008, with the IAF targeting Hamas' command nodes, weapon facilities, and logistical lines.[73] The IAF targeted the tunnel supply network along the Philadlphi Corridor (an 8.5KM buffer zone along the Egypt-Gaza border) to deny Hamas' logistical capabilities.[74]

The air-land battle started on 3 January 2009, when the IDF launched a ground attack into the Gaza Strip.[75] The IDF entered the Gaza Strip supported by both naval and air power with the objective of taking control of Hamas' rocket and mortar launching sites.[76] The IDF established achievable military goals: reinforce deterrence of terrorist activities, weakening Hamas, and reduce or end the threat from rockets over time.[77] The IDF strategy relied on dividing northern Gaza from southern Gaza, taking control of Gaza's main north-south highway which targeted Hamas' lines of communication. This strategy would impede resupply of Hamas units, stop

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[71] Farquhar, *Back to Basics*, 26.

[72] Anthony H. Cordesman, *The "Gaza War": A Strategic Analysis*, Burke Chair in Strategy (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS), February 2009), 37, 40.

[73] The State of Israel, *The Operation in Gaza*, 32.

[74] Sergio Catignani, "Variation on a Theme: Israel's Operation Cast Lead and the Gaza Strip Missile Conundrum," *The Rusi Journal* 154, no. 4 (August 2009): 68.

[75] The State of Israel, *The Operation in Gaza*, 32.

[76] Ibid., 32–33.

[77] Cordesman, *The "Gaza War": A Strategic Analysis*, 38.

militants from moving in between sectors, and isolate command and control nodes. The three areas of operations consisted of the southern zone and Philadelphi Corridor which targeted smuggling routes, training compounds, and weapon storages. Second, the northern zone which targeted Hamas units and rocket, mortar launching areas. Finally, Gaza City intended to isolate Hamas command and control nodes from the rest of the Gaza Strip.[78] With the end state of isolating Gaza City, destroying significant amounts of Hamas' rocket and mortar squads, and eliminating essential Hamas military leadership.[79]

Four brigade task forces organized under Israel's Southern Command conducted forcible entry operations into Gaza creating multiple dilemmas for Hamas. To the north, the Paratrooper Brigade had the task of attacking from north to south along the Mediterranean coast seizing the area of Atatra to drive Hamas forces out of their rocket-firing positions. The Givati Brigade penetrated through the Karni crossing seizing essential infrastructure south of Gaza City near Zeitoun to isolate Hamas leadership within the city. The Golani Brigade penetrated Gaza and seized Beit Lahiya, Jabalia, and Shajaiyeh to further isolate Gaza City.[80] The fourth task force, the 401st Armored Brigade, entered southern Gaza with the task of seizing training compounds and storage facilities. Additionally, IDF troops conducted amphibious landings along the Philadelphi Corridor to target remaining tunnels and Hamas units.[81]

Although much of the maneuver details remain classified, the IDF operations showed improvement from the 2006 Lebanon War. Unlike the 2nd Lebanon War, the IDF used a command structure that focused on joint operations between air and ground units. The joint operations came to fruition because the IDF allocated air support coordination officers to brigade

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[78] Catignani, "Variation on a Theme: Israel's Operation Cast Lead and the Gaza Strip Missile Conundrum," 68.

[79] Farquhar, *Back to Basics*, 90.

[80] Ibid., 91–92.

[81] Catignani, "Variation on a Theme: Israel's Operation Cast Lead and the Gaza Strip Missile Conundrum," 68–69.

and battalion headquarters. These changes allowed UAVs to fly 500 meters in front of units providing live imagery which enabled ground forces to operate in crowded Gaza urban centers.[82] The three IDF brigades entered the Gaza Strip following heavy bombardment from aerial platforms, naval gunfire, and artillery. The IDF forces put engineer units with armored bulldozers in the lead to create new path avoiding ambush sites and IEDs.[83] The clearly defined objectives allowed the IDF to blaze through Gaza. By conducting operations at the brigade (BDE) level, the IDF forces maneuvered around Hamas strong points and took advantage of Hamas' slow reaction times.[84]

By 6 January 2009, the IDF gained the initiative against Hamas which allowed for follow-on forces to exploit the initiative. From 6 to 18 January, the IDF did not stop the offensive and continued to exploit the initiative targeting additional rocket launch sites, tunnels, storage facilities, and homes of Hamas fighters.[85] On 11 January, the IDF reserve moved into Gaza and assumed the responsibility of the area secured by the regular IDF forces. The addition of the reserves allowed the Paratrooper, Golani, and Givati Brigades to continue to consolidate the IDF's gains.[86] By 13 January, the IDF had captured hundreds of Hamas fighters, destroyed twenty-two Hamas military cells, and destroyed twenty rocket-launching sites.[87]

The IDF achieved its military objectives by evaluating how quickly Gaza City became isolated, the decrease in rocket and mortar attacks against Israel, and the elimination of Hamas' leadership. The integration of the new force structure allowed the brigades in the north to capture

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[82] Catignani, "Variation on a Theme: Israel's Operation Cast Lead and the Gaza Strip Missile Conundrum," 69.

[83] Matt M. Matthews, "The Israeli Defense Forces Response to the 2006 War with Hezbollah: Gaza," *Military Review*, no. 9 (August 2009): 47–48.

[84] Cordesman, *The "Gaza War": A Strategic Analysis*, 41.

[85] Matthews, "The Israeli Defense Forces Response to the 2006 War with Hezbollah: Gaza," 48–49.

[86] Ibid., 49.

[87] Ibid., 49–50.

Beit Hanoun, Zeitun, and Netzrim which cut off Gaza City by the second day of the ground invasion, 4 January.[88] With armored D-9 bulldozers in the led creating new routes and bypassing ambush points, this allowed infantry units to maneuver quickly without extended rest or stationary positions. These actions took advantage of Hamas' slow ability to reinforce and create new ambush points.[89]

The rapid tempo to isolate Hamas' leadership led directly to the success of the decrease in rocket and mortar attacks. Between 27 December 2008 and 3 January 2009, Israel received 296 mortar and 116 rocket attacks, which equated to thirty-seven mortar and 14.5 rocket attacks daily. However, between 4 January and 11 January 2009 Israel received 164 mortar and fifty-one rocket attacks, the operation had decreased mortar attacks to twenty a day and rockets to six a day.[90] With Gaza City isolated and the continual decrease in rocket and mortar attacks, the IDF was able to target specific Hamas' leadership.

The combined attacks allowed the IDF to target Hamas' leadership ultimately bringing Operation Cast Lead to an end. An IDF air strike on 10 January killed Amir Mansi, Hamas' commander of the rocket launching program and on 15 January, the IDF killed Sayyed Siam, Hamas' Minister of Interior Affairs, and Salah Sharah, Head of Hamas Interior Security.[91] The rapid isolation of Gaza City, the erosion of rocket and mortar capability, and the elimination of critical leaders finally brought Hamas to the negotiation table. Operation Cast Lead ended on 17 January 2009, after reaching a ceasefire agreement with Hamas, by 21 January, the IDF had withdrawn entirely from the Gaza Strip.

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[88] Catignani, "Variation on a Theme: Israel's Operation Cast Lead and the Gaza Strip Missile Conundrum," 69.

[89] Cordesman, The "Gaza War": A Strategic Analysis, 40.

[90] The State of Israel, The Operation in Gaza, 40.

[91] Catignani, "Variation on a Theme: Israel's Operation Cast Lead and the Gaza Strip Missile Conundrum," 69.

Analysis of the Operation

The change in IDF organization allowed the commanders to maintain an operational tempo that overwhelmed Hamas. Israel learned from the 2006 Lebanon War that the military needs definable objectives. Retired IAF General, Isaac Ben Israel stated to the press, "What you see today, is a direct lesson of what went wrong in 2006. In Lebanon, we learned that if you want to stop these rocket launchers, you need to send soldiers in and take the area and control it, and this is what is being done now."[92] The IDF returned to the basics of mission accomplishment and simplicity by having clear objectives, continuity of actions, and maintaining an initiative. Additionally, the IDF had trained basic combat skills such as calling for fire, conducting night operations, and executing combined arms maneuver.[93]

Israel exploited the terrain and intelligence by maximizing its use of combined capabilities while entering the Gaza Strip. The IDF successfully integrated light infantry in urban areas as opposed to using exposed tanks.[94] All three brigades penetrated the Gaza Strip with combined forces of armored bulldozers, UAVs, and attack helicopters in the lead. The IDF made new roads to circumvent IEDs and planned ambushes. Infantry, with attached working dogs and tank formations, followed the lead engineer elements. The IDF conducted all operations during hours of darkness taking advantage of the enemy's lack of capabilities and use of terrain.[95]

During Operation Cast Lead, giving the responsibility of command and control at the brigade level denied Hamas freedom of action within the operational area. Each brigade had an assigned axis of advance, objectives, and missions while the division coordinated their progress. This arrangement improved the brigade commander's responsiveness to the battle and presented

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[92] Matthews, "The Israeli Defense Forces Response to the 2006 War with Hezbollah: Gaza," 41.

[93] Ibid., 50–51.

[94] Cordesman, *The "Gaza War": A Strategic Analysis*, 44.

[95] Farquhar, *Back to Basics*, 31.

more opportunities to gain the initiative.[96] The Paratrooper, Givati, and Golani Brigades operated as independent brigade task forces with attached artillery, forward observers, and JTACs so that commanders had tactical control over air operations. Each BDE had attached attack helicopters, UAVs, and on-call close air support. An IAF officer describes the cooperation as "groundbreaking: the concentration of air assets in a tiny territory permitted un-parallel air-land coordination."[97]

Synthesis with Elements of JFE

Israel accomplished a cross-border entry into the Gaza Strip by following the principles of forcible entry: achieving surprise, control of the air, operations in the information environment, isolate the lodgment, gain and maintain access, neutralize enemy forces within the lodgment, and expand the lodgment.[98] Achieving surprise factors in many variables that include information operations (IO) and operations security to develop a deception plan. Israel achieved surprise by developing a deception plan that called for high levels of secrecy. The maneuvers of the campaign went in areas with minimal media coverage and avoided large populate areas. The IDF leaders did not allow soldiers to bring cell phones into the area. Meanwhile, Israel continued to hold ceremonies and make regular publicized political visits to Gaza and Egypt which further signaled that Israel did not intend to fight.[99]

The IAF and IDF controlled the air during the first phase on 27 December 2008, by not only gaining air superiority, but supported the ground campaign by eliminating the anti-access/area-denial (A2AD) threat. Anti-access defines actions and capabilities designed to prevent an opposing force from entering an operational area. Area-denial defines actions and

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[96] Farquhar, *Back to Basics*, 90.

[97] Ibid., 30.

[98] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations*, (2012), I-2.

[99] Cordesman, *The "Gaza War": A Strategic Analysis*, 49.

capabilities, designed to limit opposing forces freedom of action within the operational area.[100] As proven during OCL, eliminating the A2AD threat before conducting a JFE is crucial to the success of accomplishing the objectives.

In a complex environment, operations in the information environment become difficult for the unit conducting a JFE. During Operating Cast Lead, IDF legal planners assisted with planning. Putting Israeli soldiers at risk, the IDF made phone calls, dropped leaflets, and gave citizens a reasonable amount of time to evacuate. However, Hamas used this to their advantage.[101] Similar to Hezbollah, Hamas integrated their weapon systems inside of civilian residents, schools, hospitals, mosques, and even UN buildings. Despite the planning efforts, Hamas spun an IO campaign showing Israeli bombs striking civilian areas. Israel's public diplomacy showed that 42,327 trucks transporting supplies entering Gaza and documented a daily ceasefire to allow humanitarian convoy deliveries into Gaza.[102] These actions show that when conducting a JFE into a complex environment, planners need to anticipate the legal ramifications early and get ahead of the IO networks.

During OCL the IDF showed why isolating the lodgment, gaining, and maintaining access, neutralizing enemy forces within the lodgment, and expanding the lodgment are critical for the success of a JFE. The IDF actions show that to have success in conducting a JFE into a complex environment, planners need to ensure operational tempo. The IDF decision to organize the force into independent brigade combat teams allowed the commanders to maintain operational tempo to achieve military objectives rapidly.

Finally, Israel's use of joint fires enhanced ground force's freedom of maneuver to achieve objectives. In forcible entry operations, the initial assault forces are building combat

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[100] US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Concept for Entry Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 2.

[101] Matthews, "The Israeli Defense Forces Response to the 2006 War with Hezbollah: Gaza," 51.

[102] Catignani, "Variation on a Theme: Israel's Operation Cast Lead and the Gaza Strip Missile Conundrum," 71.

power quickly. Given the mode of transport in operations, organic fire support becomes limited during the early stages of a JFE. Therefore, coordination of fires from aircraft and naval platforms becomes critical.[103]

Figure 2. The Gaza Strip. *Source:* Michel Chossudovsky, "The Invasion of Gaza: Part of a Broader Israeli Military Intelligence Agenda," *Global Research*, last modified January 4, 2009, accessed March 23, 2019, https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-invasion-of-gaza-operation-cast-lead-part-of-a-broader-israeli-military-intelligence-agenda/11606.

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[103] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations*, (2012), xii.
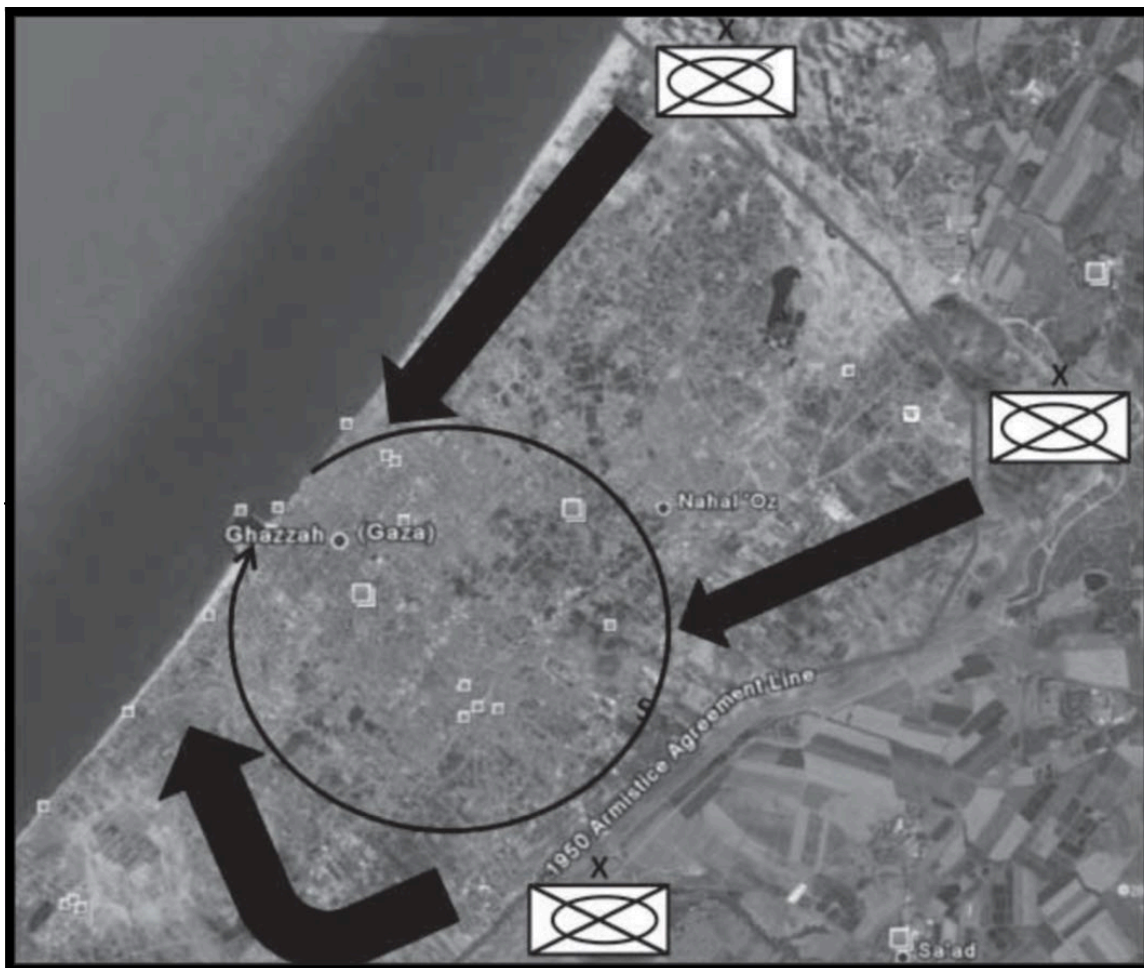
Figure 3. Map of the Three Brigade Task Forces During Operation Cast Lead. *Source:* Scott C. Farquhar, *Back to Basics: A Study of the Second Lebanon War and Operation Cast Lead* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, May 2009), 92.

Operation Protective Edge

> We started to prepare for this war a year and a half or something like that before. We didn't know it was coming, we didn't know the date. But we understood that the relationship with Hamas was heading for a clash.
>
> —Senior Staff Officer in Israeli Southern Command, *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*

Despite a cease-fire agreement signed between Hamas and Israel on 18 January 2009 ending Operation Cast Lead, Hamas continued to violate the agreement. Between 2009 and the start of Operation Protective Edge (OPE) in 2014 there have been 4,377 rocket attacks on Israel

from the Gaza Strip.[104] After OCL two more named operations occurred between Hamas and Israel: Operation Returning Echo in December 2009 and Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012.[105] In 2012 alone 2,248 rockets landed in Israel from the Gaza Strip.[106] Why did rocket attacks increase since OCL?

Hamas' political and economic reality weakened, which caused more strife with Israel. From 2009 to 2014, regime changes in Egypt and diplomatic disagreements between Iran and Syria led to all three countries cutting off financial support to Hamas. When Abdel Fattah el-Sisi became president of Egypt in 2014, he shut down the smuggling tunnels from Egypt into Gaza. El-Sisi denied a key revenue source to Hamas because he opposed the Muslim Brotherhood which were allies with Hamas.[107] Additionally, Israel cut off humanitarian aid and resources after intelligence reports confirmed that Hamas used the supplies for constructing tunnels.[108] The drop-in support created a crisis in Gaza bringing unemployment rates to 61%. The economic down turn coupled with Israel's use of air power in previous conflicts caused Hamas to focus its military and survival efforts around the tunnel networks.

With the increase in rocket attacks in 2012, Israel launched Operation Pillar Defense which ended in another cease-fire agreement between Hamas and Israel. The cease-fire agreement called for both Israel and all Palestinian factions to stop hostilities within the Gaza

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[104] Jewish Virtual Library, "Rocket Attacks on Israel From the Gaza Strip," accessed September 27, 2018, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/images/terror/gazarockets.jpg.

[105] Jacob Stoil, "Why A Gaza Ceasefire Is So Difficult," *War on the Rocks*, last modified July 29, 2014, accessed November 2, 2018, https://warontherocks.com/2014/07/why-a-gaza-ceasefire-is-so-difficult/.

[106] Jewish Virtual Library, "Rocket Attacks on Israel From the Gaza Strip."

[107] Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*, 5.

[108] State of Israel, "Cement Delivered to the Gaza Strip Used to Build Tunnels 12 Aug 2014," last modified August 2014, accessed January 31, 2019, https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Terrorism/Pages/Cement-delivered-to-the-Gaza-Strip-used-to-build-tunnels-12-Aug-2014.aspx.

Strip, which included rocket and cross border attacks.[109] Additionally, the agreement forced Israel to facilitate the movement of people and goods through all crossing points into Gaza. The cease-fire agreement went into effect on 21 November 2012, shortly after sporadic rocket fire from the Gaza Strip fell into Israel showing that Hamas had no intentions of adhering to the agreement.[110]

The multiple violations in the cease-fire finally reached a boiling point in June 2014 when Hamas kidnapped and killed three school children in the West Bank. In response to the kidnapped children, Israel launched Operation Brothers' Keeper on 12 June 2014 to recover the teenagers. The IDF raided Hamas homes in the West Bank arresting 200 Palestinians. Israel's actions caused Hamas Prime Minister in Gaza to declare a third intifada.[111] Intifada translates as "shaking off;" and means a grassroots resistance across the Middle East. The first intifada occurred in 1987 and ended in 1993 with the signing of the Oslo accords establishing the PA. The second intifada began in 2000 with Hamas leading the charge using suicide bombings and other terror attacks aimed at civilians, ending with the death of Yasser Arafat.[112] An intifada quickly and violently disrupts the region; thus, Israel had to act fast to stop Hamas.

From 30 June to 7 July, Hamas and Israel exchanged rocket fire and airstrikes as rioting and civil unrest grew. On 8 July, Hamas launched rockets at Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa

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[109] Reuters, "Text of Israel-Hamas Cease-Fire Agreement - Defense - Jerusalem Post," *The Jerusalem Post*, last modified November 2012, accessed January 31, 2019, https://www.jpost.com/Defense/Text-of-Israel-Hamas-cease-fire-agreement.

[110] Meir Amit Intelligence, *Operation Pillar of Defense – Update No. 8*, The Israeli Intelligence & Heritage Commemoration Center: The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, November 22, 2012, accessed November 2, 2018, https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/20433/.

[111] Dr Jeroen Gunning, "What Drove Hamas to Take on Israel?," *BBC News*, July 18, 2014, sec. Middle East, accessed October 2, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28371966.

[112] Bethan McKernan, "Intifada: What Is It and What Would a Thrid Palestinian Uprising Mean for Israel and the Middle East?," *The Independent*, last modified December 7, 2017, accessed December 19, 2018, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/intifada-what-is-palestinian-uprising-israel-jerusalem-trump-hamas-capital-west-bank-palestine-a8097331.html.

which became a first as Hamas rockets never had that range in the past.[113] Once again, diplomacy had failed, and Israel responded by launching Operation Protective Edge on 8 July 2014.

What Happened

The IDF started planning for OPE months in advance because the multiple cease-fire violations indicated that another conflict with Hamas would happen. The IDF planners started from experience by looking at OCL and Operation Pillar Defense developing specific planning questions. How would Hamas likely react if the IDF destroyed certain units or seized certain areas of Gaza?[114] This question drove IDF targeting by determining, if destroyed, which capabilities would cause Hamas to stop fighting. These planning questions showed that Israel wanted a quick operation in Gaza. The IDF determined that Hamas had between 25,000 and 30,000 fighters. The Qassam, had six brigades organized into roughly 2,500 fighters each. Each brigade had rockets, mortars, anti-tank units, snipers, infantry, and commercial UAVs each assigned to different regions in Gaza.[115]

OPE's original plan like OCL had three phases, an air campaign, ground invasion, and negotiations for another cease-fire which centered around isolating command nodes, destroying launch sites, and denying Hamas freedom of maneuver. The original ground phase called for a three-pronged approach to enter the Gaza Strip, similar to a cross-border forcible entry, known as the small, medium, and large plan. First, the small plan, would secure north Gaza avoiding the most populated areas. Next, the medium plan, a larger ground force would penetrate the northern and southern areas of Gaza splitting Hamas' command nodes. Finally, the large plan, the IDF

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[113] Israel News24, "Hamas Claims Rocket Fire on Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa," *News24*, last modified July 8, 2014, accessed November 1, 2018, https://www.news24.com/World/News/Hamas-claims-rocket-fire-on-Jerusalem-Tel-Aviv-and-Haifa-20140708.

[114] Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*, 84–85.

[115] Ibid.

ground force with reserves would seize the rest of Gaza City in a large envelopment forcing Hamas to the negotiating table.[116]

The IDF general staff controlled the IAF, Southern Command, and the IDF Navy. Southern Command assumed control of the operational aspects with the command of three divisions: 36th Armor Division, 162nd Division, and the 643rd Gaza Territorial Division. The IDF use territorial brigades such as the 643rd Gaza Territorial Division. Most IDF units rotate through different regions while the territorial units remain aligned to a specific territory. The territorial units act as a source of continuity for the IDF units rotating to different regions as the situation dictates.[117] Comparatively, to the US National Guard that regionally align with partnered countries for continuity within the region.

OPE started on 8 July 2014 with the air campaign. By 16 July, the IAF averaged 190 sorties a day striking more than 1,700 targets. The IAF targeted weapons and manufacturing facilities, rocket launch sites, command nodes, training compounds, and Hamas senior commander locations.[118] During the air campaign Israel still pursued a cease-fire and even accepted an Egyptian proposal on 15 July which Hamas rejected because it saw this as a sign of surrender.[119]

The air campaign did not have the intended affect because Hamas learned to protect its capabilities underground. Hamas countered Israeli airpower by using underground tunnels and moving commanders regularly.[120] An Israeli analyst estimated that the initial air campaign did not

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[116] Eitan Shamir, "The 2014 Gaza War: Rethinking Operation Protective Edge," *Middle East Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (Spring 2015): 7, accessed November 10, 2018, https://www.meforum.org/articles/2015/rethinking-operation-protective-edge.

[117] Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*, 86–87.

[118] Ibid., 91.

[119] Yossi Melman, "Full Text of Egyptian Proposal for a Ceasefire - Operation Protective Edge," *The Jerusalem Post*, last modified July 2014, accessed January 31, 2019, https://www.jpost.com/Operation-Protective-Edge/Full-text-of-Egyptian-proposal-for-a-ceasefire-362841.

[120] Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*, 93.

have any effect on Hamas. Showing the need for the ground phase, an IDF officer under the chief of staff stated, "We attacked about 1,000 targets on the first two days. But afterward Hamas kept on launching rockets, which frustrated the IAF."[121]

During IDF preparations for the ground invasion, Hamas launched a major offensive which caused the IDF to shift their military objectives. On 17 July, 13 Hamas fighters launched an attack inside of Israel using a tunnel near the civilian town of Sufa.[122] The attack on Sufa showed that tunnels gave Hamas the ability to project combat power beyond the Gaza Strip. IDF Chief of Staff Gantz stated, "The incident at Sufa made the penny drop for us."[123] The "penny dropped" because of the attack on Sufa and an ineffectual air campaign showed the IDF the significance of the tunnel systems. Thus, the IDF had to adapt a new approach to the Gaza Strip than they had originally planned.

Hamas' tunnel networks posed operational challenges because of the tunnel's placement around urban and civilian infrastructure. When the IDF reevaluated their original plan, they determined the tunnels presented three operational problems. First, the problem of detecting the tunnels proved very difficult. Throughout much of OPE, the IDF found many tunnels either by human intelligence or a patrol accidentally stumbling across an entrance.[124] The second and third problem centered on the tunnel. Once found the IDF needed to clear and destroy the tunnel which required a large amount of forces, equipment, and intelligence. Therefore, the tunnel systems required a significant amount of protection for the IDF ground forces. The protection efforts required a large amount of forces that used a combined armored and infantry force supported by aerial assets to provide overwatch.

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[121] Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*, 95.

[122] Mitch Ginsburg, "Tunnel Infiltration Thwarted Near Kibbutz Sufa," *The Times of Israel*, last modified July 2014, accessed January 31, 2019, http://www.timesofisrael.com/tunnel-infiltration-thwarted-near-kibbutz-sufa/.

[123] Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*, 98.

[124] Ibid., 99–100.

Once Israel realized the resources needed to solve the tunnel problem, the IDF chief of staff shifted from the original plan to a seek and destroy tunnel system mission. The night of 17 July, ten brigade combat teams moved into position at the Gaza border. The penetration into the Gaza Strip occurred early the next morning. Within hours of the initial invasion, the IDF found ten tunnels and twenty-two exit points. Israel moved destroying the subterranean networks to the highest priority over reducing rocket fire and destroying military infrastructure.[125]

The shift in focus from known objectives to a seek and destroy mission caused the ten brigades that entered the Gaza Strip operational and tactical friction. The Golani Brigade's operation in the Shuja'iya neighborhood of Gaza City demonstrates the struggle at the tactical level from the shift in military objectives. A Hamas stronghold, the Shuja'iya neighborhood held the center for at least six known cross-border tunnel entrances. Additionally, eight percent of the rockets fired into Israel originated from Shuja'iya.[126] Hamas in cooperation with other terrorist organizations, had prepared offensive and defensive positions for the IDF attack on Shuja'iya. Hamas carried anti-tank missiles, machine guns, grenades, anti-tank mines, tranquillizing drugs, and hand cuffs. When the Golani Brigade entered Shuja'iya an anti-tank mine exploded under an IDF outdated armored personnel carrier, killing seven soldiers. The equipment that Hamas carried showed the intention of trying to kidnap IDF soldiers for leverage in negotiations.[127] For example, on 20 July, Hamas kidnapped the body of first sergeant Oron Shaul through a tunnel located in

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[125] Russell W. Glenn, *Short War in a Perpetual Conflict: Implications of Israel's 2014 Operation Protective Edge for the Australian Army*, Army Research Paper, no. 9 (Commonwealth of Australia: Australian Army, June 2016), 47.

[126] Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*, 102–103.

[127] The State of Israel, *The 2014 Gaza Conflict (7 July-26 August 2014): Factual and Legal Aspects*, (Tel Aviv: The State of Israel, May 2015), 48–52.

Shuja'iya.[128] A total of 13 soldiers died from the 13th battalion of the Golani Brigade during the initial battle.[129]

In the north, the Nahal Brigade and the 401st Armor Brigade tasked to clear tunnels around Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahia, encountered unconventional opposition. On 21 July, four IDF soldiers, including a Nahal battalion commander, died when 12 Hamas militants disguised as IDF soldiers emerged from a tunnel near Nir Am.[130] This example shows one of many ways a hybrid threat might use deception against a superior force. However, during much of the operation, the Nahal and 401st Brigade encountered mostly sporadic sniper fire and ATGM attacks, as they searched for cross-border tunnels.

The 188th and 7th Armor Brigades movement into the center of Gaza shows the shift in military objectives to a seek and destroy mission. In the original plan, the 188th and 7th Armor Brigade had the task of seizing objectives along the Mediterranean coast. However, 24 hours from execution after the 188th and 7th Armor Brigade received orders to clear all tunnel networks to the Mediterranean Sea. The shift caused delays in movement and supplies which slowed operational tempo.[131] The slowed operational tempo caused a ripple affect which left the Givati, Paratrooper, and 460th Armored Brigades northern flank exposed as they fought in southern Gaza near Khan Yunis and Rafah.

On 3 August, OPE entered into the final phase as the IDF started to withdraw forces from Gaza, by 5 August Israel agreed to an Egyptian proposed cease-fire. However, the cease-fire did

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[128] Israel Prime Minister's Office, Report from Israel Prime Minister's Office on Staff Sergeant Oron Shaul (Prime Minister's Office Briefing Room: Tel Aviv, Israel, July 20, 2014), accessed November 1, 2018, http://www.pmo.gov.il/English/terrorinjured/pages/vicoronshaul.aspx.

[129] Mitch Ginsburg, "13 Soldiers Killed Overnight in Fierce Gaza Fighting," *The Times of Israel*, July 20, 2014, accessed January 21, 2019, http://www.timesofisrael.com/soldiers-killed-in-gaza/.

[130] Nick Logan, "Hamas Militants Wearing Israeli Military Uniforms Killed Soldiers: IDF," *Global News*, last modified July 2014, accessed January 31, 2019, https://globalnews.ca/news/1465175/hamas-militants-wearing-israeli-military-uniforms-killed-soldiers-idf/.

[131] Cohen et al*., From Cast Lead to Protective Edge,* 113–114.

not go into effect until 26 August.[132] Similar, to previous Arab-Israel conflicts when an end is in sight both sides start to fight harder. Israel wanted Hamas to disarm and Hamas demanded Israel lift the blockade on the Gaza Strip. Between 18 August and 26 August, Israel and Hamas exchanged intense rocket fire, which led to both sides becoming exhausted eventually leading to both sides agreeing to a cease-fire.[133]

Analysis of the Operation

Despite having a long time to plan, nothing from the original plan came to fruition during the execution of OPE. The IDF general staff assumed that OPE would last between seven to ten days, similar in scope and scale to Pillar Defense. This assumption resulted from the IDF's past conflicts, planning questions, and a calculation of a three-to-one ratio with a numerical advantage over Hamas which included superior combat power air support, fire support, and intelligence.[134]

OCL took twenty-two days to complete because the IDF integrated combined arms to achieve definable and achievable objectives. Although Israel knew Hamas has tunnel networks, it did not anticipate or understand the magnitude in which the tunnels systems had grown to in 2014. After the Sufa attack, the IDF realized Hamas relied heavily on their tunnel systems but this did not give them an accurate awareness of the all the tunnel systems. Throughout the fifty days of OPE, the IDF found over thirty tunnels; however, the IDF never defined how many destroyed tunnels equaled mission accomplishment.[135] Thus, when the IDF shifted military efforts mid-execution they still needed to define the new objectives.

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[132] Yousef Al-Helou, Mohammad Awad, and Sarah Lynch, "Israel, Hamas Agree to Egypt-Brokered Cease-Fire," *USA Today*, last modified August 2014, accessed January 31, 2019, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/08/26/israel-hamas-gaza-cease-fire/14613107/.

[133] Cohen et al., *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge*, 123.

[134] Ibid., 84–85.

[135] Nicole J. Watkins and Alena M. James, "Digging Into Israel: The Sophisticated Tunneling Network of Hamas," *Journal of Strategic Security* 9, no. 1, Designing Danger: Complex Engineering (2016): 86.

The planning question: The destruction of which Hamas capability would cause them to stop fighting? The question caused planners to assume that the enemy and terrain had not changed since OCL. The realization that the context of Gaza had changed forced the planners to shift objectives which resulted in ground units receiving these changes last minute. For example, the 188th and 7th Armored Brigade receiving new orders twenty-four hours out from execution caused a slower tempo which exposed other units flanks desynchronizing operations.

The slow tempo allowed for Hamas to further prepare fighting positions. Although the force ratio calculations showed an advantage for the IDF it did not consider the shift in objectives. As a result, the IDF faced strong resistance from Hamas as seen in the Golani Brigade's assault in the Shuja'iya district. Despite the resistance the new armored personnel carriers, the Namers, proved very well; however, not all the Golani's vehicles had the new updates. For example, when the first vehicle of the Golani Brigade struck an IED as it entered Shuja'iya killing the crew shows why readiness is important when conducting a JFE.

Synthesis with Elements of JFE

During OPE the IDF struggled with gaining and maintain access in the Gaza Strip when the military objective shifted to a search and destroy mission. In an operational area, many obstacles present themselves that hinder a forces ability to gain and maintain access during a JFE. Diplomatic, economic, military, or cultural factors can cause obstacles as well as physical aspects such as ports, airfields, and infrastructures.[136] In the OPE case the tunnel networks presented an obstacle that placed limitations on the IDF freedom of maneuver ability. OPE shows that when conducting a forcible-entry to retain freedom of maneuver in a complex environment the units need definable military objectives, emphasis on protection, and intelligence to anticipate a nebulas enemy threat.

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[136] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations*, (2012), I–4.

Conducting a forcible-entry consumes a lot of time, energy, and resources it is imperative that units have definable military objectives. As seen in the case study failing to anticipate the magnitude of the tunnel networks caused a shift in the focus of resources needed to accomplish the new objectives. The shift in resources caused the IDF operational tempo to slow which resulted in the operation lasting longer than expected. To gain and maintain access planners should think through commander considerations, shaping efforts, and operational access.

During OPE the IDF leveraged pre-existing operations to help drive the planning process. When conducting a JFE, commanders should leverage established basing, access and security cooperation agreements and rely upon regional expertise.[137] Although the IDF incorporated commander considerations into their planning efforts, the reliance upon past operations lead them to assume a short operation. Assuming a short operation caused the IDF to overlook aspects that indicated the enemy and infrastructure evolved from OCL. This planning error cause the IDF to not consider their shaping efforts until the hour before execution.

The main point of a JFE is to gain access into an area of operation. Therefore, planners should incorporate shaping efforts which focus on identifying and neutralizing enemy anti-access capabilities. Shaping efforts, "require a change in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance priorities."[138] The IDF became focused on the same priorities as OCL and never did a full analysis on the terrain until "the penny dropped." This is not to say that the IDF planners should have started from scratch with OPE but needed a more extensive intelligence analysis during the planning process. JFE requires extensive intelligence preparation of the battlefield by identifying, analyzing, and estimating the enemy's centers gravity, critical factors, capabilities, limitations, requirements, vulnerabilities, intentions, and courses of actions that the entry force will likely encounter.[139]

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[137] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations*, (2012), I–4.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Ibid., III–3.

Identifying the tunnel networks early would have allowed the IDF to gain better operational access. Operational access allows the commander to employ a full range of joint options within the operational area.[140] Given the complexity of a JFE, not having full operational access limits the commander's ability to employ all the options available. Shifting the military focus to the tunnel systems limited operational access and slowed tempo which effected the IDF freedom of maneuver. To gain and maintain access during a JFE a planner must focus on enemy anti-access capabilities to ensure that the commander can utilize all available joint options which enhances freedom of maneuver.

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[140] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations*, (2012), I–4.
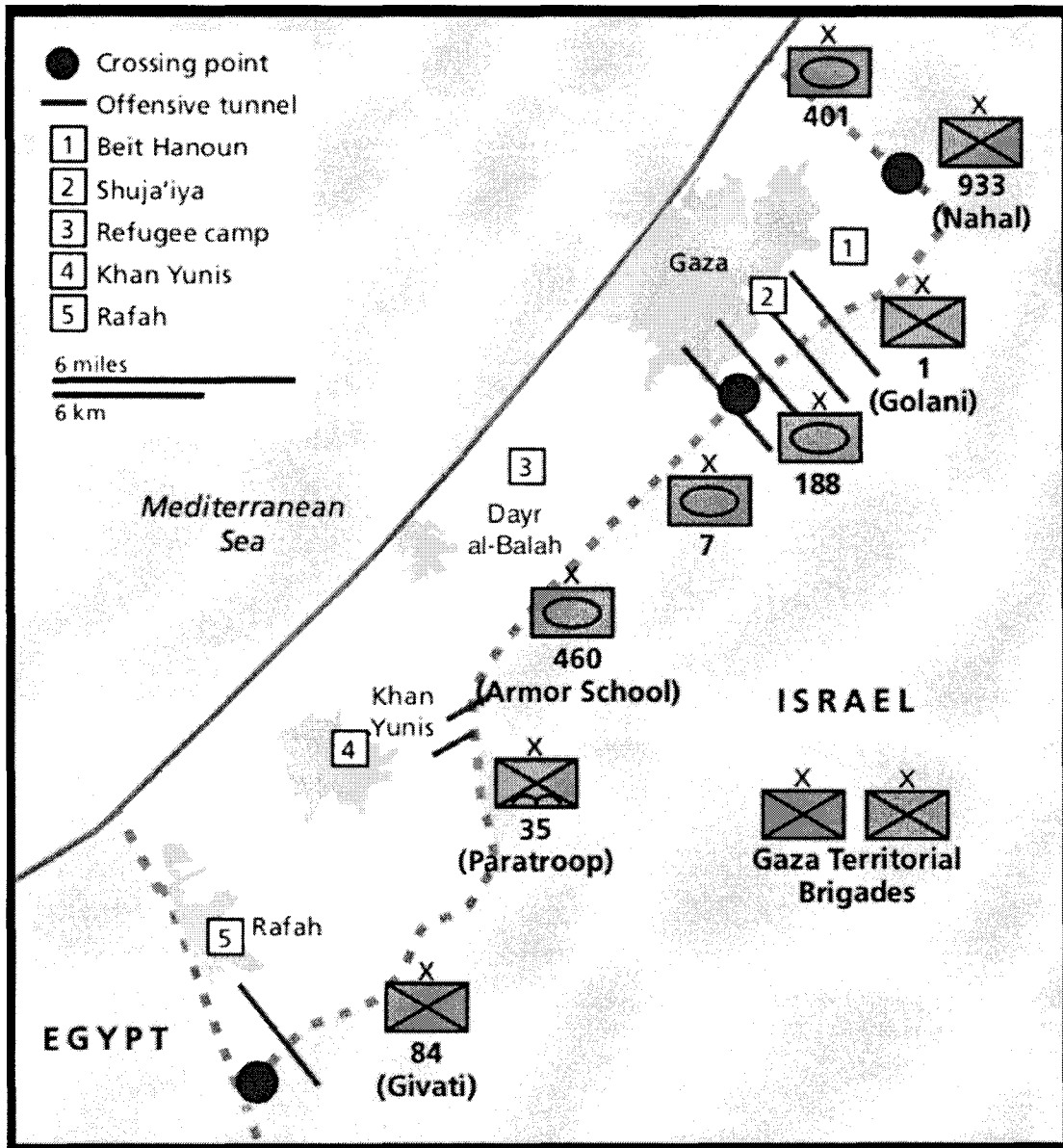
Figure 4. IDF Disposition Around Gaza. *Source:* Raphael S. Cohen et al., *Lessons from Israel's Wars in Gaza*, Brief: Summary of *From Cast Lead to Protective Edge* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017), 5.

Conclusion

As described in the US National Defense Strategy (NDS) the military cannot become

complacent in a complex security environment and "must make difficult choices and prioritize

what is important to field a lethal, resilient, and rapidly adapting joint force."[141] The long

engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq have negatively impacted the current state of readiness in

the military. Years of focusing on COIN doctrine and strategies have placed the United States at a

competitive disadvantage with global adversaries. Israel was at similar crossroads when they

entered southern Lebanon with old doctrine and low readiness levels.

Today, the United States should learn from the hard lessons of Israel's conflicts to help

avoid costly mistakes. One proving ground to create a more robust Joint Force and enhance

mission readiness is the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), where these concepts become

tested. At the JRTC the opposing forces (OPFOR) create an operational environment that focuses

efforts centered on a hybrid threat. Conventional OPFOR prepares doctrinal defenses to destroy

US elements, while OPFOR unconventional and insurgent forces disrupt or destroy targets in rear

security areas such as command nodes and logistical lines of communication. US forces struggle

to contend in a hybrid operational environment failing to provide security forces to the lines of

communication and mission command infrastructure. These tactics allow OPFOR to slow the

tempo of operations by disrupting mission command, fires, and air superiority.[142]

To prepare for a JFE in a complex environment, a planner should consider problems

across all domains. To conduct a JFE in an operationally complex environment, a military must

retain the flexibility to adjust to different definable military objectives, integrate across all

operating domains, and maintain a high level of readiness to enhance tempo and achieve decisive

results. Using the Israeli case studies as an example to learn from past experiences, definable

military objectives, maintaining a high level of readiness, and integration across all operating

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[141] James N. Mattis, *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2018), 1.

[142] Nathaniel Drake, "An Opposing Force Perspective of the Blue Forces' Attack at the Joint Readiness Training Center," *Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) Newsletter* 15, no. 17–18, Decisive Action Training Environment at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), 15 (June 2017): 85, accessed January 21, 2019, https://call2.army.mil.

domains are critical considerations when conducting a JFE. Using the framework of these considerations shows the improvement that Israel undertook from the failings of the 2006 Lebanon War through the success of OCL and OPE.

Flexibility to Shift Military Objectives

OCL proved the most successful of the three case studies because the military retained the flexibility to shift military objectives that had definable evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria measured the effect on tempo, destruction of weapon systems, and degraded enemy command structure. The IDF measured tempo on the bases of how quickly Gaza City became isolated. They understood the effect on essential weapon systems by measuring the decrease in rocket and mortar attacks against Israel. Once the IDF isolated Gaza City and neutralized critical weapon systems, the IDF had the freedom to target enemy leadership which brought Hamas to the negotiation table.

During the Second Lebanon War, the IDF did not adequately understand the environment and lacked attainable military objectives. The resulting operational approach taken by the IDF played into Hezbollah's strategy of attritional warfare and led to a confused scheme of maneuver. Only at the end of the operation did the IDF discover that using LSCO placed pressure on a hybrid threat which resulted in some success.

In OPE, the planners took the success of OCL for granted and stayed with a similar plan. Upon realizing that the enemy and terrain evolved from OCL, the IDF quickly shifted their military objectives. The shift in objectives to destroying tunnel systems put a strain on resources and slowed tempo. The IDF did not adequately plan a timeline for when OPE would end which caused the operation to last for fifty days. In OPE, the planners did not retain the flexibility needed for when military objectives need to shift. A complex environment implies a high level of uncertainty which means that upon entering the situation priorities will change. As the situation develops and a better understanding of the environment becomes clear, naturally objectives and

priorities will change. Using the IDF example in OPE shows that staffs should anticipate changing requirements to define new military objectives.

Therefore, the military must retain the flexibility to reframe military objectives to allow a unity of effort. Unity of effort happens when joint, multinational, government and nongovernmental agencies synchronize action to accomplish common objectives.[143] Determining common objectives allow the staff to see task the unit can accomplish organically, and which task need outside support. Thus, having the flexibility to reframe military objectives allow the units conducting a JFE to integrate across all domains.

Integrating Across All Domains

The rapid advancement of globalization and technology have allowed adversaries to contest operating domains that until recently have had no consideration in the context of war. The IDF case study shows how hybrid threats take advantage of all operating domains including information and cyber. The case studies show that the key to leveraging all domains resides in staying ahead of the narrative and integrating combined arms to allow a force conducting a JFE to contest all domains.

Both OCL and OPE had plans and operations that were very similar. Both operations used a highly offensive approach that avoided populated areas and collateral damage. However, Hamas' strategy forced the IDF into situations where collateral damage and civilian casualties became inevitable. When someone starts research on both these operations, issues of a just war surround OCL, but not so much OPE. During OCL the IDF could not stay ahead of the narrative. Within minutes of launching OCL tweets, articles, and reports on alleged "war crimes" committed by the IDF started to surface. Through the remainder of the operation and months after the conflict, the IDF played damage control for their actions in Gaza. Conversely, there are few if any mainstream reports about similar atrocities from OPE. Learning lessons from OCL, during

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[143] US Army, *ADRP 3-0, Operations*, (2017), 1–5.

OPE the IDF incorporated lawyers and IO specialist early and often in both the planning and execution of the operation. The specialized people in planning allowed the IDF to stay ahead of the narrative, keeping a very transparent campaign.

OCL and OPE both leveraged their command and control at the BDE level which allowed for a high operational tempo by utilizing air support, artillery, and communications. During OCL the IDF created brigade combat teams that had attached helicopters, engineers, artillery, and air support at the BDE commander's disposal. The integration fostered innovative ways to conduct the JFE into the Gaza Strip as seen with the creation of new roads to avoid ambush sites. In the 2LW the IDF general staff held the release authority which created lag times in fires and medical evacuation procedures. These lag times directly led to friendly fire incidents and enhanced pressure from the enemy. Additionally, after 2LW the IDF trained in combined arms warfare led to success during OCL and OPE. In the 2LW, the infantry and armor units did not know how to work together which led to miscommunication and high casualty rates. During OCL and OPE, the IDF successfully integrated infantry and armor to clear dense urban areas.

Therefore, to integrate across all domains (air, land maritime, space, and cyberspace) the military needs to enhance combined arms maneuver, echelon formations across all domains, and anticipate enemy actions that blend domains. Integrating across all domains earlier and in greater capacity allows staffs to see and target vulnerabilities within enemy systems. Echeloning intelligence, maneuver, and targeting cycles give the staff options to place complexity on the enemy by creating multiple dilemmas while preventing forward friendly units from isolation.[144] Integrating and echeloning forces across the domains prevents the enemy from fining vulnerabilities between the domains which allow the staff to stay ahead of the operational narrative. Integrating across all domains provides a laundry list of tasks to accomplish. Thus, a

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[144] US Department of the Army, *TRADOC Pamphlet (TP) 525-3-1, The US Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2018), ix–x.

high level of readiness becomes a critical requirement to accomplish multiple tasks across different domains.

High Level of Readiness

OCL and OPE saw a higher level of readiness than 2LW which contributed to success during both the former operations. When the IDF entered southern Lebanon during 2LW, the military still operated in a COIN framework. The COIN framework contributed to the initial piecemeal operational approach that the IDF took. The old doctrine and systems performed poorly against the hybrid threat of Hezbollah. The IDF viewed Hezbollah as an insurgent force and did not consider Hezbollah's conventional adaptations. This caused the IDF tempo to slow and logistics to fall behind. Many units went days without resupply, and individual soldiers did not have the basic maneuver skills needed in a conventional fight.

During OCL and OPE, the IDF capitalized on lessons learned from the 2LW. The IDF trained their soldiers in conventional skills such as calling for fire, communicating, and maneuver. During OCL, the superior training of the IDF allowed the units to maintain tempo with few rest periods. Despite OPE lasting longer than anticipated, the level of readiness still led to a successful operation. The shift in military objectives during OPE put a strain on resources required to accomplish the new mission. However, a high level of readiness allowed the IDF to quickly adapt to the new mission by finding and destroy tunnel systems.

OCL and OPE show that when conducting a JFE into a complex environment that LSCO with a high level of readiness places pressure on the hybrid threat allowing for a quick defeat or the continuation of follow on forces. JFE doctrine explains the two primary purposes of a forcible entry is to allow for follow on forces to continue the operations or a quick, decisive accomplishment of objectives.[145] In either case, having a high level of readiness proves the most effective at getting the job done. Conducting a JFE staffs need to find comfort in uncomfortable

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[145] US Joint Staff, *JP 3-18, Joint Forcible Entry Operations,* (2012), I-4.

situations. Having a high level of readiness offers the luxury of retaining flexibility to shift objectives in a complex environment while integrating across all domains denying adversaries capabilities.

The Future Battlefield

Around the world hybrid threats abound, Israel paid the price in blood and treasures. With the long engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States cannot afford to pay similar costs. One needs to look no further than the current news to realize the complexity across the globe. Looking at each of the different areas of responsibilities (AOR) of the combatant commands the US military could easily find themselves deploying to an unfamiliar and complex environment. The current situation in Venezuela places organized crime and different state and non-state actors competing in a potential civil war scenario. Within Venezuela, the conflict has two actors, backed by a coalition of partners led by the United States and opposition from a coalition backed by Russia creating a complex environment. Additionally, criminal organizations such as Hezbollah are trying to take advantage of the instability within Venezuela.[146]

In the Indo-Pacific AOR, China and North Korea present the two biggest threats to US interests.[147] What would a cross-border forcible entry look like into the mountainous terrain on the peninsula of Korea? Alternatively, what considerations entail an amphibious entry onto one of the many Chinese fabricated islands in the South China Sea? In the CENTCOM AOR, Iran asserts influence through instability by sponsoring non-state terrorists to gain regional hegemony.[148] While in Europe, Russia seeks to undermine the North Atlantic Treaty Organization by coercing neighboring countries governmental, economic, and diplomatic decisions in their

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[146] Colin P. Clarke, "Hezbollah Is in Venezuela to Stay," *Foreign Policy*, February 2019, accessed February 15, 2019, https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/02/09/hezbollah-is-in-venezuela-to-stay/.

[147] Mattis, *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) of the United State of America*, 1.

[148] Ibid., 2.

favor. What options does the United States have if partners and allies within the Indo-Pacific and European AOR call for a military solution? All the US areas of responsibility present a problem in a complex environment contested across all domains.

What would a forcible entry look like into an unstable region contested by conventional, unconventional, and criminal organizations? Although, the path to finding the answer becomes an unfamiliar problem. The use of a JFE will always provide an early option to consider. Therefore, The United States military must maintain a high level of readiness with a LSCO focus to provide a capable option for planners and commanders alike.

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