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## The Fruits of War: Israel and the Second Lebanon War

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**The Fruits of War: Israel and the Second Lebanon War**

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## **Abstract**

This project looked at the relevant literature on Israeli war history and Israeli counter insurgency. It established an Israeli “Way of War” by looking at the history of wars in which Israel engaged and whether or not Israel used this “Way of War” in the Second Lebanon War. It determined that the Israeli Defense Forces did not use its own security doctrine when fighting Hezbollah in the summer of 2006. Because the IDF did not utilize its “Way of War,” the Jewish state lost the conflict. This has broad implications for Israel and her allies in the War on Terror, and Israel lost its deterrence status among the Arab states and various terrorist organizations. The project concluded that if Israel wishes to win future conflicts, the state must adhere to its own security doctrine.

To Zac Stephens, my friend and anchor

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## Part I

They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; One nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again.-Isaiah 2:4

If the lion lies down with the lamb, the lamb must be replaced frequently.-Martin Luther

### Introduction

Today, Western powers do not typically fight state actors; world wars seem to be a thing of the past. Instead, the main focus is on asymmetric warfare and counter-insurgency. Israel, like other Western countries, has had the same problem. In the summer of 2006 Israel fought a war against Hezbollah after they kidnapped two soldiers. Practically all scholars and military personnel agree that Israel lost the war, and this is usually boiled down to mismanagement of the war by an inexperienced staff or the use of an incorrect strategy. Although this is true, there is a larger problem. Certain principles guide Israeli military history, and Israel went against these principles when it attacked Hezbollah that summer. Military history demonstrates the principles, or Way of War, and how Israel did not use it against Hezbollah.

### Israeli War History

The first conflict in Israeli history was a state versus state war between the new Jewish state of Israel and its Arab neighbors. Political Zionism began at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and practically started with Theoder Hertzl's publication of *The Jewish State* in 1896. Jewish immigration to Palestine started in the 1880's with 20-30,000 Jews entering the area by 1903.<sup>1</sup> By 1947 about 30% of the population there were Jews.<sup>2</sup> The 1948 War for Independence officially began on May 14, 1948, when the Jews unilaterally declared their state of Israel. The three main Israeli fighting forces during this time were Haganah, the Irgun, and Lehi, which

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<sup>1</sup> Bregman, A. (2010). *Israel's wars: a history since 1947*. New York City: Routledge. Pg. 4

<sup>2</sup> Bregman, pg. 5

eventually because the Israeli Defense Forces.<sup>3</sup> There were a series of skirmishes and conflicts before Israel became a state, which would set the stage for when the war actually happened. On May 15 the Arab Legion moved into Palestine and began occupying Ramallah, Egypt moved into the Gaza Strip and the Negev, and Syria and Lebanon moved into the north.<sup>4</sup> Israel was essentially fighting on three fronts. The Israelis were on the defensive and not performing particularly well until a cease fire went into effect on June 11, 1948.<sup>5</sup> David Ben Gurion, the Prime and Defense Minister, used this opportunity to re-organize the IDF and refresh his troops.<sup>6</sup> Two days before the cease fire ended, the Israelis attacked; this started their ascent. After Israel gained the upper hand Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and eventually Syria signed armistice agreements and the war ended. The Jews had their state.

The second state versus state conflict between Israel and the Arabs happened in the 1950's, less than a decade after the War of Independence. The Kadesh War (Operation Kadesh) of 1956 began after Gamul Abdel Nasser, the president of Egypt, decided to nationalize the Suez Canal.<sup>7</sup> This meant that he took control of the canal from French and British companies, although he did offer to compensate them. To regain the canal to protect trade in international waters, France and Britain considered military action and invited Israel to join them. Israel wanted to join because she wanted access to the Strait of Tiran, which was currently blockaded by Egypt.<sup>8</sup> Ben Gurion said this was a *casus belli* for Israel. The IDF attacked Egypt on October 29 and within 100 hours the Israelis occupied Sinai and gained access to the Strait

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<sup>3</sup> Bregman, pg. 15

<sup>4</sup> Bailey, S. (1990). *Four arab-israeli wars and the peace process*. London: Macmillan Press LTD. Pg. 22

<sup>5</sup> Bailey, pg. 25

<sup>6</sup> Bregman, pg. 29

<sup>7</sup> Bregman, pg. 55

<sup>8</sup> Bregman, pg. 56

of Tiran.<sup>9</sup> The military operation ended less than ten days after it began, although the occupation lasted until March 1957.<sup>10</sup> Operation Kadesh was not a difficult war for the Israelis, which is why it is important in Israeli military history. After the War of Independence, Israel needed to create and establish a modern fighting force. They did this by establishing a tiered, conscription system of career military individuals, reserve forces, and a well-trained intelligence corps. Kadesh was Israel's first war as an established military, and they performed successfully.

One of the most famous wars in Israeli history is the Six Day War in 1967; this conflict fundamentally altered the landscape of the Middle East. Israel had some problems with Syria because of access to water in Lake Kinneret, Syria's support of Palestinian terrorists, and violations of the de-militarized zones.<sup>11</sup> Egypt still remained a prominent enemy, which had a mutual defense agreement with Syria. Attacking one meant war with both. The war's prelude comes from the Soviet Union when Vladimir Semnov, the Soviet deputy foreign minister, erroneously, and intentionally, told the Egyptians that there were ten Israeli brigades on the Syrian border.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, Egypt began mobilizing its forces and ordered the closure of the Strait of Tiran in May of that year.<sup>13</sup> For Israel this was a *casus belli*, and due to internal political pressures the inept Prime Minister Levi Eshkol had to appoint Moshe Dayan as Minister of Defense. As soon as he took that position Dayan wanted to attack.<sup>14</sup> Operation Focus started on June 5, 1967, at 7:45 in the morning. Israel dealt a definitive blow to Egypt with its first wave of sorties, a 183 in total.<sup>15</sup> By the end of the first day the Israeli Air Force (IAF) destroyed 298 planes. This worked because Egypt expected the attack from the east, and the IAF attacked from

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<sup>9</sup> Bregman, pg. 57

<sup>10</sup> Bailey, pg. 173

<sup>11</sup> Bregman, pgs. 63-66

<sup>12</sup> Bregman, pg. 67

<sup>13</sup> Bregman, pg. 71

<sup>14</sup> Bailey, pg. 218

<sup>15</sup> Bregman, pg. 84

the west. After gaining air superiority, Israel forced the Egyptians into retreat where 10,000 died.<sup>16</sup> That same day King Hussein of Jordan invaded Israel, so the IAF responded by decimating the Jordanian air force and occupied the West Bank.<sup>17</sup> On June 8, after Israel beat Egypt and Jordan, the IDF moved to Syria and acquired the Golan Heights. By June 10 the war was over, and Israel gained the land that belonged to Eretz Israel.

Israel's last state vs. state war happened in 1973; it is called the Yom Kippur War because Anwar Sadat attacked Egypt on their high holy day. Sadat started the war because he wanted to regain the Suez Canal and the Sinai Peninsula, which Israel had occupied since the Six Day War,<sup>18</sup> while Syria wanted to regain the Golan Heights.<sup>19</sup> Israel was caught off guard concerning an attack by the Arabs because their source in Egypt was actually a double agent hindering their efforts.<sup>20</sup> On October 6, 1973, the Egyptians and the Syrians sent their air forces and bombarded Israel; the Israelis were caught completely unprepared. The IDF established the Bar Lev line for defense in the Sinai, but it quickly fell.<sup>21</sup> After Israel was able to fully mobilize and the Egyptians deviated from their original plan by going further into the Sinai, the tables turned and the IDF started to gain the advantage. The two sides established a ceasefire on October 22, which the Israelis quickly broke to gain the advantage. A second ceasefire occurred on October 24 and negotiations ended in January of 1974. Although Israel staved off the Arabs, this conflict was huge psychological blow to the Israelis.

Starting in 1970 massive waves of Palestinians left Jordan and entered Lebanon when some of their leaders failed to establish their own state there. The First Lebanon War in 1982 was

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<sup>16</sup> Bregman, pg. 85

<sup>17</sup> Bregman, pg. 87

<sup>18</sup> Bailey, pg. 296

<sup>19</sup> Bailey, pg. 310

<sup>20</sup> Bregman, pg. 115

<sup>21</sup> Bregman, pg. 133

Israel's first asymmetric war. Yasser Arafat, the leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), sided with the Lebanese National Movement in southern Lebanon.<sup>22</sup> They competed against the Christians in the region known as the Lebanese Front, and a civil war erupted between the two in 1975. Israel supported the Maronite Christians as a proxy against the PLO to fight them.<sup>23</sup> There were also several clashes between the PLO and the IDF, usually started by the Israelis. They would bomb certain Palestinian strongholds for which the PLO would retaliate. Defense Minister Ariel Sharon wanted a pretext to invade Lebanon. Oddly the *casus belli* came when a Palestinian enemy of the PLO, Abu Nidal, shot and injured the Israeli ambassador in London.<sup>24</sup> As with other wars, the Israelis started with an air campaign on June 4, 1982; they attacked a training camp, a military school, and other PLO targets. The PLO responded by firing at Galilee.<sup>25</sup> Israel officially named this Operation Peace for Galilee, and on June 6 the IDF entered into Lebanon and went passed the Litani River. The IDF moved all the way to Beirut, Lebanon's capital, and laid siege to the Palestinians for 70 days.<sup>26</sup> Sharon also used this opportunity in Lebanon to destroy Syria's missile system in Beka'a. Although certain human rights violations happened, Israel was successful in its endeavor, and Lebanon forced Arafat to leave the country with close to 15,000 Palestinians. This conflict would set the stage for Israeli counter-insurgency and asymmetric warfare.

Within Israel and the occupied territories two conflicts emerged known as the Intifadas, uprising in Arabic. The first occurred from 1987-1993 and ended with the Oslo Peace Accord. After the Six Day War Israel established a military government over the occupied territories,

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<sup>22</sup> Bregman, pg. 146

<sup>23</sup> Bregman, pg. 149

<sup>24</sup> Bregman, pg. 158

<sup>25</sup> Bregman, pg. 159

<sup>26</sup> Bregman, pg. 168

which was initially viewed as merely a transitional government.<sup>27</sup> However, it stayed for over two decades. The Intifada started on December 9, 1987 during a protest over the accidental death of four Palestinians workers on their way back from Israel.<sup>28</sup> During the riot the IDF killed a 20 year old, and the revolt began. Israeli gave its usual response to conflict with massive retaliation, and her strategy was a “systematic campaign of harassment aimed at putting indirect but intense pressure on the Palestinians.”<sup>29</sup> The IDF mostly acted as a police force and fought a war of attrition in the Territories. The uprising ended with the Oslo Accord, which ended the PLO’s struggle to eliminate Israel. Israel recognized the Palestinian nation, and they created the Palestinian Authority to govern them.<sup>30</sup> This ended Israel’s definitive winning streak against state and non-state actors.

The second Intifada, more commonly called the Al-Aqsa Intifada, began in 2000 and lasted five years. This one started because of Ariel Sharon’s infamous visit to the Temple Mount Mosque, and Palestinian violence soon escalated to guerilla war. The IDF responded like it usually did and killed several Palestinians, which aggravated the conflict. This Intifada was fundamentally different than the first because now different Palestinian organizations committed acts of terrorism, and the use of suicide bombers was rampant.<sup>31</sup> That is until Operation Defensive Shield where the IDF went into the West Bank and Gaza to attack terrorist networks, seize weapons, arrest terrorists, destroy weapons factories, kill possible terrorists, and gather intelligence.<sup>32</sup> In addition, they used swarm tactics to confuse the insurgents by encircling them with the infantry, armor, and air force instead of the usual way of engaging them and then having

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<sup>27</sup> Catignani, S. (2008). Israeli counter-insurgency and the intifadas: dilemmas of a conventional army. London: Routledge. Pg. 73

<sup>28</sup> Catignani, pg. 77

<sup>29</sup> Bregman, pg. 189

<sup>30</sup> Catignani, pgs. 99-100

<sup>31</sup> Catignani, pg. 104

<sup>32</sup> Catignani, pg. 111

to maneuver. These tactics, plus the unilateral disengagement of the Gaza Strip and building of the security fence, drastically reduced terrorist attacks on Israel. There was no official end of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, but it began to fade out in the end of 2004 with the death of Arafat and dissipated in the beginning of 2005.

### **Israeli Way of War**

Israel has no official doctrine of war; however, they have a very specific national security outlook that was shaped since before she became a state. A security doctrine “establishes the principles that guide the design of military force structure and operations, defense policy, and national strategy...and the operational plans of the armed forces.”<sup>33</sup> Many of the country’s founding members offer insight into the creation of Israel’s own doctrine. David Ben-Gurion, during the initial fighting between the Arabs and Jews, said that the appropriate response to Arab attacks was to “counter-attack the centers of Arab population.”<sup>34</sup> Other founders of Israel also viewed Israeli security this way. Menachim Begin, the leader of the Irgun and future prime minister, detested the idea of a proportional response.<sup>35</sup> Moshe Dayan, an Israeli war general and later defense minister, said in 1955 about terrorist attacks that “it is in our power to set a high price on our blood, a price too high for the Arab community, the Arab army or the Arab government to think worth paying.”<sup>36</sup> It was even important for the Israelis to respond disproportionately even at the slightest provocation, which would help create a deterrence.<sup>37</sup> This is because Israel believes herself to be in a constant existential threat, so the beginning the idea of a strong retaliation was essential to military action.

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<sup>33</sup> Levite, A. (1989). *Offence and defence in israeli military doctrine*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. Pg. 9-10

<sup>34</sup> Bailey, pg. 2

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Rothenberg, G. (1989). “Israeli defence forces and low-intensity conflict.” *Armies in low-intensity conflict: a comparative analysis*. London: Brassey’s Defence Publishers. Pg. 56.

<sup>37</sup> Bregman, pg. 50

Another major tactic Israel employs is the pre-emptive strike, which they view as a defensive action. When Begin was PM he said, “We go out to meet [the terrorists], we penetrate into their bases...we no longer wait for them to come to attack us and spill our blood.”<sup>38</sup> Yigal Allon, the Israeli leader of Palmach during the War of Independence, argued that an anticipatory counter-attack is preferred to a response, and that this is in fact a defensive action.<sup>39</sup> This pre-emptive strike was normally to be carried out by the IAF and done in the enemy territory.<sup>40</sup> Another important aspect of Israeli security thought is that these are all defensive actions;<sup>41</sup> this is even enshrined in the name of Israel’s military: the Israeli Defense Forces. As one can see a specific way of war developed through all of Israel’s military actions. Starting with the War of Independence they began massive retaliation against the Palestinians for any infraction. The Six Day War exemplified the idea of a successful pre-emptive strike against a state actor, and First Lebanon War and Al-Aqsa Intifada allowed them to believe pre-emptive attacks in enemy territory would mitigate terrorism. The state viewed all of this as defensive actions, even the swarm attacks; the operation’s name was Defensive Shield. Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, the Israeli “Way of War,” or security doctrine, is a) all actions are viewed as defensive b) Israel will use a pre-emptive strike, which is viewed as defensive not offensive c) Israel will use a disproportionate response on centers of life as a means of deterrence d) the attacks will happen in enemy territory.

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<sup>38</sup> Bregman, pg. 151

<sup>39</sup> Bailey, pg. 3

<sup>40</sup> Bregman, pg. 75

<sup>41</sup> Catignani, pg. 49

## Part II

### The Second Lebanon War

On the morning of July 12, 2006 seven IDF soldiers from the 91st Division in two Humvees set out to patrol the Lebanese border. It was their last day of their three week reserve duty. Hezbollah soldiers laid in wait, and when the two Hummers went around a bend in the road they used heavy machine fire and anti-tank weapons to take out the one in the rear. They killed the driver in the attack, and they killed the other two soldiers as they tried to leave the truck. Then two Hezbollah soldiers who had previously snuck across to the Israeli side fired two RPGs and hit the right side of the first Hummer. The two wounded soldiers on the left of the truck were able to escape, but Hezbollah kidnapped the two that got hit: Ehud “Udi” Goldwasser, a married student at Haifa Technion, and Eldad Regev, a 26 year-old student at Bar-Ilan University. It took nearly two hours for the 91st Division to pursue the enemy, but as soon as it crossed the border a Hezbollah land-mine killed all four on board. Hezbollah called this Operation True Promise because of their leader’s promise that they would kidnap Israeli soldiers to free Lebanese and Palestinian terrorists. Hassan Nasrallah, the head of Hezbollah, believed that Israel would only respond how they had previously with a basic retaliation according to the “rules of the game.” Instead, Israel declared war.

Hezbollah is an organization that came from Israel’s first invasions, mentioned above. In 1982, Israel invaded southern Lebanon to eliminate the Palestinian Liberation Organization because of its terrorist activities. Initially, the people in the southern Lebanon welcomed the Israeli military because they were tired of the oppressive regime of the PLO.<sup>42</sup>The IDF did not leave after they invaded, as the Lebanese had initially thought. In fact, they would stay until 2000. This turned the people who had supported them in the beginning against the liberators;

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<sup>42</sup> Jaber, H. (1997). *Hezbollah: born with a vengeance*. New York: Columbia University Press. Pg. 14.

they were no longer liberating but occupying. The people started to lead a resistance against to “occupiers,” which garnered the usual, militaristic response by Israel. However, the true resistance did not occur until the winter of 1983. On October 16, 1983 the Shiite population celebrated Ashura, one of the most holy days in Shia Islam. Nearly 50,000 came out for a celebration, and the Israelis saw this as dangerous. So, a military convoy drove through the middle of the preceding, which naturally enraged the religious participants.<sup>43</sup> The conflict caused the death of two Lebanese, and it led to Sheikh Mehdi Shamseddia, head of the High Shiite Council, to issue a fatwa calling for resistance to the Israelis.

The Lebanese national Resistance, dominated by Amal, started the struggle against the IDF’s presence. Although, Israel’s occupation was not the only reason Shiite organizations developed. In the mid-1980’s, as an offshoot of Amal, people like Abbas al-Musawi who led Amal left it to start a new organization: Hezbollah. They wanted to launch a campaign that was under the banner of Islam with the support of the regimes in Iran and Syria.<sup>44</sup> The founders of Hezbollah said the Islamic Revolution in Iran was their inspiration, and it was “proof of what can be accomplished when the faithful gather under the banner of Islam.”<sup>45</sup> For them, the cause was a call to jihad to obliterate Israel.<sup>46</sup> The current leader of Hezbollah is Hassan Nasrallah, who succeeded al-Musawi as the Secretary General of the organization in 1992 after the assassination of the latter; the Shura Council unanimously voted him into power. He is the one that brought Hezbollah into political power by putting them in parliamentary elections because he wanted to legitimize and fulfill the movement’s agenda within Lebanon.<sup>47</sup> In addition, he used his powerful charisma and personality to promote his agenda in the media. According to Nasrallah,

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<sup>43</sup> Jaber, pg. 18.

<sup>44</sup> Jaber, pg. 21.

<sup>45</sup> Norton, A. (2007). *Hezbollah: a short history*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Pg. 36.

<sup>46</sup> Norton, pg. 39.

<sup>47</sup> Azani, E. (2009). *Hezbollah: the story of the party of god*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Pg. 91.

his foremost goals were to continue the resistance against Israel and to help the local Shiites. In Lebanon the government practically neglected the Shiites. They lacked schools, hospitals, roads, and running water.<sup>48</sup> His essentially wanted to make the price of Israel saying in Lebanon too high for them to continue paying it. He eventually got his way when Ehud Barak came to power.

Benjamin Netanyahu became an incredibly unpopular prime minister by the time elections came to Israel in 1999. His opponent was Ehud Barak from the socialist Labor party, and one of Barak's main campaign promises was to remove Israeli troops from Lebanon.<sup>49</sup> He came to power practically on that promise, the only one he actually kept. Barak saw the conflict in Lebanon as was war of attrition, which means each side just tried to wear the enemy down with constant attacks. He had wanted to pull out since 1985 because he believed it would provide better security for the country. Israel had strongholds in southern Lebanon that Hezbollah attacked constantly, so Israel would respond with bombing campaigns.<sup>50</sup> He thought this would last forever because during war Israel could not pull out for strategic purposes, and during peace the Israelis would see no need to pull out. During his time in office Barak's initial intent was to combine a peace agreement with Syria to Israel removing its troops from Lebanon. He was even willing to trade the Golan Heights.<sup>51</sup> However, this agreement never materialized.

In the beginning of 2000 Barak ordered the military to start removing their equipment from the region. By May of that year there was only enough equipment left that they could remove in no more than two days if necessary.<sup>52</sup> The South Lebanon Army (SLA), a paramilitary of Christians in Lebanon and Israel's ally there, began to abandon their posts once they

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<sup>48</sup> Jaber, pg. 11.

<sup>49</sup> Harel, A, & Issacharoff, A. (2008). 34 days: Israel, Hezbollah, and the war in Lebanon. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Pg. 17.

<sup>50</sup> Harel & Issacharoff, pg. 20.

<sup>51</sup> Harel & Issacharoff, pg. 21.

<sup>52</sup> Harel, pg. 24.

realized that the Israelis were leaving. The IDF even started handing over their strongholds like Taibe to the SLA, who then left them and allowed Hezbollah to acquire them. Israel's actions led to several thousands of SLA refugees who sought protection in the Jewish state. However, they returned to Lebanon when they realized Hezbollah was not interested in retaliation. Leaving Lebanon was Barak's only accomplishment as prime minister, and he had very low popularity. This allowed Ariel Sharon, Israel's quintessential hawk, to come to power in 2001. The Knesset had previously banned Sharon from becoming Defense Minister ever again because of his supposed involvement in the massacres of Sabra and Shatila when he held the post during the first Lebanon invasion. Although Hezbollah continued assaulting Israel with kidnapping and missiles, it was under the premierships of Barak and Sharon, who for obvious reasons did not want to reopen a front with their northern neighbor. Then Sharon had a stroke, and his deputy prime minister came to power.

After the kidnapping of Goldwasser and Regev, the rationale put forth by Ehud Olmert, now the Prime Minister, for declaring war was that Hezbollah had members within the Lebanese government. Therefore, these attacks were not just a terrorist attack, but rather they were acts of war by the state of Lebanon itself. Nasrallah did not expect for Israel to respond so forcefully, but he kidnapped the soldiers on three weeks after Hamas kidnapped Corporal Gilad Shalit.<sup>53</sup> To have so many soldiers kidnapped and killed, two died when Hamas took Shalit, devastated the Israelis because of the high price they put on one of their soldiers. As punishment for taking Shalit, Israel instituted Operation Summer Rains, which killed 300 Palestinians. They would not be as merciful with Hezbollah. When Olmert heard the news about Hezbollah taking Goldwasser and Regev he wanted a massive retaliation, and Dan Halutz, the IDF Chief of Staff

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<sup>53</sup> Hirst, D. (2010). *Beware of small states: Lebanon, battleground of the middle east*. New York: Nation Books. Pg. 330.

and former general in the IAF, wanted to bomb the Beirut airport and civilian power stations.<sup>54</sup> It was the inexperienced defense minister, Amir Peretz, who wanted to target the launch sites of Hezbollah's missiles. The Northern Command wanted a major ground offensive, but Halutz was only comfortable with using airpower.<sup>55</sup> None of them thought that the conflict would last particularly long. Peretz said 10-14 days, Olmert said only a few days, and Tzipi Livni, the Foreign Minister, thought it would last two days.<sup>56</sup> The government eventually followed through with Peretz initiative.

Incidentally, this was the perfect time for Israel to attack Hezbollah after their provocation; both the citizens of Israel and the world supported their cause. Within Israel, 95% of Israelis supported an assault.<sup>57</sup> Even the normally raucous anti-war left was practically quiet and offered it support. The G-8 leaders, who were currently meeting in Moscow, offered a joint statement in support of Israel's right to self-defense, and blamed Hezbollah for the provocation.<sup>58</sup> This was another rare occasion of agreement between disparate parties. Finally, even the Arab world supported Israel during the beginning. The ultra-conservative Sunnis in Saudi Arabia's ulema issued fatwas against Hezbollah and Shiite apostates that differed between "legitimate resistance" and "uncalculated adventures," saying Hezbollah's action fell into the latter. They also said that the organization put Arabs in danger. The moderate regimes of Egypt and Jordan joined the fray and argued the Iran was trying to sow discord in the region. Even the March 14 majority who controlled the Lebanese government felt that Hezbollah had usurped the state and

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<sup>54</sup> Harel, pg. 76-78.

<sup>55</sup> Bar-Joseph, U. (2010). the hubris of initial victory: the idf and the second lebanon war. In C Jones & S Catignani (Eds.), *Israel and hizbollah: an asymmetric conflict in historical and ocmparative perspective* (pp. 147-162). New York: Routledge. Pg. 149.

<sup>56</sup> Hirst, pg. 336.

<sup>57</sup> Hirst, pg. 338.

<sup>58</sup> Hirst, pg. 340.

taken their ability to decide on matters of war and peace.<sup>59</sup> This was the climate that Israel began her escapade against Hezbollah, although this support did not last long because of the way she managed the war.

On the eve of the war, Hezbollah had a powerful arsenal. They possessed at least 14,000 rockets, 12,000 of which were Katyusha rockets.<sup>60</sup> These were mostly hidden in private homes of Hezbollah activists and “natural reserves.” These were underground facilities, bunkers, and tunnels, usually hidden in isolated ravines or place that could hide the entrance. All of them were in southern Lebanon, and they had roofs of concrete three feet deep to protect it from bombs, rooms to live in, bathrooms, running water, medical facilities, air conditioning, and food.<sup>61</sup> They also had 1,000 Russian made rockets with a 42 kilometer range, 1,000 Syrian/Iranian made Fajr 3’s and Fajr 5’s that have a 70 kilometer range, and then Iranian made Zelzal 1’s with a 125 kilometer range and Zelzal 2’s with a 210 kilometer range. Hezbollah had prepared for war, but they were not quite prepared for Israel’s response to their aggression.

On the morning of July 13, the day of the kidnappings, the IAF went on their first set of sorties. Within 34 minutes they had destroyed 59 stationary rocket launchers at homes of Hezbollah activists.<sup>62</sup> The Israelis called this the “night of the Fajrs” because it practically eliminated Hezbollah’s ability to use their medium and long range rockets during their war. They also eliminated at least half of their intermediate rockets, and at least 40 of their launchers for the Zelzal 1’s and Zelzal 2’s.<sup>63</sup> But they still had the thousands of Katyusha rockets, which they used until the last day of the war, and the organization responded to this initial bombing by firing 125 of them towards northern Israel. On July 14, Israel bombed Dahia, where Hezbollah housed its

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<sup>59</sup> Hisrts, pg. 339.

<sup>60</sup> Harel, pg. 48.

<sup>61</sup> Hirst, pg. 348-349.

<sup>62</sup> Harel, pg. 91.

<sup>63</sup> Bar-Joseph, pg. 158.

headquarters and Nasrallah had his personal residence.<sup>64</sup> In response Hezbollah used a C-802 Iranian made, shore-to-sea guided missile to hit the Israeli naval vessel *Hanit*.<sup>65</sup> This attack killed four Israeli sailors and helped rally the Hezbollah troops by challenging the invincibility of the IDF. Although the IAF was quite effective hitting the launchers and missiles for the long range rockets, Hezbollah was able to hide the launchers for the Katyushas within the natural reserves. The IAF could track from a where a missile came and send a plane to attack the target within 90 seconds, so Hezbollah got around this with retractable platforms and covering them with fire-retardant blankets to mask the heat signature needed to find them.<sup>66</sup> This is why a large ground invasion was necessary, but Halutz refused to institute one until it was too late.

Halutz's main strategy was to use the air force to attack as many targets as possible and then send in small units of Special Forces to "pinpoint" certain targets.<sup>67</sup> He refused to call up Israel's vast reserves; only the head of Mossad advocated that strategy.<sup>68</sup> On July 17-18 Halutz began sending in these small units. Maglan, a reconnaissance unit, found a natural reserve at Maroun al-Ras, and this started the war for the city. In the initial meeting led to the death of two IDF soldiers from hand-grenades.<sup>69</sup> Hezbollah fighters surrounded Maglan, so they called for reinforcements from Egoz, another unit.

Hezbollah two types of fighters available: Nasr Brigades and the village guards; the total number of active soldiers was about 3,000. The Nasr Brigades had about 15-20 people at the natural reserves, while the village guard had people protecting villages and homes. These were the type of fighters that the IDF came up against in Maroun al-Ras. Hezbollah soldiers most used

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<sup>64</sup> Harel, pg. 101.

<sup>65</sup> Hirst, pg. 347.

<sup>66</sup> Hirst, pg. 349.

<sup>67</sup> Hirst, pg. 350.

<sup>68</sup> Harel, pg. 119.

<sup>69</sup> Hirst, pg. 351.

anti-tank missiles, Soviet made Sagger 3's and laser guided Kornet-E's. They used them against Israel's Merkava 3 and Merkava 4 tanks, armored vehicles, building, and helicopters.<sup>70</sup> The anti-tank missiles accounted for 50 of the 119 Israeli deaths in the war. On July 19 in the same battle the IDF tried to take the strategically insignificant Shaked hill.<sup>71</sup> Finally, Israel declared victory on July 22, but they had heavy losses of seven soldiers. However, Israel claimed victory too soon.

The next city that Israel targeted was Bint Jbeil, the capital of southern Lebanon. It is also where Nasrallah delivered a famous speech in 2000 when Israel left the country saying their military and society were nothing more than a spider web that would soon collapse. On July 23 they started Operation Web of Steel, named in response to that very speech. The plan was to attack from the west where paratroopers would come down on Golani Bridge. On July 24, although Israel had said they had won in Maroun al-Ras, fighting resumed again. Then on July 25, the Northern Command said they had taken Bint Jbeil, but just like with Maroun al-Ras they declared victory prematurely. Hezbollah started to reinforce their troops in the city so that there were three times more than Israel had expected. The two forces had a direct confrontation on July 26 where Hezbollah lost several soldiers, but Israel lost eight. Hezbollah then on July 28 led a counter-offensive in the west; again they lost a lot of fighters, but they pushed the Israelis out of the city. Finally, on July 30 Israel ceded the town, but they responded to the loss with continuous bombing of the city.

That day and following the IAF dropped 2 Mk84's on a building that killed 28 refugees in Cana, the place Jesus performed his first miracle. The IDF said that Hezbollah was firing Katyusha from there, but the world agreed that Israel basically attacked civilians. Because of

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<sup>70</sup> Hirst, pg. 353.

<sup>71</sup> Harel, pg. 132.

their many failures, the government finally decided to change strategy and implement a land invasion. Halutz said Israel was in an existential crisis and needed to restore their deterrent status.<sup>72</sup> This would also deal the “real blow” to Hezbollah, but the problem at Cana delayed the offensive because they began searching for a cease-fire. On August 11 Olmert could wait no longer for the Security Council to create a cease-fire, and he followed through with the ground troops even though on August 12 Resolution 1701 passed the Security Council. The Resolution would expand the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) forces already in Lebanon by 15,000 and put 15,000 Lebanese troops in southern Lebanon to disarm Hezbollah in the region. The cease-fire would go into effect at 8 A.M. on August 14. Still Israel sent forth her troops to disastrous results. At the Wadi Salouqi, when forces tried to join with their compatriots at the village of Ghandouriyah, Hezbollah soldiers destroyed a Sikorsky helicopter, used a road side bomb to eliminate the commander’s tank, hit eleven other tanks with anti-tank missiles, RPG’s, and mortars.<sup>73</sup> Seventeen soldiers died and fifty were wounded.<sup>74</sup> Hezbollah’s final act of the war was to send 250 Katyusha rockets into northern Israel. The war ended with Israel failing completely.

### **Objectives**

Although Hezbollah’s illicit kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers started the war, and Israel’s supposed primary objective was the return of the two soldiers, in fact they had other more important objectives to accomplish. Besides trying to return Goldwasser and Regev, the Israeli government also wanted to force the Lebanese government and the Lebanese people to step up and act as an actual nation-state that would ultimately push Hezbollah out of the political process and de-arm them. They also wanted to “cripple” Hezbollah by eliminate their ability to

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<sup>72</sup> Hirst, pg. 370.

<sup>73</sup> Hirst, pg. 372-373.

<sup>74</sup> Harel, pg. 224.

attack northern Israel and preventing them from creating conflict in the region. Finally, and most importantly, Israel needed to reinforce and promote its deterrent status among Arab nations. The previous conflict with Hamas in Gaza and the Al-Aqsa Intifada had eroded Israel's standing as the pre-eminent military within the Near East. However, Israel failed in achieving in their objectives, which led to their ultimate defeat in the war.

Israel believed she could pressure the Lebanese government and Hezbollah with air power to allow the Lebanese army to attain military superiority in the country to achieve their objective to force Lebanon to actually act like a state.<sup>75</sup> Livni thought that the assault in Lebanon would fundamentally alter the political reality within Lebanon and create a government that would help establish a more peaceful region. Peretz even said that they would continue their attack until that became the political reality. Although the Bush administration would not allow Israel to bomb civilian infrastructure, this is why Halutz specifically wanted to go after those targets. His initial plan included going after the airport and civilian energy facilities as a way to turn the popular opinion against Hezbollah. The more Israel bombed the country, the more the Lebanese people rallied against them. Before the conflict only 54% of Lebanon thought Hezbollah had a right to be armed; after Israel's bombing, 87% of the country supported Hezbollah's right to weapons. Some might try to argue that through the implementation of Resolution 1701 Hezbollah's ability to maneuver was seriously mitigated, and that the deployment of more soldiers from Lebanon's army means that it is fulfilling its duty as a state. Yet its ability to enforce the resolution is completely dependent upon the expanded role of UNIFIL in the region. Without the additional UN troops, Lebanon would not have the ability to prevent Hezbollah from reigniting a conflict with the Jewish state. What also makes the belief Lebanon now acts as a state the way the

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<sup>75</sup> Inbar, E. How israel bungled the second lebanon war. *Middle East Quarterly*, Summer 2007. 57-65.  
<http://www.meforum.org/article/1686>

Israelis want them to is that Hezbollah still exists and it is still armed. They have not even prevented them from re-arming through the Syrian border. The people did not turn to the Lebanese government to stop Hezbollah, and now they are even more against Israel.

Another objective of Israel was to “cripple” the terrorist organization, but Hezbollah is now still able to attack and is possibly stronger than it was before the conflict. During the 34 day war, depending on the estimate, Hezbollah fired between 3000 and 4000 Katyusha rockets. Their pre-war arsenal had at least 10,000 short range rockets, which means at the very least they still have 6,000 to 7,000 Katyushas that they can still use to terrorize northern Israel.<sup>76</sup> Although the IAF was impressive in the “night of the Fajrs” by destroying almost sixty medium and long range rocket launchers, they did not destroy them all. The air force probably only hit eighteen of the nineteen to twenty-one available launchers for the Zelzals, and some estimate that there were more that Hezbollah had hidden.<sup>77</sup> Israel also struck many of the fixed facilities where Hezbollah fighters stayed or convened, but this is moot if none of the places housed munitions because they can build or acquire new facilities.<sup>78</sup> The IDF claims to have killed between 500-600 Hezbollah soldiers, even though the “official” estimate by the organization is 71.<sup>79</sup> Although this might seem like a large amount of soldiers for them to lose, it would have little impact. During the war Hezbollah probably had 2,000-3,000 active soldiers. This means at most Israel would have killed about 25% of their active soldiers. Still, though, Hezbollah had about 10,000 reserve soldiers ready to fight in case they were needed. When compared to Israel’s losses it shows that they fared well. Israel lost close to 120 soldiers, depending on the estimates, which gives a ratio of only 6:1 during the war. This can hardly be considered a success compared to previous counter-

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<sup>76</sup> Cordesman, A. *Preliminary “lessons” of the Israeli-hezbollah war*. Center for Strategic and International Studies. September 2006. Pg. 5.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Cordesman, pg. 7.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

insurgencies.

The previous numbers have only dealt with the statistics and armament before and during the Second Lebanon War. After the war Hezbollah began recollecting its necessary weapons and making itself stronger. Sources from Saudi Arabia said that Hezbollah had resupplied itself and had acquired enough Katyusha rockets to have 10,000.<sup>80</sup> This is the same number as before the war started, which means that the war had no effects on their short range rocket stockpile and ability to attack northern Israel. In addition, they have probably regained the lost long range rockets, such as the Fajr 3's and Fajr 5's, from Iran.<sup>81</sup> Besides acquiring the Fajrs, Iran also gave them Fateh 110, which has a range of over 200 kilometers. They have also perfected the use of anti-tank deployment, which counters the technology advantage of Israel and their Merkava 4's. The Merkava 4 is considered the most difficult tank to puncture and take down, but Hezbollah was able to do it. Israel has far from crippled Hezbollah because now they know how to use basic anti-tank weapons for a variety of purposes, and Israel can no longer count on using weapons like the Merkava. Finally, the terrorist organization is building even more natural reserves in the northern part of the country. It will now be more difficult for Israel to target specific targets because they will be underground and further into the country than they are probably willing to go. Israel may have wanted to neutralize Hezbollah as a fighting force in Lebanon, but it is just as strong as it was before the war.

Israel's foremost objective was to establish and further its deterrent status among the Arab nations and terrorist organizations, which ultimately depended on achieving the previous two objectives. Deterrence is based on how other militaries and paramilitaries organizations perceive

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<sup>80</sup> Kulick. A. *The next war with hizbollah*. The Institute for National Security Studies. December 2007

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

ones relative strength to theirs. It is not based on the real strengths of the military.<sup>82</sup> Arabs throughout the Middle East believe that Hezbollah beat the perceived stronger Israeli Defense Forces.<sup>83</sup> They believe that only a couple hundred Hezbollah soldiers fought against and defeated the larger, stronger Israeli military. Also, Hezbollah's constant rocket fire cause over a million Israelis to evacuate their homes or to live a bomb shelter for a month.<sup>84</sup> Israel may have reacted swiftly and forcefully to Hezbollah's assault, which is essential for establishing deterrence, but in the end they failed. Interestingly, when Nasrallah gave an interview on New TV, he said, "If there was even a 1 percent chance that the July 11...capturing operation would have led to a war like the one that happened, would you have done it? I say no, absolutely not."<sup>85</sup> Some have seen this as saying that Israel still has a deterrent factor. However, later on in the same statement he says that Israel's assault was the will of God, and that if he had not attacked in July for that reason he would have attacked in October. Israel did not reinforce or expand its deterrent effect with the Second Lebanon War. Instead they lessened it, and they are seen as a weaker military because of it.

The final objective of the operation was to return Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev alive. Tragically, this was not the case. Two years after the war started, Israel traded five Lebanese terrorists and the remains of 199 soldiers for the return of the corpses of the two captured Israelis.<sup>86</sup> Altogether, Israel failed to achieve any of her objectives during the war. The Lebanese population turned against the Israelis and toward Hezbollah because of the IDF

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<sup>82</sup> Cordesman, pg. 8.

<sup>83</sup> Arens, M. Consequences of the 2006 war for Israel. Middle East Review of International Affairs, Vol. 11, No. 1 (March 2007). Pg. 24.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Voice of Hezbollah: the statements of sayyed Hassan nasrallah. Ed. Nicholas Noe. New York: Verso, 2007. Pg. 394.

<sup>86</sup> July 17, 2008. CNN. *Israel buries remains of returned soldiers*.  
<http://edition.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/meast/07/17/israel.swap/>

strategy of a sustained bombing campaign. Hezbollah regained enough Katyusha rockets that they had the same amount after the war as before it. Also, they acquired new long range missiles and built new natural reserves. They were not crippled or hurt hardly at all. These losses led Israel to fall from its status, and it no longer has the deterrent effect that it used to possess. Israel lost the war, and she failed at accomplishing a single objective.

### **Implications**

To understand the implications of the Second Lebanon War and Israel's loss, one must first understand a certain aspect of the Arab culture: honor and shame. Arabs greatly value honor, and they abhor shame. They will try to regain their honor, even through duplicitous means. An important aspect that comes out of the honor/shame culture is that of the "Strongman Model." "In Arab society, the man who is given the most honor, expressed in obedience and deference, is the strongman."<sup>87</sup> The best example of the vicissitudes in the honor/shame culture is that of Osama bin Laden. Arabs and Muslims across the world praised him after September 11 when al-Qaeda killed 3,000 Americans. He became the strongman who had assaulted America. In October of that year, 10,000 Pakistanis gathered in a rally to support bin Laden and his cause. Then, after America had been in Afghanistan a month, the Muslim world saw the might of the American military. Fewer than 500 people attended the next rally.<sup>88</sup> Bin Laden lost his strongman status, while America had acquired it. The same thing happened to Israel after the 1967 war when children yelled "Shalom" as the IDF troops moved into the West Bank. The important lesson is that Arabs will support those who have the strongman status, yet they shun those who have lost their honor and no longer have it.

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<sup>87</sup> Lazar, B. *Understanding arab culture*. Small Wars Journal. 2008.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

The first implication is that since Israel lost its strongman status when it failed to beat Hezbollah in the summer of 2006 her neighbors are far more likely to attack her in the future. There are several factors that seem to indicate that Israel is going to have to go to war again with Hezbollah, especially because the organization does not fear them. The Lebanese government has already admitted that it cannot fully implement Security Council Resolution 1701, which called for an arms embargo against Hezbollah.<sup>89</sup> They have said that they cannot fully protect the border with Syria that provides the area from which Hezbollah smuggles in their weapons. At most the Lebanese government says they interdict ninety percent of the weapons. Furthermore, Hezbollah is building natural reserves and arming areas north of the Litani River outside of UNIFIL jurisdiction but still in range to attack Israel.<sup>90</sup> This means they can operate and use weapons without violating the UN resolution; it also means that it will be far more difficult for Israel to attack those areas because of how far the IDF would have to move inside of the country. It is also seen that Israel lost her deterrence capability because of the recent conflict in Gaza called Operation Cast Lead. Hamas started firing hundreds of Qasam rockets into Israel targeting civilians. Even a harsh response by the IDF did nothing about this. The only way that Israel can regain its deterrence capability and strongman status is to attack and actually cripple Hezbollah as a viable terrorist organization.<sup>91</sup> The main implication for Israel's loss is the need have another war with Hezbollah until the deterrence status is regained.

The other implications of the war have a broader, more global impact for Israel's allies rather than just her. First, it could broaden support for Islamist radicals throughout the world,

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<sup>89</sup> *Israel/Hezbollah/Lebanon: Avoiding Renewed Conflict. Crisis Group Middle East Report N°59, 1 November 2006. Pg. 14.*

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid. Pg. 15.*

<sup>91</sup> *Makovsky, D. & White, J. Lessons and implications of the Israel-Hezbollah war: a preliminary assessment. Policy Focus #60. The Washington Institute for Near East Policy: 2006. Pg. 23.*

especially Iran and its support of jihadist groups.<sup>92</sup> Countries like Iran now have a demonstrable example of using a proxy militia, non-state actor, against a state actor and coming out on the winning side. This incident could prove to be a catalyst for places like Iran giving more support to radical groups to disrupt and fight those democratic and autocratic governments with which they disagree. Second, there is a possibility that this war will adversely affect America and her counter-insurgency operations. Andrew Exum of the Washington Institute put it this ways, “Enemies of the United States will likely seek to emulate Hizballah’s perceived successes in southern Lebanon, and the lessons learned by the U.S. military in Iraq and Afghanistan may or may not apply to such a fight.”<sup>93</sup> America needs to prepare to fight counter-insurgencies and asymmetric warfare in the future, and Hezbollah may provide the model by which others will fight. They used rocket attacks against civilian populations in the neighboring countries, avoided direct confrontation at all costs, and used a plethora of rather innovative methods when countering the technological superiority of the Israeli military. America needs to be careful if other terrorist organizations try to do the same thing. The practical implication of all of these is that Islamists and jihadists are emboldened against the west. They defeated one of the most powerful militaries in the world, and now it will be even more difficult to try and defeat them. They will be inspired to attack Western powers more and more and try to implement their radical ideology on all of those whom they think they can defeat. The West took a major blow when Israel could not defeat a terrorist organization, which means that the United States, Western Europe, and their allies will find it more difficult to try and defeat sub-state actors like Hezbollah, Hamas, the Taliban, al-Qaeda, the Islamic Brotherhood, and others.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid. pg. 21.

<sup>93</sup> Exum, A. *Hizballah at war: a military assessment*. Policy Focus #63. The Washington Institute for Near East Policy: 2006. Pg. 13.

## Conclusion

When one looks at a combination of Israeli war history they can see the Israeli Way of War emerge. This Way of War had determined how Israel fought all of its enemies; that is until the 2006 war with Hezbollah in Lebanon. The Israeli Way of War is to view all actions as defensive, use a pre-emptive strike or massive retaliation for even the slightest provocation, and to fight within the enemy's territory. If the IDF had followed the Israeli Way of War then they could have actually won the conflict against the terrorists due to strategic and tactical reasons. Israel's initial response to the illegal kidnappings of two IDF soldiers followed the first part of the Way of War. First, their response was defensive because Hezbollah initiated the conflict with their actions. Second, Israel responded with a pre-emptive strike against the launchers after declaring war against the organization. Although a pre-emptive strike appears to be offensive in nature, within the Israeli Way of War the strike is defensive because Israel's enemies are always at the ready to attack them. They believe that they are in a state of existential crisis, which means all military and intelligence actions are defending the state from dissolving.

The initial response and the "night of the Fajrs" followed the Way of War, and it was particularly effective against Hezbollah by eliminating their long range rocket launchers. However, because of Olmert's, Peretz's, and Halutz's egregious decision not to send in ground forces, they broke the Israeli Way of War and instituted an incorrect strategic move. Hezbollah used chicanery with their Katyusha rockets by hiding them in natural reserves, and they used retractable launching pads and fire retardant blankets to cover the heat signature. The only way to eliminate the enemy and the capability of firing Katyushas was a large land invasion into enemy territory. This would have been the only way to find the natural reserves, kill the terrorists, and dismantle the launching pads while seizing the rockets. If Israel wants to win the

next war it has with Hezbollah, and there will be another war because of the lost deterrence factor, then the IDF must follow the Israeli Way of War. Israel must gather intelligence on the targets of medium and long range rockets so that either the IDF can use a pre-emptive strike to attack them or retaliate for them firing rockets at civilians. Then they must send in a land invasion into enemy territory to overwhelm them and find all their hiding places. By going against Israel's ideological, philosophical, and ontological nature, the IDF lost. The country must stay true to its nature if it wants to win the next conflict.

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