Pathways to Victory

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Observations from the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah Conflict

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Air Power Development Centre

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In 2001 Dr Parkin was a Summer History Fellow at the United States Military Academy, West Point. His academic qualifications include degrees in History, Education and Defence and International Studies. Dr Parkin has published widely and his research interests are professional military education, joint operations and Australian military, diplomatic and political history.

Israel has swallowed a serpent.

—Palestinian saying about the conquest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip

On two occasions—summer 1993 and spring 1996—Israel sought to answer the Katyushas by deploying massive firepower against the guerrillas. To the initiated the firepower put on display was nothing short of awe-inspiring. Meanwhile Katyushas, ... kept coming, bringing life along the border to a halt ...

—Martin van Creveld, *The Sword and the Olive,* p. 305

You know I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament, and the signs foretelling Armageddon, and I find myself wondering if—if we are the generation that's going to see that come about. I don't know if you have noted any of the prophecies lately, but, believe me, they certainly describe the time we are going through.

—President Ronald Regan, *New York Times Magazine*,
27 November 1983, p. 64

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List of Abbreviations

AMAL	Afwaj al-Mouqawma Al-Lunaniyya (Lebanese Resistance Detachments)
DSTO	Defence Science and Technology Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HARM	High-speed Anti-radiation Missile
IAF	Israeli Air Force (Chel Ha' Avir)
IDF	Israeli Defence Forces
INS	Israeli Naval Ship
JBDA	Jihad Al Binna Developmental Association
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RPD	Rocket-propelled Grenade
RPV	Remotely Piloted Vehicle
SAM	Surface to Air Missile
SLA	South Lebanese Army
UAV	Uninhabited (Unmanned) Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
US	United States of America

Preface

It is accepted that the nature of war has been constantly evolving from the earliest recorded times. There has also been almost constant debate regarding the conduct of war and the moral and ethical dilemma that face strategic decision-makers in the lead up to, conduct and aftermath of war. The emergence of the concept of nation-states and the Westphalian system was a reaction to long-drawn wars that seemed to sap the economy of all parties. That nation-states subsequently acquired capabilities and resources to wage total war, leading to the two World Wars of the twentieth century, was perhaps an unintended consequence.

The concept of limited wars is not new, although it was during the Cold War that it started to become militarily relevant. Before that, smaller wars were not even studied properly. For example, during the era of colonialism, most wars were not even considered military actions, but constabulary operations, even when the soldiers were engaged in full-scale fighting that was as deadly and destructive as any 'proper' war!

Three emerging trends are transforming the whole concept and conduct of war as it was defined a few decades ago. First, states are no longer the only entities that can wage war. In international politics it was accepted that wars could only be fought between nation-states. This in no longer applicable as non-state and sub-state actors have seized the initiative and reduced states to a reactive position. Second, greatly superior conventional military capability that is resident within the developed world makes it impossible for a non-state adversary to mount a direct challenge to these nations. This forces militarily inferior actors to resort to asymmetry of all kinds to neutralise the advantage. Third, wars are no longer the monopoly of military forces. There are more irregular forces and civilians in play than ever before. This mix of combatants has dissolved the well-drawn distinction between combatants and non-combatants to an extent where the military is itself paralysed at times.[1]

It is in the Middle East that ongoing examples of both conventional conflict and irregular warfare can be seen almost on a daily basis. Israel and its Arab neighbours have fought a number of conventional wars and are engaged in an almost constant asymmetric conflict. The latest manifestation of this has been the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah conflict wherein the might of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) was unable to secure a decisive outcome against irregular forces with minimal training and access to only limited resources.

This book looks at the larger picture of the Israeli security strategy that is primarily based on assured deterrence and analyses its validity in view of the 2006 conflict. The conflict by itself is analysed to bring out the strategic and military observations that could have universal application. The observations cover a great deal regarding the employment and success or otherwise of air power elements in the conflict, but have also studied the role of other military agencies in equal detail. Therefore, the analysis is not biased towards any one element of military power in any way. Only open source information has been used and, therefore, there are some noticeable gaps in the completeness of the analysis. The second restriction has been that the IDF itself is still coming to terms with the aftermath of the conflict and, therefore, there is always the possibility that the analysis of a particular aspect of the conflict may not stand the test of time when more clarity of information is possible.

Victory in conflict is now being redefined. The irregular adversary has already done so and it will be incumbent on the conventional forces of a state to take note of this because the definition of victory will also indicate the possible courses of action that the adversary would adopt. While states are even now unwilling to redefine victory in more abstract terms, there is no other recourse. In the current global context, military victory by itself is not sufficient to ensure that the desired end-state can be achieved. War has always been a complex endeavour and it has become even more so in the past few decades. Victory is now a volatile combination of politics, economics, social and cultural needs, made ever more interconnected by dependence on the favourable perception of the watching world. To add

to this morass, no two conflicts follow the same model and, therefore, there cannot be a definition of victory that encompasses all variables.

This is the mould used in the analysis of the Second Lebanon War in this book. There are no clear answers to the vexed questions of what goals were achieved by either protagonist; who won the conflict and who won the peace; will the understanding of the complexities of the situation build a bridge of peace between Israel and Hezbollah; will the suffering of the civilian population on either side of the divide make the 'fighters' stop to take notice; will the international community step in earlier if there is a next round? The questions are innumerable and largely unanswerable. This book looks at what went wrong, why, and what can be taken away from it from a strategic politico-military context.

The study has been structured in such a way that each observation is analysed fully to bring out its implications in the conflict per se and the thread is then drawn to the larger impact it has on the conduct of modern conflict by a nation-state. This would facilitate the emergence of a clear picture as the reader progresses with the book. The value of the book in the context of a modern nation-state lies in its currency. Observations made regarding grand strategy and its relationship to the prosecution of a war will remain valid for the foreseeable future.

As events unfold in the complex political scenario of the Middle East, the 2006 conflict is bound to become a watershed event in Israel's quest for greater security and peace. The events that led to the conflict and the repercussions of a less than optimum outcome from all aspects will have far-reaching consequences for the region's stability. It is hoped that this book will contribute to the greater understanding of the often convoluted relationship that the states of the region share and the role that non-state and sub-state actors play in destabilising an already volatile scenario.

Dr Sanu Kainikara
Canberra
October 2007

Introduction

There is a saying that all politics is local. But increasingly, all local politics has global consequences. And those global consequences, in turn, affect the quality of local life everywhere.

- Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1998

The end of the Cold War was initially hailed as the beginning of a larger global peace, but nothing could have been further from the reality that came about. Instead of peace it stimulated further conflict with international repercussions. New attitudes and behaviour patterns in independent sovereign states cut across long-standing ideological differences and traditional geo-political divisions, almost on a global scale. It also started new alignments and reassessments regarding security relationships, while governments across the world tried to cling on to existing approaches to defining national security. The growing globalisation of trade in the 1990s and the economic competition that it brought about also impacted the conventional notions of security. National security concepts have now moved beyond the protection of state boundaries and out of the purely military manifestation of its pursuit.[2]

Over the past two decades the entire concept of national security has changed and has moved away from a purely military-based deterrence oriented definition to one that is inclusive of the notions of cooperation, interdependence and common security.[3] Security now includes not only territorial defence but the preservation of social norms, political stability, ecological protection and a whole host of lesser ideals which are considered critical to the well being of a nation.

Conflicts have become more common after the Cold War, even though they are more diffused in terms of the belligerents, the modus operandi and the extremely vague political end-states that are being sought. Under

these conditions, the contestants claim victory irrespective of the actual state of affairs on the ground. In some cases fleeting tactical advantages gained in small engagements are given as examples of total victory and in others, even when faced with almost total annihilation, political victory is claimed.

In the recent past there has been a fundamental shift in the relativity between sovereign states and non-state entities. It is therefore, incumbent on the nation-states to reconsider not only the strategies to counter these non-state groups, but also to approach the very development of such strategies from a different perspective, more aligned towards a whole of government approach and national security rather than purely military solutions. This study, which demonstrates Israel's inability to effectively counter the threat from Hezbollah, clearly illustrates the above points.

The observations highlighted in this book have universal applicability to all modern nation-states and range from the grand strategic to the tactical. Further, the study illustrates once again that no one branch of military power—sea, land or air—can solve a national security issue. The only possible way forward is to harness the capabilities resident within the entire armed forces of a nation to increase their effectiveness in a seamless manner, and then integrate military power into the larger national power structure through effective strategies.

Just before relinquishing office, mainly attributed to the IDF failures in the 2006 conflict with Lebanon, Lieutenant General Dan Halutz made some very salient points in his farewell address to the nation. First, he insisted that the military alone should not be asked to bear the burden of solving the evolving terrorist threat. Second, he defined Israel's national power as stemming from a comprehensive military and social resilience. Halutz said, 'The front and the homeland have become one'. Third, he emphasised that any lasting solution to the terror threat would require a new world view of conflict, given the realities of today's asymmetric warfare. He warned, 'Concepts like "decisiveness" and "victory" that were correct in the past in force-on-force warfare, and will be correct also in the future [in force-on-force warfare], demand deep reassessment. We

cannot escape from this fact'. Fourth, the General was unequivocal in his view that asymmetric threats would force political leaders to rethink what, exactly, they expect to achieve through military forces.[4]

What is victory in conflict? Can victory be adequately defined in cases where the conflict is not even close to what could be termed as total war? Given the vagaries of contemporary global security issues, is there a possibility for a clear victory for any of the participants in conflicts with ill-defined boundaries and aims? These are questions that all students of strategy and military power have to contend with whenever an analysis of a conflict is done.

The answer to these questions might appear to be very complex, but in reality it is essentially simple—there is no military victory outside the political context. Therefore, the political context and the desired end-state have to be clearly understood before any claims of victory can be analysed. The 2006 Israel-Hezbollah confrontation is no exception.

The conflict in the summer of 2006 is an indelible part of a decades long ongoing clash between Israel and Lebanon. Sadly the intensity of the conflict has steadily increased with time, which if projected to the future is a frightening concept. This is also a sad commentary of the deteriorating security situation in the Middle East as a whole.

By all counts the 2006 conflict was a limited war conducted with specific aims at least from the IDF perspective. The Hezbollah may have had a more ambivalent attitude towards the outcome of the conflict, but was steadfast in their belief that they would not be completely routed. Military planners who envisage the conduct of limited wars have to be cognisant of two facts irrespective of how well the planning and preparation are done. First, the end result can never be predicted with any assurance and will normally fall short of the desired one. Second, there are usually unwanted consequences that erupt during the course of the war that will almost always impinge on the achievement of the desired end-state.

Geographically localised conflicts also have regional and international implications. The fact that the IDF could not completely neutralise

the Hezbollah and that the rocket attacks continued till the very last day of the conflict was interpreted by the majority of the Arab states to mean that finally Israel had been defeated in combat. This was not true, but definitely there was an element of truth in that Israel's deterrent capability came under the microscope almost immediately. The changed attitude of the openly hostile Arab states to any dialogue with Israel is a clear indication of the empowerment that is being felt in the larger Arab community.

The initial reaction to the stalemate within Israel was rooted in the public perception that every time Israel went to war, they would have the same success that they had in the 1967 conflict. Anything else verges on failure in the people's psyche. This approach does not take into account the changes circumstances not only of the opposition, but also of the IDF itself, which has transformed into a completely new entity as compared to 1967. The question therefore is whether the direction of this change has been correct vis-à-vis the merging security scenario of the state.

Even at the cost of repeating the obvious, it has to be stated here that the most prominent cleavage in the Middle East is between Islam and the Zionist state, followed by that with the West. Future conflicts are most likely to occur along these cleavages. Preconditions for an eruption along these lines are the likely emergence of new Islamic regimes in what are now moderate states like Algeria, Turkey, Egypt etc and the emergence of broad-based military cooperation among Islamic states.[5] It is also likely that states that have already embraced Islamic politics, like Iran and Sudan could actively become confrontational to the West, making Israel the immediate target. In a somewhat oblique manner the Hezbollah confrontation could be seen as the tip of the iceberg.

Rapid population growth and uncontrolled urbanisation lead to failed states with associated problems of demographic chaos in terms of refugees and terrorism. The containment of this spill over of chaos then becomes the onus of responsibility of the more stable states in the region. Ethnic, tribal and religious fissures thrive under these circumstances and in turn

lead to the coagulation of terrorism and insurgency that will need to be contained by regional and at times extra-regional intervention.

Both the above conditions exist in Lebanon in abundant measure and therefore the state itself is a source of worry to the larger stability of the region. Combined with its inability to silence the Hezbollah, operating overtly from within its state boundaries with the open support of the population, Lebanon may be on the verge of becoming a failed state. Boxed in as it is by hostile neighbours, Israel can ill afford to let Lebanon become a constant source of angst in its quest for longer lasting peace and stability.

At the end of the conflict there was a question whether the Hezbollah would emerge as the dominant force in Lebanon as a result of their not having lost the fight. While this has not happened to the extent that Hezbollah would have envisaged, it is also pertinent that they have not been disarmed, either by the peacekeeping force or the Lebanese Army. The resupply routes have also not been shut down convincingly and it can be surmised that the Hezbollah is being rearmed in a surreptitious manner.

Which ever way the end result is viewed, this conflict will go down in history as a defining moment in the larger Arab-Israeli imbroglio. Neither side came out of it unscathed, but in the broader scheme of the ongoing Palestinian struggle for a homeland, this may be a cause for concern for Israel. In the long term, there would have to be concessions made and peace 'bought' if the embattled state is to be able to function as a stable and viable entity, providing its citizens at least the bare modicum of what is perceived as modern security.

Chapter 1
Israel's Security Dilemma and Deterrence

All states face the necessity of providing for their national security. Few states have faced such sustained and existential security challenges as Israel. For the first three decades after the foundation of the Jewish state, its Arab neighbours neither recognised Israel nor acknowledged its right to exist. As a result, during that period, Israel fought five conflicts with the surrounding Arab states—the War of Independence from 1948 to 1949; the Sinai Campaign in 1956; the Six Day War of 1967; the War of Attrition from 1967 to 1971 and the Yom Kippur War in 1973. For Israel all of these conflicts were wars of national survival. Not surprisingly, the embattled Israelis very quickly developed a defence posture based on self-reliance. There are three aspects that distinguish Israel's security policy: justifiability of pre-emptive action, the value of excessive retaliation and the creation and maintenance of a deterrent (including nuclear weapons), while ensuring that its Arab neighbours do not develop similar capabilities.[6] For their part, Arab states have attempted to rely on a strategy of attrition, drawing Israel into protracted conflicts in which the IDF's superior technology can be negated by their greater numbers or by guerrilla warfare.

The effectiveness of the non-nuclear aspects of Israel's deterrence strategy has proven to be extremely complex to manage and assess. The theoretical literature on conventional deterrence categorises two types of deterrence—denial and punishment.[7] Since Israel lacks both a large population and the geographical depth in which denial would be effective, Israeli deterrence strategy has relied on punishment. Over the decades, Israel has sought to create a reputation for hitting back when it has been attacked because establishing such a reputation is important in order for a strategy of deterrence to be effective.[8] For Israel, this approach has generally included air strikes and naval bombardment of military targets and threats against Arab cities. Specific examples of punishment can be seen in attacks on economic targets to damage Syrian infrastructure in

1973 and the deliberate creation of large numbers of refugees in order to put pressure on the Lebanese Government in 1993. However, the key mechanism by which a strategy of deterrence works is 'a state of mind: … a condition which is a chosen consequence of perception of threat, *among other factors*'.[9] A fundamental difficulty with deterrence as a strategy is that when it is successful there is 'nothing much happening'.[10] While the tactical behaviour intended to deter is tangible—acquisition of military equipment or credible statements of policy and aggressive intent—it is impossible to 'show minds deterred and decisions for inaction'.[11] Defence policies based on deterrence can be frustrated by what Gray calls the,

> … reality of the living, breathing, historically unique enemy … Only the enemy can decide whether or not our armed forces are *the* deterrent. Those forces are graded for their deterrent performance abroad … the enemy, as well as playing a legitimising role, is also an inconvenient wild card which threatens the otherwise orderly world of … strategic thought and defence planning … The point is that a culturally alien foe is likely to behave quite *rationally* in his own strategic terms of sensible ends and prudent means, but that behaviour may not be *reasonable* to us.[12]

Ultimately, deterrence is unreliable because it seeks to preserve the status quo within a strategic context that is constantly in flux and where the only certainties are uncertainty and change.

The fallibility of deterrence can be demonstrated by the events of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Egypt and Syria had calculated that the limited attacks they launched would break the political impasse that had developed in the Middle East by forcing the United States and the Soviet Union to intervene in the conflict and compel Israel to return to its pre-1967 borders. In order to achieve this aim the Egyptians and Syrians designed their attack around a surface-to-air missile system that would neutralise the Israeli air power. In addition, simultaneous attacks on two fronts negated the IDF's ability to redeploy forces quickly by operating

on interior lines. Finally, by capturing and holding limited areas of Israeli territory, they hoped to inflict heavy casualties, something that would be unsustainable for the IDF. While the scale of Arab success was blunted by the IDF's ability to adapt quickly to a new range of threats, in large measure their political aims were realised through their limited military victories. Egypt, in particular, reaped the benefits of the war. As a result of his willingness to negotiate with Israel, by 1982 Anwar Sadat was able to regain all of the Egyptian territory lost in 1967. For their part the Israelis achieved recognition by an Arab state in the form of a peace treaty with Egypt, signed in March 1979.

After 1973, an awareness of the shortcomings of deterrence saw Israeli strategy emphasise punishment and focus on the idea of *hachra'a* (decisive victory). Should deterrence fail, the aim was to make Israel's enemies pay such a terrible price that the psychological and material value of deterrence would be reinstated. The concept rested on the IDF rapidly penetrating enemy lines, destroying a sizeable part of the enemy's equipment and capturing territory that could be used in negotiating a settlement. These three conditions would necessarily have to be accomplished at a reasonable cost in losses of both manpower and materiel. In the thinking of the time, 'a decisive Israeli victory was an imperative and … constituted the complementary counterpart to deterrence in Israel's strategic thinking'.[13] In the following decade, the IDF's force structure grew in order to achieve the desired decisive victory by maintaining a qualitative level of military superiority over the Arab armies. There was an increase in armoured divisions from three to eleven; the number of tanks rose from 1,075 to 3,600; the number of combat aircraft was boosted from 374 to 600; and the regular component of the ground forces was doubled to 180,000.[14] By 1985, Israel's annual expenditure on defence amounted to 32 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a significant impost on the national economy.[15]

The Yom Kippur War was a turning point in the Arab-Israeli conflict, because it demonstrated that it was possible for Arab armies to deny Israel the decisive victory that its military planning and doctrine required.

Unlike the previous wars of 1948, 1956 and 1967, in which they had been defeated convincingly, in 1973 the Arabs had been able to translate their limited battlefield successes into political gains. By 1981, the Arab military analyst, Hitham Alayoubi, could write that Israeli deterrence was eroding.[16] This perception was important, especially given the importance of the psychological dimension to the success of deterrence. For Israel, the political and material costs of an enemy strategy that sought only limited aims presented it with a serious dilemma. As Inbar and Sandler explain, 'limited Arab action would force Israel to choose whether to escalate in order to achieve a decisive victory—a potentially very costly option—or limit its reaction in order to cut its losses, which would leave the challengers of the status quo unpunished'.[17] In the following decades, the emergence of a number of trends, both in the Middle East and internationally, have combined to diminish further Israel's ability to rely on a strategy of deterrence.

The Influence of Regional Trends on Israel's Deterrence Strategy

The Middle East is an extremely complex region because the interplay of domestic, regional and international politics means that the impact of strategic trends is multifaceted. Therefore, the discussion below is restricted to examining only the major trends that have had an impact on Israel's military situation.

Consequences of the End of the Cold War

Israel's ability to deter its enemies has been significantly influenced by the changes in the international strategic environment that have occurred since the end of the Cold War. For much of the Cold War period Israel was able to rely on American diplomatic support, as well as considerable financial and material assistance, to develop and maintain its military forces. From time to time, American attitudes to the use of force by Israel altered. The Carter administration acted to restrain Israel's freedom of

action, while President Reagan generally supported Israel's use of force against its enemies. In the 1990s, after the passing of the Soviet Union, the United States, while still supporting Israel, was also apt to put considerable political pressure on its ally in order to advance the Middle East peace process.[18] More recently, the Bush administration has tended to see Israel's struggle with radical Islamist opponents in the context of its own War on Terror.[19] The outcome of this perception is that American support for the Middle East peace process has tended to place more emphasis on Palestinian adherence to non-violent political action, while reducing the constraints on Israeli reprisals against Palestinian aggression.

The demise of the Soviet Union also freed Israel from concerns that the Russians would intervene on behalf of their Arab clients and attack Israeli targets directly. However, the new Russian Government's desperate need for hard currency meant that the degree of political caution practised by the Soviets in dealing with Middle Eastern states was abandoned in favour of purely commercial interests. In 1994, as a result of this change in policy, the Russians concluded an arms deal with Syria worth $500 million.[20] In addition to sophisticated military hardware, the Russian Government has sold reactors and other sensitive nuclear technology to Iran. The United States has also concluded significant arms deals with Saudi Arabia and Egypt in order to retain their support for its Middle East policies. Saudi Arabia and Iran have both funded Syrian arms deals and provided generous funding to a range of Israel's other enemies, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Hamas, and the Lebanese Shi'a political organisation Hezbollah (Hezb-Allah, Party of God). The net effect of the end of Cold War bipolarity in the Middle East has been to make the region more unstable, with many Arab states remaining politically volatile while also maintaining a collective hostility towards Israel.

The Proliferation of Missile Technology

A second trend that has proven to be particularly problematic for Israel has been the proliferation of missile technology throughout the Middle East. Missiles can inflict serious damage on infrastructure and morale. Moreover, they allow the aggressor to attack from a distance, with little warning. From the point of view of deterrence, missile attacks make targeted retaliation difficult, if not impossible. For these and other reasons, the use of missiles (both short and medium range surface-to-surface weapons) to carry out limited attacks on Israel has increasingly been a feature of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the post-1973 period. Missile attacks on Israeli civilian targets began in the early 1980s with the Palestinians using bases in Lebanon to launch short-range Katyusha rockets against towns and settlements in northern Israel. More seriously, in the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq attacked Israel's cities with SCUD missiles in an attempt to draw it into the conflict. Although civilian casualties and damage to infrastructure from these provocative attacks were relatively light, their strategic effects were considerable, amounting to a failure of deterrence. Nevertheless, in 1991 Israel did not retaliate, restrained by rapid American support and the knowledge that the attacks were aimed at fracturing the anti-Iraq coalition. However, in the case of the Katyusha rocket attacks launched from Lebanon by the Palestinians, and later Hezbollah, the Israelis have on a number of occasions chosen retaliation on a large scale—1982, 1993 and 2006—in an attempt to restore the utility of their deterrence strategy. A more worrying issue for Israel has been Iran's purchases of missile technology from North Korea and China, especially as some of these arms have been passed on to Syria and Hezbollah.[21]

A Shift to Low-Intensity Conflict Against Israel

In the 1990s, despite such destabilising factors as a regional arms build-up and the removal of the restraining influence of superpower patrons, the likelihood of another large-scale Arab-Israeli conflict actually receded. However, in its place Israel was confronted by a range of low-intensity conflicts, both from within and beyond its borders. These attacks were

fuelled by Palestinian discontent, as well as a growing tide of Islamic militancy. The earliest of these low-intensity conflicts set many of the parameters of this new stage in the Arab-Israeli struggle and became known as The First Intifada. The Intifada, which took place between 1987 and 1993, was a popular insurrection resulting from the Palestinian's frustration with the continuing Israeli occupation of their territory. Although it was a mass movement arising from popular dissent, the PLO and radical Islamic groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad were quick to harness the unrest for their own ends. The emergence of these latter two organisations has also signified the growing influence of hardline Islamic militants in the conflict with Israel.

The rise of quasi-state actors, such as Hamas, Hezbollah and other organisations within the Middle East, has presented Israel with significant military challenges. In the 1990s, as part of the Arab-Israeli peace process, Fatah, the mainstream faction of the PLO, had given provisional recognition to Israel's right to exist. However, the Palestinians are politically fragmented, and other Palestinian factions such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad have not had the same involvement in, nor given the same commitment to, the peace process. Instead, motivated by an ideology that powerfully combines religious and nationalist sentiments, they have adopted irredentist policies towards Israel, which they pursue by means of guerrilla warfare and acts of terrorism. Islamist groups operate in a manner that is counter-intuitive to mainstream Western military thinking,

> The balance of forces doesn't matter to them because (in their view) they are heroic and their enemies are cowards. Their casualties don't matter to them because they're martyrs … Similarly, the economy doesn't matter because they have no economic program … their vision is religious, not economic ... they keep on fighting for goals no adversary can possibly concede.[22]

In addition to being highly motivated, these groups are well organised and funded and have considerable political support among the local population. They possess well-armed military wings and have complex organisational structures that are difficult for outsiders to penetrate. In Lebanon, Hezbollah has many of the same characteristics as the Palestinian radical groups, with the added complication that (as with Hamas since early 2006) it also forms part of a democratically elected government. Moreover, both organisations retain their military wings independent of the legitimate government forces and use them to carry out attacks on Israel. Due to their compound political identities, independent military power and the vehemence of their ideologies, such hybrid quasi-state organisations are extremely difficult to deal with using conventional military means.

The tactics employed by these groups include attacks on Israeli civilians and soldiers, hijackings, suicide bombings, the use of mortars and both large and small calibre rockets. These sustained low-intensity operations, which take place on Israeli soil or in the territory occupied after the 1967 war, have confronted the IDF with a significant challenge. Reuven Gal, a former Chief Psychologist for the IDF, has observed that for Israeli soldiers service in the occupied territories 'resembles a police action more than a military mission. On occasion, when the occupied Palestinian population's demonstrations become vehement and violent this duty turns into one of the worst.'[23] Moreover, the IDF's operations against opponents who include armed terrorists and stone throwing teenagers have been unpopular with large sections of the Israeli population, while television images of teenage Palestinians shot by the IDF are a propaganda gift to Israel's enemies and are exploited to full advantage in the international media.

The combined result of these trends has imposed considerable difficulties on Israel's ability to deter its enemies by the use of overwhelming conventional military force alone. Israel now finds that it needs to be able to deter a wide spectrum of enemies. However, despite these significant shifts in its strategic environment, the essential element in Israel's strategy

of deterrence has always been the capacity to carry the war to the enemy and impose heavy damage. This is a role well suited to the characteristics of air power.

The Role of Air Power in Israel's Deterrence Strategy

Air power has indeed been the major instrument of Israel's policy of strategic deterrence.[24] The country's lack of strategic depth has meant that it has always been vulnerable to attacks by artillery and aircraft mounted from the surrounding enemy states. To counter this threat, the *Chel Ha' Avir*, Israeli Air Force (IAF), has been designed to support retaliatory strikes on both land and sea, as well as more distant attacks on centres of government and key infrastructure targets. Israel Tal, a former Vice Chief of the IDF and Assistant Minister of Defence, also notes significantly that, 'if there were no choice [the IAF would also target] population centres' with the aim of undermining the political stability of the aggressors.[25] As a consequence of these key roles and missions, the IAF has been accorded substantial resources by the IDF's General Staff. In the past, one of Israel's few geo-strategic advantages has been that the most likely enemy approaches were across open deserts in the south and mountain ranges in the north. This situation meant that, with air superiority, interdiction of the battlefield was particularly effective. According to a former IAF commander, General Dan Tolkovsky, in Israel's early conflicts the air force had two key roles 'to destroy as much as you could of the enemy's air force … and … interdiction'.[26] Air superiority was a necessity for achieving these missions in addition to the vital role of close air support of the ground forces.

In order to retain this ascendancy Israel has attempted to ensure that the IAF is the most effective air force in the Middle East. After 1973, for example, the IAF was rearmed with a range of reconnaissance, fighter and fighter-bomber aircraft and also grew significantly in size. The IAF's ability to attack enemies anywhere within the region was demonstrated during this period by two momentous missions. The first was a 1981

attack by eight F-16 and six F-15 aircraft on the Iraqi Al Tuwaitha Nuclear Research Center at Osirak, near Baghdad. Four years later, in 1985, following the killing of three Israelis by PLO terrorists in Cyprus, the IAF attacked the PLO headquarters in Tunis, sending ten F-15 fighters and a 707 refuelling aircraft 2 060 kilometres to complete the mission. Both missions were highly successful. The attacks confirmed the regional dominance of the IAF, while also reinforcing Israel's policy of deterrence. In recent years, because of the shift to low-intensity operations by its enemies, the IAF has used helicopters to conduct targeted assassinations, a tactic that further accentuates punishment as an aspect of deterrence.[27]

However, the effectiveness of the IAF as a deterrent and the role of air power in Israel's deterrence strategy largely rested on the fact that 'the strategic firepower of Israel and the Arabs was based on their air forces'.[28] The ability of the IAF to destroy the majority of the Arab air forces while they were still on the ground during the morning of 5 June 1967 left a lasting impression, particularly on the Egyptians. Large quantities of missiles were first introduced into combat in the Middle East during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. It is accurate to say that the battle plans of both the Egyptians and the Syrians relied heavily on large concentrations of Russian-supplied surface-to-air missile systems to constrain the IAF's freedom of action.[29] From 1973 onwards, the proliferation of surface-to-surface missile technology in the region became the main conventional military problem for the Jewish state and missile attacks remain a serious threat to Israel in the twenty-first century. One advantage of missiles for Israel's enemies is that they are relatively inexpensive weapons and, with their economic strength, the Arab states can afford to procure them in large quantities. Large stockpiles of missiles in the hands of the Arab states have also drastically altered the strategic balance in the Middle East. Accurate, long-range missiles can be used to achieve strategic surprise, interrupting the operation of the IAF and dislocating the mobilisation of reservists upon which the IDF is critically reliant. In addition, a sustained missile campaign has the capacity to cause significant disruption to the

Israeli economy (as was demonstrated in northern Israel during the 2006 war with Hezbollah).

The proliferation of missile technology has undermined the historical importance of air power as the main strategic instrument of Israel's deterrence policy. The IAF will not be able to interdict strikes by long-range missiles and it may even be unable to reach the bases from which they are launched. The possession of such weapons confers on the Arabs an effective strategic deterrent force of their own. Israel has now lost its monopoly on strategic deterrence with the result that 'the race will no longer be for monopoly, but rather for mutuality [and] the maintenance of mutual deterrence'.[30] This development also means that Israel will need to acquire new long-range offensive weapons and a variety of missile defence systems. The high priority that the IAF once enjoyed in the allocation of Israel's defence resources will necessarily diminish as a result of these new priorities. The difficulties of maintaining the effectiveness of a strategy of deterrence in a region as politically unpredictable as the Middle East are amply demonstrated by the problems that Israel has experienced during almost six decades of conflict and confrontation in Lebanon. The complexity of the political situation in Lebanon has confounded Israel's attempts to secure its northern border, while a series of highly motivated guerrilla opponents have underlined the challenges faced by conventional military forces when they become engaged in low-intensity operations.

Lebanon: The Practical Problems of Deterrence

Historically, Israel has been successful in employing its strategy of deterrence by the use of overwhelming military force to bring most of its immediate neighbours to the negotiating table. With international assistance, mainly from the United States, Israel has achieved political settlements with two of its former adversaries: a peace treaty with Egypt, signed in March 1979, and a nonbelligerency agreement with Jordan, signed in July 1994. Even with Syria, Israel was able to continue fitful negotiations from the mid-1990s until 2000, although the two nations

still maintain an uneasy confrontation on the Golan Heights. The major exception to these significant military/diplomatic accomplishments is Lebanon. Israel has invaded Lebanese territory in force four times since its foundation—in 1948, 1978, 1982 and, most recently, 2006—but the two countries have only formally been at war once, in 1948 during the conflict which Israel refers to as the War of Independence.[31] On the three other occasions the IDF has crossed into Lebanon to counter the actions of quasi-state entities—the PLO and Hezbollah—when they used Lebanese territory as a base from which to attack Israel. In terms of how to deal with such adversaries, Lebanon provides Israel with the most significant ongoing challenge to the maintenance of its national security by use of deterrence. Why Lebanon presents such a test for Israeli strategy (as demonstrated by the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in July and August of 2006) can best be understood in the context of the IDF's operations in Lebanon against the PLO and Hezbollah from the late 1970s onwards.

One of the main reasons that Lebanon has become a major battleground in the conflict between the Arabs and Israel is the fundamental instability of the Lebanese state. Since its inception, Lebanon's political stability has been compromised by both internal and external factors. The basic cause of the nation's internal instability is the confessional political system, which has been a central feature of the Lebanese state since it gained independence from the French in World War II. In 1943, negotiations between the Sunni, Shi'a Muslims and Maronite Christian leaderships led to a compromise agreement referred to as the National Pact or Covenant. Although it was an unwritten accord, the National Pact was a key element in allowing the Lebanese people to achieve independence in November 1943. The crux of the agreement was a power sharing arrangement between the various religious communities that principally aimed at avoiding sectarian conflict. The Pact was the foundation of the whole governmental system, influencing the structure of the government as well as matters of foreign policy. For example, the Christians agreed to accept that Lebanon was an Arab nation, not Western, while for their

part both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims had to give up aspirations for the country to unite with Syria.

In addition, the major offices of government were distributed among the various confessions based on questionable data from a 1932 census, which showed that the Christians were then the majority of the population. Under the agreement, the President had to be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, his deputy an Orthodox Christian and the Speaker of the Parliament a Shi'a Muslim. The distribution of seats in the parliament was in a ratio of 6:5 favouring Christians, who also held other important positions, such as the commander of the armed forces.[32] As with many political arrangements handed down by a colonial power, the Pact was an attempt to lock in the status quo. However, during the following decades the Muslim population increased more rapidly than the Christians. A large proportion of the Christian population also emigrated over the same period, which significantly altered the demographic foundation on which the confessional system had been based. Moreover, economic disparities between wealthy Christians and poorer Muslims tended to further highlight the fact that the Christians were able to exercise a disproportionate share of political power. Failure to conduct another census only served to heighten dissatisfaction with the disparities of the confessional system and in 1975 sectarian schisms erupted into a bloody civil war that lasted until 1990.

The external causes of Lebanon's political instability have also arisen from the defects of the confessional system. Many of these external influences have come about as a result of the convoluted nature of Lebanese politics, a prime example being Syria's intervention in the civil war. In 1976, at the invitation of the Maronite President, Suleiman Frangieh, Syria intervened in the civil war when it appeared that Christian Maronite forces would be defeated by more powerful Muslim factions. In a further twist, the Syrians began supplying the Maronite militias with arms which they employed against the PLO and militia forces from the Lebanese Muslim community. The intervention began a 29 year occupation of Lebanese territory by Syria, which became one of the key external impediments

to peace in Lebanon. For almost three decades Syrian forces controlled approximately one third of the country, dominating the strategic Beqa'a (Bekaa) Valley, east of the central mountain range.

A second destabilising factor was the presence of large numbers of PLO fighters in Lebanon. In 1970 there was an influx of some 3000 PLO militants from Jordan into Lebanon, adding to the existing Palestinian population, many of whom had been living in refugee camps since the 1948 war with Israel. The main concentration of Palestinians was in southern Lebanon, with smaller clusters in Tripoli and Beirut. In the south of the country, Palestinian factions, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), had begun to establish themselves as early as 1968. By the late 1970s they had created a quasi-state in the area south of the Litani River. With the Lebanese Government prostrated by civil war, the Palestinian occupation of southern Lebanon came to resemble a 'state within a state'—the very reason that the PLO had previously been ejected from Jordan.[33] The extensive infrastructure, quantity and types of arms later found in the area by the Israelis suggested that the PLO had learnt a lesson from the expulsion and decided to turn the area into a stronghold from which they could not be removed.[34] In the early years of the civil war, their massive military build-up and heavy handedness with the local people alienated the mainly Shi'a population of the south to the point where clashes between Palestinian and Shi'a militia groups were a frequent occurrence.[35]

The PLO's use of Lebanese territory to mount raids on Israel led initially to a series of cross-border skirmishes. However, it was the killing of 37 Israelis near Tel Aviv that provided a pretext for the IDF to cross into Lebanon in some strength on 14 March 1978.[36] Israel's first invasion of Lebanon, Operation *Litani*, was a short-lived, large-scale conventional mission, employing 7000 troops supported by artillery, tanks and aircraft. Moving on a broad front, the size and speed of the IDF incursion gave the PLO guerrillas sufficient time to take shelter behind Syrian lines in the Beqa'a Valley.[37] Moreover, Israeli concern to avoid military casualties saw the IDF using artillery and air strikes to force entry into villages

and towns, ensuring that the Lebanese population bore the brunt of the invasion. Lebanese civilian casualties, extensive property damage and a flood of refugees quickly exhausted the international community's sympathy for Israel because of the the PLO's attack. The operation soured Israel's relations with the United States and resulted in American support for a United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution (No 425) that called on Israel to withdraw 'forthwith'. For Israel, this brief incursion proved to be 'close to a fiasco' which 'did not solve the problem it was meant to address, and in many ways sowed the seeds of further escalation in the years to come'.[38]

Pressure from the international community forced the IDF to withdraw from southern Lebanon. The subsequent creation of an international observer force, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), was intended to prevent further cross-border skirmishes. However, UNIFIL did not have the manpower to enforce this mandate and, following clashes with the PLO, whose military forces were superior to the UN units, UNIFIL reached a *modus vivendi* with the PLO which ensured that both the intended buffer zone and the Israel-Lebanon border were once again porous.[39] The Israeli withdrawal and the weakness of UNIFIL encouraged the PLO to increase their military activity in southern Lebanon, with PLO leader Yasser Arafat telling his followers that they 'must keep the area ablaze' just a few months after the IDF's withdrawal.[40] Largely undamaged by the IDF, the PLO, with funding from oil-rich Arab nations, began a program to transform its guerrilla forces into semi-regular formations. The process began with the establishment of three infantry brigades and acquisition of heavy armaments—tanks, artillery and anti-aircraft guns—as well as large quantities of small arms and anti-tank weapons.[41] By 1981, the PLO had also developed an extensive network of underground bunkers, including weapon storage facilities, and had even infiltrated its defences into the UNIFIL buffer zone.[42] Although Operation *Litani* had been intended as a demonstration of force to deter PLO attacks, it actually exposed the IDF's inability to deal with guerrillas through the use of conventional forces.

Following their withdrawal from Lebanon, the Israelis attempted to ensure the security of their northern border by sponsoring a proxy Lebanese force, called the South Lebanese Army (SLA). From small beginnings in Christian enclaves, the SLA rapidly grew in to a mixed force of both Christians and Shi'a which controlled a continuous belt of Lebanese territory along the border with Israel.[43] Despite the presence of the SLA and UNIFIL, the PLO was still able to launch attacks on Israel, both by infiltrating guerrillas along the Mediterranean coast and by using artillery and Katyusha rockets to harass towns and settlements in northern Israel. Some attacks even employed gliders and balloons to cross the UNIFIL and SLA zones and penetrate up to 20 miles into Israel without being detected.[44] In the period July 1981 to May 1982 there were 290 PLO attacks on Israel launched from Lebanon, killing 29 Israelis and wounding 271.[45] Israeli reprisals included artillery bombardment of PLO bases and cross-border raids but, on 3 June 1982, an assassination attempt on the Israeli Ambassador in London by three PLO gunmen sparked widespread artillery exchanges along the border and the IAF attacked PLO targets as far north as Beirut.[46] Three days later the IDF once again crossed the Lebanese border.

In many ways this second IDF invasion of Lebanon, Operation *Peace for Galilee*, was a repeat of Operation *Litani* but on a larger-scale.[47] The hawkish Minister of Defence and former general, Ariel Sharon, had wanted to mount an even bigger operation. However, the cabinet of the Begin Government was deeply divided over any invasion of Lebanon, which was opposed by Israel's intelligence agencies.[48] The final operational plan was therefore the result of a political compromise and became a complex two phase operation with three separate, but interrelated objectives. The first, and official, objective of the operation was to clear the PLO from its positions in southern Lebanon to a line 40 kilometres from the Israeli border, thus putting northern Israel outside the range of the PLO's heavy artillery and Katyusha rockets. The second objective would see Israel involve itself in the Byzantine political chaos of the Lebanese civil war. The plan called for the IDF to link up with the hard-pressed Christian forces

in East Beirut and impose a political solution on Lebanon that included the destruction of the PLO as a military force. The final objective was to compel Syria's withdrawal from western Lebanon. It was hoped that this withdrawal would occur either voluntarily, as their forces were threatened with isolation when the IDF cut the Beirut to Damascus Highway, or as the result of a direct battlefield confrontation. To achieve these objectives the IDF deployed six and a half divisions, supported by 1000 tanks, and the IAF, with some 600 combat aircraft.

Within four days the Israelis had reached the suburbs of Beirut. The PLO was swept aside or forced into retreat on Beirut or behind Syrian lines in the Beqa'a Valley. A protracted siege of the PLO in Beirut from June to August saw IDF casualties for the operation mounting to over 500, before an internationally brokered deal allowed the PLO leadership and 14 500 supporters to depart Lebanon for destinations in other Arab countries. Unfortunately, even with what seemed at the time such a comprehensive military victory, Israel was unable to bring about the political resolution it desired. The initial problem was the unreliability of its ally, Bashir Gemayel. Gemayel, an American-educated lawyer, was a Maronite Christian who had succeeded in unifying the Christian Lebanese militias. In 1982, while he lent clandestine support to the Israelis, his need to seem independent of their influence frustrated the Israeli political and military objectives for Operation *Peace for Galilee*. During the IDF's bitter urban operations in Beirut, their Christian allies offered only minimal support and proved themselves incapable of providing an effective military counter to the PLO and Syrian forces. Nevertheless, the Begin Government had hopes of signing a peace treaty with a Lebanese Government headed by Gemayel as President. For this reason the Israelis tolerated Gemayel's public aloofness on the basis that his successful candidacy would present an opportunity to put an end the civil war, while the desired peace treaty would not only end the conflict, but also mean Lebanon's recognition of the Jewish state as a legitimate political entity.

For most Lebanese, particularly the Sunni and Shi'a Muslim communities, Gemayel was tainted by his tacit cooperation with Israel. Despite being

the only candidate for the presidency, he was elected to the office with one of the smallest margins in the history of the Lebanese republic (57 votes out of a possible 92), largely due to a boycott by most the Muslim members of parliament. Soon after, Israel's plans for forging a diplomatic settlement with Lebanon were thwarted by Gemayel's assassination in an explosion at his party's headquarters, just nine days before he was due to take office. One day after the assassination, the Christian militias carried out a massacre of Palestinians and Shiites in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps located in West Beirut. The fact that the IDF had the camps surrounded when the massacre took place became a massive political liability for Israel.

The failure of the political objectives of Operation *Peace for Galilee* highlights a significant disconnect in Israel's execution of the conflict. In the opinion of John Garofano, Israel's political leaders, especially Ariel Sharon, had overestimated the time available and underestimated the cost in lives to achieve these goals.[49] Corroborating this view, Shlomo Gazit, a former head of Israeli military intelligence says that both Begin and Sharon 'chose to isolate themselves from their intelligence advisors and never evinced the slightest doubt that they could achieve their objective'.[50] As the siege of Beirut continued, Sharon's ability to direct IDF operations was gradually restricted by his cabinet colleagues to the point that he could only issue piecemeal orders. Meanwhile, the IDF suffered large numbers of casualties in fierce urban fighting and later became bogged down in two decades of a low-intensity war against Hezbollah that it could not win. The IDF's intelligence analysis and evaluation of Lebanon cannot be faulted. As Gazit notes, the data and the recommendations received by the government were 'sober and realistic [however] the advice of even the best intelligence organisation in the world is useless when the nation's key decision-makers are permitted to ignore critical information and indulge wishful thinking unrestrained by legal, political or moral checks and balances'.[51]

Soon after the end of the fighting in Beirut, villagers in the south and the west of Lebanon who had welcomed the IDF as liberators, began to

resent the Israeli presence. Ironically, the IDF's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, while temporarily disposing of the PLO as a threat to Israel, also set in motion a chain of events that led to the creation of Hezbollah, an equally implacable enemy of the Jewish state. This paradox is not lost on some Israelis. In a July 2006 interview with *Newsweek*, former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak recalled, 'When we entered Lebanon … there was no Hezbollah. We were accepted with perfumed rice and flowers by the Shi'a in the south. It was our presence there that created Hezbollah.'[52] In late 1982, the leaders of Shi'a para-military organisations were pleased by the IDF's defeat of the PLO but soon, like the rest of the Shi'a community, they became suspicious of Israel's motives, fearing either a direct annexation of southern Lebanon or control of the area by militia groups, such as the SLA, acting as Israel's proxies. For the Shi'a, the prospect of swapping the PLO for another occupying force was simply unacceptable.[53]

Since the time of independence, the Shi'a community had been the most disadvantaged in Lebanon. Under the terms of the National Pact, Shi'a influence in Lebanese politics was limited to the constitutionally weak position of speaker of the parliament. In addition, much of the Shi'a community, especially in the south, was impoverished. At the local level, the community was dominated by a small number of powerful families (*zu ama* or political bosses) who maintained their control through extensive patronage networks. During the 1960s and 1970s, young Shi'a discontented by the established political system looked to reform movements to improve their economic prospects. In 1974, just before the civil war began, a Lebanese Shi'a cleric, Musa al-Sadr and Hussein el-Husseini, a member of parliament, founded Harakat al-Mahrumin (the Movement of the Deprived). While predominantly Shi'a based, the movement was secular (with some Islamic influences) but its main aim was to seek social justice for all deprived Lebanese through the reform of the political system.[54] In January 1975, it acquired a military wing when the Lebanese Resistance Detachments (Afwaj al-Mouqawma Al-Lubnaniyya which gave the movement its popular name the acronym

AMAL) became part of the Movement of the Disinherited under al-Sadr's leadership. While Al-Sadr sympathised with the Palestinian cause, he did not condone PLO actions that put Lebanese, especially the Shi'a community in the south, at risk from Israeli reprisals, such as Operation *Litani*. This was especially the case when these operations displaced large numbers of civilians, further souring relations between the PLO and the Shi'a.

The radicalisation of Shi'a politics can also be traced to another external influence—Iran. In 1979, a large detachment of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps arrived in the Beqa'a Valley. The Iranians began the process of spreading the ideology of their Islamic Revolution among their fellow Shi'a, who were receptive to any message that promised to empower them. In late 1982, the Iranians drew on the growing resentment of the Israeli presence to mobilise the local population against the IDF's occupation of southern Lebanon. AMAL has remained a rather loose organisation with an eclectic political ideology but, in the early 1980s Iranian inspiration and funding saw the emergence of a new more coherent Shi'a political group, Hezbollah. In 1985, the group published its political manifesto with ideological roots fixed firmly in Islam:

> No one can imagine the importance of our military potential as our military apparatus is not separate from our overall social fabric. Each of us is a fighting soldier. And when it becomes necessary to carry out the Holy War, each of us takes up his assignment in the fight in accordance with the injunctions of the Law, and that in the framework of the mission carried out under the tutelage of the Commanding Jurist [sic Ayatollah Khomeini].[55]

Although much of this communication was couched in the militant language of the Iranian Islamic Revolution, the tenor of group's main objectives were essentially nationalistic and included: the desire to expel 'the Americans … and their allies … from Lebanon [and] put an end to

any colonialist entity on our land [Israel]; a just revenge on the Phalange militias "for the crimes they have perpetrated against Muslims and Christians" [but especially the massacres in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps]; [and] a desire for 'Islamic government which, alone, is capable of guaranteeing justice and liberty for all. Only an Islamic regime can stop any further tentative attempts of imperialistic infiltration into our country".'[56]

A separate paragraph headed, 'The Necessity for the Destruction of Israel' referred to Israel as 'the vanguard of the United States in our Islamic world'. Ominously, the manifesto went on to describe the Jewish state as an enemy posing 'the greatest danger to our future generations and to the destiny of our lands, particularly as it glorifies the ideas of settlement and expansion, initiated in Palestine, and yearning outward to the extension of the Great Israel, from the Euphrates to the Nile'.[57] Citing Israel's settlements built on Arab lands seized since 1948, the document announced a policy of obliterating what it called 'the Zionist entity' and condemned any negotiations or agreements with Israel on the grounds that these implied recognition of Israel and gave legitimacy to its cause.[58]

As the group began to be better trained, armed and funded, they launched rocket attacks on Israeli military posts along the border and on settlements in northern Israel. Hezbollah's arsenal came to include sophisticated equipment sourced from Syria, Iran, Russia, North Korea and China. Much to the group's funding has been reported as coming from religious donations, illegal activities abroad and from contributions by Iran and is estimated to be as much as US$ 200 million annually.[59] In the convoluted milieu of the Middle East, it would also be wrong to dismiss Hezbollah is a mere proxy of Iran and Syria.[60] Fariborz Mokhtari suggests that the relationship between Hezbollah and Iran is symbiotic. Iran provides Hezbollah with vital financial, political and military support, while Hezbollah's presence on Israel's northern border gives Iran a forward posture that forestalls the possibility that the IAF will launch attacks on Iranian territory.[61] Prior to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's presidency, there

were signs that Iran had been reducing its backing for Hezbollah, but the international diplomatic dispute over Iran's nuclear program may have been the trigger for renewed Iranian support.[62]

Military opposition to Israel has given Hezbollah's legitimacy and popularity among Lebanese Shi'a and the organisation has also expanded its agenda to include the delivery of social welfare to the community. These activities are the responsibility of the Jihad Al Binna Developmental Association (JBDA), which has programs in health and education, as well as construction projects, all of which have given the organisation considerable respect among Lebanese Shi'a. Between 1988 and 2002 Hezbollah has built schools, hospitals, mosques, homes, shops, cultural and agricultural centres and rehabilitated thousands of other buildings.[63] From mid-1991, Hezbollah also began satellite television broadcasts on Al-Manar (The Beacon). Unlike Al Jazeera (The Peninsula) network based in Qatar, Al-Manar does not aim at even-handed reporting and never airs comments by Israeli officials. Instead the station's content supports the political and religious agendas of Hezbollah through a variety of news, current affairs, music and entertainment programming which reaches a worldwide audience estimated at between 10 to 15 million viewers daily.

Domestically, Hezbollah enjoys high approval ratings with the majority of Lebanon's Shi'a, ensuring the organisation a secure role in Lebanese politics.[64] In June 2005 this broad support was demonstrated via the electoral success of the AMAL/Hezbollah coalition, which won 35 seats in the Lebanese Parliament and assured it of two cabinet posts in the government.[65] Meanwhile, membership in the democratically elected government of Lebanon has brought little alteration to Hezbollah's hostility to Israel. During two decades of conflict, Hezbollah has studied its enemy's weapons and tactics and has come to understand its shortcomings. The former senior political advisor to UNIFIL, Timur Goskel, told the *New York Times* in August 2006 that, while Hezbollah fighters are respectful of the IDF's firepower and mobility, they are no

longer '… afraid of the Israeli Army ... [but see it as] … a normal human army, with normal vulnerabilities and follies'.[66]

Observations on the IDF Operations in Lebanon Before 2006

There are some striking parallels between the IDF's experience in the 1980s and 1990s, and the war between Israel and Hezbollah in July and August of 2006. While each conflict took place in a different international context and was the product of discrete political circumstances, the general military performance of the IDF against a non-conventional enemy exhibits some interesting continuities. Operation *Peace for Galilee*, as with the 2006 conflict, was not the high-intensity, conventional inter-state war that the IDF's force structure had been designed to fight after 1973. Both the PLO and Hezbollah were quasi-political entities in possession of considerable military forces. Lebanon, as the geographic setting of the conflicts, was very different from the battlefields of previous clashes between the IDF and Arab force. In 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973, the fighting had largely taken place in open country away from population centres, such as the deserts of the Sinai Peninsula. In Lebanon, not only was the population more densely settled, but the mountainous terrain (running north to south) and the country's poor transport infrastructure made armoured operations difficult.

One critic of the IDF's performance in Operation *Peace for Galilee* suggests that the problems experienced by the IDF were due to the fact that the Israelis 'fought according to their preferred style, i.e., the systematic use of firepower rather than manoeuvre'.[67] When they encountered serious opposition, IDF units were more likely to rely on the firepower of their tanks, artillery and aircraft, rather than use tactical movement to resolve the problem. This excessive use of fire power was, moreover, a symptom of a defence force unable 'to create a strategy that focuses and controls the application of force in wartime'.[68] A brief survey of some major Israeli operations in the period before 2006 reveals that Israel has found

it difficult to find a better way of deterring guerrilla attacks than reliance upon overwhelming firepower.

Ground Combat

A large, conventional operation such, as Operation *Peace for Galilee*, relied upon the strengths of the IDF and its post-1973 force structure. Despite the rapid success of the invasion in 1982, the IDF encountered a number of serious problems. The armoured columns were unable to manoeuvre easily in the broken hill country of eastern Lebanon. Even on the coastal plain, poor roads slowed the heavy tank columns and there were long traffic snarls as logistic units attempted to keep up with the fighting units. The most intensive fighting against the PLO took place at Beaufort Castle, a twelfth century fortification on the northern bank of the Litani River. The surviving PLO fighters only surrendered to the IDF after the castle had been almost totally destroyed by IAF bombers. However, once the bulk of the PLO's forces had abandoned their heavy equipment, Israeli armour and air power became extraneous against a lightly armed enemy who could attack quickly and then melt away into the forested valleys or villages and towns. The siege of Beirut further exacerbated this problem for the IDF. The PLO was well established in the suburbs of the city, largely depriving the IDF of its technological advantages. In the urban fighting, the PLO also used children as young as 12 years old, who were known to the Israelis as 'RPG kids' because of their ability to use the Soviet manufactured rocket-propelled grenade with great effectiveness.[69]

In Beirut, the IDF was faced with a difficult choice. Either it could remove the PLO in house-to-house fighting and accept the high casualties this would entail, or use its firepower to achieve the same result. The first option was politically unpalatable for a defence force that was extensively manned by reservists and conscripts, while the second involved extensive collateral damage to both civilians and the city's infrastructure and would draw condemnation from the international community, not to

mention its exploitation for propaganda purposes. In the end, while the rules of engagement for the IDF in Beirut were stringent, the Israelis opted for a combination of manpower and technology. The IDF suffered heavy casualties in the urban battles but, when required, tanks, artillery and air power were concentrated against PLO strong points, with the consequence that civilians were also killed and injured.[70]

After the PLO had left Lebanon, the IDF settled into a 20-year occupation of the country which ended in 2000. Militarily, Hezbollah filled the void left by the ejection of the Palestinians and, in much the same way as the PLO, has conducted an ongoing insurgent campaign against Israel from its bases in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah's military wing, The Islamic Resistance, quickly began guerrilla operations against the IDF's occupation. In the period from 1985 to the end of the Lebanese Civil War in 1990, Israel experienced what Judith Palmer-Harik has described as its 'own small-scale Vietnam' in southern Lebanon.'[71] On two occasions, in 1993 (Operation *Accountability*) and again in 1996 (Operation *Grapes of Wrath*), the IDF deployed massive firepower in southern Lebanon in retaliation for Hezbollah Katyusha attacks on Israel. Both times the Israeli attacks were aimed at displacing Lebanese civilians in order to force the Lebanese Government to act against Hezbollah. This variation on deterrence by collective punishment, called 'circular pressure', had been conceived by the former Israeli Prime Minister, Itzak Rabin. Not surprisingly, the application of this tactic did not succeed in goading the weak Lebanese Government into action against Hezbollah.[72]

Air Operations

In fighting against the Syrians in 1982 the IAF showed that it was able to deal with the extensive air defence system which they had set up in the Beqa'a Valley. A series of well-coordinated missions on 9 June saw the IAF employ electronic warfare assets, UAVs and HARM missiles to destroy seventeen out of nineteen SAM batteries. IAF pilots also shot down 29 Syrian aircraft without suffering any losses.[73] However, Lebanon's difficult

topography also had an impact on air operations. While the IAF was able to interdict the battlefield and stop the Syrians reinforcing their ground units in the Beqa'a Valley, the narrow valleys made close air support operations difficult.[74]

The IAF's technological sophistication was also displayed in Operation *Accountability* and Operation *Grapes of Wrath*. In the latter operation, the IAF's attacks continued day and night without interruption for seventeen days. No ground troops were committed and the IAF flew 2,350 sorties without a single combat fatality.[75] Remotely Piloted Vehicles (RPVs) and radar were used to locate and destroy Katyusha launch sites. Attack helicopters were used for precision strikes in urban areas, including launching Hellfire missiles at a suspected Hezbollah operations centre in central Beirut.[76] During the fighting hundreds of Lebanese civilians were killed and wounded, but casualties for Islamic Resistance's guerrilla fighters were hotly disputed by the two sides, with Hezbollah admitting to just six dead and the IDF claiming fifty.[77]

Israeli Public Opinion and the Influence of the International Media

In 1982, domestic opinion in Israel started to swing against the invasion of Lebanon even before the IDF began to take heavy casualties from the blockade of the PLO in Beirut.[78] As Van Creveld points out, for many Israelis the issue seems to have been that, unlike Israel's other conflicts, Operation *Peace for Galilee* was a 'war of choice'.[79] The implication of this perception was that aggressive military action, rather than defensive operations, went against the tradition of the Jewish state. In September 1982, after the Sabra and Shatila massacres, an estimated 400 000 people demonstrated against the IDF's continued involvement in Lebanon and by December public support for the war was at 34 percent from a level of 93.3 percent in June.[80] As Gil Meron argues, the high levels of trust that Israelis accorded to their political leaders in matters of national security had justified the gamble of launching Operation *Peace for Galilee*.[81] However, once that trust had begun to erode, questioning of the war

was not limited to the civilian population but also spread to the IDF, which suffered over 500 combat deaths during the course of the invasion. The IDF, with its large reserve component, naturally reflects the mood of Israeli society but, as Yael Yishai records, a number of soldiers formed protest groups and insisted that they would go to prison rather than serve in Lebanon.[82]

Such acts of conscience have since become periodic in the IDF and are a symptom of the difficulties that low-intensity operations present for conscript armies and the societies they defend.[83] However, until the withdrawal in 2000, despite continued domestic dissent, the majority of Israelis accepted the need for the IDF to maintain a presence in southern Lebanon as the price for maintaining the freedoms of an open, democratic society. One Israeli sociologist maintained that the 1982 Lebanon War in particular provoked such discord within Israeli society and the IDF because, for the first time, the 'boundaries between active warfare and routine conflict [a term he applies to low-intensity warfare] were blurred'.[84] In the years since 1982, Israeli society has largely adapted to the routine violence of the ongoing low-intensity operations. The constant level of threat has created a strong sense of insecurity among Israelis, which Avi Kober believes has only engendered a 'greater determination to persevere'.[85]

Sections of the international community have long been critical of Israel's military actions against its Arab neighbours.[86] A report published in 1983 by an International Commission of jurists was especially disparaging of the IAF which it accused of 'indiscriminate bombing of Muslim civilians'.[87] However, as James Corum and Wray Johnson point out, the report by the International Commission displayed considerable bias against the conduct of the IDF, while explaining away or ignoring violations of international law by the PLO.[88] In one case cited by the Commission, the IAF killed 20 civilians in an attack on an anti-aircraft gun that the PLO had positioned on the roof of an apartment building. The attack on the gun was a legitimate action within the laws of armed conflict, but the Commission's report censured the IDF on the basis that such

weapons were 'completely ineffective against the Israeli Air Force', despite the fact that the IAF had lost a number of aircraft to ground fire during operations over Lebanon.[89] Other photographic evidence showed that the PLO had regularly sited heavy weapons in hospitals, schools and near foreign embassies.[90]

From the first, Israel's interventions in Lebanon have also been subjected to harsh criticism in the international media, ensuring that the IDF now places considerable emphasis on information warfare as an aspect of all its operations. However, as Aharon Yaariv, a former head of Israeli military intelligence has observed, in the early 1980s the lessons of previous conflicts had been forgotten or not implemented, 'No machinery was established … and the price for this neglect was paid in 1982.'[91] For their part, organizations such as the PLO also exercised the ability to tightly control the coverage of Western journalists reporting from areas under their control. Journalist Kenneth Timmerman described how the process worked in Lebanon during 1982:

> No newspaper or other medium would commit the error of sending into West Beirut someone who had adversely reported in the past on the activities of the PLO or the Syrians, for fear of his simply disappearing. Thus a first 'selection' of journalists was made by the PLO: there simply were no unfriendly journalists operating in the besieged city.[92]

International criticism of Israel grew steadily throughout August and September 1982. On 13 August, the *New York Times* reported that Ronald Reagan had telephoned Prime Minister Begin to convey his 'outrage' at civilian casualties caused by the IDF's use of artillery and air strikes against PLO targets in Beirut. Reagan's action had been prompted by television pictures of a baby girl who allegedly had been badly wounded by one such attack.[93] The case of this child is typical of the use of images

for propaganda purposes in both the print and electronic media. The original picture showed a small child with heavily bandaged limbs and was captioned, 'small girl who has lost both hands'. The photograph was associated with a story reporting on Israel's bombing of the PLO-held area of West Beirut. When the Israelis found the child, it turned out to be a boy who lived in Christian-held *East* Beirut, the section of the city that had been bombed by the PLO and the Syrians. The child's bandages did not conceal amputated limbs, but burns to the hands, which later healed well.[94] In another case, a photograph in the 2 August 1982 edition of the *U.S. News and World Report* showed a Muslim woman mourning by a graveside in Beirut. This poignant image had great impact, until an Arabic linguist pointed out that the date on the gravestone was 10 August 1980, nearly two years before the IDF entered the city. [95]

These examples illustrate the fundamental problem with images of war used in news reporting—they lack context. This is especially the case with television reporting, where images are generally fleeting, making the most likely viewer response an emotional one. The predisposition of viewers to respond to images of warfare on an emotional level can be further influenced by bias contained in the accompanying commentary. It should also be recalled that by 1982, the city of Beirut had already been a major battleground in the Lebanese Civil War and scenes of destroyed buildings and other devastation were common after seven years of bitter civil conflict. It would have been difficult if not impossible to tell which buildings had been destroyed by the IDF from those previously destroyed in fighting between the various Lebanese factions, but for the media this context, even if they recognised it, would have been peripheral to the immediate story of the conflict between the PLO and the IDF. Indeed, the PLO and Hezbollah have both skillfully used the media for propaganda purposes and often made the IDF's use of firepower to carry out its strategy of deterrence a liability. During Operation *Accountability*, in 1993, the IDF's massive use of firepower against Hezbollah attracted significant media attention and was one factor in the subsequent intervention by the Clinton administration. In 2006, images of destruction and the plight of

refugees once again stirred the international community into action. The media is ubiquitous in the twenty-first century. The 24-hour news cycle is fuelled by images and sound bites, making an information management strategy a necessity for armed forces. At the same time, however, the ability of governments and the military to control the media has been eroded by the ready access that opponents have to satellite television networks and the Internet, giving them entrée to a worldwide audience. Israel's conflicts in Lebanon illustrate General Sir Rupert Smith's concept of 'war amongst the people'. The characteristics of this type of conflict are 'amplified literally and figuratively by the central role of the media: we fight in every living room in the world as well as on the streets and fields of a conflict zone'.[96]

The Breakdown of Deterrence

For over six decades, Israel invested considerable resources in order to establish an effective strategy of deterrence. Israel's ability to deter its enemies was built on the promise of punishment via massive retaliation. To guarantee this ability, the IDF maintained a qualitative advantage over its Arab enemies, ensuring that it could carry the conflict on to their territory and bring hostilities to a rapid and decisive conclusion. So long as conventional military forces determined the balance of power in the Middle East, Israel was able to ensure its national security. However, strategy is formulated in a dynamic environment. The challenges that confront Israel in the first decade of the twenty-first century are very different from those of the past. Developments, both internationally and within the region have undermined the effectiveness of Israel's deterrent strategy. These developments include: regional instability in countries such as Lebanon; rapid population growth in Middle Eastern states, which has also been accompanied by the rise of Islamic fundamentalism; a shift to sub-conventional, low-intensity warfare conducted by complex, non-state entities such as Hezbollah and Hamas; a regional arms build-up, especially the proliferation of missile technologies; and constraints on

Israel's freedom of action, which are a result of engagement in the peace process and the need to retain the goodwill of the United States.

Israel's long involvement in Lebanon is a microcosm of all these trends. Since the 1980s, the emergence of these new challenges has made the idea of decisive victory (*hachra'a*) much more difficult to define. As Van Creveld has pointed out, the IDF has struggled to deal with guerrilla attacks.[97] The IDF's experience in Lebanon illustrates how Israel's ability to deter its enemies by deploying conventional armed forces in limited conflicts has increasingly yielded disappointing military and political results. Towards the end of the twentieth-century Israeli diplomacy was able to capitalise on its military successes against enemies such as Egypt and Jordan to trade land for peace. However, recent unilateral withdrawals from southern Lebanon and the Gaza Strip failed to yield similar results and were judged by Israel's enemies as a sign of a reduced Israeli capacity to wage war. For Hezbollah, the IDF's withdrawal from Lebanese territory in 2000 was a military victory resulting from almost two decades of sustained conflict. Moreover, the perception of Israeli weakness only served to strengthen the organisation's belief in the political utility of armed resistance.

Chapter 2
The Israel-Lebanon Wars
Historical Background

The conflict along the Israel-Lebanon border is an indelible part of the larger Arab-Israeli conflict that started in 1948, when five Arab nations, including Lebanon, unsuccessfully attempted to prevent the formation of Israel as a Jewish state on land that the Arabs felt belonged to them and referred to as Palestine. As in a number of conflicts and wars that rage around the world, the root cause of the ongoing Israel-Lebanon conflict lies in historical claims by both parties to ownership of land. On the one hand Israel lays claim to the land that today forms the nation as part of its religious and ethnic heritage. On the other, the people who inhabited the area for a millennium before 1948 claim ownership and question the unilateral (in their perception) gifting of their land to an outsider.

The failure of the Arab nations to drive the newly formed state of Israel to extinction in 1948 led to the formation of a number of irregular Palestine militia forces to wage a guerrilla/terrorist campaign against Israel. Any action by these groups automatically prompted retaliation and reprisal from Israel, mainly against Jordan and Lebanon, their main host nations. The Palestinian forces were expelled from Jordan in 1970 after a civil war. Thereafter the resistance led by the PLO, an umbrella organisation that included all Palestine resistance groups opposed to the Israeli state, moved to Southern Lebanon to continue the campaign.

Lebanon had a mixed population of Christians and Muslims, with a precariously maintained balance between the two that was arrived at in an uneasy peace after a civil war between the two groups in 1950. The move of the PLO to Lebanon affected this fine balance and in 1975 a bloody civil war erupted between the Lebanese Muslims and the PLO on the one side and the Lebanese Christians on the other. Lebanon has common borders with Syria and Israel and both states intervened, Syria by sending a 40 000 strong 'peacekeeping' force that began a long occupation of

Lebanese territory, and Israel by providing weapons and other assistance to the anti-Muslim forces.

Almost immediately on establishing a foothold in Lebanon, the PLO started carrying out cross-border raids and rocket attacks into Israel, which elicited violent retaliation from Israel. These responses resulted in a great deal of destruction in Southern Lebanon and also in the death of a number of local Lebanese citizens. By 1978, the PLO controlled the entire southern Lebanon, creating a 'state-within-a-state', and even with a full-scale civil war raging in their region, they continued their attacks on northern Israel. In 1978, Israel initiated a campaign, Operation *Litany*, to oust PLO from southern Lebanon in response to PLO raids into northern Israel.[98]

On 14 March 1978, Israeli soldiers began a ground invasion of southern Lebanon to neutralise the PLO fighting units. This thrust by Israel into Lebanese territory had some very tragic effects—in an effort to destroy the fighting units of the PLO and also its support base, they destroyed over 6000 Lebanese homes. Around 2000 civilian Lebanese were killed and the biggest debacle of all, an estimated 285 000 people became refugees. This mass exodus was to have repercussions for Israel's security in the future. The IDF captured the whole of Lebanon south of the Litany River and created a buffer zone north of its northern borders.

However, they were not successful in disbanding the units of the PLO because these units retreated ahead of the IDF advance and could not be comprehensively engaged and destroyed. In effect, the immediate goal of the campaign, to stop the regular attacks on northern Israel, was met to a certain extent for a limited period of time. In June 1978, the IDF withdrew from the captured areas of southern Lebanon and was replaced by a UNIFIL. A breakaway militia called the Southern Lebanon Army SLA, which served as a proxy for Israel, also started to operate from southern Lebanon and often engaged the PLO in skirmishes. The PLO elements continued to carry out rocket attacks on Israel albeit in lesser numbers than previously. The withdrawal of the IDF, without

having removed the PLO from its bases in southern Lebanon, was a great embarrassment for the Israeli Government.

In April 1981, Syrian forces bombed and then managed to remove the Maronite group, allied to Israel, from the city of Zahlah in eastern Lebanon. Israel responded by carrying out bombing raids in which they destroyed two Syrian helicopters, in turn prompting Syria to move Soviet-made SAMs to the Beqa'a valley in Lebanon. Meanwhile domestic politics in Israel were focused on the incumbent government's inability to stop the build-up of the PLO in Southern Lebanon. This led to the adoption of a more aggressive Israeli military strategy, which in combination with the rapid growth of PLO in southern Lebanon and the presence of Syrian missiles in the Beqa'a valley, pointed to an imminent outbreak of hostilities.

In July 1981, Israel responded to PLO rocket attacks on northern Israeli settlements by bombing PLO camps in southern Lebanon, but acceded to a very shaky cease-fire negotiated by the United States and monitored by UNIFIL.

The early 1980s was a period of considerable disarray in the Arab world. The 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution, the Iran-Iraq war that broke out in September 1980, followed almost immediately by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1980, all contributed to an innate sense of division within the Arab nations. There was also a serious domestic upheaval in Syria where the opposition to the Assad regime by the Muslim Brotherhood was violently put down in February 1982. Israel considered this political instability of the region, in conjunction with an ambivalent stand taken by the United States, conducive to initiating actions to free northern Israel from PLO attacks.

Operation Peace in Galilee

By 1982, the Israeli leadership was determined to remove the PLO threat from Lebanon. By this time PLO had established its headquarters in west Beirut and controlled almost the whole of southern Lebanon, like a mini-Palestine state. The assassination attempt on the Israeli Ambassador in London provided the catalyst to launch air strikes on 4 June, against PLO targets in Beirut and southern Lebanon. When the PLO responded in characteristic fashion by shelling northern Israel, the Israeli Government used these attacks as the reason to launch a land campaign into Lebanon on 6 June.

The stated objective of the invasion was to 'place all the civilian population of the Galilee beyond the range of the terrorist fire from Lebanon, by attacking them [the Palestine guerrillas], their bases, and their headquarters'.[99] The secondary objective was to sign a peace treaty with Lebanon. From the outset there was a divergence in the perception of the end-state between the political and military leadership. The Cabinet was briefed that the ground operations would be limited to 40 kilometres inside Lebanese territory, needed to create an effective security zone. However, the military higher command had not been informed of any territorial constraints and presumed that the penetration would be all the way to Beirut.

Although the initial progress of the IDF was slower than anticipated, on 13 June they reached the outskirts of Beirut. Beirut, famed as the 'Paris of the Middle East' from the 1960s, had been in decline since the eruption of the Civil War that had raged since 1975. By 1982 it had been reduced to a shell of its former splendour. The IDF had previous experience in urban warfare but the challenge of moving into an Arab capital with over a million inhabitants was formidable.

It has been reported that on 12 June the Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, Yasser Arafat had expressed his desire to appeal for a cease-fire and that the overwhelming mass of the IDF had demoralised the PLO. It would have been possible for the IDF at this stage 'to win a

rapid, indisputable, and psychologically overwhelming triumph'.[100] However, political considerations led to the IDF not being able to grasp this golden opportunity to capture west Beirut, the *de facto* capital of the PLO, thereby destroying its centre of gravity. Such an action would have removed the PLO from Lebanon almost permanently.

The conduct of the 1982 operations gives very clear indications of the political-military relationship as practised in Israel. At the outset, this was the first time that the Israeli Cabinet had insisted on overseeing the conduct of the campaign on a day-to-day basis. This was done since there were fears of a Syrian intervention and subsequent escalation of the conflict. Subsequently, when the IDF reached Beirut, the Cabinet once again opposed the occupation, concerned over possible Israeli casualties and also the strategic ramifications of occupying an Arab capital.[101] Because of the difficulty in obtaining Cabinet approval to assault Beirut, the IDF, under instructions from the Minister for Defence Ariel Sharon, surrounded west Beirut and concentrated on pushing the Syrian Army out of the surrounding hills and along the Beirut-Damascus highway.

Since the IDF had successfully laid siege to Beirut as a result of Sharon's unilateral actions, the Cabinet changed the required end-state. From placing the civilian population of northern Israel (Galilee) out of range of artillery and rocket attacks, they now demanded that all Palestinian fighters and Syrian troops leave Beirut—a demand that the Syrian Government refused to accept. This is a clear case of military operations, conducted without the complete authorisation of the civilian cabinet, influencing and dictating national security policy at the highest level. The Cabinet was forced to widen the war's strategic objectives in response to military escalation of the conflict without proper authorisation.

Although military action was leading national security policy in this instance, the failure of the IDF to attack Beirut itself provided the much-needed respite for the PLO to regroup and fortify their positions. They were able to prepare for a long siege. The other fallout of the encirclement strategy was that the morale of the Arab fighters was enhanced because they felt that the Israeli leadership, both military and the civilian, did not

have the will to absorb the heavy casualties associated with intense urban conflict.

The Israeli Cabinet was reluctant to approve a direct assault of the city for fear of international repercussions in response to civilian casualties and domestic compulsions to avoid Israeli military casualties. Yasser Arafat in the meantime had shrewdly calculated that time and attrition would negate any decisive Israeli action.

There was only tacit support for the PLO within the larger Arab community of nations. Only Syria could have provided direct and plausible support, but strained personal relationship between the Syrian president Hafiz al-Asad and Yasser Arafat precluded any useful cooperation. Further, there was little enthusiasm amongst the Arab states to accept the Palestinian fighters removed from Beirut. The PLO members were strangers to Lebanon and had effectively created a mini-Palestine in the south. By July 1982, they had overstayed their welcome and there was even an undercurrent of welcome for the Israeli forces within the Lebanese.

Israeli bombardment, both from the air and ground, continued unabated for a number of weeks. These attacks were complemented initially by small scale ground offensives that slowly became full assaults on critical targets. By the beginning of August, it was clear that the PLO was isolated not only territorially, but also diplomatically. The support from the Arab world, what little there was, had become ineffective and they were under intense pressure from the United States to accept the terms of withdrawal being offered by Israel. Under these extreme circumstances, on 6 August, the PLO agreed to evacuate.

The maverick nature of Ariel Sharon was displayed once again on 12 August, when he ordered the IDF to launch its most elaborate bombing of Beirut, without the consent of the Israeli Cabinet. The aerial assault, that lasted the whole day, was intended to ensure that the PLO withdrawal was credited as a military victory for the IDF. The fallout this action was that the Cabinet reserved for itself and the Prime Minister the right to order any air or ground attack.

The siege by itself was conducted by Israel using all components of national power—diplomacy, information campaign, economic strangulation and military power. The siege of Beirut lasted two months and culminated in the massacre of innocent civilians by the Phalange fighters as a revenge for the murder of their leader. Since the IDF did not intervene in any way to stop the massacre, it led to the loss of legitimacy of the entire campaign. The PLO withdrawal from Lebanon was completed on 3 September.

The Israeli Air Force played a major role throughout the campaign. They dropped smart munitions, cluster bombs, missiles and rockets. There was very little air defence opposition, so the attacks were driven home with great precision. Israel stressed the use of precision weapons, but first-hand reports indicate that general bombing also was carried out, destroying building after building by indiscriminate bombing.[102]

An unforeseen development arising from the IDF's expanded invasion of Lebanon, far beyond the remit given by the Cabinet, was that for the first time in its history, there was open dissent within the military to the war. Although incidents of dissent and refusal to obey orders were limited in number, they came as a shock to the nation at large.[103]

This campaign was a classic case of military action leading policy and forcing the political leadership to formulate policy on the go. The fact that the attack on Beirut and the resulting siege was arrived at without explicit Cabinet approval does not seem to have in any way deterred the Cabinet from changing the desired end-state that was sought. However, political constraints did prevent the IDF from attempting a rapid capture of west Beirut. The political leadership's strategic miscalculation in supporting a local Lebanese leader, who reneged on vague promises made earlier, was the prime reason for the IDF becoming embroiled in a siege based on attrition. However, Israel's aim of expelling the PLO from Lebanon was achieved, even though the campaign cannot be classified as a complete success.

This was also the first war fought by the IDF that did not have unequivocal support within the nation. The operation was not seen as being crucial

to the survival of the Jewish state unlike the wars fought in 1948, 1967 and 1973. The attempt in 1982 was to use Israel's overwhelming military power to find a solution to the intractable Palestine problem. This was not achieved. Though the PLO was forced to leave Lebanon, it was far from being a politically spent force. In fact it remained an important player in the chaotic Middle Eastern political scenario.

The Campaigns in the 1990s

Although the PLO was successfully expelled from Southern Lebanon in 1982, its removal did not bring the necessary respite to Israel because the Iranian-inspired Hezbollah filled the vacuum that was thus created and continued to subject Israel's northern districts to recurring but intermittent rocket attacks. This prompted the IDF to launch a week-long military campaign against the Hezbollah, Operation *Accountability* (25 July–31 July 1993). The operation was aimed at making southern Lebanon as inhospitable as possible for the Hezbollah to operate from against the IDF in occupied Lebanon and also the northern settlements of Israel.

The destruction of thousands of houses during the campaign created a flow of refugees, estimated to be more than 300 000 Lebanese and Palestinian civilians, towards Beirut and other areas outside the combat zone. The IDF also targeted Lebanese bridges, power stations and roadways, a change in their approach to attacks on civilian infrastructure. This would be repeated in future attacks on Hezbollah in Lebanon. However, the effectiveness of targeting civilian infrastructure to change the attitude of the general population towards the Hezbollah has never been clearly demonstrated.

Operation *Grapes of Wrath* (11 April–27 April 1996) was the campaign in which Israel used its massive firepower through air and artillery attacks in Southern Lebanon in an attempt to put an end to the rocket attacks. The IDF carried out more than 1100 air raids and fired around 25 000 shells during the 16-day offensive. This was a military response to a political

problem and consequently was fated to fail. Not surprisingly, the attacks on Israel continued unabated during both these operations. The rocket attacks on Israel terminated only when the conflict was brought to a halt through political arrangements.

The uneasy peace that was established in 1996 relied on mutual acceptance of an unwritten understanding that as long as Israel refrained from attacking Lebanese towns and villages, the Hezbollah would not carry out rocket attacks. This assurance of status quo by Israel was seen as a victory for Hezbollah and was perhaps one of the primary reasons for Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Southern Lebanon in 2000. The Hezbollah did not carry out any rocket attacks of significance between 1996 and 2006, but used the time to build up what was the largest and most lethal infrastructure to use surface-to-surface rockets.

After the May 2005 elections in Lebanon, Hezbollah was given two cabinet posts in the government. For this participation in the mainstream politics of the nation, the Lebanese Government agreed never to refer to the organisation as a 'militia' but only as a 'national resistance group'. This effectively removed Hezbollah from being subjected to UN Security Council Resolution 1559 that called for the disarming of all militias in the country.

By early 2006, Hezbollah's taunts of Israel's military weakness and the ineffectiveness of its leadership had increased the desire within the political and military leadership to confront the militia. Therefore it was not surprising that instead of the standard response to Hezbollah rocket attacks on an Israeli border post in late May 2006, Israel opted for a more robust response and shelled more than 20 Hezbollah positions, destroying most of them. The stage was set for a more intense conflict.

Chapter 3
The Israel-Hezbollah Conflict 2006

It is difficult to know how many goals Israel achieved by the fighting …, but both Israel and Hezbollah face major uncertainties in claiming any form of meaningful victory.

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The Hezbollah leadership did not try to cover up the developing strength of their rocket force and openly show-cased it. In fact in his May 2005 'Resistance and Liberation Day' speech, Sheikh Nasrallah, the charismatic leader of the Hezbollah, proudly announced that they possessed 'more than 12,000' rockets that had the potential to deter any Israeli attack on Lebanon.[104] While Israel appreciated the growing threat to its northern areas, when the attacks actually took place later in 2006, there was a visible lack of preparation and anticipation of the realities of the prolonged campaign that was to unflod. This has to be viewed as a central point in the larger understanding of the events that surround the war that erupted in June 2006. The 2006 Israel-Hezbollah conflict is known as the 'July War' in Lebanon and commonly referred to as the 'Second Lebanon War' in Israel.

The Conflict (12 July – 14 August 2006)

On 12 July 2006, Hezbollah troops entered Israel, under cover of a diversionary rocket and mortar attack on Israeli settlements, and attacked a border patrol. They killed three soldiers and captured two others. They then withdrew to southern Lebanon with their captives. The Hezbollah leadership claimed that the captives were taken to set up a prisoner exchange with Israel. An Israeli tank that attempted to follow the

retreating Hezbollah fighters was also destroyed with the loss of the four crew members. Another Israeli soldier died while attempting to recover the bodies of the tank crew. This attack was declared an 'act of war' by the Israeli Prime Minister and was the immediate cause for the outbreak of the conflict. The IDF responded by launching air, naval and ground attacks on Hezbollah targets across Lebanon.

From a political perspective, two actions stand out vividly as a precursor to what was to become a protracted conflict that did not throw up any clear victors from a military view point. First was the statement by Hezbollah leader, Sheikh Nasrallah, declaring that military operations would not facilitate return of the prisoners and that the only way they would be returned was in an exchange of prisoners. This was so far the clearest indication of the Hezbollah's preparedness to battle the IDF. The second was that the Israeli Government blamed the Lebanese Government for the attack. This was obviously denied by the Lebanese Prime Minister who stated that he did not condone it. However, this was an indication of the suspicion with which the Israelis viewed the Lebanese Government and their alleged involvement and tacit support for Hezbollah actions.

From the very beginning the conflict fell into a predictable pattern. The IDF used its massive firepower to destroy Hezbollah infrastructure and they in turn continued the rocket attacks on northern and central Israel.

On 13 July Israeli fighter jets bombed and forced the closure of the international airport near Beirut. The Hezbollah retaliated with heavy rocket attacks on the Israeli towns of Nahariya and Safed, killing two civilians and injuring 29 more. Israel thereafter imposed an air and sea blockade of Lebanon and also bombed the main Beirut–Damascus highway. On 14 July Israeli air strikes killed 60 civilians in Lebanon forcing the Hezbollah leadership to vow open war. In response Hezbollah leader Nasrallah is quoted as having said, You wanted an open war, and we are heading for an open war. We are ready for it'.[105]

Israeli ground offensive into Lebanon started on 23 July with the IDF Chief of Staff, Dan Halutz, going on record to say that the ground

offensive would be limited. The ground offensive seems to have had two main objectives. First was to clear a stretch of land in southern Lebanon wide enough to ensure that Hezbollah would find it difficult to target Israeli towns with any accuracy and effectiveness. Second was to reconnoitre and if possible retrieve the Israeli prisoners taken by the Hezbollah. The conflict continued with heavy air attacks by the IDF and retaliation through rocket attacks by the Hezbollah.

The IDF effectively isolated the southern part of Lebanon by attacking all the roads that connect it to the rest of the country in an effort to ensure that this would deny the Hezbollah supply of arms and ammunition. Israeli strategy seemed to hinge on cutting off Lebanon and thereby Hezbollah from any assistance they could receive from Syria or Iran. A secondary effect was that civilians in southern Lebanon could not flee the conflict zone for that very reason. Israel had also resorted to an information campaign by dropping leaflets asking the civilian population to leave the area of conflict. The Human Rights Watch reports that a number of vehicles that were attacked on the roads contained civilians obeying the warnings and trying to evacuate to safer areas.

Israel had expected this conflict also to proceed in the time honoured way of previous Arab-Israeli conflicts. It had so far been customary for the Arab forces to be overwhelmed by the quality and quantity of Israeli firepower. Similarly, the massive aerial response to the 12 July incursion by Hezbollah was expected to fully neutralise Hezbollah capabilities. However, it was the IDF that was in turn surprised. Several instances stand out as clear indications of Hezbollah's enduring tenacity. First, even as the Israeli Prime Minister declared that more than half the Hezbollah rocket batteries had been destroyed in the first five days of the war itself, a wave of missiles hit northern Israel. Second, Hezbollah attacked and damaged the missile corvette INS *Ani-Hanit* with a cruise missile that it was not even known to possess. Third, the failure of the IDF to kill or capture any Hezbollah leader of significance, despite several attempts, tarnished its pristine image as an extraordinarily effective operational force.

From the perspective of a trans-border Arab-Israeli conflict, the ground operations were strangely mild. Ground attacks took place largely from the second week, but they lacked the focus and power that in the past had characterised IDF's land assaults. The assaults were aimed at neutralising individual targets close to the border and did not seem to be planned as part of a larger overall land campaign. The IDF apparently relied on artillery bombardment and an air campaign to inflict the necessary damage. The rocket attacks by Hezbollah had been anticipated, but the sheer numbers and the tenacity of the attacks took almost everyone, the IDF, Israeli political leadership and international observers, by surprise. Some of the larger rockets were able to strike and damage the Israeli port city of Haifa and also inflict civilian casualties.

Coming as it did while the United States was completely bogged down in Iraq by irregular insurgents, Israel's inability to contain Hezbollah is seen as an indication of the declining capability of two of the world's best conventional powers. Israel's position as the region's mightiest and most innovative combat force[106] has been effectively questioned.

The Ceasefire—14 August 2006

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 is intended to resolve the 2006 Israel-Lebanon conflict. It was unanimously approved by the United Nations Security Council on 11 August 2006, and by the Lebanese Cabinet, which includes two members of Hezbollah, on 12 August 2006. On the same day the Hezbollah leader, Hassan Nasrallah, said that his militia would honour the call for a cessation of hostilities. The Israeli Cabinet approved the resolution on 13 August 2006 and the formal ceasefire came into effect on 14 August 2006 at 8 am local time.

The UN Resolution calls for the cessation of all Hezbollah attacks and Israeli offensive operations while providing Israel continued right of self defence. In addition it calls for the withdrawal of Israeli troops and the disarming of Hezbollah and any other armed group in Lebanon other than for UNIFIL and the Lebanese Army. If enforced, this would ensure

that the only armed organisation within Lebanon would belong to the Lebanese state. This is also in line with the Lebanese Cabinet decision of 27 July 2006 that required the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon. The UN resolution also forbade the re-entry of Hezbollah or any other paramilitary force from southern Lebanon. The success of the resolution in bringing peace and stability to the region will depend entirely on the effectiveness of its implementation. In fact this is true of earlier resolutions aimed at containing the volatile situation. For example if Resolution 1559 of 2004 that called for the disarmament of Hezbollah had been efficiently implemented, the current conflict would not have erupted and the new resolution would not even have been necessary.

The key to any progress in the peace process is to translate the resolution into action. This may not be as easy as it looks, given the ineffectiveness that the UNIFIL has so far displayed. However, the Lebanese Army has a vested interest in ensuring the peace process because many Lebanese leaders are keen to avoid a repeat of the destruction that was inflicted during this conflict. Even though Hezbollah is claiming victory in this round, the establishment of security in southern Lebanon, enforced by a strong Lebanese Army, would be a strategic victory not only for Israel, but also the more moderate Arab nations and the United States.

The Hezbollah Rocket Campaign

During the 33 days of the conflict, Israeli Police reported 4228 rocket impacts inside Israel, the density of strikes being assessed as the highest suffered by any geographical area in more than a decade.[107] The warheads were mainly anti-personnel which made the attacks lethal to anyone within the arc of impact. Almost one-third of the rockets that landed in Israel were within built-up areas thereby increasing the casualty probabilities. Even though only 53 Israeli civilian causalities have been reported, it is estimated that nearly 250 000 civilians from the north of the country evacuated to other areas. There was also extensive damage to hundreds of dwellings, public utilities and even to dozens of factories.

Israel's long standing policy of constructing public shelters proved its worth as passive defence against random rocket attacks and it is reported that more than 80 percent of casualties were ones that were caught in the open. Although Israeli counterattacks on rocket launches did not bring down the rate of fire throughout the conflict, it had a detrimental effect on the accuracy of fire.

Both Syria and Iran were believed to be the sources for the Hezbollah rockets and missiles, with the Iranian ones being considered more of a threat because of their longer range. Practically, the Iranian long-range rockets could target nearly every major Israeli city. Very close to the outbreak of the conflict, the IDF had exercised the scenario of an escalation in the border skirmishes by Israeli troops that was countered by a general rocket campaign by the Hezbollah targeting northern and central districts of Israel, as far as Tel Aviv. So the rocket campaign was definitely an anticipated reaction to the Government's decision to respond in force.

There are two different aspects of the rocket campaign that need to be analysed. Although interlinked, they need to be considered separately. They are interlinked only by the operational impact that the flow of events had on the campaign, and also has political implications.

The first is that although there is considerable evidence to prove that Hezbollah had been provided with Iranian long-range rockets, they were not used in any noticeable numbers during the conflict. One possibility for this situation is that they were all destroyed in the pre-emptive strike of 13 June. However, this has to be discounted because, by IDF's own reckoning, even after the strikes Hezbollah retained the capability, albeit in a reduced manner, to utilise the Iranian rockets. The most plausible explanation, therefore, is that Iran did not grant permission for Hezbollah to use the surviving rockets. This is corroborated by the ambivalent attitude Iran displayed during the early days of the conflict. At the outbreak of this conflict Iran was in a delicate situation vis-à-vis the dialogue with the G8 nations regarding its nuclear ambitions. It was very obviously advantageous for Iran to be seen as sort of neutral in

this conflict. The images of Iranian rockets destroying Israeli cities, with their attendant civilian casualties, would have been counterproductive to these negotiations. This situation reinforces the basic political aspect of the larger Arab-Israeli conflict, wherein each participant evaluates its own need ahead of the overall espoused aim.

The second aspect is the fact that, irrespective of the reason for the absence of the Iranian rockets, the Hezbollah continued its assault with Syrian rockets. This begs the question whether the rockets were stockpiled during the previous decade or were transported from Syria at the outbreak of the conflict. In either case, the implications for the IDF are serious. If the rockets had been stockpiled earlier, then it points towards the failure of intelligence and the capability to locate and destroy the cache in time. Of greater significance would be the failure of the IDF to negate the transfer of arms from Syria to Hezbollah after the outbreak of the conflict. If this was the case, it clearly indicates a lowering of the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities of the IDF and also the Air Force's inability to carry out timely and responsive targeting. There is an inherent danger in this situation that other militia groups waging irregular war against the state of Israel would take a salutary lesson from this failure.

A notable feature of the Hezbollah campaign was the innovative ways in which the rocket launchers were concealed from being detected by air surveillance. However, this was achieved at the cost of losing a great deal of flexibility and having the launchers fixed in predetermined directions. Considering that the rocket barrage was not precisely targeted and was general in nature this was not a great disadvantage. The Hezbollah displayed a remarkable amount of ingenuity in the operation of the launchers.

There is no doubt that the Hezbollah completely dominated the rocket campaign. They were able to control the rate of fire throughout the campaign, carrying out the severest attack on the last day of the campaign. All through the conflict they maintained a steady stream of rocket attacks into Israel. This was achieved without the availability of the Iranian rockets and in the face of continuous Israeli air attacks. The

rocket barrages of the last day were Hezbollah's demonstration to the world at large, of the efficacy of its command and control structure and the discipline and morale of its cadre, that had not been compromised in the 33 days of incessant fighting. The rocket attack campaign was an unmitigated success for the Hezbollah. By the same token, it was a clearly visible setback for the IDF.

The IDF relied mainly on air attacks, from both manned and unmanned platforms, to suppress the Hezbollah rocket fire. The immediate aerial response was pre-planned and could be counted as successful because it managed to achieve the aim of neutralising known caches of rockets. However, it did not have any tangible effect on the rocket attacks that continued unabated. A number of raids were also conducted by Israel's Special Forces behind Hezbollah lines to destroy equipment and eliminate personnel. Their success and effect is hard to judge. In the final analysis, it is clear that from a tactical perspective, both the efforts were not successful in negating Hezbollah's capability to carry out the rocket attacks.

There is now a great deal of statistics available regarding the number of launchers that were active and also destroyed by the IDF on a daily basis. Some of this shows that around 75 percent of launchers that became active on any day were destroyed. The location and neutralisation of these small, mobile targets is technically a remarkable feat. Only a force that is attuned to being inherently innovative could have achieved any appreciable success in such a mission. Therefore, the success rate of 75 percent is a very creditable tactical performance by the IDF. This extremely impressive achievement however was not sufficient to cripple the Hezbollah. The ground reality was that the number of incoming rockets did not diminish throughout the conflict. In fact, the intensity of the attacks steadily grew.

Very clearly the IDF's attempts at suppressing the rocket attacks did not succeed, viewed from any perspective. The ability of Hezbollah to continue their rocket campaign against the heavy onslaught of one of the most advanced conventional forces in the world by itself became a measure of their success. In a contemporary redefinition of the assessment

of the end-state, Israel's failure to stop the attacks is being regarded as Hezbollah's victory.

The primary impact of the campaign was that surface-to-surface missiles and rockets came to be acknowledged as defining weapons in the arsenal of irregular militia, especially in the context of the Middle East scenario. Their predominance will increase in the future, considering the Hezbollah success in their use. Rockets and their launchers, especially the quick deployable variety, are complex targets to track and neutralise. This in turn will require the development of adequate countermeasures and active defences to protect civilian infrastructure. There will also be a need to reduce the reaction time to a few seconds between launcher location and kinetic response.

From an Israeli perspective, the only positive to come out was the reaction of the general public. The rocket attack campaign demonstrated the extraordinary resilience and perseverance of the general Israeli population. They endured the ordeal with tremendous fortitude and constantly strove to maintain a modicum of normalcy. Like other populations under attack in previous wars, the disruption to normal daily life and casualties did not in any way lead to a breakdown of morale. In fact support for the IDF never wavered. It was also reported that at least 60 percent of businesses and manufacturing units continued to maintain their peacetime production level. There was however, economic loss in the north. But Israel's overall economy did not display any visible signs of stress and after the actual fighting was over went on to boom as a significant year in Israel's economic history.

Israel's Primary Strategic Aim

To draw any worthwhile observations from a conflict, even ones not as complex in their conduct and background as the Israel-Lebanon conflict, it will be necessary to understand clearly the aims of both the protagonists. In this particular case this would be a difficult task because the official aim of Israel is obscured in a web of contraindicative information given

out publicly. Similarly the Hezbollah did not specify their aims, before or during the conflict, other than in terms of rhetoric of their leader. The real aims can be however, gleaned by the analysis of the events as they unfolded and the actions that were initiated by both sides.

Undoubtedly the Israel's primary strategic aim in launching this offensive was to deal a debilitating blow to Hezbollah. It may be incorrect to depict it as the destruction of Hezbollah, but it is clear that the IDF planned their campaign with a view to making the Hezbollah completely irrelevant militarily, politically, socially and economically, at least for the next two decades.

Israel conceived a three-pronged strategy to achieve the aim of long-term neutralisation of Hezbollah. The strategy revolved around Israel's formidable air power and the inherent asymmetry that it brought about against an adversary that did not posses any credible air power or air defence. There is no reason to believe that casualty aversion was one of the factors that prompted the adoption of an air power centred strategy, especially since the IDF historically has not been averse to absorbing casualties when needed. However, the conflict in 1982 and the resulting decade-long, attrition-filled occupation of southern Lebanon may have been an influencing factor in the decision to limit the use of ground forces.

The basic tactics adopted by the IDF were to ensure that Hezbollah was not supplied by either Syria or Iran by direct interdiction of the possible supply routes, while also striking at Lebanese infrastructure with no direct connection to the Hezbollah. This seems to have generated an unforeseen effect with even the neutral Lebanese population blaming Israel for wanton destruction. Within the first few days of the conflict it became apparent that it would not be a normal run-of-the-mill reprisal raid against Hezbollah strongholds to achieve tactical and operational aims alone. This was the first time that Israel was in conflict with a state that was ruled by a consensual government with legal, political and moral acceptance. Therefore, the strategy had to take into account these

changed circumstances, wherein the assumed moral privileged status of Israel could not be used as a given superiority.

In combination, the three complementary arms of the overall strategy—political, socio-economic and military—were designed to ensure the demise of Hezbollah as a viable entity almost on a permanent basis.

Political Strategy. The Hezbollah was primarily a Shiite organisation, but garnered support from the other religious denominations that coexisted in southern Lebanon. The political goal of Israel was to alter the perception of the non-Shiite general population regarding Hezbollah and thereby negate any moral or material support. This was to be achieved by regular and intense disruption of the normal life of the majority of Lebanese population by enforcing a blockade. The blockades were effected on land, by air and through the sea. The bombing of the international airport and its subsequent closure was oriented towards this purpose. The effective disruption of life by the IDF undermined the legitimacy and efficacy of the UN force UNIFIL. It was presumed that the blockade would also have the tertiary effect of changing the political balance in southern Lebanon sufficiently to allow the Lebanese Army to take military action against the Hezbollah on the ground.

Socio-economic Strategy. Hezbollah relied on the large Shiite community for economic support and to provide recruits for the fighting arm. Further, its basic claim to legitimacy was that they were fighting to right the wrongs that had been heaped on the community by Israel. Israel therefore, decided to wage a psychological campaign to discredit Hezbollah and change the opinion of the large Shiite population on which their strength was based. This was an attempt at demonstrating mainly to the Shiite population in Lebanon that the basic reason for their ongoing troubles was the actions of Hezbollah. To reinforce the psychological effect, the IDF targeted predominantly Shiite areas for aerial attacks.

Military Strategy. In the six years since the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon, Hezbollah had stockpiled an enormous quantity of military hardware. In order to put an end to the constant

threat of attack Israel had to deal a devastating blow to the military capability of the Hezbollah. This was sought to be achieved by destroying its infrastructure, denying resupply by disrupting the road network, destroying its command network by assassinating its leadership and reducing its fighting effectiveness by killing as many fighters as possible.

Measure of Success

The measure of success in any campaign is the clear achievement of set goals and end-state. Since the primary aim of the campaign was to be achieved by the completion of three mutually supporting strategies—political, socio-economic and military—the quantum of its success or failure would also have to be considered against those goals. At the outset, it is clearly apparent, a year after the conflict, that the campaign was not successful. In fact some analysts have gone to the extent of categorising the campaign as a "blatant failure."[108] A more realistic assessment would be that the campaign was a not a politico-strategic success from an Israeli perspective, but from the tactical viewpoint of the IDF they were able to achieve limited success.

Politically, the Hezbollah retained its structure and increased its influence. This can be understood by looking at Saudi Arabia's reaction to the conflict that changed from a neutral stand at the beginning to almost complete support for Hezbollah by the end. Hezbollah concentrated on focussing public attention on the territorial invasion of Lebanon and thus deflected the Israeli efforts at proving to the public that support for Hezbollah was the real cause of all the problems. The first goal of political isolation and subsequent irrelevance, sought to be achieved by militarily enforced blockades, did not succeed.

The notion of the Lebanese Army being able to initiate action against the Hezbollah was flawed and perhaps rather naïve from its inception. Historically the Lebanese Army has not ever been effective in enforcing its will on militia groups and it was wishful thinking to expect them to become effective against Hezbollah, the strongest militia force yet to have

formed in Lebanon, just because of a possible change of public opinion. Even Israeli observers have gone on record that it was a mistake to think that Israeli military action would persuade the Lebanese Government to try to disarm Hezbollah.[109]

From a socio-economic perspective, the devastating attacks on Shiite strongholds do not seem to have alienated the community from Hezbollah. In fact, the collateral damage suffered by the community in terms of civilian deaths and the destruction of houses that created a large number of homeless refugees only seem to have enhanced the support for the group. The Hezbollah fighters were seen in a nationalistic mould and provided both moral and physical support as the conflict raged on. Although Hezbollah, or rather Lebanon as a whole, suffered extreme economic distress because of the destruction brought on by IDF actions, the socio-economic cohesion that sustained Hezbollah did not break.

Of the three strategies, military action comparatively had the most visible success. The military achieved the initial objective of striking and neutralising key targets that it was aware of before the beginning of the conflict. These were mainly medium and long-range rockets and missiles. However, the command centres of these systems were not targeted effectively. It is a moot point that the command centres were mobile and therefore difficult to locate and if destroyed could be set up again within a few hours with the use of portable computers. Further, the short-range rockets were not silenced and even at the cessation of hostilities, it was estimated that the Hezbollah had more than 7000 Katyusha rockets in their possession.

But viewed unilaterally even military goals were not achieved. At the end of the conflict, the two IDF prisoners—whose release was the ostensible reason for the start of the military action—were still in the custody of the Hezbollah. At the tactical level the IDF destroyed a large number of buildings and infrastructure that it claimed were either Hezbollah hide-outs or areas that supported Hezbollah actions. This did not in any way contribute to the IDF moving further forward in achieving its strategic, operational or tactical aims. In fact, the IDF was slowly brought to a

stalemate situation wherein any of offensive action led to immediate reprisals from Hezbollah and condemnation from the international community. Even then the difficulty faced by Israel in achieving its more strategic and long-term aims led to the IDF escalating its attacks to encompass even parts of Lebanon that were not essentially Hezbollah dominated areas. However this only led to furthering the stalemate and increasing the perception of Israel as the aggressor in an unequal war. In a very basic way, military action did not bring about the successful achievement of any of the goals set out by Israel.

Another clear measure of success of a military campaign is the perception of the general public that supported the action at the end of it. Viewed from such a perspective, and analysing the publications that have since appeared in the free press, the impression is of a mixed reaction to an inconclusive war. The view tends more towards an acceptance that the campaign was not a success because it did not enhance the security of the nation. It has been accepted in Israel that asymmetric warfare works and that Hezbollah and other such non-state entities can be extremely effective. There is also a belief gaining ground that fixed but narrow demilitarised and secure areas at the borders cannot ensure security from infiltrating irregular fighters and will not provide guaranteed protection to Israel.

Over the past 60 years, Israel has consciously grown into the region's only military 'super power'. This fact has been demonstrated in the earlier Arab-Israeli wars in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982 and the 1992 and 1996 incursions into Lebanon itself. In this conflict, the fact that Israel was not able to stamp its military authority unmistakeably on its conduct and outcome was a strategic failure. This does not in any way indicate that Hezbollah was able to defeat Israel militarily—far from it. The failure has been of the carefully cultivated and demonstrated strategy of deterrence through the implicit threat of overwhelming military force on which Israel has based its security over many years.

The Validity of Deterrence

For six long years, from Israel's unilateral withdrawal from southern Lebanon to the outbreak of the Second Lebanon War in July 2006, Israel tried to contain the Hezbollah threat. However, their efforts were diluted by the need to contain a renewed Palestine uprising and also tempered with a reluctance to open a second front, with the risk of escalation and Syrian interference, if a military response was required. Added to this was the economic growth that was apparent in northern Israel after 2000, when normal life was not being disrupted by random rocket attacks. From a political viewpoint, it was therefore more important to exercise restraint even under provocation of cross-border terrorist attacks. Within the Israeli leadership, both political and military, there was still hope that deterrence would keep the peace, although this was diminishing by 2004–05.

Even though restraint was the watchword for any action to be initiated, the IDF which considered Hezbollah a mere nuisance in 2000 had by 2005 upgraded the assessment and clearly considered the group a strategic threat.[110] Paradoxically there was still a prevalent belief within the higher command of the IDF that diplomacy would minimise the threat from the Hezbollah. There was also a tacit understanding that there could not be a purely military solution to the vexed problem.

The reasons for the failure of deterrence to prevail are many. Primarily, deterrence can only work if the party being deterred has no means to counter the deterrent capability of the other party. If the strength of one side is so overwhelming, then it is possible to keep the other side on an even keel. But the moment the edge is reduced or blunted, conflict is almost certain to erupt. In the past few decades, especially after the end of the Cold War, the concept of deterrence itself has become a less than effective way to ensure peace. The advent of asymmetry, that has engulfed almost the entire world in some form or the other, has so diminished the efficacy of a deterrent posture within the national security paradigm that its validity is itself being questioned.

That the Israeli Government continued to believe that deterrence would work as a security posture, even when global indications were to the contrary, is indicative of one or both of the following two factors. The first is that there was a reluctance to accept the inevitable changes taking place internationally in respect of the concept of deterrence as a basis to formulate national security policy. The second is the reluctance on the part of the IDF to bring the conflict to a boil because of the complex nature of a ground campaign that would have to be conducted against a guerrilla force that had overwhelming local support. This was expressed by Major General Udi Adam, the IDF Chief of Northern Command in an interview when he said, 'I do not believe that anyone wants to go back into Lebanon'.[111]

There is also enough evidence now to believe that the Israeli leadership did not consider the rocket forces of the Hezbollah to be anything other than a poorly trained tactical fighting arm that could be comprehensively dealt with by the military. This was a costly mistake. The Hezbollah rocket attacks completely invalidated military deterrence as a conflict inhibiting concept.

Deterrence is essentially built on perceptions, mainly of potential adversaries. The deterrent capability of pure conventional military might has been diminishing over the years and has been in terminal decline in the past decade. In the case of the Hezbollah, the conventional superiority of the IDF was not considered a powerful enough factor to stop them from carrying out attacks into Israel territory. This was because of two reasons. First, the asymmetry that they had worked hard to create during the relatively uninterrupted five-year period made them, at least psychologically, disdainful of the IDF's capabilities. Second, they believed that Israel relied unnaturally on the perceived superiority of their forces to create a deterrent situation that no irregular force would want to question. By 2006, Hezbollah was ready and willing to challenge this paradigm.

The major observation to be considered from this conflict vis-à-vis deterrence is that superior and demonstrated military might, even in

all operating environments simultaneously, does not guarantee the establishment and continued maintenance of peace. This is particularly the case if the less capable belligerent has the capacity to sustain low intensity guerrilla warfare intent on slow and indiscriminate attrition. With this conflict the concept of deterrence has lost its acceptability as a clearly viable option of choice in national security considerations.

The Failure of Deterrence: Implications

There is no doubt that the concept of deterrence, till now the inviolable cornerstone of Israeli security strategy, is now a debatable issue. Israel's long-term security has been built on deterrence, either through overwhelming conventional force or through the implicit threat of the use of nuclear forces. The equation is no more the same. This has serious repercussions not only for the IDF, but for the context, strategy and tools available to ensure Israel's national security through continued dominance of the politico-economic-military environment in the region.

From its violent formation in 1948, Israel's sheer military power—equipment, innovative concepts, tactical brilliance, tenacity, fighting ethos and unquestioned patriotism—has been accepted as the final and absolute guarantee of its security. Notwithstanding the peace treaties that Israel has with Egypt and Jordan, the concerted ethos of the nation is that the entire region is hostile to its very existence. In this situation it is not surprising that the IDF is seen as the final bastion of national security. This belief was greatly reinforced in the public memory by the huge effort that the IDF undertook, at great cost in casualties, to reverse the setbacks suffered in the first three days of the Yom Kippur war in October 1973. In this case the IDF was able to avert a potentially destructive crisis perpetuated by some mistaken political beliefs regarding the nation's security strategy.

Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon in 1982 was not an unequivocal success and also provided the impetus for an accelerated growth of Hezbollah as a fighting force. The IDF's failure to anticipate this growth

and appreciate the increased capability of the Hezbollah over the period of the occupation contributed directly to the Israeli withdrawal in May 2000. The underestimation of Hezbollah capabilities that led to a protracted and inconclusive war, which in the bargain almost completely undermined Israeli security strategy, borders on incompetence.

The concept of deterrence can only work when the potential adversary has tangible physical assets to lose or be destroyed. Hezbollah strategy was to provoke a full-scale ground offensive retaliation from Israel by rocket attacks. Thereafter, the aim was to kill as many Israeli soldiers as possible, since Hezbollah technically did not possess any ground to be conquered. In a clear and simple manner, the Hezbollah completely brushed aside not only the force projection capability of the IDF, but also made its doctrine contextually irrelevant.

In the final analysis what stands out starkly is that deterrence based on technologically superior conventional forces is not always infallible as a security paradigm. A seasoned and determined enemy using innovative asymmetry will be able to undermine the security of a powerful industrial state and leave it exposed to further security degradation. Almost total belief in the effectiveness of deterrence to ensure national security, combined with a myopic underestimation of the adversary was the undoing of the myth of invincibility that the IDF carried so far.

Israeli Military Doctrine Rattled

The first failure of Israeli military doctrine hinged on two miscalculations at the tactical level. These had effects that percolated upwards into operational and strategic level doctrinal thought. First, the lack of appreciation within the Israeli leadership, both military and political, that artillery rockets when used indiscriminately and in sufficient numbers against civilian infrastructure has a strategic impact. On the other hand, Hezbollah fully understood that the rockets attacks would be an effective asymmetric tool to deflect the superiority of IDF's conventional warfighting edge and in a circumspect manner the concept of deterrence. The Israeli leadership

viewed the rocket attacks as a purely tactical military threat of minimum importance.

Second, the military mindset within the IDF also considered their superior firepower as being capable of neutralising the rocket threat. This is apparent because there is sufficient evidence to prove that the IDF was completely aware of the stockpiling of rockets that the Hezbollah was carrying out. The confidence that firepower, mainly from the air, would be able to counter it in short order also meant that sufficient intelligence was not gathered about the rocket strike capability of Hezbollah. The Israeli doctrine was built around the firepower of the IDF alone.

The short history of Israel had provided sufficient direct clues that firepower alone would never be sufficient to counter the rocket threat. But Israel, for some unaccountable reason, continued to bank on a doctrine that adhered to a preponderance of high technology enabled firepower as the basis for their response to asymmetric attacks. Historically, the PLO rocket attacks of the 1980s could only be contained by ruthless ground action in 1982. In 1993 and then again in 1996, the same Hezbollah stopped the rocket attacks only when political concessions were made. Therefore, the failure of this doctrine when applied under similar conditions should have been very apparent at the outset itself. However, the leadership opted not to heed the warnings rooted in history.

The second failure was even more unexpected and difficult to expalin. The IDF has always been in the forefront of innovation, and its flexibility is a competency taken for granted. In this case, when the air assault did not silence or even reduce the tempo of the rocket attacks, the IDF reluctantly moved to a ground offensive mode. However, an uncharacteristic inertia within the IDF created a hesitancy to change completely the direction of the campaign and realign the operational focus. This created a scenario wherein the political time frame available to conclude a conflict on favourable terms ran out before the IDF was able to achieve the war aims, even partially. Wrong doctrinal emphasis led to what is being termed as the first strategic failure of the IDF.

If anything, the defence establishment in Israel is extremely robust and pragmatic when it comes to clinically analysing its failures. Within a few months of the 2006 Lebanon debacle, Israeli defence doctrine had been revised. In January 2007, a fourth factor—defence—was added to the three traditional doctrinal factors of deterrence, pre-emption and offence. The defensive factor was to apply to Israel's home front, effectively the defence of Israeli civilians against rocket or missile attack. This is a remarkable change to a doctrine that did not envisage the IDF being part of the active and passive defence against irregular and asymmetric attacks on civilian infrastructure.

The Failure of Grand Strategy

Two fundamental failures are impossible to miss in any analysis of the performance of the Israeli political and military leadership, and the IDF during this campaign. First is the failure of the highest level of national security decision-making to have a comprehensive link to ensure that military strategy is clearly derived from clearly articulated grand strategy.

The grand strategy was based on two presumptions. First was that as weak as the Lebanese Government was it would take advantage of the pressure that the IDF would put on the Hezbollah and initiate military action to clear southern Lebanon of Hezbollah strongholds. The second, flowing from the first, was that the success of the Lebanese military action would automatically generate a political process that would be conducive to long-term peace. Israeli political leaders worked on the premise that Lebanon would become a regular 'normal' state once the IDF had crushed the Hezbollah that was running a state-within-a state. They saw military force as the instrument that would strengthen the Lebanese Government and that the operation was 'an almost unique opportunity to change the rules in Lebanon'.[112]

The Israeli Government declared that the primary aim of the campaign was to put in place a process that would bring about a fundamental and long-term change in the political reality of Lebanon. This was to

be achieved by creating a sufficiently strong regime in Beirut that could be effectively responsible for the entire territory of Lebanon. In effect, the end-state was to be a stable and self governing Lebanon that could deal with the problems of insurgent militia operating from within its borders.[113]

While the aim of the campaign is laudable in an esoteric fashion, the military did not assess and tinge it with reality. If this had been done it would have been possible for the senior military leaders, who are also part of the grand strategy formulation process, to clarify the anomaly in the process that was to be set in motion. That military force alone would not be capable of achieving a radical political change and a completely socio-political end-state should have been apparent at the outset. Instead the IDF leadership believed that the use of force could effectively change the political equation in Lebanon.

The military strategy devised in pursuance of the stated grand strategy was again formulated without considering previous campaigns that had similar aims. The stark lessons of the campaign in 1982 were all but forgotten, at least in the initial planning phase of this campaign. From the very beginning of the campaign, the IDF targeted infrastructure far into northern Lebanon in the mistaken belief that these raids would pressure the Lebanese Government to take action against the Hezbollah in the south.

In the contemporary world, force does not create new political environments, it only creates aberrations that fester and bubble almost continuously. When the force employed is constrained in a manner to make it only partially effective, the aim is almost completely out of reach. In this instance, the fear of escalation led to the political restriction on the IDF to not attack targets in Syrian territory. A great deal of political manoeuvring and posturing took place to placate Syria while it was actively resupplying Hezbollah with the latest weaponry. This led to a complete breakdown of the linkages between grand and military strategy. It was almost as if the Israeli Government was sanctioning the resupply

of weapons to the Hezbollah so that they could be brought to bear on the IDF and other Israeli civilian areas.

Whether by design or because of a lack of strategic insight, the attitude and actions of the Israeli Government were the complete opposite of traditional Israeli stands in such circumstances. There was always the unspoken threat of escalation that acted as an effective deterrent to the possible intervention or even covert support by other Arab nations. By reorientating their strategic posture, the Israeli Government instituted a grand strategy that was bound to fail, and fail it did, emphatically.

At the outbreak of the war Israel was operating under favourable political conditions, both in the region and internationally. The failure of its grand strategy, compounded by the confused concept of what victory over Hezbollah entailed that prevailed in the leadership, led to an indecisive war. The less than admirable outcome, from an Israeli perspective, is something that the nation will have to come to terms with, sooner rather than later.

Military Failures

The second fundamental failure falls more in the purview of the military leadership alone in that serious strategic errors were made based on the presumed preparedness of a flexible and agile IDF, which proved to be incorrect. Even as the ceasefire was established, it was apparent to any observer that the IDF had made some fundamental strategic errors. Uncharacteristically for the IDF, the errors straddle the entire operation at the strategic level, from preparation through the conduct and well into the aftermath of the conflict. The base outcome was the emergence of Hezbollah in a better-poised stance and as an even greater threat to Israel.

Preparation. The earlier conflicts inside Lebanon doubtlessly influenced the thinking in terms of preparation for conflict. The morass that the IDF found itself in after the occupation of southern Lebanon in 1996 and the difficulty it experienced in pulling out without political and

strategic repercussions were still very visible to the planners. Therefore, the reluctance to plan or prepare for a full fledged conventional military campaign, although it cannot be condoned, is perhaps understandable at the operational and tactical level. Preparation, or what little was done, was not based on any clear analysis of Hezbollah capabilities. In fact the general staff did not consider a land war in Lebanon as a possibility.

Combat Preparedness. In addition to the strategic level lack of preparedness, at the operational level, there was a visible lack of combat experience. It is acknowledged that no amount of training can substitute for actual combat experience. The IDF had not dealt with any adversary of consequence for a long time. Even the actions of 1982 were against a poorly armed and almost completely disorganised Palestine resistance.

Resource Constraints. The fact that the IDF did not consider Hezbollah a credible and imminent threat is underlined by the fact that there was a schedule already drawn up to gradually reduce the length of conscript service as well as reserve duty liability. Further, the Government had cut the funds for reserve training by US$800 million between 2001 and 2006. In addition, budgetary constraints enforced by the civilian financial controllers made the IDF discontinue production of the top-of-the-line Merkava tanks, leading to a reduction in the size of tank formations. Most of the tanks were not fitted with anti-missile systems and the air force did not have bunker buster bombs, both the result of financial stringency exercised by the IDF.

Intelligence Disconnect. The army was not geared for operations in southern Lebanon and only expected a slight increase in the small and localised skirmish-style missions to take place. Even the few Special Forces units that received some degree of training for operations within southern Lebanon were hamstrung by lack of intelligence when ordered to cross the border. This emanated from the refusal by military intelligence heads to transfer collected and available data on Hezbollah positions to field units. At the very least this indicates a disconnection not only between higher echelon command and field units, but also a general failure to accept reality.

Leadership's Analysis. The military leadership, and by extension the political leadership, did not envisage the operation as a war, but considered all action against the Hezbollah more in the light of retaliatory raids. The delay in mobilising the reserves, a first action in all other wars that the IDF had to fight, combined with the non-declaration of a state of emergency is a clear indication of the mindset of the IDF leadership who considered this operation only a limited military action.

Countering the Rockets. The Katyusha rockets were dismissed by the IDF as of limited effect because of their short range, inaccuracy and very small warhead. This was true of single rockets, but the strategic impact of simultaneous, as well as cumulative, rocket strikes was not considered by the leadership. Although only an estimated 25 per cent of the rockets fired into Israel hit urban or populated areas, it was sufficient to completely disrupt normal life in northern Israel. About 300 000 people left their homes to seek refuge further south and over one million people lived in bomb shelters. The IDF had no plans to counter this and only in the last stages of the war did the curtailment of the actual rocket attacks become an operational goal.

Civilian Resilience. Both the political and military leaders underestimated the resilience of the larger Israeli society, resulting in the reluctance to commit ground troops to battle. The fear of public opinion going against the war and the incumbent government in the face of almost certain casualties was almost palpable. In hindsight, this reveals the complete misalignment between the Israeli leadership and the people. The leadership had for some years considered the public stamina for conflict as the weakest link in the national defence structure. The ability of the new Israeli society to withstand the troubles and tribulations of a war was openly doubted by military commanders. Historically, the Israeli society has always been very resilient, even during wars of attrition. In 2006, the population would have absorbed greater casualties, if by doing so the Hezbollah threat could have been effectively ended. The misunderstanding of the societal strength not only made for a lost opportunity, but also showed up as an almost fatal weakness in the IDF.

There are other factors, some equally important, that led the IDF into a dead-end situation. Israel's military industry had developed and mastered the technology that could produce effective anti-missile defences against short-range missiles. However, these had not been inducted operationally, mainly because of lack of financial support. This was a strategic blunder. Only in February 2007 did the Government approve the development and deployment of comprehensive defensive weapon systems against missile attacks—short, medium and long range.

The main failure of the IDF stemmed from its reluctance, at least at the higher level of leadership, to commit to a conventional and cohesive ground campaign. This has been attributed mainly to two reasons, casualty aversion that seems to have become an over-sensitive issue and the insistence of the IDF Chief of Staff, Dan Halutz, to resort to a ground invasion of any kind only as a last resort.[114]

The IDF could have used this opportunity to deliver a debilitating blow to Hezbollah capability and perhaps also contained their spread terminally. However, the opportunity was squandered and the failure already seems to have emboldened regional radicals to question Israeli power. Hezbollah by itself has become a more entrenched and will try to build from this position of strength into a more acceptable force with increasing political overtones.

The intensive inquiry that Dan Halutz instituted before his resignation will no doubt bring out the mistakes committed at all levels within the IDF. The IDF is a very robust military force and in the past has been able to absorb lessons from its mistakes and take stringent remedial measures. In the current situation, an increase in the defence budget would address a number of lacunae like longer training times and modernisation of equipment. Correcting strategic conceptual deficiencies will be hard and a long drawn process. It is very obvious that the IDF and indeed the political leadership have to infuse better clarity into the blurred strategic impasse that they seem to have reached because of benign neglect of fundamental realities.

The conflict also highlighted some basic truths. Israel is a strong and resilient state with the necessary spirit and morale to fight its enemies. It can still rebuild the military power backed deterrence on which its national security is founded. The public perception of the IDF as invincible has taken a slight downturn, but there is an underlying belief that the rank and file of the IDF are still the best fighters in the region. This is bolstered by the fact that the IDF conclusively won each and every tactical encounter with the Hezbollah.

The writing on the wall is clear—if the IDF assimilates all the lessons, they will have clear victory in the next round. Although another conflict in similar circumstances would be unfortunate, the indecisive outcome of the 2006 conflict mandates it so.

Air Power—Broken Promises?

> There is no reason to disbelieve the IAF's claim that towards the end of the war every launcher that opened fire was quickly eliminated. Yet … it may well be that all the effort that had been made to achieve this impressive technological feat was misdirected. Simply put, the IAF punch went into thin air.
>
> Uzi Rubin
> Founding Director, Missile Defence Organisation, Israel

In the last two decades, in nations across the globe, air power has become a politically accepted first-choice capability. Nowhere is this more prominently noticeable than in the doctrinal ethos of the IDF. The IDF has relied on its overwhelmingly superior air power capabilities in all its wars to ensure victory at their terms. In fact this implicit reliance on air power is matched only by the military forces of the United States as most other nations tend to have a more all-round strategy to warfighting. The IDF clearly believed that land forces were also critical to victory,

considering the lack of strategic geographic depth of the nation. The 1991 Gulf war and the much touted '*Desert Storm*' influenced doctrinal development within the IDF both directly and indirectly. There was a distinct tendency to swing more in favour of air power. In addition, from a political perspective, air strikes—especially against targets that did not have any tangible air defence—was more acceptable than a ground incursion because it promised greater destructive capability and lesser probability of own casualties.

There is also ample evidence to indicate that the Israeli leadership had taken the Kosovo campaign as the epitome of the success of air power. The Kosovo campaign's reliance on air power, the swift victory and the obvious painlessness of it, in terms of own casualties, made it a worthy example to follow.[115] The interpretation of Kosovo as an unadulterated success of air power alone greatly reinforced the already strong faith in the decisiveness of air power. However, the completely different context and adversary strategies—one of almost conventional methods and the other reliant on guerrilla style operations—were not factored into the equation when the basic plans were being drawn up. Further, in Kosovo there was always the implicit threat of a massive ground invasion, which some analysts consider an important factor in the Serbian surrender. The fact that mobilisation was not ordered as part of the build up to the conflict was not lost on the Hezbollah, who knew that a ground offensive would only materialise as a dribble and not as an unbeatable onslaught.

Opportunistic leadership within the IAF was also able to capitalise on this development and influence the political leadership in favour of air power. It came to be believed that air power capabilities could be expanded to fulfil the requirement to neutralise emerging new threats and contain new security challenges. Therefore, it was not surprising that the IDF operational plans for the 2006 conflict placed air power as the centrepiece in its larger strategy.

Further, for the first time in its history, the IDF was being led by an aviator who had commanded the Air Force for more than four years before becoming the Chief of Staff. Dan Halutz was an ardent air power

enthusiast, as he should be, and he advocated a basic strategy of using an airpower-dominated and Special Forces-assisted combination to overcome a diffused enemy fighting a low-intensity conflict. The nature of the adversary and the methodology that they employed in prosecuting the conflict negated all the advantages that this strategy espoused. In fact, from the outset, it exposed the fundamental flaw in this strategy by denying the IDF control of the tempo of operations.

Essentially, the senior leadership came out of the conflict looking like parochial air power advocates believing unrealistic claims of what air power could achieve. This may be partly true, but judgement on this can only be made with any certainty if the directions they received from the political leaders are also made available in a non-partisan manner to be analysed.

At the operational level, the IAF excelled. They flew in excess of 8000 fighter sorties and 2000 attack helicopter sorties without any combat loss. Tactically they were extremely effective and the weapon delivery accuracy was reported to be approximately 10 metres. There is also unanimous agreement from the land forces that close air support was very responsive and well coordinated with artillery support.

The IAF was also quick to realise that there had been a failure of intelligence regarding the Syrian supply network for the replenishment of rockets to the Hezbollah. It set up a 24-hour seven-day surveillance network, well integrated with strike capabilities to cover the entire southern Lebanon. This sensor-shooter network was extremely effective and the IAF was able to destroy missile launchers within minutes after they were fired. However, there are still doubts regarding the success of the interdiction missions that were flown to disrupt the supply routes and storage facilities as the Hezbollah did not run short of rockets. There are also indications that Hezbollah carried out a concerted effort at random dispersal of their assets, making a number of IAF raids hit facilities that did not contain any equipment of value.

There is no doubt that the IDF had complete superiority in the realm of conventional warfare because of better training and highly sophisticated equipment, ably supported by well-conceived concepts of operations. This superiority has been demonstrated time and again in force-on-force conventional warfare for more than 50 years. However, in campaigns against irregular adversaries like the Hezbollah who have no discernable centres of gravity or even high-value targets, conventional military advantages do not necessarily translate to victory. Hezbollah did not have any industrial centres or even robust command and control nodes that could have become high-value assets to be targeted. Terrorist or insurgent groups do not normally present lucrative targets for aerial attack and the opportunity to carry out effective strategic bombing that would produce the desired effects against such adversaries is even rarer.[116]

The amount of effort needed to subdue an adversary will always be greater than the combination of the total means at their disposal and the strength of their will.[117] By cleverly manipulating the media and carefully husbanding the waning support within the local population at the beginning of the conflict, the Hezbollah Leader, Hasan Nasrallah, proved to be a master at influencing public perceptions thus ensuring continued support. The use of media consolidated the will of Hezbollah fighters and their supporters and ensured that the means available was also being replenished. Paradoxically, the same media reports played a role in eroding support for the IDF actions in the international community and sapped the strength of will in Israel. Although Israel's right to retaliate for the kidnapping of two soldiers was accepted initially, as the conflict progressed the proportionality and discrimination—two cardinal principles of the application of lethal force—came to be questioned by the wider international community. This was a clear case of the media having a very forceful effect on the perceptions of right and wrong.

From even a cursory analysis it is possible to understand that air power did not achieve the strategic objective. However, the air action cannot be written off as complete and total failure. Air power did destroy more than half the rocket stock of the Hezbollah and also killed about 500 of

the organisation's most advanced fighters. This forced a majority of the Hezbollah fighters to move north of the Litany River, diluting the rocket attacks on northern Israel. Hasan Nasrallah admitted after the war that if he had anticipated the fierceness of the Israeli response, he may not have authorised the kidnapping of the soldiers that triggered the war.[118] Even if this statement was made to assuage the feelings of the Lebanese who suffered the maximum, it indicates that there would be a reluctance to push Israel too far the next time. In a roundabout manner this could be thought of as a reinstatement of the concept of deterrence in the larger security strategy.

In the more than 100 years of the use of air power as a weapon of war, if there is a constant thread that can be discerned, it is the unending enthusiasm of air power aficionados to exaggerate greatly the ability of air power to be a weapon of political warfare. This trend is visible from Douhet to the present and this campaign was no exception. There is no evidence to suggest that air strikes in any way affected the decision-making of the Hezbollah leadership. In fact the IAF strikes increased the hostility of the larger Arab world towards Israel and almost forced the international community to demand a ceasefire from Israel. Historically it is seen that escalation of a conflict to force political decisions does not normally have the desired effect.

Observations from Visible Results

The analysis of information so far made available indicates that every campaign has to be contextualised correctly in terms of applying the appropriate lessons gleamed from previous wars. No two wars are the same, but some are more similar to each other than others. There is a clear necessity to understand the strategy of the adversary before laying down the strategic context of the campaign for own forces.

Air power is a very potent force projection tool. But it cannot be equated to a panacea for all evils. Ensuring national security involves the employment of the appropriate tools that match the circumstances and

evolving environment, even if that points to having to absorb casualties. This has to be understood at the highest levels of decision-making. National leadership is in the business of ensuring adequate protection of their state and ensuring the welfare of their citizens, even if this means having to take unpalatable decisions.

A look at the historical use of conventional military power against an asymmetric and diffused adversary shows that it is not only air power, but military forces as a whole that are ineffective in this unconventional environment.[119] The manipulation of the media by the guerrilla/terrorist groups to denigrate the conventional forces of a state and gain political mileage means that the use of military forces—that would invariably entail casualties—will almost always increase the support for these groups. These groups are founded more on ideology and religion than on actual material prowess that is the mainstay of conventional forces. Therefore, the response also has to be a combination of ideology and force in the same proportion. The use of force alone will never bring victory against such adversaries. These asymmetric groups have to be countered by a broad political strategy designed to defeat them by neutralising their support base, with the use of military force forming only one part of the strategy.

Israel did not destroy Hezbollah, which continues to function as a socio-political and 'military' entity. However, it has created a scenario for the Lebanese Army and the international peacekeeping force together to ensure that the Hezbollah will not be able mount a credible rocket and missile threat in the near future. This depends on the capability of the international peacekeeping force and the intention of the Lebanese Army. While this outcome by itself cannot be considered a success from a military perspective, the political fall out could be in Israel's favour in the long term.

The neutralisation of the rocket and missile arsenal, essentially by their destruction, is something that cannot even now be determined with any certainty. It is a tactical fact that most launchers in position at the outbreak of the conflict were destroyed. However, the further infiltration

of launchers and missiles from Iran and Syria could neither be accounted for nor countered effectively. The chances are that both Syria and Iran would wait for a cooling down period before starting to rearm Hezbollah. The fear now is that Iran will be able to provide the Hezbollah with a limited number of precision guided longer range rockets that could be deployed north of the areas controlled by the peacekeeping force. These missiles could even be armed with chemical or biological warheads in the future.

There was definitely a failure of intelligence within the IDF, from the tactical all the way to the grand strategic level. There was a clear underestimation of the sheer number of Hezbollah combatants and also their training not only in defensive countermeasures, but also in their ability to strike and rapidly disperse. The IDF claims to have killed or wounded around 20–25 percent of the Hezbollah's primary cadre. However, this is not as debilitating as it would be to a conventional force because the Hezbollah is an irregular force that has a recruiting capability far exceeding any conventional military. Therefore, it is more than likely that replacement for casualties were made even as the conflict ground on.

At the end of the conflict it was widely speculated that Israel had lost its much vaunted military edge in the region. More than a year later it is plain that no such thing has happened. Even then there is another side to this story. Israel's security strategy is based on the concept of deterrence. Deterrence by itself is only an idea based on perceptions of what could happen under certain conditions. The biggest failure that Israel faces is the changed perception of its deterrent capacity that Hezbollah and, to a lesser extent, other Arab nations seem to have after the conflict. For the first time, Israel looked vulnerable throughout a campaign. Israel continues to be the predominant military power in the region and retains its nuclear monopoly. However, it will have to work at building the aura of dominance and therefore the perception of deterrence back to the same level as it was before the conflict.

There is yet another viewpoint to this aspect of the conflict—perceptions. There is a prevalent feeling in the IDF, reinforced as the conflict grows

further away in time, that the scale of destruction that was visited on Lebanon for harbouring Hezbollah would act not only as a deterrent, but also reinforce its deterrent effect. This would in turn inhibit any Arab nation from permitting Hezbollah or any other non-state actor to operate from their country. It is too early to comment on this aspect, but at least for the moment, Israel's deterrent capability does not seem to have changed a great deal either way.

In a different manner the conflict has increased the possibility of a threat to Israel. It is a distinct possibility that other radical Arab organisations would take a leaf out of this conflict and impose a multi-pronged irregular war on Israel. The recent activities of Hamas could be an indication of such a move. This could also deteriorate into political problems for more moderate Arab states with inadequate internal security mechanisms. Given the animosity of the rest of the region towards Israel, this could well metamorphose into a continuous low level threat as a new 'front' that could constantly sap the IDF. Both Syria and Iran have compelling reasons to offer covert support to such activities to exert pressure on Israel.

At the end of the conflict Hezbollah declared victory, claiming the mantle of fighting the Arab fight against Israel. Over a period of time this claim has been somewhat diluted and there is a discordant view that blames Hezbollah for the destruction, damage and casualties in Lebanon. There is also open questioning whether the price that Lebanon paid for achieving an undefinable end-state was worth it or not. The result could be deeper divisions within the state that would further weaken an already shaky political spectrum.

Over the years, Islamist extremist movements have used the civilian population as part of their warfighting mechanism. In this conflict, Hezbollah finetuned this attitude and effectively used civilians as the first line of defence to ameliorate their lack of conventional military power. In asymmetric warfare there is no better tactic than this to slow the tempo of a superior, but conventional, force operating under internationally endorsed and accepted laws of armed conflict. It can be expected that

such use of innocent civilians will increase and be done in more subtle manners as the fight against extremism continues.

The use or misuse of the omnipresent media could also be seen very clearly. The Hezbollah tended to exaggerate the civilian casualties from air strikes and politicised their impact. In the past decade, military forces that are engaged in combating irregular militia type adversaries have had to face a dilemma. The laws that require them to limit or minimise civilian casualties during the application of lethal force have been misrepresented in such a way that now it is interpreted as totally avoiding civilian casualties. The time honoured test of proportionality and discrimination has been put aside in this new found humanitarian mind-set. This issue is further exacerbated in situations wherein the conventional force forms part of what is perceived as the rich western states fighting the so-called downtrodden and oppressed mass.

Another casualty of perceptions is proportionality. The IDF consistently tried to ensure that its actions would be proportional to the threat as the IDF understood it. Their actions were within the legal bounds of what is permitted under law, especially considering that Hezbollah had built up a credible military threat to Israel in the six years preceding the conflict. The Hezbollah could target all of Israel with its missiles and also had the tacit support of both Iran and Syria, nations with a stated agenda of defeating Israel. However, the laws of war do not shape general perceptions and the civilian targets, that the IDF were forced to attack, somehow gave the impression that the attacks were out of proportionality to the actual military need. International value judgements are made on perceptions and Israel was not able to project the actual threat to its existence in a credible manner to the rest of the world.

The basic problem associated with countering an insurgency—that of distinguishing between combatants and civilians—once again came to the fore. Both in terms of air strikes and land attacks, there is no infallible way to do so, particularly when the conflict is taking place in urban areas. Modern sensors do help, especially when well supported by human intelligence. However, the truth is that currently technology

cannot assure complete elimination of collateral damage and cannot stop a skilled urban guerrilla force from dictating terms of engagement to even the most sophisticated military force. Theoretically it is possible to achieve a 10-metre accuracy from air launched weapons. Practically, time and again this has proved to be a chimera with significant numbers of weapons going astray because of technological failures and also because the weapons cannot distinguish between civilian and military targets once they have been programmed.

In urban or guerrilla warfare there is the added problem of interdicting supply routes. Negating resupply and stopping reinforcements from reaching the battlespace is almost impossible under these circumstances. Any interdiction activity would, of necessity, have to be targeted to the destruction of both local and national infrastructure which would have rippling adversary effects.

There is a salutary lesson that nations across the globe could take away from the actions of Israel in the immediate aftermath of the conflict. Nowhere else is the search for accountability for the failures of the state and the military more transparent than in Israel. It is also noteworthy that the accountability trail starts with the criticism at the highest level and is a top-down approach, which then cannot become a search for scapegoats. The official investigation that was instituted is a classic case in point. The key lessons from any war can only be distilled if the analysis not only includes, but starts with a completely unbiased examination of grand strategy and policy decisions taken at the highest level of government.

Conclusion

Israel fought the Hezbollah for 33 days. The end was indecisive, to say the least, and both sides did not really achieve any of their aims, stated or otherwise. As it was succinctly put by an observer, 'It was a mistake to believe that military pressure could generate a process whereby the Lebanese Government would disarm Hezbollah'.[120] The stalemate that resulted from the Israeli offensive further triggered an escalation that

could not be justified, even if from a legal point of view, it was within the laws of armed conflict.

Although Israel started the conflict with at least the grudging acceptance of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, the three Arabs states that are influenced by the United States, their support, or rather taciturn nonchalance to the conflict, changed dramatically as the public opinion increasingly started to voice support for Hezbollah. This in turn led to diplomatic pressure being brought to bear on Israel to limit the military action. The unfortunate bombing of Qana on 30 July that killed about 30 civilians was the turning point in terms of Arab opinion and prompted a reversal of tone and attitude in the Arab capitals that mattered.

Hezbollah proved to be much more resilient than credited by the Israeli intelligence and the IDF. After more than a month of bombing attacks, it emerged with its support base intact, if not bolstered. It further enhanced its credentials with the local population by almost immediate and impressive response to the needs of the civilians who had been affected by the conflict. The combined result of bad perception management and the very savvy proactive Hezbollah response meant that Israel had to scale down the demands that it could make at the cease-fire. The cease-fire was brought about under the auspices of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 which would enhance the UNIFIL created in 1978. For a number of reasons it is unrealistic to expect the international force or the Lebanese Government to try and disarm Hezbollah.

The inconclusiveness of the conflict is evident from the reluctance of the Lebanese Army to confront or disarm Hezbollah and the incapability of the IDF to do so under the cease-fire agreement. Both sides paid a heavy price for the 33 days of fighting, perhaps with the civilian population of Lebanon being very badly affected. But it was a war without an unequivocal winner with both Israel and Hezbollah failing to achieve their stated aim of bolstering their credibility to deter adversaries from initiating military action. Both sides underestimated the capability and intent of the other. The fact that both sides are still trying to convince

themselves as well as their friends of their victory reveals the fragile state of the peace that prevails now.

Chapter 4
The Winograd Committee and its Universal Impact

> *After 25 years without a war, Israel experienced a war of a different kind. The IDF was not ready for this war. Some of the political and military elites in Israel have reached the conclusion that Israel is beyond the era of war. It had enough military might and superiority to deter others from declaring war against her; these would also be sufficient to send a painful reminder to anyone who seemed to be undeterred; …*
>
> Winograd Committee Interim Report
> April 2007

Almost immediately after the ceasefire came into effect, on 17 September 2006, the Israeli Government appointed retired Supreme Court Justice Eliahu Winograd to head a governmental Commission to investigate wartime failures of the State. The stated objective was, 'To look into the preparation and conduct of the political and the security levels concerning all dimensions of the Northern Campaign which started on July 12th 2006'.[121] The Commission was appointed because of the strong sense of disappointment felt within the nation regarding the consequences of the conflict. In particular the way it was conducted, which allowed the Hezbollah to claim victory, even if it rang hollow from a military perspective. The composition of the Commission, which included Israel's leading experts on human and civil rights law and public administration along with two reserve generals, gives a clear indication of the breadth of its remit.

At the release of the interim report, media coverage tended to focus almost completely on the Commission's harsh criticism of the political leadership of the nation. However, it is not merely an evaluation of the performance of the incumbent government, but also a deep study of the behaviour of the military and the functioning of the National Security Council. The interim report also covers the role of the media and the general public or the electorate for a period of six years following the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in May 2000. Irrespective of the biased analysis that the report has been subjected to at times, there is unanimous consent that it is 'both uncompromisingly honest and scrupulously fair',[122] very carefully balancing the approbation of responsibility between individual, collective and institutional responsibility.

In the interim report itself the Commission identified certain systemic failures in the Israeli governmental apparatus and establishment. Some of these are not really confined to Israel, but find a universal echo in their application in almost all democratic nation-states. The difference is only in the transparency of the investigation, the level of acceptance of its findings and the institution of remedial measures. The Commission found that the conflict did not provide the correct incentive for the relevant systems to learn from mistakes that were obvious. There is an inherent lethargy in government agencies that, even after salutary lessons have been identified, makes it difficult for them to take appropriate remedial actions to mitigate and ameliorate the problem. The reluctance to take 'energetic and determined action' to redress failures almost always comes to light. The Commission gives this as one of the main reasons for publishing an interim report.

The Commission concentrated on investigating the process of decision making that led to war at the highest levels of the political and military echelons.[123] It also accepted that there was an overall troubling larger picture that emerged during the initial stages of the investigation itself. That picture began to be formed in 2000 with the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from southern Lebanon.

Background Factors that Contributed to the Lebanon War

The developments that took place in the Israeli polity and the military during the period between the IDF withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000 and the outbreak of the conflict in July 2006 needs to be carefully studied to understand the decision making process that eventually led to the conflict. Such a study is also necessary to distil the observations that can be derived from the conflict—from its initial planning process, its conduct and its aftermath—that are more often than not broader than the actual effect of the war itself.

Decision to take military action. The Commission determined that there were very serious failings in the decision-making process and the decision to authorise an overarching military response to the abduction of two soldiers. From a military perspective, the decision to initiate intensive military response was not based on careful study of the ground realities. It was obvious that any Israeli military action would immediately be followed by missile attacks on Israeli civilian areas and that there was no way the missiles could be completely neutralised in the short term. The complexity of the theatre of operation indicated that military action in that area would not produce any significant political outcome. However, the military planners did not share this information completely with the political leadership when they supported the decision to go to war. This is a salutary observation for all democratic nations where the political leadership is almost completely dependent on the military leaders to ensure that the end-state is not only achievable but is complementary to the political goals. Military forces must be able to convey the realities of the action that they propose to take in clear terms to the nation's political leadership prior to decisions being made.

Considering available options. The inaccurate appraisal given by the military skewed the Government's assessment. This also led to the Government considering only limited options, all based on a quick and decisive military victory, thereby limiting the strategic choices available. The sharpness of the military reaction indicates that continuing the containment policy that was pursued for nearly six years was not

considered as a viable option. Keeping the military reaction below the 'escalation level' for as long as possible would have increased the chances of diplomatic moves becoming successful. Once again there is a universal observation to be taken from this. Even if the military does not provide the political leadership with all the options, it is incumbent on the national leaders to keep open all avenues that could be used short of all-out war. Strategic options must never be brought down to a narrow perspective and must be kept as broad as possible at all times.

Selection and maintenance of aim. The Government presented the Cabinet with a purposely vague plan regarding the goals and modes of operation to ensure the support of the Cabinet. There was no clear exit strategy enunciated. The outcome was that neither the nature of the campaign nor its implication were well understood and even some of the goals were unclear. It is incumbent on military leaders first to ensure that there is no discrepancy between the plans and the goals. After the commencement of hostilities the *modus operandi* must be closely monitored to ensure that it is in complete harmony with the aims of the campaign. At the highest level of decision-making the selection and maintenance of aim is of the utmost importance to the success of the campaign as a whole.

Lack of Flexibility. As the campaign progressed, it became plain that there was a gap between the ground reality and the declared goals. The military had not initiated the mobilisation of reserves, which was part of the military plan itself. The Government did not take any action to ease this situation, but seemed to become even more recalcitrant by declaring that the campaign would continue, even if the mobilisation was late, till the goals were achieved. Under such circumstances it is even more important for the Government to be flexible and to adapt the military campaign to meet larger national objective within the available resources.

Factors that Contributed to the IDF's Failure to Win

The background factors that led to the IDF getting bogged down in an unwinnable situation are mostly at the strategic level of decision-making and the failures have been attributed to the senior members of the group that determines politico-military policy and overseas such affairs. The Commission also identified a number of other factors that contributed directly or indirectly to the outcome of the campaign. Some of these factors are peculiar to the Israeli situation, but a majority of them once again have universal applicability if adapted to the right circumstances.

National strategic doctrine. Israel faces a number of security challenges in a volatile political environment. It is perhaps more important for Israel than any other nation to have a well articulated and clear national strategic doctrine. An updated national security strategy and doctrine derived from it will form the basis for coping with challenges to security in a comprehensive manner within a whole of government approach. Such doctrine will need constant updating so that there are clear directives to be followed when there is a crisis, without having to take recourse to *ad hoc* measures. The national strategic outlook should also provide an overall picture of the strengths and vulnerabilities of the nation as a whole and indicate where the military fits in the broader security agenda.

Beyond Israel's control. The Lebanese political scene was, and continues to be, very complex and Israel has almost no control over it. Therefore, their belief that the Lebanese Army would supplant the IDF after Israel unilaterally withdrew from Southern Lebanon in March 2000 was misplaced. Instead of the Lebanese Army patrolling the Israeli-Lebanon border, it was Hezbollah that moved in. It is difficult for a nation to predict accurately the internal developments of another nation and even more difficult to influence them without actual intervention.

Military doctrine. Very obvious shortcomings were noticed in the preparation and training of the Israeli Army. However, the dilution of training and the subsequent fall in operational preparedness does not happen overnight but is a long-drawn process. All military forces have

to be cognisant of the need to constantly monitor the evolving nature of threats and the changes that are required to be incorporated regularly into the operational doctrine of the force. It may become necessary at times to change the force structure and fine tune the organisational culture itself to bring the military capabilities in line with the national security agenda. This has to be an ongoing process and should be supported at the highest level of decision-making.

Moral courage. It is obvious that at least some members of the IDF general staff were aware of the deficiencies in preparation and also the increased military capacity of Hezbollah. There was also ample intelligence data regarding the build up at the Lebanese border. However, these were not factored into the decision-making process. The position of the senior military leadership in this process is at the apex and therefore it becomes clear that there was an absence of diligent advice. While decisions of national consequence are made at the political level, their military veracity is almost completely dependent on the ability of the senior leadership to provide free and frank advice to the government at the strategic level. This requires moral courage born of clear understanding of one's own responsibilities. Only by exercising moral courage to provide frank advice will the military be in a position to deliver what is required of them, because only decisions made after taking into account all possible scenarios will be robust. There is a basic requirement to ensure that the military goals and capabilities are well aligned.

Overarching Elements

In March 2007, the Israeli Government officially named the conflict 'The Second Lebanon War'. This was after not fighting a 'war' for 25 years and one that turned out to be completely different to any other war that the IDF had so far fought. In the interim 25 years the Israeli society had changed a great deal and there was a sizeable community that were distinctly uncomfortable with the idea of going to war. The military in all democratic nations is a microcosm of the larger society. Therefore, all military action that is initiated needs to be transparent from the start and in consonance with the larger society, failing which the military will find itself gradually isolated.

The Commission found that some of the political and military elite were of the opinion that Israel had moved beyond the era of war. They believed that the IDF's enormous superiority in the region would by itself act as a deterrent to any adversary declaring war. The corollary was that, under these circumstances, the main challenge that the Army trained for was low intensity asymmetric conflicts. While declared wars between states have receded into the deep background, it has not made high intensity and high technology warfare redundant. The military needs to have the capability to operate at the highest end of the intensity, tempo and technology spectrums. Any force that trains for low intensity conflict and asymmetric warfare will find itself completely swamped and out of its depth when faced with an adversary operating at even a medium level of intensity and technology.

Given the changing nature of threats as well as the way in which they manifest themselves, military forces have to be prepared to adapt very rapidly to changing circumstances in the battlespace. This needs a top down approach, with an overall security strategy that has the capacity to be systematically updated in a sophisticated manner from which should flow the strategies that govern the employment of national power through its entirety. These strategies should be able to combine the national security resources and the sources of strength at the base level and should include political, economic, social, military, technical and cultural aspects.

The overarching theme that comes out is the need for the armed forces of a nation to be prepared to fight a conflict in the conventional manner while being able to adapt to new and more complex ways in which the adversary will wage war. There is a no substitute for clever doctrine, preparedness and flexibility in the decision making process across the entire spectrum of command.

Endemic Problems

Military Overstretch

Many of the problems identified by the Commission are applicable to almost all contemporary military forces that follow the Western way of warfighting. There are three major but purely military observations that should be analysed. These concern the tempo, intensity and duration of operations that a force is capable of fighting without undue fatigue, the need for realistic assessment of force level capacity and unbiased understanding of weapon system capabilities.

The IDF and the Israeli society seem to have been fatigued by the six years of almost continuous fighting on the Palestinian front. The stress of such long duration involvement showed markedly on the undermanned and inadequately trained forces deployed at the Lebanese border. The IDF had to draw equipment and trained personnel away from the Lebanese border, especially the regular units of the Army. This in turn created an overstretch which invited the disaster that was to take place in the Second Lebanon War.

The observations that can be carried from this are fundamental. First, a voluntary force—which most of the democratic militaries are—will have to be very cognisant of the number of campaigns and theatres that it can engage in simultaneously without loss of overall capability. Second, the duration of any single campaign would have a cascading effect on morale, readiness and training of the entire force at the very basic level. Third, if a force is reliant on reserves to carry out its full responsibilities, then the reserve force would have to be as well trained and equipped as the regular

units, as well as mobilised in time. Fourth, and the most fundamental of all the factors that emerge, is that strains on the resources budget will always be there in any military force. The success of strategic leadership is in ensuring that the curtailment of expenditure to keep within the available budget is done in such a way that the combat capability of the force is not affected. Fifth, the need to maintain a viable logistic chain and have clear awareness of the equipment and ammunition levels at all times cannot be over emphasised.

Failure in any or all of the above factors will lead to military overstretch. There is no substitute for training and adequacy of quality equipment and even then the tempo of operations can overwhelm the best force. All planning must take into account the stress levels inherent in long term operations and even in non-combat situations that require the forces to be on combat alert. The capacity within the force structure to absorb multiple operations and simultaneous campaigns must be ascertained with accuracy before committing the force to battle. It is easy for a force to reach overstretch very fast, especially if the escalation of conflict is unforeseen, and thereafter to restore back to normal operations will be painfully slow process. Success of any force that is likely to be committed to simultaneous and long drawn combat scenario is inexorably tied to it avoiding overstretch.

Operational plans that cater to predictable scenarios have to be constantly updated taking into account a number of factors. The changes in the force structure as well as force capability of one's own military must be continuously incorporated into the plans. While this has to be done at the General Staff level, the updates must also be transparent at the field commander level down to the tactical units. Further, political and strategic changes that take place regularly in situations that are ill-defined and volatile need to be carefully monitored, analysed and then incorporated into the plans. In an overstretched military, the updating of operational plans that may not have been used for a period of time could conveniently be placed on the back burner with disastrous results when they have to be actually put into action. Ensuring the adequacy and contemporary

relevance of operational plans becomes even more important in situations wherein the military expects to become stretched beyond their normal capacity.

Assessment of Force Level Capability

A military force that is constantly required to operate in the defence of the nation must also be able to carry out realistic assessment of its readiness to face unexpected as well as predictable crisis. There is a trend that can be noticed in the study of military failures—that of the senior leadership having become content with purely routine bureaucratic self-evaluations. However, such evaluations do not give even the slightest indication of the reality on the ground and do not reflect the readiness or capability of the force. There has to be a distinct difference, well understood by both political and military leadership, between bureaucratic formalities and operational assessments.

Even when the nation is constantly engaged in military operations of one type or another, if the assessment of force level capabilities is done purely as a formality, then the likelihood of the civilian leadership having a clear idea of the actual capability of the force is very limited. There will always be a distinguishable gap between the actual and the estimate, which is almost certain to lead to military debacle of some sort—tactical or strategic.

From a military leadership perspective inaccurate assessments, which are normally exaggerated towards the force being projected as more capable than it really is, tend to self-perpetuate the feeling of adequacy in areas where the force is actually weak. There are other factors like over reliance on technology and biased view of the capability of one or the other arm of the military that are contributory in making such assessment seem to be realistic.

There is a peculiar problem that exists mainly in established democracies. The political leadership is normally reluctant to publicly mention the shortcomings of the nation's armed forces. This is as it should be, since

the military needs to be given bipartisan support at all times. However, the same political leadership has to make decisions that take into account the very same shortcomings that have been smoothed over in public. The respect and confidence that is shown in public must not be allowed to interfere with realistic and honest assessment of the force level capability. This is a pitfall that all democracies have to avoid when contemplating the employment of their military forces in the furtherance of national security goals.

Understanding Weapon System Capabilities

Western militaries are reliant on technology enhanced weapons to create the desired effects. When employed against irregular and asymmetric insurgent adversaries, the technology edge tends to get blunted. In fact, as was seen in the Second Lebanon War, an air and artillery campaign against the Hezbollah was not expected to silence the rocket attacks. The IDF had a clear plan to mobilise the reserves for a ground campaign to complement the aerial bombardment.

At the same time the IDF led the political leaders to believe that a precision air and artillery offensive would be able to achieve the campaign goals without getting dragged into an exhausting ground campaign. The Commission also came to the conclusion that the failure of the IDF to initiate mobilisation as a counter to possible escalation stemmed from 'excessive faith in the power of the Air Force and incorrect appraisal of the power and preparedness of the enemy, amounting to an unwillingness to examine the details'. The reason for this strategic mismatch between the original plan that called for mobilisation and the almost institutionalised belief in the efficacy of air power remains unexplained.

It is crucial to understand this analysis correctly. It underlines the need to apply available intelligence to estimate the enemy's capabilities vis-à-vis a realistic appraisal of own weapon system limitations. In military forces that operate sophisticated high technology weapons systems regularly, there will always be a tendency to overemphasis their potency.

In the past two decades or so, there has also been changes made to the doctrine as well as concepts of operation based on the rapidly changes in capabilities brought on by evolving and revolutionary technology. The so-called 'revolution in military affairs', which is primarily based on the enhanced precision of air-to-surface and surface-to-surface weapons, has moved doctrine away from the traditional definitions of military success based on occupation of land and elimination of adversary forces. There is a very strong belief in most of the modern military forces that success can be achieved by creating effects that would confound the enemy. In the current environment of diffused military operations, such a strategy is not likely to be successful.

When faced with asymmetric opposition, which is the norm in majority of contemporary conflicts, military and political success cannot be achieved by the use of precision guided munitions alone. It is necessary to keep the capabilities of all weapon systems in mind when dealing with the expectations at the strategic level. Only a joint response with optimised use of all assets that includes control of territory by a complementary ground campaign will prove effective against the new emerging threats.

Conclusion

The Winograd Commission is an exemplary example of transparency in conducting an examination of the causes and effects of a conflict. It was not intended as a blame-fixing scapegoat-hunting government vehicle and its interim report clearly shows that the Commission has been scrupulously honest in their analysis and assessment.

While the Commission examined the Second Lebanon War in great detail, their findings have universal application for all truly democratic nations. The pitfalls that the Israeli Government and IDF encountered can be viewed and with very slight changes put into context in most modern conflict scenarios. The basic lesson that should be imbibed from the Commission is the need for all military forces and governments that employ these forces to further their political and strategic agenda

to be able to look back with clarity at the planning, conduct and decision-making mechanism of the nation. Only a dispassionate analysis such as done by the Winograd Commission will make the nation and its security stance stronger.

Chapter 5
The IDF Response

The Winograd Commission's interim report has generated global attention and its findings have given a sense of deep disenchantment to the Israeli public. The public demonstrations and the transparent honesty of the Commission's report have highlighted the basic difference between Israel and its neighbours—Israel is a vibrant democracy willing to confront and correct strategic errors that may have put its security at risk as never before. In the dangerous neighbourhood that Israel inhabits, this is a source of enormous strength. However, the Commission did not mince its words and publicly used the word 'failure' in relation to IDF operations, perhaps for the first time.

The general public in Israel acknowledge the selfless devotion and bravery of their soldiers, but for sometime now had tended to keep the military and civil society in separate watertight compartments (even with the prevalent universal conscription). The aftermath of the Second Lebanon War struck at the root of this attitude of indifference. Domestic political analysts point towards the declining moral and ethical standards of senior political leaders in Israel as the primary cause for the current state of affairs. There is a great deal of soul-searching within the intelligentsia regarding the contrasting paradigms of culture and leadership exhibited by the IDF at the tactical level and political leadership at the grand strategic level. Accepting that the drop in moral and ethical standards at the political level is almost a universal phenomenon, this dichotomy is worth investigating in all democracies, especially ones whose military forces are committed on a long term basis.

The Second Lebanon War, and more importantly the strategic impact its inconclusive end brought about, is an eye opener not only for Israel, but also for the rest of the world. It has become very apparent that perception of military capabilities plays an unusually high role in how the adversary reacts to emerging events. The turn of events that made the IDF almost

look like a blind giant flexing muscles at random in response to rocket attacks that had more nuisance value than actual destructive power, quickly diminished the invulnerable status of the Israeli defences, built up over a long period. While not so clearly apparent, the military forces of the Western world also face a similar situation of decreasing credibility. Actual and potential adversaries are keenly watching the unfolding events in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Unless a very well thought out strategy, that permits a more than honourable exit for both these places, is quickly put in place escalation of the complex conflict against fundamentalist fuelled obtuse and diffused threats to democracy and national interests is almost a certainty.

The IDF Chief of General Staff during the conflict, Lieutenant General Dan Halutz, openly stated that 'the words decisiveness and defeat against guerrillas are not relevant words. Of course this may not be a popular thing to say, but I am saying it. You can't defeat ideology'.[124] He cited this as the reason for the IDF not having been able to achieve decisive battlefield results. However, the IDF's new leaders tend to refute this and have accordingly modified their doctrine statements. The new IDF Land Forces mission statement's basic thrust is to deliver the type of decisive results that looked so elusive in Lebanon, 2006.

Whatever the reason for it, there is obviously a very palpable disconnect between the perception of the previous IDF chief and what the IDF seems to be preparing to do into the future. It may be also that the new IDF chief has completely different expectations of the force and how it will support national strategy. There is a viewpoint gaining ground that the military leadership during the conflict id tacitly using asymmetric warfare as an excuse for some basic mistakes that were made in the strategic calculations prior to and even during the course of the campaign.

The analysis of the Second Lebanon War has brought out two factors that are undeniable in the broader security equation. The first is that political leadership should to use all facets of national power effectively to ensure that adversaries, even potential ones, should be deterred from waging war as far as possible by solving the problem that motivates them

to take up arms. Reducing the enemy's intention and desire to fight is the realm of diplomacy and international relationship. The second is that the military forces of a nation should be able to neutralise the ability of adversaries to wage effective war, if the political initiative is not successful. While political problems cannot be solved by military action, the armed forces have a responsibility to be able to create the strategic environment in which the adversary will find it more beneficial to negotiate rather than initiate or continue conflict. There can be no substitute for political victory, but the armed forces can create the necessary conditions.

Immediately following the conflict there had been claims that the poor performance of the IDF was a result of budget cuts over a period of a number of years. However, a report by a government appointed panel of experts has refuted this perception. Instead the panel blamed the IDF of budgetary mismanagement that led to the depletion of war stocks and essential equipment. While criticising the planning and budgetary process as lacking transparency, the panel recommended supplementing the defence budget to ensure that by 2010 it would have a baseline of $12 billion. They also recommended an annual increase between 1.3 and 2.5 percent through to 2017.[125]

The second study, carried out by Uzi Rubin for the Begin-Sadat Centre for Strategic Studies, focussed on the Hezbollah rocket threat. The report actually questioned the post-war conventional perception that only ground forces could have eliminated the hidden rocket launchers. The report is an indictment of the Israeli Air Force and states very categorically that the IAF had not prepared for the campaign as well as they should have and found it convenient to shift the blame to the IDF high command for not ordering the ground offensive in time.

Even when the rocket launchers are mobile, it is possible to locate them accurately if constant high resolution surveillance is carried out. Time sensitive targeting and precision strike capabilities resident in modern air power could use such data to effectively neutralise the rocket/missile threat. Somehow, even with unquestioned air superiority, the IAF did not go down this path. Whether this was because of lack of preparation for

such action or because the planning was based around the perceived need for a ground campaign is still obscure.

Rubin further provides very compelling evidence, gathered from open sources, to refute the claims of the IAF that they had destroyed the majority of Hezbollah's long- and medium-range missiles. His analysis of the frequency, dates and location of rocket strikes clearly indicates that the intensity of long-range attacks remained the same throughout the war. The official stand may have been confused because the IAF was only calculating the number of launchers destroyed without a clear idea of the total number in the possession of the Hezbollah.

Rubin's report is stark and realistic, concluding with, 'Contrary to the prevailing belief that the IAF eradicated the long-range rockets but was incapable of eradicating the short-range ones, the truth seems to be the exact opposite … The IAF's failure to eradicate the rockets—both longer and shorter range ones—led to one of the worst defeats in Israel's military history'.[126]

Teffen 2012

In the wake of such damning criticism, the IDF launched a new five-year plan on 3 September 2007, primarily aimed at enhancing its capability to deal with immediate and developing threats to Israel. The plan, 'Teffen 2012', is visibly biased towards the modernisation of the land forces with special emphasis on improving its manoeuvrability.

This plan differs from previous plans in its basic premises itself. Unlike in previous plans this does not take a positive view regarding the prospects of peace and security in the region. It acknowledges that the strengthening of radical Islam in the region is driving the Middle East to an accelerated arms race and also accepts that within the next few years there is a potential for a 'dramatic change' in regimes of the more moderate states in the region like Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. This will most likely be brought on by the withdrawal of US forces from Iraq.

Based on realistic assessment of the situation, the IDF has identified four main challenges that it must face up to in the next decade.[127] First, it must able to counter conventional challenges from advanced regular armed forces in what could be a state-on-state conflict. Second, and more probable, the IDF should be able to neutralise asymmetric challenges to the nation's security from irregular militia/paramilitary and terrorist organisations that have covert support from state-based adversaries of Israel. Third, it has to face the possibility of having to contain a nuclearised Iran and the fourth challenge is the very real threat of further destabilisation of the region with the rise of radical and fundamentalist Islam. The planners have also considered a two-front war in a combination of any of the challenges above as a distinct possibility.

The IDF has also taken careful cognisance of the Winograd Committee's Interim Report and formulated Teffen 2012 to address what it feels are the primary drawbacks facing the force. The IDF has identified nine core capabilities that it believes should be not only maintained, but also upgraded to ensure combat edge in any of the four challenges listed above.

- A decisive ground manoeuvre capability based on armour (both tanks and fighting vehicles), attack helicopters, airlift and tactical low altitude UAVs
- Air superiority with manned and unmanned air platforms
- Precision strike mainly through manned platforms
- Enhanced reach based on air-to-air refuelling, long range fighters and UAV
- Maritime supremacy with more naval surface vessels
- Active defences from surface-to-surface missiles and rockets

- Intelligence superiority through all means of information gathering
- Effective command and control based on the Army digital program
- Increased emergency ammunition stockpile to ensure sustainability of operations

From the available information on Teffen 2012 it is apparent that the Second Lebanon War has made the IDF sit up and take note of some fundamental changes that have taken place on what it has always perceived as its own turf. It must have been traumatic for the rank and file of what was once considered one of the best armed forces in the world to accept that they were outdone by a force of irregulars with nothing more than rockets to fight with. The fundamental change that had come about in the adversary's *modus operandi* was neither anticipated nor was the IDF able to bring to bear its famous flexibility and rapid evolution of tactics to counter a new threat. From the core capabilities that the IDF is concentrating on in the new plan, it can be deduced that the lessons of the recent conflict have not been studied in vain.

Conclusion

This conflict is not the first time that Israel has been accused in the world media of 'overreaction' to provocation. However, during the early days of the Israel-Hezbollah conflict of 2006, there was a subtle difference in the international reaction, especially from some of the Arab states. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan and even the Palestine Authority, while condemning Israel, have also made it clear that Hezbollah also shares a heavy blame for the escalation of the crisis. This stance may be indicative of the wariness of these regimes regarding the threat of fundamental Islamic extremism to their own states.

There was limited opposition within Israel to the unilateral withdrawal of its forces from Southern Lebanon in 2000. The fear expressed by the critics of the redeployments was that Israel would appear weak in its resolve to face terrorist attacks. In turn this would be indicative of the threat of terrorist attacks working against the psych of the nation. However, by withdrawing from the occupied areas of Lebanon of its own volition Israel gained a much-needed boost in international politics. So much so, that when the 2006 conflict broke out, most of the international agencies blamed it on Hezbollah and, by default, Lebanon. Even though Israel has been blamed for disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force, the reality is that there is tacit approval regarding Israel's right to initiate military action to secure its borders.

The Winograd Commission report, which is a scathing attack on the incompetency of Israel's senior leadership, does not criticise the decision to wage war against Hezbollah. However, the Commission and any serious international analysts have questioned the legality or morality of Israel's decision to go to war. This is an important point to note and one that stands out as a redeeming feature in an otherwise bungled attempt by an inexperienced government to display its resolve to secure the nation against evolving threats.

In wars where nation-states fight other nation-states through the use of conventional forces using conventional methods of operations, victory or defeat can be very clearly measured by analysing the physical end-state. Such measurements can be in terms of territory captured or surrendered, palpable destruction of the opposing military forces or the surrender of the regime itself. This is no longer possible when the adversary is more often than not a non-state player bent on creating new political realities based on ideology and religion. Conventional military forces of the democratic world are yet to come to terms with this aberration. They still do not have sufficient appreciation of the complexity and the multi-dimensions of the threat posed by these non-state forces. Without that understanding, conventional military forces will not be able to bring to bear their considerable might in the right proportion with the necessary discretion.

The Second Lebanon War is a conclusive example of the strategic failure of a powerful conventional force to subdue a tactically incoherent force of irregulars cohesively bound together by a religion-based ideology that has convinced them that victory will be theirs irrespective of tangible human and material loss. In this equation the tactical brilliance of the IDF, so evocatively demonstrated in precision air strikes and sharp ground manoeuvres, has little or no strategic relevance.

For nation-states across the globe, that face similar challenges and are unified in their need to fight the scourge of terrorism based on fundamentalist religious beliefs, the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah conflict holds very relevant and valuable insights. Use of military forces alone against an ideology will never achieve the desired end-state. Grand strategy at the political decision-making level must take into account the military capabilities that could be employed optimally but must not rely only on the application of force to achieve strategic aims. For any progress to be made in containing this emerging threat, such a grand strategy will have to be formulated and carefully brought to fruition. Decisiveness at the strategic political level is critical to success under these circumstances.

The definition of victory in such a war needs redefinition. The adversary has already reset the measure of victory in this complex and ongoing war and the democratic nations of the world have to be cognisant of this subtle change. Under these circumstances military success in the battlefield cannot, and should not, be equated to victory in the war. One measure of success could be the effectiveness of the political process in bringing the guerrilla/insurgent group to the negotiating table, even if this is coerced with the threat of force.

The use of air power as the first and primary choice in trying to neutralise the Hezbollah military capability was fraught with the danger of failure from the outset. The situation was exacerbated by the reluctance of the higher military command to inform the political leaders of the discrepancy between the reality on the ground and what was being perceived at the command level. The need to be constantly aware of the context of employment of military assets, especially air power, was underlined in this conflict as never before. The decisive actions of the last war do not always meet the demands of the next. The classic photograph of an Israeli F-16 screaming by at tree-top level, apparently on a time-sensitive mission, while immediately behind it a Hezbollah rocket launcher is seen firing into northern Israel, is perhaps the most evocative and visually credible statement of the complexity faced by the IDF in neutralising the rocket threat for much of the conflict.

The Middle East has always been politically a complicated region. The Israel-Hezbollah conflict of 2006 only muddied the area further. Over the nearly 60 years of its independent existence as a nation-state, Israel has at times taken intransigent stances. However, its recent willingness to cede territory, even if it was captured in the first place, is an indication of the nation's weariness with constant battles and the readiness for war that it has always maintained out of necessity. Israel is now acting to remove some longstanding points of friction. As a corollary, Israel needs to have its right to exist permanently validated by the other nations in the region. It was only a few years ago that most of the nations in the region had

conceded, however reluctantly and covertly, that Israel was a reality that they had to live with.

The inconclusive outcome of the 2006 conflict has inflicted great damage to this small but significant step in the peace process in the region and the reluctant acceptance some Arab states of Israel's right to exist. At the same time it has also undermined the impact of Israel's willingness to make concessions to further progress the peace process. The land ceded by Israel must not be allowed to be used by terror groups, which do not subscribe to the idea of a settled peace with Israel on any terms, to mount punitive strikes within Israel to shatter a fragile peace or escalate minor skirmishes into appreciable conflicts. Such a situation is possible only if the forces promoting radicalism as an end in itself can be reigned in by legitimate governments. The strategic and political victory that Hezbollah claimed in August 2006 has directly questioned both these small steps forward in the normalisation of the convoluted political and military environment of the region.

Endnotes

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8 Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1966, pp. 55–59.

[9] Colin Gray, 'Deterrence and the Nature of Strategy', *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Autumn 2000, p. 18. (Emphasis in the original).

[10] ibid., p. 23.

[11] ibid., pp. 23–24.

[12] ibid., p. 25–26. (Emphasis in the original).

[13] Efraim Inbar & Shmuel Sandler, 'Israel's Deterrence Strategy Revisited', *Security Studies*, Vol 3, No 2 Winter 1993/94, p.333.

[14] These figures are from Emanual Wald, *The Wald Report: The Decline of Israeli National Security Since 1967*, Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 1992, p. 139. Hereafter, *The Wald Report*.

[15] ibid., p. 138.

[16] Inbar and Sandler, 'Israel's Deterrance Strategy Revised', p. 340.

[17] ibid., p. 335.

[18] For example, in 1989 the Israeli Peace Plan proposed by Prime Minister Itzak Shamir was produced under intense pressure from the United States. Subsequent American administrations have continued to encourage and cajole Israel to make peace with its Arab neighbours and the Palestinians on the condition that the Arabs would renounce violence.

[19] Thomas H. Henriksen, 'Security Lessons from The Israeli Trenches' in *Policy Review*, No. 141, February March 2007, pp.17–30.

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[24] Israel Tal, *National Security: The Israeli Experience*, (trans) Martin Kett, Praeger, Westport, Connecticut, 2000, p. 222.

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[27] The March 2004 assassination of Hamas' spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin is just one high profile example of this tactic.

[28] Tal, *National Security: The Israeli Experience*, p. 222.

[29] Chaim Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars: War and Peace in the Middle East from the War of Independence to Lebanon*, Arms and Armour Press, London, 1984, pp. 307-308.

[30] Tal, *National Security: The Israeli Experience*, pp. 224-225.

[31] Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars,* p. 23. The Lebanese Army contributed a small force of 2000 men to a combined Arab Liberation Army which attacked Israel on several fronts in early 1948. In response Israel invaded Lebanon, but its forces withdrew in March 1949 after the two states signed an armistice agreement.

[32] Leonard Binder, *Politics in Lebanon*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1966, p. 276.

[33] The PLO had been expelled from Jordan in 1970, both because of the trouble caused by their repeated raids on Israel from Jordanian territory and for attempting to interfere in Jordan's internal affairs.

[34] Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars,* pp. 361–362.

[35] Augustus Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2007, pp. 21–22.

[36] The event that initiated the invasion was the hijacking of two buses by eleven members of the PLO's Fatah faction on 11 March 1978. Thirty-seven Israelis were killed and seventy-six wounded before the PLO fighters were killed by Israeli forces.

[37] Martin Van Creveld, *The Sword and the Olive: A Critical History of the Israeli Defence Force*, Public Affairs, New York, 1998, p. 287. The author calls the operation 'cumbersome' and compares it with similar, unsuccessful American operations during the Vietnam War. He suggests that the operation was launched in order to 'assuage outraged Israeli public opinion'. Van Creveld notes that the IDF's Chief of Staff, General Mordechai Gur, had commanded similar operations during his time as Commanding Officer Northern Command and should have understood that the PLO could not be defeated by such a large-scale manoeuvre.

[38] Avner Yaniv, *Dilemmas of Security: Politics, Strategy, and the Israeli Experience in Lebanon*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987, p. 75.

[39] ibid., p. 73.

[40] Helena Cobban, *The Palestinian Liberation Organisation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983, p. 95. (Arafat made the statement in July 1978).

[41] Van Creveld, *The Sword and the Olive*p. 288.

[42] Yaniv, *Dilemmas of Security*, p. 75.

[43] This area was dubbed Haddad land, after the SLA's leader Major Saad Haddad

[44] Yaniv, *Dilemmas of Security*, p. 77.

[45] Richard Gabriel, *Operation Peace for Galilee: The Israel-PLO War in Lebanon*, Hill & Wang, New York, 1984, p. 56.

[46] The PLO disclaimed responsibility for the attack on the ambassador and Yaniv notes that Israeli intelligence sources suggest that the assassination attempt was carried out by an extremist Palestinian element, possibly the Abu Nidal group, for internal, factional reasons. See Yaniv, *Dilemmas of Security*, pp. 109–110.

[47] The politico-military interactions and the relationship between military action and national security have been analysed in the next chapter.

[48] John Garofano, 'Tragedy or Choice in Vietnam? Learning to think Outside the Archival Box', *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 4, Spring 2002, p. 168.

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[51] ibid.

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[54] Judith Palmer-Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, I. B. Tauris, London, 2004, p. 22.

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[67] Wald, *The Wald Report,* p. 70.

[68] ibid.

[69] Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars,* p. 365.

[70] Yaniv, *Dilemmas of Security*, p. 146.

[71] Palmer-Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, p. 49.

[72] Van Creveld, *The Sword and the Olive,* p. 305.

[73] Greenhous, '*The Iraeli Experience*', pp.598-600.

[74] Wald, op cit, p. 67. In one instance, an attempt to provide close support led to an incidence of fratricide when IAF planes attacked an Israeli armoured battalion.

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[76] Kevin Fedarko, 'Operation Grapes of Wrath', *Time*, 22 April 1996.

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