MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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**TITLE: Israel's Wars in Lebanon, 1982-2006: An Ends/Means Mismatch**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQURIEMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

**MAJOR KENNETH W. CASAIS**
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS (RESERVE)

AY 2008-09

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Mentor and Oral Defense Committee Member: _____
Approved: _____
Date: _____

Oral Defense Committee Member: _Donald F. Bittner_
Approved: _Donald F. Bittner, Ph.D, Professor of History_
Date: _19 March 2009_

| | | Form Approved |
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| **Report Documentation Page** | | *Form Approved* *OMB No. 0704-0188* |

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

| 1. REPORT DATE **2009** | 2. REPORT TYPE | 3. DATES COVERED **00-00-2009 to 00-00-2009** |
| --- | --- | --- |

| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE **Israel's Wars in Lebanon, 1982-2006: An EndslMeans Mismatch** | | 5a. CONTRACT NUMBER |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | | 5b. GRANT NUMBER |
| | | 5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER |
| 6. AUTHOR(S) | | 5d. PROJECT NUMBER |
| | | 5e. TASK NUMBER |
| | | 5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER |

| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **United States Marine Corps,Command and Staff College, Marine Corps Combat Development Command,Marine Corps University, 2076 South Street,Quantico,VA,22134-5068** | 8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER |
| --- | --- |
| 9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) | 10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) |
| | 11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) |

| 12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT **Approved for public release; distribution unlimited** |
| --- |

| 13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES |
| --- |

| 14. ABSTRACT |
| --- |

| 15. SUBJECT TERMS |
| --- |

| 16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF: | | | 17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT **Same as Report (SAR)** | 18. NUMBER OF PAGES **31** | 19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| a. REPORT **unclassified** | b. ABSTRACT **unclassified** | c. THIS PAGE **unclassified** | | | |

**Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)**
Prescribed by ANSI Std Z39-18

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# Glossary

EBO     -     Effects-Based Operations

IDF     -     Israeli Defense Force

IAF     -     Israeli Air Force

PLO     -     Palestinian Liberation Organization

UN     -     United Nations

SC     -     Security Council

SOD     -     Strategic Operational Design

## Disclaimer

# Preface

I came to this subject in large part due to the coursework involved in Command and Staff College. Although familiar with events in the Middle East through attention to current events and an abiding love of history, I was prompted to delve deeper into Israel's invasions of Lebanon in 1982 and 2006 by the topics we studied in the first semester. Lectures and seminars on Clausewitz, non-state organizations such as Hezbollah, and Effects Based Operations (EBO) piqued my interest. Our explorations of groups such as Hezbollah prompted me to re-read Thomas Friedman's *From Beirut to Jerusalem* at approximately the same time we discussed the death of EBO proclaimed by General James Mattis in the fall of 2008. Soon I was beginning to read the contemporary media articles on Israel's 2006 war and the reports and books published in its aftermath. I was struck by the similarities between the goals of the 2006 and 1982 invasions. With all of the pain and angst the 1982 invasion produced for Israel, how could that state have made so many of the same mistakes twenty-four years later? That question eventually became my thesis statement and answering it the purpose of this paper.

I owe a debt of gratitude to a number of people. My wife has endured incessant yammering on a number of topics she has no interest in and only rarely has she told me to shut up and leave her alone. Dr. John Gordon became my mentor when I was originally going to write about training in the Marine Corps Reserve. When that idea died late in 2008 he did not bat an eyelash and instead offered all of the support I needed to push on with my new topic. Dr. Doug Streusand introduced me to the website on the Institute for Near East Policy, which is a treasure trove of information produced by people much smarter than I. Finally, M. Thomas Davis' *40 Km Into Lebanon* provided the impetus for me to look at my topic from the viewpoint of strategic theory.

## Executive Summary

**Title:** Israel's Wars in Lebanon: An Ends/Means Mismatch

**Author:** Major Kenneth W. Casais, United States Marine Corps (Reserve)

**Thesis:**

The Israeli government failed to heed the lessons of Operation Peace for Galilee, its unsuccessful 1982 invasion, when it made the decision to invade Lebanon in 2006 and established political goals that could not be accomplished through the military means applied.

**Discussion:**

Israel's wars with Lebanon, analyzed within the context of Clausewitz's determination that war is subordinate to the political goals of the government, identification of centers of gravity, strategic theory and risk assessment, clearly indicates an application by Israel of political ends using inadequate military means. In both wars Israel's goals included the removal or destruction of a non-state actor from southern Lebanon and the establishment of a government friendly to Israel and capable of securing its borders. In neither case did Israel commit sufficient military power to meet its policy goals, yet Israel failed also to conduct an adequate risk assessment that would identify the high likelihood of failure and seek to adjust the means, ways or goals of either campaign.

By failing to heed the lessons of the 1982 invasion on the limitations of military force and the necessity of conducting a realistic assessment of the risks involved, Israel committed many of the same mistakes in its 2006 invasion. These mistakes, coupled with an over-reliance on airpower, the adoption of a new, untried system of command and control, and the reduced combat-effectiveness of the Israeli Army due to a focus on counterinsurgent/terrorist operations in the occupied territories vice training for conventional war, led to a defeat of the IDF at the hands of Hezbollah.

**Conclusion:**

In its military efforts of 1982 and 2006, Israel failed to develop realistic goals that could be achieved using the available military means. By not adhering to the purpose of war espoused by Clausewitz and by not conducting adequate risk assessments of its strategies, Israel failed to achieve its political goals. Moreover, by its failure to incorporate the strategic lessons of Operation Peace for Galilee in its national security decision-making process in 2006, Israel repeated the mistakes of 1982 in the Second Lebanon War by establishing political goals that its military means were unable to fulfill. The result in both cases was the failure of the IDF to achieve the policy goals, a diminution of the deterrent value of the IDF, and a loss of faith in Israel's civilian government.

**Introduction**

On July 12, 2006, the state of Israel embarked on a military operation in Lebanon in reaction to the capture of two of its soldiers by Hezbollah. Christened the Second Lebanon War, the operation spanned thirty-three days and at its conclusion was considered a defeat by Israel. The Second Lebanon War began six years after Israel withdrew from the security buffer zone it had occupied in southern Lebanon since the end of its first major war with Lebanon, Operation Peace for Galilee, in 1985. The similarities between the political objectives in both wars are striking, as is the perception that in both wars Israel failed to meet these objectives. For decades the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) has been considered the most advanced and capable military in the Middle East. How then did Israel fail to achieve the objectives of its government in the Second Lebanon War? The Israeli government failed to heed the lessons of Operation Peace for Galilee when it made the decision to invade Lebanon in 2006 and established political goals that could not be accomplished through the military means applied.

**Parameters of Analysis**

This paper will not assess the validity of Israel's justifications for invading Lebanon in either 2006 or 1982. Rather, it will apply the theory of war as enunciated by Carl von Clausewitz and other authors to examine the Israeli government's objectives and strategies in both wars to determine why Israel failed to achieve its objectives. This paper will also explore the similarities between the objectives of Operation Peace for Galilee and the Second Lebanon War in order to identify the lessons from 1982 which could have been applied to Israel's 2006 invasion.

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## Chapter 1: Clausewitz, Strategic Theory and Risk Assessment

In his unfinished masterpiece regarding the theory of warfare, *On War*, Carl von Clausewitz set forth parameters for understanding the nature of war and policy that continue to exert enormous influence today. Clausewitz considered war an instrument of policy, famously observing that war is "...a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means."[1] The use of war as an instrument of policy, however, was one that Clausewitz considered unique due to the violence inherent in war, the potential totality of effort required by the state to make war, and the risk of failure.[2] Thus there is an obligation to ensure that when the state decides to make war, the military means are appropriate and able to achieve the political purpose of the war, and the political purpose behind the war, or "policy" as Clausewitz terms it, is correct. According to Clausewitz only one test is needed to determine if a policy is valid: success or failure.[3]

On the conduct of war itself, one of Clausewitz's most hotly debated concepts was that of centers of gravity. A center of gravity is "the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends," for a military force or government. For Clausewitz it was imperative to identify the centers of gravity of an adversary, and then apply concentrated military force to destroy them or render them powerless.[4] A correct identification of a center of gravity allows the state to focus its efforts and enables the military to conclude the war successfully and as quickly as possible. The rapid success that a focus on centers of gravity potentially allows reduces the risk of failure that is inherent in making war.

**Strategic Theory**

In order to determine whether war is the appropriate instrument through which to achieve political goals, the government must first generate its strategy and then conduct an assessment of the strategy's validity. The strategy is what links the political ends to the military means:

> Strategy is all about *how* (way or concept) leadership will use the *power* (means or resources) available to the state to exercise control over sets of circumstances and geographic locations to achieve *objectives* (ends) that support state interests. Strategy provides direction for the coercive or persuasive use of this power to achieve specified objectives. This direction is by nature proactive. It seeks to control the environment as opposed to reacting to it. Strategy is not crisis management. It is its antithesis. Crisis management occurs when there is no strategy or the strategy fails.[5]

It then falls to the strategist to establish objectives that, when achieved, result in the realization of the political goal. These objectives are not necessarily limited to the military means alone, but reflect the full use of all elements of the state's power. For example, a military strategy "may also facilitate accomplishment of diplomatic, economic, or informational focused interests. In a similar manner, other instruments of power may play crucial roles in support of military strategies."[6] The military strategy does not exist in a vacuum, but affects and is affected by the other instruments of the state's power, and is influenced throughout by the political policy that underlies the strategy as a whole. "[P]olicy dominates strategy by its articulation of the end state and its guidance. The analysis of the end state and guidance yields objectives leading to the desired end state." The strategist must ascertain the intentions of the policy and determine the specific interests, or "key factors" that must be overcome or influenced if the political goal is to be realized. The key factors and resulting strategy are developed from an analysis that identifies which factors might "affect the specific objectives, concepts, and resources of the strategy." The strategist must take into account the risk that is resident in all strategies and balance the risk of failure versus the likelihood of success.[7]

**Risk Assessment**

Those in government involved with the formulation of strategy must assess the potential

risks throughout its genesis and execution. The ends, ways and means must be revisited to ensure

that they are still valid and possess the potential to achieve the political goal. "Choosing the right

policy option (or way) to achieve the strategic objective is...a critical consideration even

assuming a clear objective and adequate means. That is, an adequately resourced 'way' that is

inappropriate to the 'end' would still create risk of failure to achieve the strategic objective."[8]

The failure of the strategy could either mean the state's objectives were not achieved or even that

the implementation of a flawed strategy resulted in an advantage gained by the state's adversary.

Harry Yarger, Professor of National Security Policy at the U.S. Army War College, identifies

three areas that the risk assessment must consider in order to avoid an adverse outcome:

1) the suitability of the strategy: will it achieve the desired goal?

2) the strategy's feasibility: are the means to be employed sufficient to the task required?

3) the acceptability of the strategy: does the strategy call for costs or sacrifice that are too

severe for attainment of the political goal?[9]

If the strategy meets the criteria in the risk assessment, then it may be implemented.

However, if the government chooses to delay its strategy, or if one or more major factors should

change (such as a change in the policy that led to the creation of the strategy) it must reassess the

strategy again to re-establish that it achieves the policy purpose within an acceptable level of

risk. In this way the government does all it can to ensure that its strategy is suitable, feasible and

acceptable.[10] If the strategy fails in its risk assessment the government must then re-evaluate the

strategy's core components (ways, means and ends) or determine if it is willing to accept a

greater risk of failure. The government's options are:

*Modify Ends*. When the price to achieve a particular objective is too high or the ability to affect a "center of gravity" is limited, it may become necessary to reduce the overall objective to more realistic terms...

*Modify Means*. An increase or reallocation of resources may affect the ability to implement a strategy and achieve the objective. This is, however, not simply a quantitative solution. A definition of resources includes unpredictable and changeable elements as well. For example, public support of a particular policy/strategy is a key consideration in a democracy and must be accounted for even if difficult to measure...

*Modify Ways*. Assuming that the objective is sound and resources are adequate, there will likely be multiple ways to achieve the desired end-state. Use of the various elements of power (political, military, economic, informational) in differing combinations with varying emphasis may enhance the ability to achieve the same overall objective...

*Reassess the Risk*. Over time some of the going-in assumptions may be proven invalid. Additional information may become available or gaps in knowledge filled. The strategist needs to recognize the potential strategic effect of more or less information, recognizing that the 100 percent solution will always be elusive due to the 'ephemeral factors.' It is important to reemphasize that this process is dynamic and 'at once abstract and rational, [and] must be capable of synthesizing both psychological and material data.' Indeed, one man's risk is another man's certitude and therefore grist for the continuously grinding strategic mill.[11]

This reassessment occurs as outlined above and continues throughout the period during which the strategy is actively implemented.

Using this foundation on the purpose of war as an extension of politics and the elements of strategy formulation, assessment and implementation, the next chapter will examine the 1982 invasion of Lebanon to explore the Israeli government's use of these concepts and to identify the lessons that could have been applied to the Second Lebanon War.

## Chapter 2: Operation Peace for Galilee

When Israel invaded Lebanon on June 6, 1982, its publicly stated goals for the operation were clear: to remove the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) from a zone in Lebanon 40 kilometers in depth that would free the northern-most portion of Israel, known as the Galilee, from the threat of PLO artillery attack. The invasion was presented to Israel's allies and

adversaries alike as a limited measure aimed at the PLO and no wider war was desired. However, the IDF quickly moved beyond this self-imposed limit when it conducted an amphibious landing north of Sidon on June 7 and attacked Syria's air defenses in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley on June 9. It has never been clear what the full extent of Israel's goals were, and there have been accusations that the Defense Minister at the time, Ariel Sharon, exceeded Prime Minister Menachem Begin's and the cabinet's instructions by continuing Israel's attack until the IDF reached and surrounded Beirut on June 14.[12] M. Thomas Davis makes a strong case that, among other goals, Israel desired the destruction of the PLO, especially in order to reduce the resistance of the Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza, to eject Syrian forces from Lebanon, and to establish a strong central government in Lebanon sympathetic to Israel, willing to end the technical state of war that existed between Lebanon and Israel, and prevent use of the southern third of Lebanon by groups to launch attacks against Israel.[13]

However, any goals other than the initial clearing action to protect the Galilee were outside the capabilities of the relatively limited force of approximately 78,000 troops that invaded Lebanon. Although the IDF pushed forces north to a line stretching across the country from Beirut to the Syrian border (effectively occupying the southern third of Lebanon) they were finally forced to halt on June 22 and consolidate their gains due to the obstinate defense of the Syrian army in the vicinity of Sofar.[14] For several weeks, from June 25 to August 12, the IDF and their Lebanese Christian allies laid siege to Beirut until, under international pressure, a cease fire was declared and the PLO agreed to remove its forces from Lebanon to other Arab countries. By the end of the month the last PLO troops departed under the supervision of a multinational force which included U. S. Marines, and Bashir Gemayal, the leader of the Phalange confessional group and an ally of Israel, was elected president of Lebanon. At this point in 1982

it seemed that almost all of the possible goals presented by Davis had been achieved or were within Israel's reach.[15] The PLO had been removed, though not destroyed, Lebanon had a president friendly to Israel, an agreement to normalize relations between the two countries was under negotiation and a strong Lebanon allied with Israel would likely result in the end of the presence of Syrian forces on Lebanese soil.

Only weeks after his election Bashir Gemayal was assassinated, reportedly by a Lebanese national acting under the orders of the Syrian intelligence service.[16] Over the course of the next several months Israel's success in Lebanon began to unravel. Two days after Gemayal's death the IDF allowed their Phalangist allies access to the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps then stood by for three days while the Phalangists murdered approximately 1000 Palestinian civilians.[17] The international outcry over the massacre increased Lebanese and international opposition to the Israeli invasion and eventually resulted in the ouster of Ariel Sharon from his position as Defense Minister. Amin Gemayal, Bashir's brother and successor as Lebanon's president, was much less inclined to view Israel favorably, and by late 1982 Israel was under attack in southern Lebanon by the Shi'ite militias Amal and Hezbollah which viewed the IDF as occupiers.[18] In the fall of 1983 Menachem Begin resigned as Prime Minister and Israel began a slow withdrawal from Lebanon.

**Aftermath**

While the IDF won almost every engagement with PLO and Syrian forces, Israel failed to realize the stated or possible goals of Operation Peace for Galilee. The IDF destroyed a large amount of the PLO's weapons, equipment and supplies, but failed to destroy the PLO as either a military or political organization. The PLO leadership escaped unharmed, re-established itself in various Arab countries and remained the lead organization in the Palestinian struggle against

Israel. While Israel cleared southern Lebanon of forces capable of attacking the Galilee using rockets or artillery, it also provided the impetus to the Shi'ite Amal and Hezbollah organizations to wage a protracted guerilla struggle against Israel that continues to this day. In essence Israel removed one enemy only to create another to take its place. Syria maintained forces in Lebanon until 2005 when they were forced out in the wake of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. Lebanon remained in a state of civil war until 1990 and the Lebanese central government remained weak and either incapable or unwilling to exert influence in primarily Shi'ite southern Lebanon. By 1985 Israel had withdrawn from all but a thin ribbon of territory in southern Lebanon held as a security zone to reduce Shi'ite rocket attacks and commando raids into northern Israel. This security zone was maintained until Israel withdrew completely from Lebanon in 2000. An average of twenty-five Israeli soldiers died each year in the security zone from 1985 to 2000.[19] Finally, in 1987 the West Bank and Gaza strip exploded in the first Intifada, or uprising, against the Israeli occupation.

With the exception of its goal of removing PLO artillery from a zone within 40 kilometers of Israel's border with Lebanon, Israel failed to promulgate political goals which were militarily feasible. While it is still unknown whether Ariel Sharon usurped the goals of the Israeli government and executed his own campaign plan against the PLO, it is clear that Prime Minister Menachem Begin and the rest of the cabinet did not see the need to restrain Sharon until August 12, when the cabinet rescinded Sharon's authority to order military engagements without prior approval by the cabinet and prime minister.[20] Thus it seems logical to evaluate all of Israel's goals, both stated and theorized, through the prism of Clausewitz and risk assessment.

1) <u>War as an extension of, and thus subordinate to, politics</u>. While Sharon's alleged execution of a campaign without prior approval by the prime minister was obviously found to be

acceptable to the Israeli cabinet, at least until August 12, if true it means that the Defense Minister, and by extension the IDF, decided the political goals that the war served vice subordinating their actions to the goals of the government. If false then the Israeli cabinet established political goals that the IDF could not accomplish. The IDF was unable to destroy the PLO as a political or military force, remove the Syrians from Lebanon or establish an alliance with the Lebanese government. To accomplish the first objective would have required Israel to conduct a bloody, costly urban assault on Beirut without bending to international pressure, including the diplomatic pressure that was applied by Israel's primary western ally, the United States, whose envoy brokered the cease fire between Israel, Lebanon and the PLO which resulted in the PLO withdrawal from Beirut. To accomplish the latter two objectives would have required Israel to defeat the Syrian military, completely occupy the whole of Lebanon for an extended period of time and somehow convince the Christian and Muslim factions to establish a power-sharing arrangement that was acceptable to all confessional groups.

2) The Center of Gravity. The Israeli government and IDF did not explicitly define a center of gravity for Operation Peace for Galilee. However, the prosecution of the war points towards the PLO as the likeliest candidate. The IDF ceased most offensive operations against Syrian forces once Beirut was cut off from support from Syria and focused its efforts on the destruction or removal of the PLO. This assessment of the center of gravity was flawed. The IDF could not achieve its objectives simply by destroying the PLO. In order to secure its border with Lebanon Israel required a Lebanese government that was at least willing to prevent groups opposed to Israel from operating in the border area. A correct center of gravity would have focused on the Shi'ite population in southern Lebanon. The Shi'ites made up approximately 80 percent of the population in southern Lebanon and were initially on friendly terms with Israel

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due to the infringement of the PLO on Shi'a influence in the south.[21] The Christian minority allied with Israel was incapable of ruling Lebanon without the support of at least one of the other Lebanese confessional groups. It is unlikely that Israel could have persuaded Hezbollah to undertake such an alliance, but in 1982 Amal was the most powerful of the Shi'ite parties in Lebanon and the Shi'ites initially welcomed the Israeli invasion as a means of ridding themselves of the presence of the PLO.[22] Israel's focus on the PLO as the center of gravity and alienation of the Shi'ites in southern Lebanon not only provided Hezbollah with its *raison d'être*, but also killed any chance, however remote, of forging a stable Lebanese government favorable to Israel.

3) <u>Risk Assessment</u>. Israel failed to adequately address the risks in its strategy prior to attempting a military solution in 1982. The strategy was flawed from the beginning as the military force (means) which could be applied was not able to accomplish the desired political endstate of a stable Lebanon devoid of foreign forces. The IDF could help put Bashir and Amin Gemayal in power, but without allies from other confessional groups the government remained weak and ineffectual. With its ends and means mismatched Israel would be confronted with the choice of increasing its means (overwhelming military force), finding a different way (using diplomacy, economic pressure or information operations to advance its political goals) or amending its ends to the point where the means were sufficient to make success likely. As there were already numerous United Nations resolutions calling for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon and the popularity of the PLO was ascendant in many countries when compared to Israel, the use of diplomacy to meet Israel's political goals would have likely failed. As Lebanon does not rely on Israel for its economy, economic pressure would also have failed. The use of military force coupled with an information campaign among both the Shi'ites and Christians

would hold out some hope of success, but also would likely fail due to the sectarian nature of Lebanese politics. Therefore, a risk assessment of Operation Peace for Galilee would be forced to arrive at the conclusion that Israel's only option was to scale back its political goals to correspond to the means available.

The 1982 invasion offers a stark illustration of the limitations of Israeli military force to achieve political goals. In 2006 Israel was again confronted with a non-state organization operating from Lebanon which threatened the security of its northern border. Far from incorporating the lessons of Operation Peace for Galilee, the Israeli government implemented a strategy that once again failed to take into account the limited means at its disposal.

## Chapter 3: The Second Lebanon War

The political objectives of the Second Lebanon War were eerily similar to those of Operation Peace for Galilee in 1982. Again Israel was faced with a provocation by a non-state organization entrenched in southern Lebanon and again Israel developed a strategy that called for the use of the IDF as the means to accomplish its political ends. On July 12, 2006, the Shi'a Hezbollah organization attacked an Israeli patrol operating along the border and abducted two Israeli soldiers. In retaliation the Israeli Air Force (IAF) began bombing targets in Lebanon. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert announced the goals for what the Israeli government named Operation Change of Direction as "...the release of the two soldiers being held captive, as well as a cease-fire and withdrawal of Hezbollah forces from along the Lebanon border. Furthermore, Olmert called on the Lebanese army to be deployed in an effort to force Hezbollah out of the south. His most fervent aim, however, was that Hezbollah be abolished as a military power."[23]

The IDF attempted at first to accomplish these political objectives through a concerted air campaign that was designed to cut off southern Lebanon from the rest of the country, destroy

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Hezbollah positions in range of the Israeli border and target Hezbollah command and control facilities within Beirut. The Israeli Navy imposed a blockade on the Lebanese coast and attempted to interdict lines of communication between Lebanon and Syria. Hezbollah retaliated by launching multiple rocket attacks on a daily basis into northern Israel. After ten days of attacks by air, artillery and special operations forces failed to achieve much headway Olmert was forced to hurriedly send a significant ground force into Lebanon to destroy the Hezbollah rockets that continued to rain down on the Israeli population in the Galilee.[24] As the IDF ground forces moved through southern Lebanon they were engaged by Hezbollah units that fought effectively and caused significant casualties among the IDF:

> The IDF ground forces encountered stiff resistance from Hezbollah fighters in hardened positions, suffering considerable casualties and delays in their penetration of south Lebanon. On 12 August Israel mounted a final push to strengthen its position in South Lebanon ahead of a United Nations ceasefire, tripling its forces over a weekend and advancing north to the Litani River. Despite this effort, Hezbollah rocket fire continued and Hezbollah ground forces continued to operate and hold territory in south Lebanon through the war's end.[25]

As the IDF offensive bogged down in southern Lebanon the Israeli government revised and expanded its political goals. In addition to the initial goals "Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni declared that the goal of the campaign was 'to promote a process that will bring about a long-term and fundamental change in the political reality' and to create a regime in Lebanon that would be responsible for its entire territory."[26] As a result the IAF hit government and infrastructure targets in Beirut in an attempt to convince the Lebanese government that it was in its best interests to rein in Hezbollah:

> Both Maj. Gen. Gadi Eizencott, chief of operations in the general staff, and Brig. Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser, former director of research at the IDF intelligence branch, believed that Israel's use of force could change the political equation in Lebanon. From the first day of the campaign, [IDF Chief of Staff Dan] Halutz advocated attacking infrastructure beyond southern Lebanon to pressure the Lebanese government to counter Hezbollah.[27]

This attempt to influence the Lebanese government backfired. Instead of seeing

Hezbollah as the problem the steady stream of Israeli munitions striking Beirut gave credence to

Hezbollah's claims that Israel was attacking Lebanon as a whole to wreck its economy and that

Hezbollah's cross-border raid was simply the excuse Israel needed.[28] Prime Minister Olmert

added fuel to Hezbollah's position. "Statements by Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert indicated

that Israel was holding the entire nation of Lebanon responsible for the kidnapping and that the

Israeli response would be felt by all segments of the Lebanese population."[29] On July 30 Israel

seemed to hammer this point home, though not with the results it probably intended, when Israeli

jets struck the city of Qana killing twenty-eight civilians. That an Israeli artillery barrage in 1996

in this same city had killed scores of people seeking refuge at a UN base there was not lost on the

population of Lebanon.[30]

**Aftermath**

The second Lebanon War ended with a UN negotiated cease-fire on August 12 and a

resolution calling for an international force and the Lebanese Army to take control of southern

Lebanon. Israel had advanced to the Litani River at the cost of some 300 of its soldiers killed but

with little to show for its efforts. While the IDF had destroyed numerous rocket launchers and

prepare positions:

> [T]here was no *observable* degradation of Hezbollah military capabilities at all
> during the war. The quality and endurance of [Hezbollah's] military performance
> exceeded Israeli expectations in virtually every domain, from the volume and
> accuracy of rocket fire into northern Israel (which peaked in the final week of the
> war) to the sophistication of its communications network and artful camouflage of
> heavy military equipment and bunkers (belying the initial assumption of Israeli
> war planners that air power alone would be sufficient to destroy them).[31]

While the Lebanese Army moved into southern Lebanon to ostensibly assert the central

government's control and the UNIFIL peacekeeping force was expanded, the Lebanese

government refused to allow either of these groups to disarm Hezbollah. Far from strengthening the Lebanese government, the Israeli invasion and bombing campaign exposed the inability of the government to defend its territory, provide for the large number of civilians displaced by the fighting or provide effective support in rebuilding infrastructure and homes destroyed during the war.[32] Nor did Israel recover the two missing soldiers whose abductions had precipitated the crisis. Once again Israel was confronted by the reality that the most capable, technologically advanced military in the Middle East had failed to achieve the political goals its government desired.

1) War as an extension of, and thus subordinate to, politics. In the Second Lebanon War the Israeli government set the political goals to be achieved and employed the IDF as its means to achieve its ends. Unlike in the aftermath of Operation Peace for Galilee there was no question that the IDF was subordinate to the government. However, the cabinet failed to question the plan presented to them by the IDF, which the Chief of Staff admitted was unrealistic.[33] According to the postwar inquiry conducted by the government of Israel:

> The inexperienced, incurious Mr. Olmert "didn't realize he was getting into a real war," Mr. Avineri said. Rather, the committee found, "The prime minister made up his mind hastily, despite the fact that no detailed military plan was submitted to him and without asking for one." As damning, the report said, "His decision was made without close study of the complex features of the Lebanon front and of the military, political and diplomatic options available to Israel.[34]

While the military understood its subordinate position, the government failed to ensure the plan would achieve the political goals and in effect relinquished the primary position that politics plays in warfare espoused by Clausewitz.

2) The Center of Gravity. In contrast to 1982 the strategy implemented by the government correctly identified both a military and political center of gravity. The military center of gravity was the military arm of Hezbollah, while the political center of gravity was the

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Lebanese government. The military wing provided Hezbollah with the ability to influence both the government and population of Lebanon by defending against Israeli "aggression" and by maintaining the capability to plunge the country back into a civil war if the central government attempted to chart a course Hezbollah deemed inappropriate. If Israel rendered Hezbollah incapable of using its military or diminished its effectiveness in the eyes of the Lebanese people Hezbollah would find its influence in Lebanon seriously degraded. The neutralization of the military center of gravity would likewise improve Israel's ability to influence the political center of gravity; Lebanon's central government. Though the government was weak and unable to exert control within its borders, Israel correctly surmised that if it could drive a wedge between the other members of the government and Hezbollah by showing that the war was a result of Hezbollah actions detrimental to the security of Lebanon the government could generate sufficient support to disarm a Hezbollah weakened by attack by the IDF. However, Israel failed to address the political center of gravity appropriately and squandered an opportunity to drive a wedge between Hezbollah and the other confessional groups in the government by bombing targets in Beirut and stating that the government was accountable for the actions of Hezbollah.

3) <u>Risk Assessment</u>. Israel failed miserably to conduct an effective risk assessment of its strategy both before and during the Second Lebanon War. Of greatest concern to the government should have been the weakened state of the IDF in 2006. In March of that year the IDF had transitioned over to a new operational and tactical doctrine based on the Strategic Operational Design (SOD) and Effects Based Operations (EBO) concepts. The complexity of the new doctrine, coupled with the restricted training opportunities caused by demands on the military as a result of the continuing conflict with the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, reduced the IDF's ability to conduct adequate training prior to the start of the war in 2006.[35] Coupled with

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the lack of training on the new doctrine was the general lack of training and conventional warfare

capability within the IDF's reserves:

> Some analysts believe the IDF and its reserve components had become
> excessively preoccupied with policing the occupied territories. In this view,
> because their training and operations focused so heavily on small-unit
> counterterrorist missions, the reservists had neglected to prepare adequately for
> large-scale conventional conflicts such as the war in Lebanon during the summer
> of 2006...Members of the Israeli government have acknowledged the legitimacy
> of some of these criticisms. For example, IDF Chief of Staff Lieutenant General
> Dan Halutz said in retrospect that he would have called up and trained reservists
> earlier in the conflict. Other Israeli commanders explain that budgetary cuts and
> the expense of responding to the *Intifadas* had required them to reduce spending
> on reserve training, equipment, and logistical support.[36]

The means chosen by the Israeli government to achieve its political goals was thus degraded to

the point that the IDF found the ground campaign in Lebanon a rude awakening to its ability to

execute conventional operations.

Likewise the capability of the IAF to destroy Hezbollah was found to be less than what

was advertized by Halutz to Olmert. Halutz was the first Air Force officer appointed to the

position of IDF Chief of Staff and "… his enthusiasm for airpower was unequivocal. As chief of

staff, Halutz planned cuts in the IDF's ground forces and emphasized reliance on the air force."[37]

Yet while the IAF was the principle means Israel decided to use at the beginning of the conflict it

possessed its own limitations:

> [W]hile the air force was extremely efficient in destroying Hizballah's long-range
> missiles and their launchers, it was incapable of dealing effectively with the short-
> range Katyushas. Only ground forces could have performed the job. The pilots at
> the helm of the IDF seem to have been unable to grasp this fact. Their hesitation
> and the reluctance of the political leadership to employ infantry battalions allowed
> Hizballah to continuously barrage Israeli cities with Katyushas for an entire
> month, granting Hizballah the claim to victory at the end of the war.[38]

The Israeli government was presented with a political endstate that was once again

unachievable by the military means at its disposal. Yet Olmert and his cabinet not only failed to

adjust their political goals to achieve an acceptable level of risk when the air war failed to deliver on Halutz's promise, they in fact expanded their political goals to include establishing a stable Lebanese central government which would disarm Hezbollah and secure the border with Israel. The unrealistic goals delineated by the government of Israel resulted in the failure of the IDF to achieve the desired endstate and resulted in a loss of confidence in Olmert's government on the part of the Israeli people and the perception that the IDF's ability to deter enemies was reduced.

**Conclusion**

In 1982 and 2006 Israel failed to develop realistic goals that could be achieved using the available military means. In both wars Israel sought to rid itself of a non-state actor that threatened the security of its northern border with Lebanon and establish a strong central government in Lebanon friendly to Israel. By not adhering to the purpose of war espoused by Clausewitz and by not conducting adequate risk assessments of its strategies, Israel failed to achieve its political goals. Moreover, by its failure to incorporate the strategic lessons of Operation Peace for Galilee in its national security decision-making process in 2006, Israel repeated the mistakes of 1982 in the Second Lebanon War by establishing political goals that its military means were unable to fulfill. The result in both cases was the failure of the IDF to achieve the policy goals, a diminution of the deterrent value of the IDF, and a loss of faith in Israel's civilian government.

Israel seems to have incorporated some of the lessons of 1982 and 2006 into its most recent major military operation: the 2008 assault into the Gaza strip in response to rocket attacks by Hamas. It appears that Israel used military force to inflict sufficient damage upon Hamas to the point where Hamas was willing to cease firing rockets into southern Israel, to enter negotiations to return to a cease fire that had expired in December 2008 and to enhance the

deterrent value of the IDF.[39] In contrast to its performance in the Second Lebanon War the IDF demonstrated improved training and effectiveness, as illustrated by its very low casualties during the three weeks of conflict. The Israeli cabinet made few clear policy declarations on its desired endstate, though this lack of clarity may have been due to differences of opinion between members of the cabinet.[40] While the lack of clear goals ensured that Israel would not over-reach as it did in 1982 and 2006, this lack of a defined, announced endstate also meant that neither Hamas nor any other entity knew precisely why Israel was employing its military in Gaza. Israel thus left itself open to questions such as whether or not it intended to fully occupy Gaza and destroy Hamas. The Israeli government's use of force in Gaza as an apparent attempt to influence Hamas to cease attacks and return to negotiations suggests a new assessment, and that the prime minister and his cabinet understand full well that military force alone will not provide a lasting solution to Israel's security concerns.

## Endnotes

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[3] Ibid, 605-608.

[4] Ibid, 595, 617-619.

5Harry R. Yarger, "Toward a Theory of Strategy: Art Lykke and the U. S. Army War College Strategy Model," *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues,* Vol. 1, *Theory of War and Strategy,* ed. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2008), 43.

[6] Ibid, 55.

[7] Ibid, 44, 57.

[8] James F. Holcomb, "Managing Strategic Risk," *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues,* Vol. 1, *Theory of War and Strategy,* ed. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2008), 66.

[9] Yarger, 44, 48.

[10] Ibid, 52.

[11] Holcomb, 70-71.

[12] Camille Habib, "The Consequences of Israel's Invasion of Lebanon, 1982: Failure of a Success," (doctoral thesis, Dalhousie University, 1993), 442-445; M. Thomas Davis, *40Km Into Lebanon: Israel's 1982 Invasion.* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1987), 108; Richard A Gabriel, *Operation Peace for Galilee: The Isreali-PLO War in Lebanon* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1984), 65-70; Thomas L. Friedman, "Sharon, Replying to Critics, Opens Lebanon War Scars." *The New York Times.* August 13, 1987.

[13] Davis, 108-112.

[14] Habib, 449; Davis, 97.

[15] Friedman, *From Beirut to Jerusalem* (New York, NY: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1989), 150-155; Gabriel, 139-159; Davis, 93-101; Habib, 340-353.

[16] Friedman, 157-158.

[17] Ibid, 159-163; Habib, 369.

[18] Ibid, 179-180; Habib, 376-377; Augustus R. Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 80-81. Naim Qassem, *Hizbullah: The Story from Within.* Trans. Khali, Dalia (London: SAQI, 2005), 89.

[19] Norton, 91.

[20] Gabriel, 158.

[21] Shai Feldman and Heda Rechnitz-Kijner, *Deception, Consensus and War: Israel in Lebanon* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1984), 3.

[22] Norton, 22-23, 34; Greg Myre, "Israelis in a Shiite Land: Hard Lessons From Lebanon." *The New York Times.* April 27, 2003.

[23] Hany T. Nakhleh, *The 2006 Israeli War on Lebanon: Analysis and Strategic Implications.* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Army War College, 2007), 6.

[24] Ralph Shield, *Israel's Second Lebanon War: A Failure of Afghan Model Warfare?* (Newport, RI: Joint Military Operations Dept., Naval War College, 2007), 3-4.

[25] Ibid, 3-4.

[26] Efraim Inbar, "How Israel Bungled the Second Lebanon War," *Middle East Quarterly* Summer 2007.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Nakhleh, 11-12.

[29] Andrew Exum, *Hizballah at War: A Military Assessment* (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2006), 8.

[30] Norton, 84, 140.

[31] Gary C. Gambill, "Implications of the Israel-Hezbollah War." *Mideast Monitor, vol. 1, no. 3,* Sept./Oct. 2006.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Makovsky, David, and Jeffrey White. *Lessons and Implications of the Israeli-Hizballah War: A Preliminary Assessment* (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2006), 15.

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[35] Matt Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared: The 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 2008), 27-28.

[36] Richard Weitz, *The Reserve Policies of Nations: A Comparative Analysis* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 107.

[37] Inbar, "How Israel Bungled the Second Lebanon War."

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[39] Anthony H. Cordesman, *The "Gaza War": A Strategic Analysis* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009), 11.

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