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14. ABSTRACT Although Israel possessed the military superiority and destroyed parts of Hezbollah and Southern Lebanon, the Israeli leaders had trouble understanding how to defeat the new conventional fighting force because they expected and irregular fight. In today's evolving conflicts around the world and current on-going operations, many adversaries will mimic Hezbollah tactics. The incorporation of these lessons in future training, exercises, and doctrinal development will ensure success in future operations. The assistance Hezbollah received came from countries the United States may be involved in future conflicts with in the near future (North Korea, Iran, China and Syria). Although Israel possessed the military superiority and destroyed parts of Hezbollah and Southern Lebanon, the Israeli leaders had trouble understanding how to defeat the new conventional fighting force because they expected an irregular fight. The cumulative impact of six years of reduced defense spending, lack of large-scale training events and an overall lack of support for their forces were contributory factors to Hezbollah's success and Israel's struggles on the battlefield.					
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TITLE:

An Analysis of the Second Lebanon War and its Impact on United States Military Strategy

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OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: An Analysis of Second Lebanon War and its Impact on United States Military Strategy

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Thesis: The Second Lebanon War, considered an Israeli defeat, is attributed to the Israeli failure to appropriately prepare and conduct the conflict.

Discussion: The Second Lebanon War, 12 July through 14 August 2006, began with the capture of two Israeli soldiers. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) failure can be attributed to their over reliance in their air campaign, Effects Based Operations (EBO) and Counter Insurgency (COIN) operations while shorting other means of combat. The Israeli government incorrectly believed that a massive air campaign would result in fewer civilian casualties and bring Hezbollah and the Lebanese government to the table without having to commit ground troops to the fight. The Israeli's overreliance on airpower and use of modern technology greatly contributed to their defeat against a conventional Hezbollah fighting force.

While the Israeli Air Force possessed air superiority over Hezbollah, Hezbollah fighters were able to defeat the IDF by conducting small engagements and launching Katyusha rockets via mobile missile launchers from restricted positions such as holy sites, schools and apartment complexes. The Second Lebanon War is considered an Israeli defeat by the Arabs and diminished Israel's status/prestige. The conflict involved the country of Israeli, the religious extremist group Hezbollah and the country of Lebanon. The situations that finally culminated into war took place over many years. When war finally came, Hezbollah had baited the Israelis into the conflict and succeeded in achieving their military and political objectives.

The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) attributed the failure of the Second Lebanon war to a series of factors:

- An overreliance on modern technology warfare, the strength of their air campaign and Counter Insurgency (COIN) operations,
- Embraced the Effects Based Operations (EBO) doctrine while only considering those aspects directed toward military victory instead of a comprehensive view of all objectives,
- Limited the use of traditional means of combat,
- Underestimated the effectiveness of their opponents less sophisticated weaponry,
- Not honor the lessons of the past.

Conclusion: In today's evolving conflicts around the world and current on-going operations, many adversaries will mimic Hezbollah tactics. The incorporation of these lessons in future training, exercises, and doctrinal development will ensure success in future operations. The assistance Hezbollah received came from countries the United States may be involved in future conflicts with in the near future (North Korea, Iran, China and Syria). Although Israel possessed the military superiority and destroyed parts of Hezbollah and Southern Lebanon, the Israeli leaders had trouble understanding how to defeat the new conventional fighting force because they expected an irregular fight.

The deployment of small units into Southern Lebanon clearly shows that the Israeli military leadership did not have clue of what to do next. The Israeli government based their decision not to send ground troops upon the Air Force's claim that they were on the verge of victory and needed a little more time. The cumulative impact of six years of reduced defense spending, lack of large-scale training events and an overall lack of support for their forces were contributory factors to Hezbollah's success and Israel's struggles on the battlefield. One former senior US commander stated, "This wasn't the vaunted IDF that we saw in previous wars."

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Page

Figure 1 – United Nations Blue Line.....7
Figure 2 – Hezbollah Rockets.....10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	ii
DISCLAIMER.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
PREFACE.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
OVERVIEW.....	1
HEZBOLLAH-OVERVIEW.....	2
PRECEEDING FACTORS TO THE SECOND LEBANON	
Israel 2000 Withdrawal from Southern Lebanon.....	4
Hezbollah Response to Withdrawal.....	5
2006 SECOND LEBANON WAR.....	8
THE UNFORSEEN CONSEQUENCES OF ISRAELI POLICY.....	12
THE POLITICAL AFTERMATH OF THE SECOND LEBANON WAR.....	13
ISSUES WITHIN THE ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES.....	13
THE WINOGRAD COMMISSION.....	15
ISRAELI LESSONS LEARNED.....	15
LESSONS FOR THE UNITED STATES.....	18
CONCLUSION.....	19
REFERENCES.....	21

INTRODUCTION

The Second Lebanon War is considered an Israeli defeat by the Arabs and diminished Israel's status in the region. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) attributed the failure of the Second Lebanon war to a series of factors:

- An overreliance on modern technology warfare, the strength of their air campaign and Counter Insurgency (COIN) operations,
- Embraced the Effects Based Operations (EBO) doctrine while only considering those aspects directed toward military victory instead of a comprehensive view of all objectives,
- Limited the use of traditional means of combat,
- Underestimating the effectiveness of their opponent's less sophisticated weaponry,
- Not honoring the lessons of the past,

The Israeli forces were not prepared for the task presented in war. Hezbollah played the game better than the Israel. Hezbollah not only made military gains but political benefits as well. The military strategies of the world changed because of the Second Lebanon War.

OVERVIEW

The Second Lebanon War, 12 July through 14 August 2006, began with the capture of two Israeli soldiers. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) failure can be attributed to their overreliance in their air campaign, Effects Based Operations (EBO) and Counter Insurgency (COIN) operations while shorting other means of combat. The Israeli government incorrectly believed that a massive air campaign would result in fewer civilian casualties and bring Hezbollah and the Lebanese government to the table without having to commit ground troops to the fight. The

Israeli's overreliance on airpower and use of modern technology greatly contributed to their defeat against a conventional Hezbollah fighting force.

While the Israeli Air Force possessed air superiority over Hezbollah, Hezbollah fighters were able to defeat the IDF by conducting small engagements and launching Katyusha rockets via mobile missile launchers from restricted positions such as holy sites, schools and apartment complexes. This went against the agreement Hezbollah and Israel made in 1996 where both sides state they would not target civilians.¹ With these launchings, Hezbollah was sure Israel would retaliate, regardless of location, producing civilian casualties and thus strengthening Hezbollah's ability to recruit new members and secure the backing of the Lebanese people. The Israeli response did not consider the political objectives of Hezbollah

HEZBOLLAH - OVERVIEW

The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 set the stage for a vast array of situations and conflicts of extreme complexity. The displaced people and the geopolitical realignment of the region have left unresolved issues. The clashes between Israel and Hezbollah are part of the string of ongoing conflicts.

The Lebanon based radical Shi'ite group Hezbollah or (Party of God) formed in 1982 in the Bekaa Valley. This was in response to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and is a merger of several groups opposed to the Israeli occupation.² Hezbollah has become one of the most powerful militant movements in the Middle East. Its ideological inspiration comes from the Iranian revolution and the teachings of the late Ayatollah Khomeini. On February 16, 1985, Sheik Ibrahim al-Amin issued Hezbollah's manifesto. According to the teaching, the three objectives of the organization are:

- To expel the Americans, the French and their allies definitely from Lebanon, putting an end to any colonialist entity on our land.

- To submit the Phalanges (Lebanese Social Democratic Party) to a just power and bring them all to justice for the crimes they have perpetrated against Muslims and Christians.
- To permit all the sons of our people to determine their future and to choose in all the liberty the form of government they desire. We call upon all of them to pick the option of Islamic government, which, alone, is capable of guaranteeing justice and liberty for all. Only an Islamic regime can stop any future tentative attempts of imperialistic infiltration onto our country.³

The manifesto makes it clear that Hezbollah intends to use armed force to achieve these goals and phrases its argument in the language of defensive jihad. Utilizing the language of defensive jihad they are: 1. justified in their actions as they are responding to the actions of others; and 2. called to their actions by their God.⁴

The governing structure of Hezbollah is very complex. A series of councils maintained at the highest level then repeat in the lower levels. Hezbollah's highest governing body is the Majlis al-Shura (Consultative Council), led by Secretary General Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah. Nasrallah is also chairman of the Jihad Council, the organization's military decision-making body or war department, which issues orders for acts of terrorism. The Jihad Council also contains many of the political leaders of Hezbollah.⁵

The members of the Majlis al-Shura (Consultative Assembly) divide the decision-making responsibilities of the Hezbollah. Twelve senior clerical members head the assembly; they are responsible for tactical decisions and supervision of all Hezbollah activity throughout Lebanon. The Majlis al-Shura al-Karar (the Deciding Assembly), headed by Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, is composed of eleven other clerics with responsibility for all strategic matters. Within the Majlis al-Shura, seven specialized committees deal with ideological, financial, military and political, judicial, informational and social affairs. Hezbollah replicates the Majlis al-Shura and these seven committees in each of the movement's three main operational areas (the Bekaa, Beirut, and the South).⁶

Hezbollah's initial goal was the establishment of an Islamic republic in Lebanon. The lack of popular support forced Hezbollah to abandon this goal. Hezbollah started out as a fanatical militia during the 1980s and has transformed itself from a revolutionary group into a political one. They are the second largest employer in Lebanon.⁷ In the 2005 elections, following the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon, Hezbollah won fourteen seats in the 128 member Lebanese Parliament.⁸ This is significant because it gives Hezbollah a voice in the Lebanese Parliamentary decision-making process.

The Lebanese people credit Hassan Nasrallah with ending the 18-year occupation by Israel of Southern Lebanon. Hezbollah's use of terrorism to push its political agenda eventually led to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon. This withdrawal strengthened Hezbollah's political standing in Lebanon and gained popularity for Nasrallah with the people of the Middle East.

PRECEDING FACTORS TO THE SECOND LEBANON WAR

Israel 2000 Withdrawal from Southern Lebanon

After 18 years, Israeli forces pulled out the "security zone" it occupied to protect its citizens in northern Israel from Hezbollah rocket attacks. With the assistance of the IDF, the Southern Command of the Lebanese Army (LAF) protected the buffer zone. After years of fighting and mounting IDF casualties, anti-war groups, politicians and the public had seen enough. The fact that Hezbollah possessed rockets that could reach farther than the security zone could protect bolstered the decision for withdrawal.

During the 1999 Israeli elections, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon became a political promise from retired General Ehud Barak who was running for Prime Minister. If elected, Barak assured the Israeli people that he would remove all IDF troops from Southern

Lebanon within a year.⁹ Barak stayed true to his word, withdrawing all IDF's from Lebanon on 24 May 2000. The IDF withdrawal was so fast the SLA was unable to continue security operations and collapsed in Southern Lebanon.¹⁰

Prior to the withdrawal, talks held in Geneva between Syria, Israel, and the United States, discussed how the withdrawal would take place. Much to the amazement of the Lebanese and Syrian populace, the talks failed due to Prime Minister Barak's refusal to return a small portion of Syrian land abutting Lake Tiberius. This failure put the unilateral withdrawal of IDF from Lebanon in motion. Some called the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon on 24 May 2000 as a 'Day of Humiliation'.¹¹ Most Arabs believe this unsuccessful attempt to force Hezbollah to disarm and withdraw from Southern Lebanon makes up for the embarrassing defeat of the Six Day War.

Hezbollah Response to Withdrawal

After the unilateral withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon in June 2000, Hassan Nasrallah claimed victory saying, "the Israeli Achilles' heel was Israeli society" itself.¹² Hezbollah then began preparations for a conflict with Israel with military construction along the "Blue Line", the border demarcation between the countries of Lebanon and Israel as acknowledged by the United Nations. (See Fig 1) At the time of the Second Lebanon War, this line of demarcation contained many hardened defenses that were the result of six years of diligent work beginning after the 2000 withdrawal. Many of the command bunkers built by Hezbollah engineers were fortified, and a few were even air-conditioned.

Hezbollah began building a command structure, military positions, and a logistics support system to sustain its southern forces. Infrastructure included underground command and control centers, observation posts, and surveillance sites; fighter hide-sites and pre-surveyed rocket launch positions; border defenses; minefields; and other obstacles, as well as arms caches and supply and support bases dispersed down to the house level.¹³

Fig. 1 – United Nations Blue Line



Source: <http://middleeast.about.com/od/arabisrae>

A 2006 United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) report stated that Hezbollah was in the process of constructing permanent observation posts, temporary checkpoints, and “intensive construction works” including the construction of new access roads all along the Blue Line to fortify its positions.¹⁴

Alastair Cooke (journalist) and Mark Perry (foreign affairs analyst) described the complex defensive network Hezbollah constructed after the withdrawal:

The digging of the arsenals over the previous years had been accompanied by a program of deception, with some bunkers being constructed in the open and often under the eyes of Israeli drone vehicles or under the observation of Lebanese citizens with close ties to the Israelis. With few exceptions, these bunkers were decoys. The building of other bunkers went forward in areas kept hidden from the Lebanese population. The most important command bunkers and weapons-arsenal bunkers were dug deeply into Lebanon’s rocky hills—to a depth of 40 meters. Nearly 600 separate ammunition and weapons bunkers were strategically placed in the region south of the Litani River. For security reasons, no single commander knew the location of each bunker and each distinct Hezbollah militia unit was assigned access to three bunkers only—a primary munitions bunker and two reserve bunkers, in case the primary bunker was destroyed. Separate primary and backup marshaling points were also designated for the distinct combat units, which were tasked to arm and fight within specific

combat areas. The security protocols for the marshaling of troops were diligently maintained.¹⁵

Hezbollah perfected thirteen principles of war for their situation specifically designed to defeat a technologically advanced enemy within fixed positions. The principles are:

1. Avoid the strong, attack the weak-attack and withdrawal.
2. Protecting our fighters is more important than causing enemy casualties!
3. Strike only when success is assured.
4. Surprise is essential to success. If you are spotted, you have failed.
5. Don't get into a set-piece battle. Slip away like smoke, before the enemy can drive home his advantage.
6. Attaining the goal demand patience, in order to discover the enemy's weak points.
7. Keep moving; avoid formation of a front line
8. Keep the enemy on constant alert, at the front and in the rear.
9. The road to victory passes through thousands of small victories.
10. Keep up the morale of the fighters; avoid notions of the enemy's superiority.
11. The media has innumerable guns whose hits are like bullets.
12. The population is a treasure-nurture it.
13. Hurt the enemy and then stop before he abandons restraint.¹⁶

An UN observer in Southern Lebanon stated, "Both sides were clearly itching for a fight."¹⁷ The final phase of the lead up to the Second Lebanon War began when Hezbollah kidnapped Israeli soldiers patrolling the Blue Line. The Israeli government took notice of this and other actions and promised a massive retaliation if they continued to provoke the situation. Hezbollah's intent was to capture IDF soldiers to facilitate a prisoner swap for Lebanese fighters still held in Israeli jails, similar to a 2004 exchange. In May of 2006, Hezbollah ramped up their desire to wage a war with Israel and to test the Israeli military response by targeting an IDF outpost along the Israeli border with indirect fire. In response, the IDF fired twenty rockets at Hezbollah positions, reducing them to rubble. Despite the damage, Hezbollah viewed the response as weak.

2006 SECOND LEBANON WAR

The lead up to the Second Lebanon War reached a high point during late June and early July 2006. The "IDF issued an alert along the border adjacent to milepost 105 near the village of Zar'it, Israel".¹⁸ This location was significant due to the terrain as the "road drops down and the

observation posts and dug-in tanks” in the area did not have constant visual contact of the entire area.¹⁹ With an apparent increase in hostilities, the IDF deployed an elite Egoz reconnaissance force specializing in guerrilla and anti-guerrilla warfare to capture any Hezbollah fighters in the area. With no Hezbollah forces found, the Israeli Defense Forces lowered the alert and removed the Egoz reconnaissance unit. However, one week later, an IDF reserve patrol reported seeing twenty Hezbollah fighters in the same location of the Egoz reconnaissance patrol. This information never made it to the reserve unit preparing to conduct their routine patrols adjacent to milepost 105.

The Second Lebanon War begins with Hezbollah attacking Israeli positions near the border towns of Zar’it and Shlomi while simultaneously launching a daring attack on an IDF security patrol on the Israeli side of the border.²⁰ Hezbollah militants armed with anti-tank munitions waited as an IDF patrol consisting of two High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV) approached. Hezbollah termed these coordinated attacks “Operation Truthful Promise.” In violation of their Stand Operating Procedures (SOP) to use dismounted infantry to first sanitize the area, the lead HMMWV proceeded into the defilade and exploded. At that exact moment, numerous anti-tank rounds impacted the second HMMWV, engulfing both vehicles in flames. Hezbollah forces managed to kill three soldiers, injure two and capture two others. An Improvised Explosive Device destroyed a nearby Merkava tank attempting to rescue the soldiers, killing the crew of four. The IDF lost one additional soldier in an attempt to rescue the crew of the tank. Israel responded by launching massive airstrikes and artillery fire at targets in Lebanon.

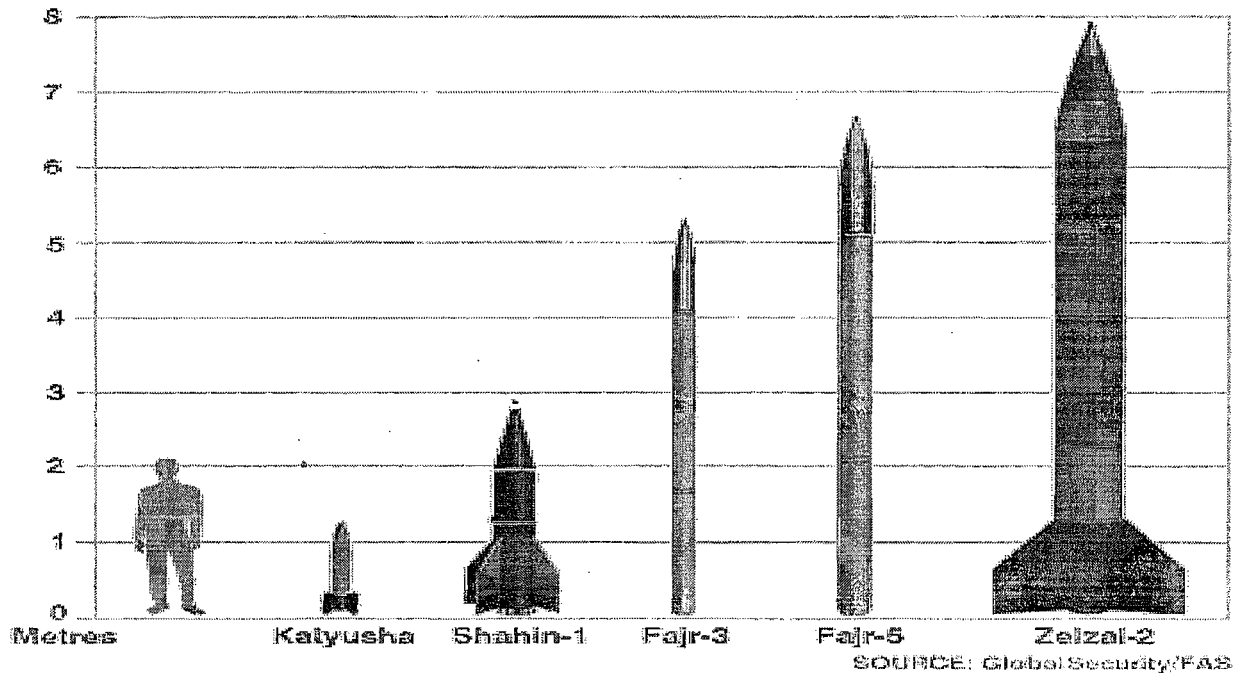
Prime Minister Ehud Olmert saw the incursion and seizure of the soldiers as an “act of war” and blamed Lebanon.²¹ Prime Minister Olmert proclaimed, “Lebanon will bear the consequences of this action” and further promised “a very painful, far reaching response.”²² For decades the IDF was considered the most advanced and capable military in the Middle East. The Israeli government based its decision to respond to continued Hezbollah rocket attacks with an immediate, intensive military strike on a careful study of what would make the Lebanese people force Hezbollah out of Lebanon. Israel selected key Lebanese government and infrastructure targets in Beirut that would have the largest military gains forcing the Lebanese government to keep Hezbollah at arm’s length. The calculation proved incorrect.

The Lebanese government disavowed the Hezbollah attacks and sought an immediate cease-fire. Israel was convinced it could force the disarmament and withdrawal of Hezbollah forces from Southern Lebanon by conducting a massive air and naval campaign targeting bridges, roads, choke points, the Beirut Airport as well as other Lebanese civilian infrastructure. One target of the opening day assaults was the bombing of Hassan Nasrallah's home in south Beirut.

In addition to the bombing of civilian infrastructure, the Israeli Air Forces targeted Hezbollah’s long-range rocket and missile stockpiles during the first two days of the war.²³ Although unable to destroy the launch sites of the Katyusha rockets, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) was successful in defeating most, if not all, of the Iranian made ZelZal-2 and Fadjr-5 rockets.²⁴ However, the problem was not these types of rockets as their numbers accounted for less than 10% of the total number of rockets in Hezbollah’s’ arsenal. The shorter-range Katyusha rockets, a mixed class of smaller, portable Iranian rockets, were the problem. These rockets are

transportable and launchable by rocket teams or via remote control. Israeli aircraft could not target Katyushas effectively. (See figure 2)

Fig. 2 – Hezbollah Rockets



Global Security.Org

In addition to the airstrikes, the Israeli Navy imposed a blockade off the coast of Lebanon to capture ships suspected of carrying arms from Syria and Iran. In retaliation, Hezbollah launched over sixty Katyusha rockets at Israeli border villages. An Israeli spokesman said it was an “unprecedented attack” in terms of the number of villages targeted and the depth of rocket strikes.²⁵

Hezbollah forces engaged the Israelis with effective fires and caused significant damage to the Israeli war machine. What everyone thought was an inferior fighting force soon showed the world that Hezbollah were a force that could defeat a super power of the Middle East. During the first three days of the war, the IAF attacks on Hezbollah failed to destroy or disable logistical sites and defensive positions. According to one U.S. official who observed the war closely, “the

IAF's air offensive degraded perhaps only 7% of the total military resource assets available to Hezbollah's fighters in the first three days of fighting and Israeli air attacks on the Hezbollah leadership were absolutely futile."²⁶

Prime Minister Olmert gave the Lebanon government three demands: the unconditional return of the abducted soldiers, Hezbollah was to stop all rocket attacks on Israel, and the full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559, which called for the disarmament of all Hezbollah forces.²⁷ The Israeli government revised their objective three times during the war: first, through a massive bombing campaign it would force Hezbollah to return the kidnapped soldiers, second, it would destroy Hezbollah, and third, it would attempt to limit the number of rockets and missiles targeting Israeli towns. The focus by Prime Minister Olmert was the full commitment by the Lebanese government to disarm Hezbollah forces.

For many weeks during the war, a cease-fire agreement had been in the works, revised many times but an agreeable solution between all parties did not exist. Israeli wanted a conditional cease-fire and the return of the two soldiers, while Hezbollah maintained their desire for an unconditional cease-fire. Lebanon pleaded with the United Nations for an immediate, unconditional cease-fire during their bombardment. On 11 August 2006, the United Nations unanimously approved United Nations Security Resolution 1701.²⁸ The preamble to the resolution clearly put the blame on Hezbollah, called for the unconditional release of the Israeli hostages, and calls for the implementation of UNSCR Resolution 1559. The operative paragraph within United Nation Security Resolution 1701 reads:

- The cessation of all Hezbollah armed attacks.
- Creation of a new, strengthened UNIFIL (15,000 troops)

- Creation of a new mandate allowing UNIFIL to use “all necessary action” to prevent hostile activities within its Area of Operation (AO).
- Establish and embargo of weapons to Lebanese groups other than the government.
- Forbids Hezbollah armed elements from returning to Southern Lebanon, from the Blue Line to the Litani River.

On 12 April 2006, Lebanon and Hezbollah accepted the resolution and Israel accepted the resolution the following day, even though Hezbollah had not returned the missing soldiers. In the end, the agreement of Israel to accept the cease-fire agreement was due in large part to the United States and United Kingdom realizing Hezbollah would not be defeated in the near future.

THE UNFORSEEN CONSEQUENCES OF ISRAELI POLICY

Many in the international community saw the kidnappings of Israeli soldiers as a war that Israel had to fight. Israel’s response to Hezbollah aggression after the withdrawal was very light handed. Prior to the incident, the IDF goal was the containment of the Hezbollah threat instead of any aggressive action. This decision was based upon Israel’s dealing with a continued Palestinian uprising in Gaza and West Bank and not wanting to commit more forces or call up their reserves. Eventually, Prime Minister Olmert set forth the primary mission of the Israeli government was to remove Hezbollah power from Lebanon. It became apparent this goal would not be attainable. Still many leaders believed there was a diplomatic solution available. Some argued that Israel’s objectives during the war were unclear and its plan from the beginning was to start a war. Peter Singer, a senior fellow with The Brookings Institution analyzed Israel’s planning process. He cited three reasons for the Israeli failure:

First, The IDF needed to have good order of battle knowledge on Hezbollah, knowing how many targets there were and where to strike them. Instead, it is clear that it underestimated both the number and variety of weapons in the group's arsenal (with the Israeli Navy even losing four

men to an anti-ship cruise missile that it didn't know Hezbollah had), as well as how to track down the group's leadership after they went to ground.

Second, the plan depended on an understanding of Hezbollah as a brittle organization that would crumble if pushed hard enough. In actuality, the group has proven both motivated to fight and die (even welcoming each shootout as a strategic win, given that the Israelis didn't want to fight it out on the ground) and flexible enough to stay effective under great pressure.

Finally, the plan depended on the belief that Israel's bombs could send just the right message to the Lebanese elites. Instead, the general takedown of infrastructure and resultant civilian casualties and refugee flight has backfired, inflaming opinion not against Hezbollah, but against Israel. Moreover, the whole house of cards stood on an understanding of the fragile Lebanese government as strong enough to stand down Hezbollah, if only it could be convinced to act. It wasn't before the attacks, and certainly isn't now.²⁹

Israeli planners followed a doctrine that envisioned small battles vice a long drawn out conventional military campaign.

THE POLITICAL AFTERMATH OF THE SECOND LEBANON WAR

The majority of Israelis believed Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Minister of Defense Amir Peretz, and the army general staff was responsible for the political and military failures of the Second Lebanon War. Olmert lacked the public's confidence "to make a restrained response if attacked by Hezbollah"³⁰ forcing Olmert to resign from the Knesset in September 2008.³¹ Army Chief of Staff Dan Halutz came under criticism for selling his stock portfolio three hours after Hezbollah kidnapped the Israeli soldiers. Minister of Defense Amir Peretz resigned on 15 June 2007.³²

ISSUES WITHIN THE ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES

Many officers saw problems with the new Israeli defense philosophy before the 2006 war but were afraid to speak up. The contingencies pre-war did not include any land-based operation. The fear of casualties was the basis this decision. The Israeli failure to provide their forces with sufficient logistics is due to a decrease in defense spending. The funding issue had caused much consternation with the IDF. The Knesset debated whether to redirect funding from the Army to the Air Force. This is a reasonable theory due to the IDF embracing the theory of Effect Based Operations (EBO), a U.S. Air Force concept designed to take out key components of an enemy's crucial infrastructure.³³ Effects Based Operations is "a methodology for planning, executing and assessing operations to attain the effects required to achieve desired national security objectives."³⁴ The IDF believed they could impede or stop an enemy by precision air power without the requirement for ground forces. The fight against Hezbollah tested this theory.

Between November 2000 and March 2006, the IDF decreased the size of its military forces to coincide with a decrease in overall defense spending. The Israel Defense Minister also initiated a new law shortening reserve duty and reducing training requirements. Since 2001, the training budget for the more experienced soldier of reserve units, who have served together for years, was decreased by US \$800 million.³⁵ In addition to the budget cuts, the IDF lacked training, equipment, and did not exercise their mobilization call-up system prior to the outbreak of war in 2006. During this downsizing, the budgetary officials pressured officials to discontinue the production of its Merkava 4 Tank, the installation of the Trophy antimissile system on most tanks and the future procurement of "bunker busting" bombs for the Israeli Air Force.³⁶ Israel's decision to discontinue the production of the Merkava Tank was due to another possible battle

against Syria and Hezbollah during the summer of 2007 who would continue to use Guerilla Tactics.

THE WINOGRAD COMMISSION

Due to a deep disappointment with the conduct of the 2006 war, the Israeli government appointed a commission to provide an impartial opinion. Led by retired judge Eliyahu Winograd, the Winograd Commission was a five-member group appointed by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert under section 8A of the Government Act of 2001 and demanded by public pressure. This commission was “to look into the preparation and conduct of the political and the security levels concerning all the dimensions of the Northern Campaign which started on July 12th 2006”.³⁷

The report, released 30 April 2007, sharply criticized the key decision makers and leadership within the IDF. An IDF intelligence officer who was involved in leadership training stated, “A kind of COIN state of mind set in with commanders and officers as a result of the continuous security operations in the occupied territories.”³⁸ The Winograd report cites the “decision to respond with an immediate, intensive military strike was not based on a detailed, comprehensive and authorized military plan, based on careful study of the complex characteristics of the Lebanon arena.”³⁹ The report especially criticized Prime Minister Olmert accusing him of “severe failure” and “hastily” going to war.⁴⁰ The examination of these characteristics would have revealed that Israel would only achieve limited military gains and that an Israeli military strike would inevitably lead to missiles fired at the Israeli civilians. The only effective Israeli response would have been an extensive and prolonged ground operation. The commission concluded, “the war was a big and serious failure for Israel”.⁴¹

ISRAELI LESSON LEARNED

By the beginning of the cease-fire that was to end the Second Lebanon War, Hezbollah had launched over 4,000 rockets into Israel. Approximately 90% were 122mm Katyushas. Of these, roughly 900, or 25%, fell in developed areas of Israel leaving northern Israel paralyzed. These rocket attacks showed the Israeli populace that Hezbollah possessed the ability to target any Israeli city, regardless of location. As a result, over one million Israelis lived in bomb shelters with roughly 300,000 fleeing to southern Israel.⁴² Without adequate funding, the Israeli populace would continue to suffer the consequences of an inadequate missile defense system. The Israeli defense industry researched and developed certain anti-missile systems that could combat the threat Hezbollah's short-range rockets, but the government's lack of funding stopped them from becoming operational.

For the six years prior to the 2006 war, Israel had been in a counterinsurgency fight with the Palestinians while also developing a doctrine based on a foundation of EBO and the use of high tech weapons (precision munitions). Officials within the IDF who believed the use of precision firepower vice ground troops could stop Hezbollah prior to the Second Lebanon War were continuing to redefine their stance. As defined by the United States Military Joint Forces Command, EBOs are "a process for obtaining a desired strategic outcome or effect on the enemy through the synergistic and cumulative application of the full range of military and nonmilitary capabilities at all levels of conflict."⁴³ The intent and desired outcome of an effects-based approach is to employ forces that paralyze the enemy.

Rather than focusing specifically on causing casualties and physical destruction resulting in the attrition or annihilation of enemy forces, EBO emphasizes end-state goals first, and then focuses on the means available to achieve those goals. For instance, psychological operations,

electronic warfare, logistical disruptions and other non-lethal means can be used to achieve the demoralization or defeat of an enemy force while minimizing civilian casualties or avoiding the destruction of infrastructure. While EBO does not rule out lethal operations, it places them as options in a series of operational choices for military commanders.

Israel lacked training, funding and doctrinal preparation to counter a conventional Hezbollah fighting force during the war of 2006. Israel found they were incapable of completely defeating Hezbollah who could continue to strike their cities and towns. The targeting of the Israeli populace in the south would continue unless the Israeli government committed ground forces to stop the hit-and-run tactics and launching of rockets.

Hezbollah's operational design focused on the future fight against the IDF and their presumption of Israel using a massive air and artillery campaign. Hezbollah doctrine helped establish it into an extensive political party with many Lebanese supporters. Hezbollah protected its rocket systems by delaying the Israeli ground attack.

Israeli intelligence speculated that Israeli bombing killed hundreds of Hezbollah fighters. This could not be verified, Hezbollah never publicly announced their casualties. The mishandling of intelligence by senior Israeli intelligence officers resulted in Israeli ground troops paying the price. Israeli intelligence officials noted the week of 14 July that air power alone could not defeat Hezbollah. The Israeli Foreign Minister concluded that the heavy bombing campaign and small ground offensive then underway would show "diminishing returns" within days.⁴⁴ It stated that the plan would neither win the release of the two Israeli soldiers nor reduce the militia's rocket attacks on Israel to fewer than 100 a day."⁴⁵

The IDF did not properly collect or disseminate intelligence on Hezbollah to those field units that would benefit the most from information regarding troop movements and incursions

along the Blue Line. One critical intelligence flaw to note is the IDF not collecting intelligence on Hezbollah's Katyusha rockets. One possible reason could be the IDF's belief that Katyusha rockets were inaccurate and produced little damage. Chief of Staff Dan Halutz stated, "short-range rockets are not a decisive weapon."⁴⁶ Halutz was clearly mistaken.

By 11 August, a decrease in the number of long-range missiles launched into Israel meant the Israeli Air Force had accomplished some degree of success in destroying the rocket launching capability of Hezbollah. The Israeli government finally sent thousands of troops across the border with a goal of destroying Hezbollah's short-range Katyusha rockets. The IAF had been unable to knock out the short-range rocket that had been plaguing the population for close to one month. It was not until after the 2006 Lebanon War that it became apparent that a missile defense system was something the Israeli government could no longer postpone.

LESSONS FOR THE UNITED STATES

The Second Lebanon War has been the subject of much debate inside the Pentagon. The U.S. should not lean too much on precision air power as being the start and finish of a conflict. North Korean instructors with backing from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard engineered many of the Hezbollah fortifications during 2003-2004. With this type of collaboration, Hezbollah is being compared to a North Korea-type guerilla force which "could offer the United States some hints on what it would face if they one day decided to attack Kim -Jong-IL's regime."⁴⁷ The First and Second Lebanon War has been the subject of much debate inside the Pentagon. The "future of warfare is one that will involve non-state actors employing irregular methods against Western states."⁴⁸

During the six years between the unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon and the Second Lebanon War, Israel perceived the Hezbollah threat as one it could contain. Hezbollah continued

soldier abductions and Katyusha Rocket barrages. Israel viewed cross-border terrorist attacks as more of a nuisance than a major threat. Israel had enough problems dealing with the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza. In the end, the situation deteriorated and Israel was drawn into a situation where they were not victorious, losing credibility and support of their population and the world. When dealing with threats, the United States should be well aware of the consequences of miscalculations and look back upon the Second Lebanon War as a graduate degree level learning experience.

CONCLUSION

In today's evolving conflicts around the world and current on-going operations, many adversaries will mimic Hezbollah tactics. The incorporation of these lessons in future training, exercises, and doctrinal development will ensure success in future operations. The assistance Hezbollah received came from countries the United States may be involved in future conflicts with in the near future (North Korea, Iran, China and Syria). Although Israel possessed the military superiority and destroyed parts of Hezbollah and Southern Lebanon, the Israeli leaders had trouble understanding how to defeat the new conventional fighting force because they expected an irregular fight.

The deployment of small units into Southern Lebanon clearly shows that the Israeli military leadership did not understand what to do next. The Israeli government based their decision not to send ground troops upon the Air Force's claim that they were on the verge of victory and needed a little more time. The cumulative impact of six years of reduced defense spending, lack of large-scale training events and an overall lack of support for their forces were contributory factors to Hezbollah's success and Israel's struggles on the battlefield. One former senior US commander stated, "This wasn't the vaunted IDF that we saw in previous wars."⁴⁹

Israel had the opportunity to ensure victory if they implemented a large land invasion targeting the many bunkers and infrastructure in Southern Lebanon. The delay in the ground operation cost the Israelis the war. Israeli Air Force planner Ron Tira argues, “Israel failed on the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.”

Israel did not succeed in producing effects that could harm or stop Hezbollah’s command and control. Nor did it succeed in suppressing Hezbollah’s ability to conduct combat operations or their ability to launch surface-to-surface rockets. At the end of the day, Israel did not upset the equilibrium of Hezbollah’s system and did not create a sense of helplessness and distress, nor did it push the organization towards cognitive-strategic collapse and a drive to end the war immediately on Israel’s terms.⁵⁰

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