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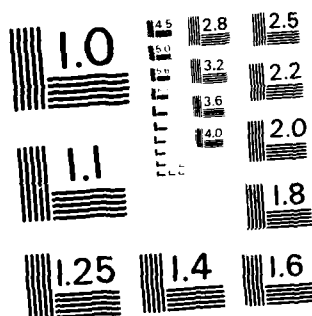
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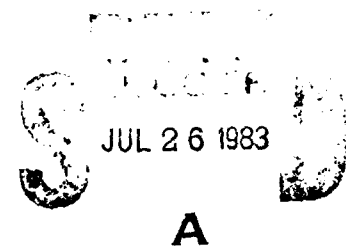
USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM

CIVIL AFFAIRS REQUIREMENTS EVIDENT
IN THE ISRAELI INVASION OF LEBANON

INDIVIDUAL ESSAY

by

Colonel Patrick J. Orelli
Civil Affairs



US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
9 May 1983

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ABSTRACT

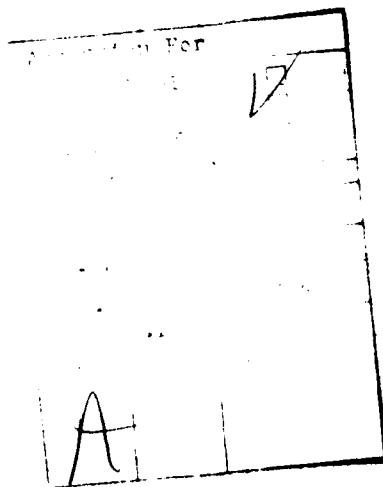
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The Israeli invasion of Lebanon resulted in a military victory but a Public Information Officer's nightmare due to the inordinate number of civilian casualties and evidence of excessive suffering inflicted on noncombatants. While the facts do not support a deliberate disregard for the lives of civilians on the part of the Israeli Army, they do suggest a lack of coordinated civil affairs planning. An analysis of the problems encountered by the Israeli Army and a comparison of their military government with US civil affairs capability clearly shows the necessary role of trained civil affairs personnel to support a combat commander.



On Sunday, 6 June 1982, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) launched operation "Peace for Galilee" across the border into southern Lebanon. Just five days later the IDF was on the outskirts of Beirut and occupied almost half of Lebanon. Ten months later the IDF is still present in significant strength in southern Lebanon and hostilities continue albeit only on a minor scale.

Although the announced objective at the start of the invasion was to take out the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) artillery that was shelling northern Israel, it soon became evident that Israel was pursuing the much more ambitious goal of crushing the PLO.

A review of these incidents and consideration of the structure and capabilities of the IDF to control the situation as compared with the civil affairs capabilities of the United States Army indicates a need for specially trained forces.

There are many conflicting reports concerning the statistics resulting from the invasion and, considering the situation that existed in Lebanon prior to the invasion, it is probable that exact numbers will never be known. The country was factionalized with the central government having very little control beyond the confines of Beirut proper. Armed rival factions controlled their various areas by a reign of fear. The PLO was concentrated in southern Lebanon although this area was also the home for a large part of the Christian Lebanese population. Estimates vary, but by the end of the first week the Red Cross estimates were over 10,000 dead and

16,000 wounded. Of the dead, it has been estimated that only 1,000 to 1,200 were armed Palestinians who could properly be described as members of the PLO. The Red Cross also estimated over 600,000 Lebanese and Palestinian were homeless, although Israeli reports claimed only 70,000. By 8 July, the Lebanese Ministry of Health and US observers were placing 150,000 to 200,000 in the homeless category.

Managing noncombatants in a combat area is a management problem that will face every field commander. Noncombatants cannot be wished away as the battle develops and, as will be seen from a closer look at the Israeli experience, nor do noncombatants just go away.

When it became apparent that the IDF was poised for an invasion southern Lebanese towns began emptying. As fear of an Israeli attack mounted thousands of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians began abandoning their homes in the south and jamming the roads north. In an attempt to prevent noncombatant casualties, the IDF compounded the refugee problem. Leaflets printed in Arabic and warning the inhabitants to flee were dropped prior to the bombing and shelling of Tyre, Sidon and other Lebanese towns. Rarely were the inhabitants given sufficient time to get out of the towns and many were caught in the open when shelling and bombing began. Nor was there any provision for handling the refugees once they attempted to flee the combat areas. In Tyre, for example, the inhabitants were instructed to go to the beaches to avoid the bombing. Over 40,000 civilians fled to the beaches where they had to wait over two days without food, water or shelter.

Many civilians died as a result of inadequate planning for their care beyond the immediate warning of impending danger. Due to lack of food over 15,000 inhabitants tried to reenter Tyre while the battle was still in progress. Additionally, it has been reported that the IDF barred UN food convoys from reaching Tyre during the two days of the battle. One US Army officer serving with a UN observation team in southern Lebanon stated that he was stopped from supplying water to the refugees on the beaches.

As the invasion continued to press toward Beirut, residents of the city began stockpiling goods. Thousands of refugees poured into Beirut from southern Lebanon seeking food and shelter. When the IDF continued to press towards Beirut, refugees who had previously fled north to escape the shelling began fleeing south again. Thousands of Beirut residents fled to the Bekaa Valley which was occupied by Syrian forces.

As the areas were secured by the combat forces personnel from the Military Government Branch of the IDF began arriving in southern Lebanon. In Sidon, which suffered only 10% damage, Major Arnon Mozer became the Civilian Administrator. Major Yossef Tanna, a lecturer in Arabic literature from Haifa University was appointed Civilian Administer of Tyre. In Tyre, where destruction had been the heaviest outside of Palestinian refugee camps, damage amounted to over 30 percent.

The initial action of the military government was to issue identification cards to the residents. This apparently was an attempt to flush out PLO combatants who had abandoned

their weapons and mixed in with the population as the Israelis pushed through the towns. The Israelis used informers whose faces were concealed to point out members of the PLO and sympathizers as they came to secure identification cards.

The military government forces do not appear to have been prepared to assist in humanitarian endeavors. Seemingly, there was no plan for handling of civilian dead and bodies were left to decay where they lay. The IDF compounded the problem of noncombatant wounded by arresting medical personnel who had been providing medical care to Palestinians. Most hospitals had been rendered unservicable or destroyed by shelling and bombing. Engineers from the IDF were used to reestablish water in the towns although this was primarily through a supply point system.

As could be expected, other problems in the sanitation area arose. Drainage to the sewer system went unrepaired and uncollected garbage piled up. Rats began to appear in numbers as a result of the garbage problem, and a number of typhoid cases were reported.

As a result of the destruction of banking facilities and the closing of banks the handling of local finances became a problem for the local population. The Bank of Lebanon was closed for several weeks throughout the Israeli controlled sector. No reason has become apparent for this action which worked a hardship on the local population since no one could obtain monies in bank accounts. Only funds in the possession of the local population at the time of the invasion were available to conduct transactions.

Beginning around 16 June the military government provided mobile units of Israeli banks. These mobile banking units were primarily for the benefit of Israeli soldiers serving in Lebanon, but also provided exchange services for local Lebanese merchants who were doing business in Israeli currency. Due to shortages and lack of available currency, prices escalated and black market activity began to develop.

The IDF actually created a unique problem in its approach to the Palestinian refugee situation which it does not appear to have thought out beforehand. The destruction of the Palestinian refugee camps displaced thousands of persons. The Israelis initially announced that no Palestinian refugees would be allowed back into the destroyed camps. No alternative provision had been made to settle the chronically displaced Palestinians elsewhere, so eventually it became necessary to let them return to the rubble of the destroyed camps. They had to have some place to go. Predominantly only women and children were allowed to return as most men were detained.

The lack of a plan or the implementation of a carefully planned solution for dealing with the noncombatant situation the IDF encountered as they made their drive north was further compounded by the Israeli alliance with the militia of Major Sa'ad Haddad and the extreme right-wing Lebanese politico-military Phalange Maronite Christian community. Once the Israeli Army captured towns and villages it turned them over to the Phalange after the PLO had been driven out. Many among the Phalange had suffered severely under the PLO

leadership and disliked the Palestinian refugees who had taken over their towns and villages. While supportive of the Israelis, the Phalange were not kept under direct military control. This lack of a plan to fully manage the occupied areas contributed to the September massacres in the Shatila and Sabra refugee camps.

The very uniqueness of the invasion aims contributed in part to the suffering of the noncombatants. Israel was invading Lebanon to destroy the PLO presence near its borders. The IDF was not engaged by the properly constituted forces of the Lebanese government. While the PLO was not an army of occupation, it was an armed force controlling areas in which Palestinian refugees had settled. Many of the Palestinian refugees were not members of the PLO, but were true noncombatants swept up in the invasion. The attitude of many in Israel that blamed all Palestinians for the shelling of northern Israeli towns created a double standard in providing humanitarian aid by the Israelis. In her article "Chronology of the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon" which appeared in the Journal of Palestinian Studies, Carole Collins alludes to a statement made by an unidentified Israeli cabinet minister who declared that Israel's humanitarian aid was meant only for indigenous Lebanese and not for the Palestinians.¹ Israel did subsequently make what aid it did provide available to all noncombatants who were in need.

With the exception of mopping up operations in some PLO strongholds, the push through southern Lebanon to Beirut lasted only six days. It was possible for rebuilding to

begin in the south while West Beirut, which became the last major defensive position for the PLO, came under siege. The conditions in West Beirut were similar to those in the southern towns, but further complicated by the duration of the siege for over 45 days. Hundreds who had fled from the south were jammed into parks. The population of Beirut lacked food, water, medicine and hygiene. Sanitation became a problem as garbage piled up.

Although it may sound like a condemnation of the Israelis, the scenario described above is meant only to provide a description of the scene as it existed and provide the necessary foundation for analysis of the situation. There was much suffering by the civilian population despite the shortness of the war in the south and steps taken by the IDF to limit civilian casualties. As reported in the June 21, 1982 issue of the Christian Science Monitor, "Reserve MG Aaron Yariv said everything possible was done to limit civilian casualties by warning civilians via radio, loudspeakers and leaflets to leave areas prior to shelling or bombing."² Military considerations prevailed in softening up any built up areas. As a result, the IDF suffered only light casualties from the invasion.

Despite the existence of a Military Government Division in the Operations Branch of the General Staff and the rapid appearance of Civilian Administrators (Military Governors) by the third day of the invasion, it does not appear from the evidence that the IDF was prepared to deal with the noncombatant situation it encountered and created.

Part of the reason lies in the direct chain of command from the Operations Branch to the Military Governors in the field. The Military Governors appear to have operated independently of the IDF combat forces rather than in a combat support role. From the actions taken by the IDF in their attempts to limit civilian casualties, it is evident that the troops are trained to be aware of the noncombatant in the area of operations, i.e. witness the presence of loudspeaker teams, the use of civilian radio for information and the dropping of leaflets. It was also important that the leaflets were printed in Arabic and broadcasts were done in Arabic by fluent linguists.

An example of the problems encountered in the use of this simplistic approach was reported by Abraham Rabinovich in a Christian Science Monitor article on 16 June 1982. He quoted an Israeli military authority who had responded on the noncombatant situation concerning the shelling of Ein Hilwe, a Palestinian refugee camp near Sidon where a large number of PLO were believed to be holding out at the time:

"We believe that most civilians have fled the area, but many are being held hostage. We've been calling on the terrorists inside for several days now on a mosque loudspeaker to surrender. Some have come out, but many are still inside. When they kept on firing we decided to attack."³

There is no strong indication that with the exception of the military government teams there were any IDF units

specially trained to deal with the problems of noncombatants who were present in the areas where actual combat operations were taking place. The single approach most commonly used was to attempt to evacuate the area, but no provision existed for handling the displaced persons that were the result of this approach.

While it is possible to question general Israeli intentions toward the Palestinians as a whole it does not ring true that there was a purposeful intent to slaughter non-combatants. On reflection, it does seem that the number of civilian deaths was excessive and could have been avoided with more adequate preparation. Military exigencies must always take priority in combat. Generally, troops should not be sacrificed to provide for the safety of noncombatants in a combat area, but where safety is not a major factor adequate provision should be made to avoid civilian casualties. Under most circumstances such provisions cannot be left to the combat troops in the area of operations. It requires troops specially trained for the task and who have the task as their assigned mission.

Responsibility for civilian personnel in a combat area rests ultimately with the combat commander who is usually more concerned with the conduct of the engagement and only indirectly with the civilians present in his area of operations. This is a concern that can be delegated to a subordinate unit commander who has the sole mission of civilian management. Such an arrangement would have avoided many of the problems expressed by journalists and other observers of the Lebanon

invasion and its aftermath. Due to a lack of a central command for handling refugees, noncombatants were denied necessary food, water and shelter while combat troops were searching through their midst for possible PLO members who had sought annomity among the civilian population. Many voluntary agencies were waiting to provide relief assistance to those who had abandoned their homes and sought safety outside the combat areas. They were denied access to those they could have helped and the refugees suffered accordingly because there was no central command with overall responsibility for civilian care. While the task of coordinating relief eventually fell to the Military Governors when they finally took over an area after the combat troops had searched it, combat commanders not having troops to detail for the care and feeding of civilians merely denied outside agencies access to their separate areas since they lacked the means of coordinating relief services.

Medical care for civilians was another problem that became unwieldy due to lack of specialists to handle the situation. Due to the misbelief of many PLO who lacked standard military training and believed hospitals could be used for sanctuary, many combatants fled to hospitals taking their arms with them. Despite the attempts of some hospital personnel to prohibit arms in the hospitals, many hospitals became mini-fortresses. The natural Israeli response was to declare the hospital a hostile area, order evacuation of the hospital and then shell it. In so doing, many hospitals were so destroyed that they were inoperable.

Since the doctors, many of whom were foreign volunteers, had been sympathetic to the Palestinians they were detained and evacuated to Israel. This action produced a scarcity of medical personnel where too few had already been providing the medical care. The problem was further compounded by the injuries noncombatants were receiving from the combat operations. Medical personnel not in the armed forces should not have been subject to evacuation from the area where they were needed. A lack of trained specialists to handle the situation locally and properly classify and supervise civilian medical personnel produced the evacuation that resulted because combat commanders were unprepared and did not have the necessary assets in the form of trained personnel to take any other action.

Not much information has surfaced concerning the closing of the Lebanese banks by the Israelis. A short term closure during actual combat operations would be expected as every business establishment in an area of operations ceases doing business while fighting is in progress. Safeguarding funds in the banking facilities and the prevention of looting damaged facilities would be the usual limits of the combat commander's responsibilities in this regard. The long term closure of the banks could have been the result of a decision of the Military Governors, although instruction on this issue may have come from higher up in the Israeli government. Whatever the reason, the continued closing worked a hardship on civilians in the occupied areas. The temporary establishment of Israeli banks, while somewhat of an aid, was an

inadequate approach to the need to conduct financial affairs.

In contrast to the Military Government division found at the General Staff level of the Israeli Army, civil affairs personnel are available to support every level of the US Army. Though generally type classified as a combat service support branch, civil affairs personnel play an important role in assisting the US soldier to comply with the provisions of international law that are applicable when US forces are present in host, liberated or occupied territories. At corps level and below individuals performing civil affairs activities are normally generalists, having a familiarity with a number of the functional specialities and a broad area of interest for their support role. Above the corps level civil affairs personnel operate in a narrow field of endeavor possessing a high degree of expertise in their functional speciality. In almost every case governmental support activities would be performed by specialists. Such support could be the establishment of a military government in an occupied territory if it was necessary for military forces to fill the entire spectrum of providing executive, legislative and judicial functions. This role is seen as a rarity in modern military thinking. The more likely governmental support function is envisioned as one requiring the establishment of a temporary civil administration until the local government is restored and can resume performance of the governmental functions. As the combat forces established unquestionable superiority, it was this type of function that the Military Governors who came in to assist the Israeli

Army should have been prepared to do.

From published reports of their activities it does not seem that initial efforts were in the direction of governmental operations nor that the appointed military Civil Administrators had any significant assets available to accomplish this mission. Some articles have mentioned personnel of the Military Government forces operating in the occupied territories of the West Bank being sent to assist in Lebanon. However, after ten years of occupation under a military government, most functions on the West Bank have been assumed by civilian personnel. The Military Governors mentioned earlier who were appointed as the Civil Administrators came from the reserve forces. Governmental support is only one function of civil affairs operations, and in consonance with the after-the-fact arrival of the Israeli Military Governors does not require an immediate presence on the battlefield.

A look at the missions of civil affairs from the viewpoint of the US Army can provide some insight into where trained civil affairs personnel with the proper orientation and structure could have performed a different and more important role in the Lebanon invasion. The missions of civil affairs as currently set out in the draft US Army Operational Concept for Civil Affairs are:

- (1) To assist the commander in the conduct of military operations
- (2) To fulfill obligations imposed by international laws and such agreements as may be in effect

- (3) To further the national and international policies of the United States

All matters impacting upon the relationship between the people of an area and military forces present in the area (whether they are local or foreign military forces) are of civil affairs orientation. Generally, civil affairs operations will be in either a command support role or a government support role. Two of the most important activities in the command support role are:

- (1) To minimize interference by the local population in the military operation
- (2) Assist the combat commanders to meet legal and moral obligations to the local population

During the initial stages of the invasion into Lebanon these important activities required more attention from trained personnel than there were present with the invading forces. Not that they were ignored completely for, as was evident in the description of the Israeli Army operations, attempts were made to get noncombatants to leave the immediate combat areas. Subsequent provision for handling these refugees is not evident, and it was in these instances that the important activities described above went lacking. Certainly, the unfilled needs of the refugees for food, water, shelter and medical attention were not in meeting with a commander's legal and moral responsibilities to the local population. Nor was the attempt by many refugees to return to their homes in the area of operation in order to obtain food and water an effective minimization of interference in the combat operation.

Part of civil affairs command support operations is the conduct of area studies and the preparation of contingency plans for civil affairs operations. Such planning takes place prior to the initiation of hostilities and should anticipate a requirement for military forces to provide emergency care to the local population. In planning the invasion of Lebanon adequate planning for civil affairs activities appears to have been an area of neglect by the Israeli Army.

When not required for actual support of military operations, military capabilities could be utilized by the commander to assist in the relief of hardship and suffering in the civilian population. Civil Affairs personnel make assessments and reassessments of local resources to locate available supplies and determine the status of communication and transportation facilities and key civilian personnel. Locating and managing the distribution of food was a civil affairs activity receiving very little attention from the Israeli Army until after the Military Governors had dealt with making identification of the local populace. By that time relief agencies were beginning to be admitted into the areas and bringing in much needed supplies.

The Israeli Army did assist somewhat in the city rebuilding program and in alleviating major problems to the civilian community. In Tyre, for instance, where the water supply system had been severely damaged, engineer personnel from the IDF were used to reestablish the water supply to designated areas.

A brief look at the functional specialties normally provided in a civil affairs organization will also provide insight into the types of activities that could have been performed by the Israeli Army if it had had a similar type of organization. Depending upon the size of the unit providing support, an individual may perform tasks of more than one functional speciality. While most functional specialties have a role in both command and governmental support operations, a number are generally considered to be solely governmental support activities. The civil affairs functional specialties are usually grouped into four basic categories--governmental, economic, public facilities and special. Within the special category are probably found the functional specialties most important to command support. These include Displaced Persons, Refugees and Evacuees (DPRE), Civil Information, Cultural Affairs, and Arts, Monuments and Archives.

As is evident from the most recent conflicts and throughout all of history, when combat takes place noncombatants in the area of operations will quickly become displaced persons, refugees and evacuees. In the command support role, DPRE functional teams must provide the combat commander with information concerning the impact of noncombatants on the military operation to include estimates of the number of persons involved, the anticipated directions of their movements and places of origin. The DPRE team is responsible for developing movement control measures for noncombatants, establishing and supervising temporary camps for displaced

persons and refugees and providing and/or coordinating emergency care. DPRE personnel also provide intelligence agencies information obtained from noncombatants.

The Civil Information function provides significant command support through the dissemination of information to the local populace. Team members must determine the types of media available to disseminate information, i.e. radio, television, newspapers, etc. and prepare information in a format that will reach and be accepted by the local population in the area of operation. Team members also determine the type and acceptance of information being communicated by local agencies and coordinate with censorship units. Completing the functional specialties of the special category are Cultural Affairs and Arts, Monuments and Archives which tend to assist the commander more through an advisory role than by actual assistance with noncombatants. Members of the Cultural Affairs function specialty are concerned with the impact of the social, religious and cultural characteristics of the local population on the military operation. They also identify and locate religious shrines and buildings to prevent their desecration. The Arts, Monuments and Archives functions are concerned with protection of the traditional culture, customs and arts of the local area.

In the public facilities category some command support is received from the functions of Transportation and Public Communications. Generally, the Public Works and Utilities function is considered to have only a governmental support role.

The Transportation team determines the capabilities of local transportation systems and coordinates the use of local assets to assist military operations. Team members also arrange for the use of both military and civilian transportation assets for the transportation of noncombatants. Public Communications fulfills a command support role by identifying and obtaining the use of local civilian communication facilities to meet military requirements. Assistance in the operation and maintenance of power systems, water supply and waste disposal are functions of Public Works and Utilities in a governmental support role and come within the purview of the Military Governor. It was necessary for Israeli Army engineers to assist in restoring these public utilities in order to resettle the local population after actual combat had ceased.

In the category of governmental functions two of the three deemed not to have command support roles, Public Education and Public Welfare, also seem to have no governmental support role in a conflict of short duration unless a military government is to be set up in occupied territories for a considerable length of time. Reopening of the banks in Lebanon could have been facilitated through the availability of a Public Finance team to assist in controlling the assets of the financial institutions and prescribing necessary regulatory measures. An early opening of the banks would have aided in returning normalcy to the civilian populace.

Two of the governmental functions have an important

command support role that would have contributed immeasurably to alleviating the hardship suffered by the Lebanese and Palestinian noncombatants. These functions are Public Health and Public Administration. Although the first and foremost command support role of the Public Health function is to keep the commander advised concerning medical problems that could have an effect on the health of his troops, the Public Health team determines the need to provide emergency medical service to noncombatants in the area of operations by the military. It is also responsible for ascertaining and coordinating available civilian medical facilities and resources. It is highly probable that medical care would not have become a problem of such magnitude nor as many hospitals closed if a Public Health team concerned with maximizing available medical care had been available to coordinate and direct local medical personnel. This would have allowed injured and ill noncombatants to receive medical treatment much earlier than was actually the case.

Public Administration was perhaps the functional area in which the IDF was most effective. Military Civil Administrators having appeared in the area of operations within a short time after consolidation did develop a liaison with the local civil government agencies and proceeded to restore friendly officials to their governmental positions. The command support role of the Public Safety function was also an operational technique of the Israeli Army as the requirement to maintain law and order and to enforce population control measures were rapidly turned over to local police under the direction of the Military Governor.

The remaining functional specialties in the governmental category are Legal, Labor and Civil Defense. All have command support roles, but in the fluid combat environment of the short war only the legal function can actively fulfill its role. The Legal team must keep the combat commander advised of laws affecting civil-military operations and aid him in meeting not only his legal but also his moral obligations to noncombatants in the area of operations. Where combat activities continue in an area for an extended period of time, the Labor function would be necessary to determine available local labor resources and to coordinate and obtain labor support for military requirements which are more likely to exist in a static combat situation.

The Civil Defense function has the responsibility to locate civilian shelters and evaluate their availability for use by the military and to coordinate civil defense activities of local agencies. Another responsibility of the Civil Defense team is the coordination of explosive ordinance disposal in the civilian community. This was an activity that received very little attention from the Israeli Army, and there were reports of many children being killed or injured by the delayed explosion of shells. Assistance to the civilian sector in this activity could have prevented these accidents.

In the economic category of functional specialties only Indigenous Supply has a command support role which is limited to acquiring local supplies for use by the military. While this would be an important activity in an extended

war with long lines of communication, it was not a requirement for the short incursion across the Israeli border into Lebanon. The remaining functional specialties are Economics and Commerce, and Food and Agriculture. Both of these functions have only governmental support roles involving extended occupation of an area.

This review and analysis has been primarily concerned with civil affairs activities as they support the combat commander. A look at the recent hostilities of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon has been useful in providing a setting wherein to evaluate the various functions and to determine if there is a continuing need to provide the combat commander with civil affairs assets. It seems very evident that, had the IDF the same civil affairs assets available to its combat commanders as does the US Army, the critical press reports resulting from the invasion would have had far less substantiative basis. It is conceivable that the death toll among noncombatants could have been reduced considerably with proper civil affairs planning.

As is evident from Vietnam and Lebanon, in any future conflict the Army will be closely scrutinized by the press. It behooves the US Army to require its combat commanders to know the capabilities of their civil affairs units and to plan for their use from the very beginning of combat operations--which includes the initial planning process. More can be done to alleviate unnecessary suffering by noncombatants in a combat area of operations, but it is up to the commander to see that it is done by including civil affairs functions in his plans.

ENDNOTES

1. Collins, Carole, "Chronology of the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon, June - September 1982"; Journal of Palestinian Studies, Vol XI No. 4, Vol XII No. 1 Summer/Fall 1982 p.1.
2. Rabinovich, Abraham, Christian Science Monitor, 21 June 1982 p. 3.
3. Rabinovich, Abraham, Christian Science Monitor, 16 June 1982 p. 3.

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