

THE ISRAELI EXPERIENCE IN LEBANON, 1982-1985

Major George C. Solley
Marine Corps Command and Staff College
Marine Corps Development and Education Command
Quantico, Virginia
10 May 1987

ABSTRACT

Author: Solley, George C., Major, USMC
Title: Israel's Lebanon War, 1982-1985
Date: 16 February 1987

On 6 June 1982, the armed forces of Israel invaded Lebanon in a campaign which, although initially perceived as limited in purpose, scope, and duration, would become the longest and most controversial military action in Israel's history. Operation Peace for Galilee was launched to meet five national strategy goals: (1) eliminate the PLO threat to Israel's northern border; (2) destroy the PLO infrastructure in Lebanon; (3) remove Syrian military presence in the Bekaa Valley and reduce its influence in Lebanon; (4) create a stable Lebanese government; and (5) therefore strengthen Israel's position in the West Bank.

This study examines Israel's experience in Lebanon from the growth of a significant PLO threat during the 1970's to the present, concentrating on the events from the initial Israeli invasion in June 1982 to the completion of the withdrawal in June 1985. In doing so, the study pays particular attention to three aspects of the war: military operations, strategic goals, and overall results.

The examination of the Lebanon War lends itself to division into three parts. Part One recounts the background necessary for an understanding of the war's context -- the growth of PLO power in Lebanon, the internal power struggle in Lebanon during the long and continuing civil war, and Israeli involvement in Lebanon prior to 1982. The second part deals with the four distinct phases of Israeli military operations in Lebanon: (1) the eight-day offensive which shattered the PLO and seriously damaged Syrian occupation forces; (2) the consolidation of gains and seige of West Beirut; (3) the occupation of territory pending political settlement; and (4) the phased withdrawal from Lebanon. Part Three examines the results of the war in terms of military lessons learned, degree of success of war goals, and overall effects of the war on Israel, Lebanon, and the Palestinian movement.

In brief, the Israeli Defense Force conducted a successful combined arms offensive which achieved every military objective assigned it, but which revealed certain weakness in force structure and tactics. Strategic goals were initially met with the evacuation of much of the PLO from Beirut and the defeat of Syrian forces in the Bekaa; however, long term results have been a

renewed PLO presence in Lebanon, the rise of militant Shi'a fundamentalist militias in the south, the almost total collapse of any semblance of a Lebanese government, restored Syrian presence and influence, deep domestic divisions in Israel concerning the war, and increased political violence in the West Bank.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter I. Introduction	1
Chapter II. Background	4
Chapter III. Plans and Preparations	40
Chapter IV. Invasion	58
Chapter V. Seige	97
Chapter VI. Occupation and Withdrawal	106
Chapter VII. IDF Lessons Learned	126
Chapter VIII. Conclusions	142
Bibliography	150

FIGURES

Figure 1. IDF Expansion, 1973-1982	16
Figure 2. IDF Organization	18
Figure 3. PLO Organization	23
Figure 4. Palestinian Factions	25
Figure 5. Lebanese Factions	29
Figure 6. IDF Order of Battle	48
Figure 7. PLO Order of Battle	50
Figure 8. Syrian Order of Battle	55

MAPS

Map 1. Religious Communities in Lebanon	27
Map 2. Areas of Control in Lebanon	35
Map 3. Topography of Lebanon	43
Map 4. PLO Dispositions	51
Map 5. Syrian Dispositions	53
(Vp6w6n?p 6. Israeli Advances -- 6 June	65
Map 7. Israeli Advances -- 7 June	68
Map 8. Israeli Advances -- 8 June	73
Map 9. Israeli Advances -- 9 June	78
Map 10. Israeli Advances -- 10 June	82
Map 11. Israeli Advances -- 11-12 June	85
Map 12. Beirut-Damascus Highway -- 22-25 June	91
Map 13. Beirut	96

Map 14.	Beirut -- 1-4 August	102
Map 15.	Israeli Dispositions -- Sept 82-Sept 83	113
Map 16.	Israeli Dispositions -- Sept 83-Jan 85	115
Map 17.	Israeli Dispositions -- Jan 85-June 85	123

CHAPTER I -- INTRODUCTION

Any attempt to examine one segment in the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict runs into an immediate and unavoidable dilemma, and this study of the Israeli invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon from 1982 to 1985 is no exception. The dilemma is this: the threads that must be woven together to produce a tapestry which accurately and thoroughly depicts a particular conflict are long and convoluted; the Lebanon conflict especially cannot be understood without a knowledge of the greater Arab-Israeli conflict, its roots and history -- both military and political. Even that knowledge must be reinforced by further understanding of both Arab and Jewish-Israeli history, culture, and society. Obviously, a study which attempted such an encyclopedic approach could not be confined to one volume -- much less to a research paper. The approach of this study, therefore, is to rely on the reader to bring with him an overall awareness of the greater conflict and to provide only a brief account of the broader struggle in order to concentrate on background events which directly influenced the events and conduct of the Lebanon War.

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 and the ensuing three-year occupation are themselves multi-faceted. There is the purely military struggle between Israel, on the one hand, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Syria, and Lebanese militias on the other. There is a political struggle on several levels -- within the Israeli government, within Israeli society, between Israel and both its friends and adversaries, between

Syria and Lebanon, and within Lebanon. There is the effect of the war on the pre-existing confessional conflict in Lebanon. And there is the effect on the Palestinian problem as a whole, including not only the PLO but also the Palestinian communities in Lebanon, Israel, and elsewhere. Again, a relatively brief examination of the war cannot hope to deal adequately with its many facets in any detail, so this study will focus on its military aspects. But to concentrate solely on the military aspects of this war in particular would be to remove it from its context and to mislead the reader, so the attempt has been made to include enough related information that the reader may gain an understanding of military events in their political context.

An additional problem in writing of the Lebanon War concerns the matter of sources. One might expect to find only contemporary press accounts supplemented by a few journal articles, but in fact a number of full-length works concerning the war (or at least the invasion through the siege of Beirut) have appeared in the last few years. In dealing with these works, and in particular when dealing with press reports, care must be exercised to maintain a balanced viewpoint. This conflict, like the Arab-Israeli conflict in general, brings forth an emotionally charged reaction from anyone who subscribes to the views of one side or the other, and in this case the deep division within Israel over the war has led to substantially different accounts even among Israeli writers. The sources, then, can be divided into four points of view, each represented by writers whose approach varies from balanced, factual, and reasoned to biased, unreliable, and emotional: anti-Israeli and

pro-Palestinian, anti-Israeli and anti-Palestinian but pro-Lebanese, pro-Israeli and anti-Palestinian, and pro-Israeli and reasonably balanced concerning the Palestinians. In dealing with these sources the researcher must recognize any inherent biases on the parts of the authors and accept as legitimate only that information which can be verified. In addition, all Israel Defense Force reports are kept secret for thirty years, and American reports resulting from liaison with the Israelis also remain classified. Nevertheless, one can build an accurate and fairly complete picture of the war by comparing information from a number of sources.

This study represents an attempt to build such a picture by examining the events which led to the war, the characteristics of its participants, the way in which it was fought, and its overall results.

CHAPTER II -- BACKGROUND

It is difficult to define the amount of background information the reader may need for an understanding of the Lebanon War, but there is no doubt that some knowledge of the roots of the war is necessary. In order to dig out those roots without trying to cover the entire history of the Middle East, it is possible to examine the influences on the conflict in four areas: the military aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict; the development of the Israel Defense Force; the history of the Palestinians and the PLO in Lebanon; and the growing role of Israel in Lebanese affairs.

THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

The historical roots of Arab-Israeli hostility can be traced as far back as one wishes to go, and some Arabs and Israelis

argue the issue from a Biblical starting point, anchoring their key points in events of 3,000 years ago. Be that as it may, the modern conflict has its genesis in the Zionist movement of the late 19th century, when the Jewish population in Palestine increased from some 25,000 in 1881 to more than 80,000 in 1914. Unlike the Palestinian Jews, the Zionist immigrants came to till the soil and were determined to defend themselves in a land where Bedouin and other Arab bandits regularly plundered villages and robbed travelers; these Zionists established barricaded villages guarded by the first Jewish defense organizations, Hashomer ("the Watchman").⁴

World War I was a watershed for both Jews and Arabs. Palestinian Jews served initially at Gallipoli in the Zion Mule Corps; later, after the Balfour Declaration gave British approval for "establishment in Palestine of a national homeland for the Jewish people," the Jewish Legion participated in Allenby's campaign to drive the Ottoman Turks from Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria. Also serving under Allenby was the Arab Legion, commanded by the Arabian Sheik Faisal--great-uncle of Jordan's King Hussein--and advised by the T. E. Lawrence.⁵ At war's end, Britain received the Palestinian mandate, but in order to conquer the region, she had encouraged both Zionist aspirations and Arab nationalism in Arabia, Transjordan, and Palestine.

These conflicting aspirations resulted in bloody clashes during the period of the British Mandate in Palestine. The increasing number of authorized Jewish immigrants spurred Arab anti-Jewish riots in the 1920's, which in turn led to the creation of the country-wide militia that was father of the

Israel Defense Force--the Haganah.⁶ By the outbreak of World War II, the Jewish population had reached 445,000; thousands of Jews had received paramilitary training as part of the Jewish Settlement Police; and the best of these underwent special training under Orde Wingate in the counterguerilla Special Night Squads. In addition, the Zionist radical right had formed its own militia, the Irgun Zvai Leumi. On the Arab side, banditry and riots had begun to be supplemented by trained guerillas under the command of a former Ottoman army officer named Fawzi al-Kawukji.

World War II again brought military training to the Palestinian Jews, as some 32,000 joined the British forces. Meanwhile, the Haganah organized a full-time military force, the Palmach, which participated as scouts and commandos in the British operations against Vichy Lebanon and Syria. After the war, the Haganah concentrated on building an army-in-waiting and on facilitating illegal immigration from Europe, while the Irgun and its offshoot Lohamei Herut Yisrael ("Fighters for Israel's Freedom", LEHI to Israelis and the Stern Gang abroad), indulged in a terrorist campaign against the British. Arab guerilla groups -- many of whom had also received British training -- fought both British and Jews.⁷

The first Arab-Israel war actually began in November 1947, when the United Nations commenced its plan to partition Palestine and the British agreed to withdraw within six months. The war unfolded in several phases, the first two of which consisted of an offensive by mostly Palestinian elements and a Jewish counteroffensive. The Palestinians had formed a number of units manned by armed Palestinians and Arab volunteers. One of these units was commanded by the same Fawzi al-Kawukji; another by the

talented Abdul Kader Hussein -- a kinsman of Yasser Arafat.

During these phases, the Palestinians attacked Jewish villages throughout Palestine, until the Jewish forces mustered the strength to strike back. In April 1948, the Irgun seized the Arab village of Deir Yassin, near Jerusalem, and massacred some 250 men, women, and children in an action which more than any other stimulated Palestinian flight into neighboring countries. By May, the Palestinian offensive reached its apex when Arabs captured the Jewish kibbutz of Kfar Etzion and committed their own, retaliatory, massacre. However, soon after the Palestinians were spent.

The final phases of the war began on 14 May 1948: the day the British evacuation was completed, Israel declared her independence, and forces from five Arab countries, including Lebanon, invaded Palestine. On 26 May, the Israeli Army was officially established by combining the various militias into the Zva Haganah LeyIsrael (literally "Defense Army for Israel", and officially Israel Defense Forces, or IDF, but known in Israel by its popular acronym--Zahal). In a campaign which lasted until June of 1949 (although the fighting was mostly over by December 1948), the Israeli Army defeated each invading force in detail.⁸

The signing of armistice agreements with Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon in 1949 did not end the Arab-Israeli conflict. Rather, the conflict became institutionalized. In the years following the War for Independence, Israel continued to build her army and to define a defense doctrine, while at the same time strengthening her population base by the encouragement of unlimited Jewish immigration. On the other side, the Arabs were

struggling to come to grips with the disaster of 1947-48, both in Arab capitals and in the many Palestinian refugee camps scattered throughout the Middle East. In the main, the early 1950's was a time when both sides tested each other -- and themselves -- in small raids, both by regular forces and armed Palestinian Fedayeen (Arab for "self-sacrificers") guerillas from Gaza and Jordan's West Bank. By October 1956, Egypt had regained sufficient strength and confidence to close both the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping, prompting Israel to act in concert with Britain and France and launch an offensive against Egyptian forces in the Sinai. That fast-moving operation resulted in a swift Israeli victory: IDF mechanized and armored columns reached the Suez Canal in less than four days, and in another four days they seized the entire Sinai Peninsula, destroying the equivalent of two Egyptian divisions in the process.⁹

Again, a period of relative peace followed the Egyptian defeat; but again, Egypt rebuilt its strength in preparation for another clash with Israel. In May 1967, Egypt began to mass its forces in the Sinai, concentrating some 95,000 men and nearly a thousand tanks; President Nasser made increasingly bellicose announcements and declared the closing of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, while at the same time Jordan and Syria mobilized their forces. To counter what it considered increasingly dangerous preparations by the Arabs, Israel launched a pre-emptive attack on 5 June. Begun with Israeli Air Force (IAF) attacks on the airfields of all three countries, the Israeli attack routed all three Arab forces in a mere six days,

with relatively low losses to the IDF.¹⁰

The Six Day War was an unparalleled success for Israel and an unmitigated disaster for the Arabs. Egypt had suffered some 10,000 dead and lost the Sinai Peninsula for the second time in 11 years. Jordan had 1,000 killed and lost its remaining foothold in Palestine on the West Bank, but more important to Arabs and Israelis alike, it had lost the city of Jerusalem; Syria lost over 2,000 killed and most of the Golan Heights, the strategic hills overlooking northern Galilee. Moreover, the Israeli success brought about an entirely new equation in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although the territorial gains greatly enhanced the security of Israel proper by distancing her from her enemies, the gains also brought hundreds of thousands of Arabs under Israeli control, caused a new wave of Palestinian refugees, and stimulated the fortunes of the Palestinian Liberation Organization as Palestinians lost faith in the ability of Arab governments. As the Arabs despaired, Israelis rejoiced in the belief that they had so thoroughly destroyed any threat to their survival that lasting peace would now follow.

However, the war did not bring peace, but a three-year period of non-stop conflict known in Israel as the War of Attrition. This war was most intense along the Suez Canal, but was also fought on the Syrian and Jordanian fronts; artillery exchanges, ground raids, and air strikes exacted a steady toll on both sides, and terrorist and guerilla attacks against Israeli civilian targets became frequent. Although Israel fortified its front lines, particularly along the Suez Canal and in the Golan Heights, it also conducted long-range air strikes and armor raids. It was Israeli air power, which struck deep into Arab

countries and destroyed over 60 MiG-21's (with the loss of only two Mirages), which caused the Arabs to agree to a ceasefire in August 1970. Israelis counted this non-war a victory, but -- although it cost nearly 600 Israeli lives -- the fighting did not seriously test Israeli defenses in the occupied territories.¹¹

That test came in October 1973. On the afternoon of 6 October, on the Jewish Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), Egyptian and Syrian Forces launched a well-coordinated surprise attack in the Sinai and on the Golan Heights. On both fronts, Israeli defenses were overrun and the small IDF forces were reduced to fighting desperate holding actions while mobilization was slowly taking place. In the Golan, the threat to Israel was more immediate, since a short Syrian advance would put them among the towns and settlements of northern Galilee. In the Sinai, the IDF did not stem the Egyptian advance until 14 October, when IDF armor defeated that of Egypt in a tremendous tank battle involving nearly 2,000 tanks. The Israelis quickly seized the offensive and crossed the Suez Canal, and by 24 October had completely encircled the 45,000 men of the Egyptian 3rd Army. Therefore the IDF conducted simultaneous offense and defense, holding on by a thread in one sector while counterattacking in another. By 11 October, the Syrian attack had been broken, and IDF units had advanced to within artillery range of Damascus by the next day. After a near superpower confrontation; a ceasefire was imposed in 22 October.

The Yom Kippur War shook the Israelis out of their complacent sense of military superiority -- for it had been a near thing. On the other hand, the war increased Arab self-

respect and demonstrated that when supplied with sophisticated weaponry and equipment, they became more formidable opponents. The war also led to a number of developments in the continuing conflict: Egypt signed the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab country; Jordan, which had stayed out of the war and ceased providing a haven for PLO guerillas, became more determined to shift attention from military to political action; and attacks by the PLO, both within Israel and abroad, increased in frequency. Now, however, these attacks did not emanate from Egypt or Jordan, but from the growing PLO base in Lebanon. And it was toward Lebanon that Israel turned her attention during the 1970's.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDF

Much of the doctrine and fighting characteristics of the IDF stem from the pre-state era and the War for Independence. The Haganah, which formed the core of the new IDF, emerged from a strong pacifist background and at first strongly opposed the use of force except in self-defense. This principle of self-restraint, known to the Haganah as "to keep your weapon clean," later developed into the IDF concept of tohar haneshek, or purity of arms -- a concept which can loosely be described as morality in war. Not all members of the Haganah agreed with what some considered such a naive approach, and the establishment of the Irgun and LEHI reflected that counter-policy, whose chief characteristics were lack of restraint and a tendency to identify as enemies all who stood between them and their goals. It was in the Haganah that the first operational doctrine was formulated -- based particularly on the main principles espoused by Orde Wingate. These principles included leadership by personal

example, purposeful discipline based on operational requirements, careful planning down to the lowest levels, delegation of authority to subordinates, encouragement of improvisation, concentration on the main objective, exploitation of surprise and mobility, use of night operations, and emphasis on ideological motivation.

In matters of training, the chief influence on the IDF was the Palmach, both because it served as the training ground for many of the future leaders and because the training methods were unconventional. Palmach training emphasized individual responsibility, stressed the need for independence of action even to the squad leader level, and instilled as military answers to the Jewish lack of a conventional military force the concepts of cohesion, group morale, inventive tactics, and daring leadership.¹³ The War for Independence molded the different elements of the Jewish defenses into a single military organization based on these principles and practices. The doctrinal concepts of the Haganah and the Palmach were proven valid in that war, and the young members of those organizations became the heroes of the war and the leaders of the post-war IDF.

After the War for Independence, the new IDF began to attain its shape as a national military force. Confronted immediately with the problem of how to provide a ready defense without the draining burden of a large standing army, the IDF adopted a modified Swiss model of reserve service. The IDF would be made up of three components: Keva, the relatively small permanent service of career officers and NCOs; Hova, conscripts undergoing compulsory service; and Meluimm, the large standby reserve of

those whose compulsory service was completed. The IDF was organized into an army, air force, and small navy -- all subordinate to a Chief of Staff who reported directly to the Minister of Defense. Within the IDF, three regional commands and a General Staff reported to the Chief of Staff.

Also during these early years, the main strategic and tactical doctrines of the IDF were defined. Stemming from certain built-in constraints (lack of geographical depth, numerical inferiority, and limited economic resources), the IDF developed doctrinal concepts which still form the basis for Israeli defense: 1) deterrence of Israel's larger enemies is only possible through an effective and highly aggressive military force; 2) effective intelligence is required to deny surprise to the enemy; 3) pre-emptive attack is necessary to prevent enemy penetration of Israeli territory; 4) reserve forces, the main strength of the IDF, must be kept in a high state of proficiency, equipment, and readiness; 5) a "fast-war doctrine" is necessary to avert economic and human attrition.

Despite these developments, and partially because of the IDF's role in assimilating immigrants from a myriad of backgrounds into Israeli society, the IDF suffered a lapse of effectiveness until Moshe Dayan became Chief of Staff in 1953. Dayan, who had been a favored disciple of Orde Wingate, set about to reinstill the Haganah/Palmach characteristics into an IDF made up largely of immigrants. This he did while at the same time developing the IDF's infantry capability in response to Fedayeen attacks. The Sinai campaign affirmed the overall Israeli approach, although it revealed weaknesses in logistics, coordination, and armor. As a result, the armored corps was

greatly increased in number and quality, and air operations received greater emphasis. The IDF's characteristics and doctrinal concepts, however, remained the same.¹⁴

The June 1967 war further validated IDF doctrine and character, and seemed also to demonstrate an Israeli edge in the adaptation of modern, sophisticated weapons and equipment to the battlefield. However, it was in this area of equipment that the Israelis noticed problems, for its forces were equipped with a wide variety of machines -- from modern Centurians to surplus World War II Shermans. Troops followed the tanks in civilian buses, and the navy could boast no craft built since 1945. Only the air force contained quality equipment, and it was outnumbered by almost three to one. The combination of poor equipment, good leadership, and swift victory led to overconfidence on the part of the IDF, especially as the outdated items were replaced by first rate tanks, personnel carriers, missile boats, and aircraft. More serious, the IDF combined arms doctrine was supplanted by the belief (seemingly confirmed in the war) that successful operations in the Middle East could be conducted with tanks fighting virtually alone, without supporting infantry. From an infantry-based force in the early 1950's, the IDF had become an overwhelmingly armor-heavy force by the 1970's.¹⁵

Both the overconfidence and reliance on armored formations received severe blows in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, which brought with it the realization that courage and initiative might not in themselves prove sufficient for Israel's defense. In addition to maintaining a qualitative edge, the IDF must obtain quantitative comparability as well. In addition, the IDF had

encountered technological innovations for which it was unprepared, particularly the surface-to-air (SAM) and anti-tank missiles. Israeli human and equipment losses were high, but the IDF immediately began to replace these losses and to begin an enormous expansion in manpower, equipment, and complexity. Figure 1 details that expansion, but the overall trends were a great increase in the number of armor and artillery brigades, the mechanization of infantry and artillery, and the tripling of the number of tactical aircraft.¹⁶

This growth did bring with it certain problems. The increase in manpower resulted from the acceptance of lower quality conscripts, which in turn decreased the average quality of the IDF soldier. Officer selection and promotion became more

FIGURE 1 -- IDF EXPANSION, 1973-1982

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1982</u>
<u>ARMY</u>		
<u>Manpower</u>		
Regular	11,500	25,000
Conscripts	83,000	110,000
Reserve	275,000	450,000
<u>Units</u>		
Armor Bde	10 (2-100%)	33
Mech Bde	9 (0-100%)	10 (5 para)
Inf Bde	9 (3-100%)	12
Para Bde	5 (2-100%)	
Arty Bde	3	15 (5 Bn/Bde)
<u>Equipment</u>		
Tanks	1,700	3,600
AFV	3,000	4,000
M-113	450	4,000
Artillery	350 (towed)	918 (most SP)
Anti-Tank	50 guns & RR	TOW, MILAN, RR
AAA	300 guns	24 Vulcan
<u>AIR FORCE</u>		
<u>Manpower</u>		
Regular	15,000	30,000
Conscripts	1,000	7,000
Reserve	20,000	37,000
<u>Equipment</u>		
Combat Aircraft	488	634
F-4E	95	F-4E 138
Mirage III	35	Mirage III 20
A-4	160	A-4 174
Super Mystere	18	F-15 40
Other F/B	66	F-16 74
		Kfir 160
SAM	10 Hawk Bty	15 I-Hawk Bn
<u>NAVY</u>		
<u>Manpower</u>		
Regular	3,500	5,700
Conscript	1,000	3,300
Reserve	5,000	10,000
<u>Ships</u>		
Fast Attack	13	28
Patrol Craft	32	48
Amphib ships/craft	0/9	4/9

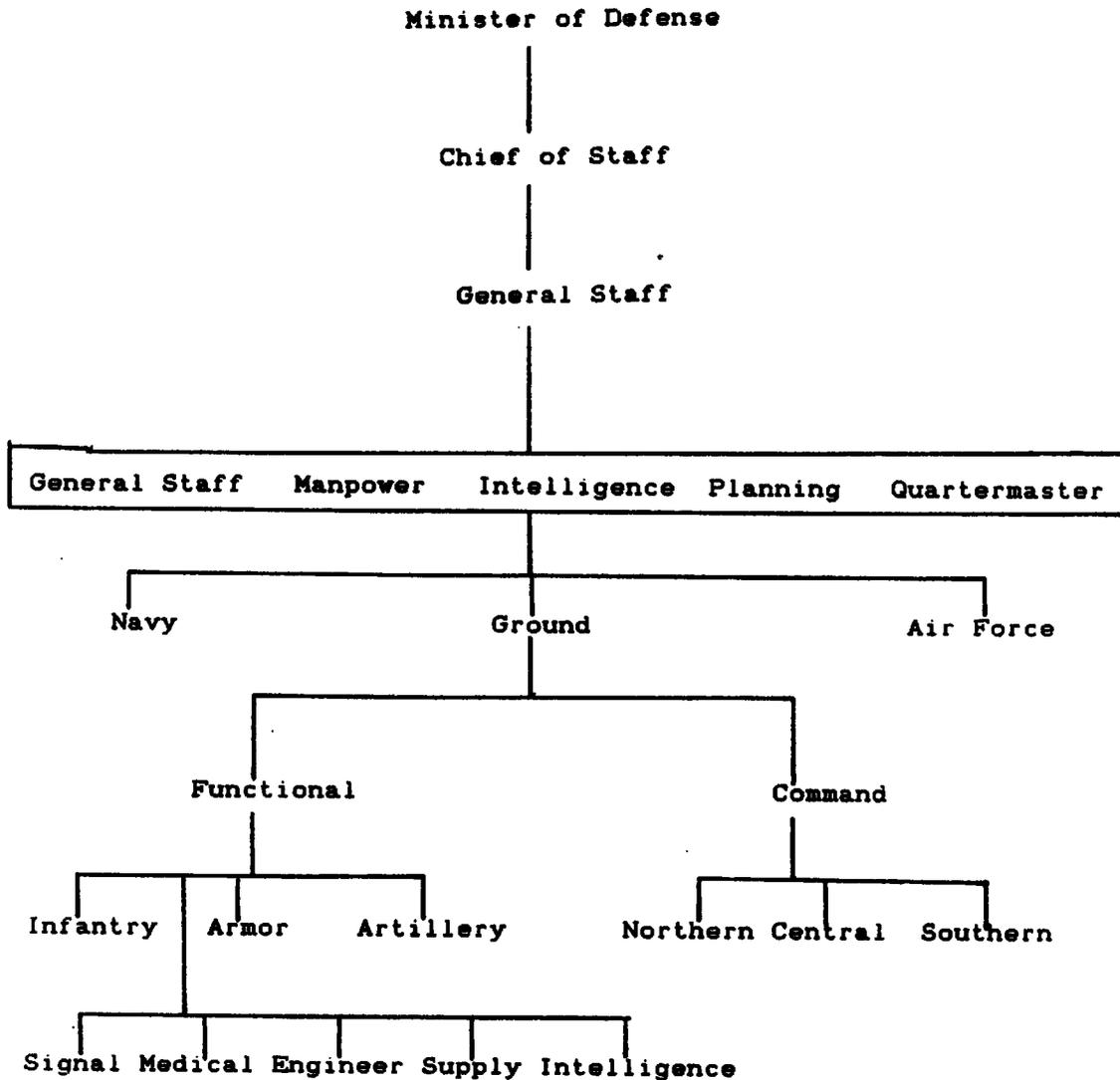
Source: The Military Balance, 1973-74 and 1982-83

lax, because of both force expansion and the need to replace the

nearly 1,300 officers killed and wounded in the Yom Kippur War. As the IDF grew, so did its complexity, command and control difficulties, centralization, and bureaucracy.¹⁷ Finally, the expansion had a severe economic effect: the money spent on upgrading equipment was significant, and when added to that spent dismantling IDF bases in the Sinai following the Camp David Accords with Egypt and rebuilding them in Israel, caused defense spending to jump from around 21 per cent of the GNP prior to the war to a high of 35 per cent in the mid-1970's; the store of arms and ammunition, which was nearly exhausted early in the war, was enlarged sufficiently to sustain 28 days of combat; and the costs of equipment acquisition and force growth led to a cutback in training time, live-fire exercises, flight time, and other key training. However, a corresponding effect was the hastened development of an arms industry in Israel which would reduce dependence on overseas suppliers.¹⁸

Operationally, the IDF learned several lessons from the Yom Kippur War. First, Israel underestimated the enemy. Second, the IDF suffered an imbalance in the composition of its forces: the lack of APC's inhibited mobility; artillery had been neglected due to emphasis on aviation; and the IDF overrelied on armored formations. Third, infantry was used very poorly. Fourth, intelligence was not received in a timely manner nor applied effectively in operations.¹⁹ The overall result of IDF changes following 1973 was a much larger and more sophisticated force, with more combat formations and a greater combined arms

FIGURE 2 -- IDF ORGANIZATION



Source: Luttwak and Horowitz, The Israeli Army and Heller, The Middle East Military Balance, 1983.

capability. Operational doctrine may have changed in some technical aspects, but basic doctrine remained the same. That doctrine is based on consideration of the threat and factors of geography, population, economic resources, and superpower

intentions: Israel has no strategic depth; its population is vastly less than its Arab opponents; its economy will not sustain a prolonged war; and the superpowers will intervene to prevent the total defeat of an Arab nation. Therefore, doctrine emphasizes deterrence through the identification of casus belli, decisive military victory, defensible borders, and an image of autonomous action. These translate into operational emphasis on offensive operations, pre-emption, speed, maneuver, exploitation of technical and command superiority, and combined arms.²⁰

THE PLO AND LEBANON

For much of the forty years of Arab-Israeli conflict Lebanon has been the one area devoid of direct confrontation. After agreeing to a ceasefire with the new state of Israel in 1949, Lebanon was left with a major problem relating to the continuing conflict -- the more than 100,000 Palestinian refugees who fled north from 1947 to 1950.²¹ These refugees, mostly from Arab settlements in northern Israel, were initially settled in camps built by the French in the 1930's for Armenian and Kurdish refugees. Rather quickly, however, the Lebanese government began transferring them to some fifteen camps based on place of origin in Israel. As was the case in other Arab countries, the Lebanese government discouraged the integration of Palestinians into Lebanon's own population, both because Arab states maintained a tacit agreement that Palestinian refugees were politically more useful than Palestinian citizens and because the Christian leadership in Lebanon feared a sizable increase in the Muslim population.²² In Lebanon, the conditions were worse for refugees than in Jordan, Syria, or Egypt: regarded as "non-nationals,"

Palestinians were barred from any government work, including the military, and their children were generally excluded from Lebanese schools. However, a number of Palestinians who either had money, were educated, or were related to Lebanese did manage to obtain Lebanese citizenship.²³

As the camps grew during the 1950's, so did the fledgling resistance movement. The original Palestine National Assembly, formed in Gaza in 1948, gradually gave way to more active groups. In October 1954 a secret resistance group was formed by Yasser Arafat called "Fatah."²⁴ By 1960, the headquarters of Fatah was located in Beirut and had published a credo containing five main points, central of which was the need for "armed struggle" to liberate Palestine.²⁵ As Fatah expanded its base of support, another group, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), was established in early 1964 replete with an Executive Committee, a National Council of elected representatives, and a military branch -- the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA).²⁶

Late the same year, Fatah launched its first raid into Israel. Backed mainly at this point by Syria, Fatah moved its headquarters to Damascus and increased the number of its raids staged from Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan's West Bank. The swift and thorough Israeli victory in June 1967 left a frustrated Palestinian diaspora, one which became increasingly convinced that Fatah's program of phasing a guerilla struggle from hit and run raids to limited confrontation to permanent occupation was the only hope of wresting Palestine from the Israelis.²⁷ Many resistance groups sprang up, with differing goals and ideologies, but all committed to armed struggle. As a result of the war and

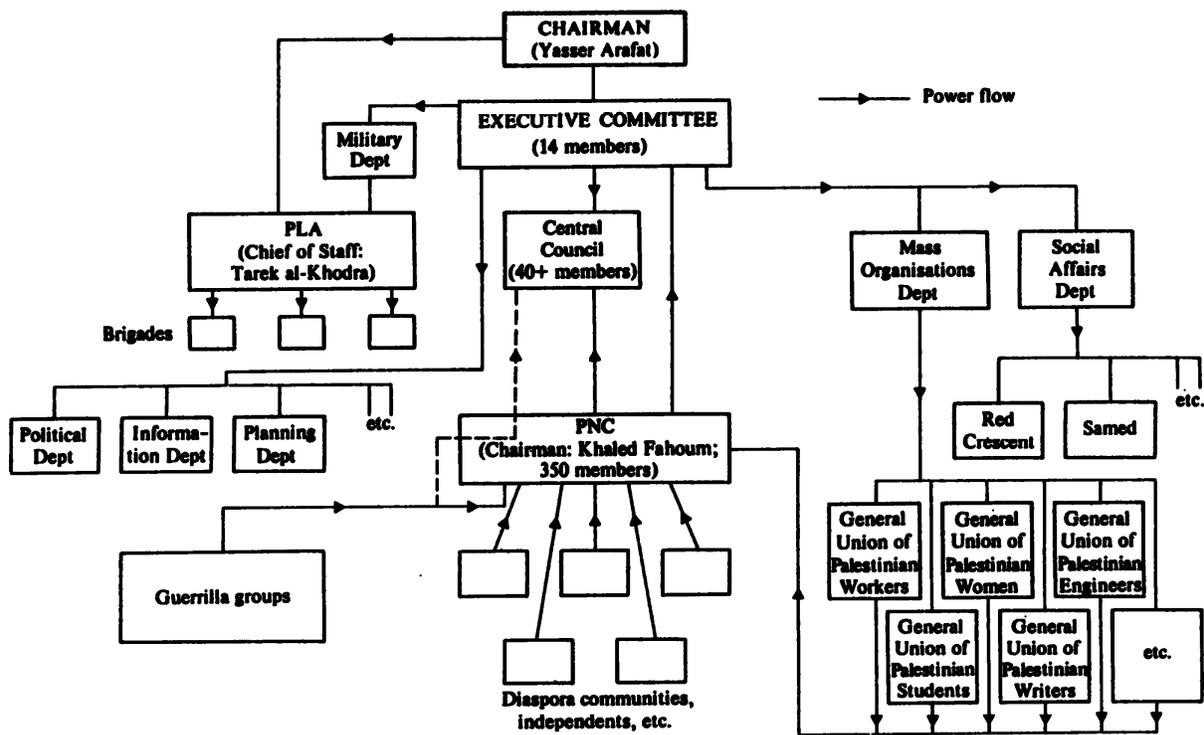
the flood of refugees into Jordan from the West Bank, Fatah activities increased dramatically in Jordan and the PLO itself became more militant. Fatah's reputation and popularity received a tremendous boost in the aftermath of the war, when a large Israeli raid on the Jordanian village of Karameh in March 1968 resulted in scores of Israeli casualties; although the Jordanian Army was largely responsible for the Israeli losses, Fatah fighters performed well and Arafat turned the clash into a propaganda victory which resulted in thousands of volunteers and which consolidated Fatah's position as the leading organization in the Palestinian movement.²⁸

Again, violent clashes between Palestinian groups and Israel increased in number and frequency: nearly a thousand border incidents occurred between Israel and Jordan in 1968,²⁹ and skirmishes between guerillas and the IDF along the Lebanese border were taking place several times a week.³⁰ In December 1968 these incidents brought the first significant retaliatory raid in Lebanon when IDF commandos landed at the Beirut airport, carefully evacuated passengers and crew members, and destroyed thirteen planes belonging to Lebanon's Middle East Airlines -- with no casualties on either side.³¹ In February 1969, Arafat was elected Chairman of the PLO and Fatah became the dominant force of the organization [see Figure 3].³² The strength of the movement (and resulting Israeli response) had by now become such that Lebanon began to feel the pressure. A series of battles between PLO groups and the Lebanese Army resulted in mediation by Egypt's President Nasser, and in October 1969 Arafat and Lebanese Army Chief General Emile Bustany met in Cairo and signed what became known as the Cairo Agreement. This agreement in

effect legitimized the PLO position in Lebanon: Palestinians were allowed "to participate in the Palestinian revolution through armed struggle," and even were granted bases for operations in return for acceptance of Lebanese government sovereignty.³³ Thus, by 1969, Arafat's Fatah had taken over the leadership of the PLO, had become the chief Palestinian player in the armed struggle against Israel, and had established a legitimate basis of operation in both Jordan and Lebanon. In addition, the second great exodus of Palestinians, this time from the West Bank, had swollen the ranks of all Palestinian groups.

However, 1970 saw a series of events in Jordan which had severe consequences for both the PLO and Lebanon. The growing strength of the PLO in Jordan following the June 1967 war was becoming a threat to King Hussein's government. In addition, each terrorist attack launched from Jordan brought retaliation from the Israelis -- in ever-increasing severity. During the early months of 1970, several clashes occurred as the Jordanian

FIGURE 3 -- PLO ORGANIZATION



Source: Cobban, The Palestinian Liberation Organization.

Army attempted to control PLO activities, but in September these

battles erupted into all-out war. Following an attempt on Hussein's life. George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) hijacked four American and European airliners, flew them to remote fields in Jordan, and blew them up. Hussein turned his army on the Palestinians and by the end of the month, after thousands of Palestinian deaths, the PLO in Jordan was crushed. Thousands of fighters fled, mostly to Lebanon.³⁴

Left in a state of reduced capability and reputation by the losses of "Black September," elements of the PLO turned increasingly to terrorism. After more than a year of recuperation in Lebanon, PLO-trained teams embarked on a series of spectacular terrorist acts which included the Lod airport Massacre in May 1972 and the killing of eleven Israeli athletes in Munich the following August. Israeli reaction again provoked tension between the PLO and the Lebanese Army which climaxed in May 1973 then slackened during the Yom Kippur War. During 1974, terrorist and guerilla actions continued by some PLO factions, although Fatah curbed its violent activities when it appeared likely for a while that real political progress was possible. In the Arab League summit conference in October 1974 Arab leaders recognized the PLO as the "sole legitimate representative of all Palestinian people," and the next month Yasser Arafat was invited to address the United Nations General Assembly.³⁵ Yet, as the PLO seemed within reach of international legitimacy, the situation in Lebanon was rapidly deteriorating.

FIGURE 4 -- PALESTINIAN FACTIONS

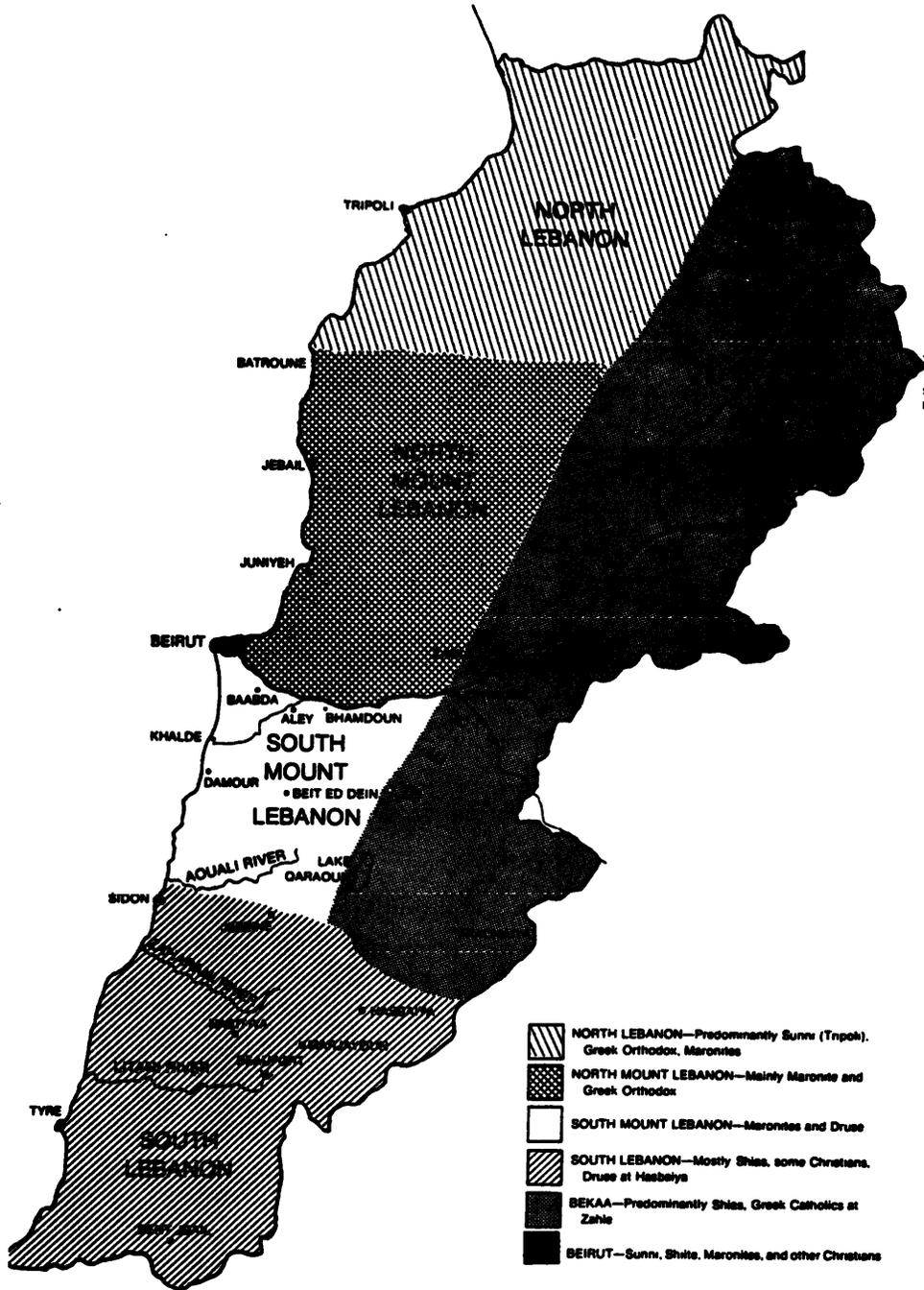
Group	Leader	Militia Strength	Orientation
Fatah	Yasser Arafat	20,000	Mainline--Political/ Guerilla
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)	George Habash	800	Marxist--Terrorist
Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)	Nayef Hawatmeh	1,000	Maoist--Terrorist
Vanguards of the Popular War of Liberation (al-Saiqa)	Issam al-Qadi	1,500	Ba'athist--Dominated by Syria
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine--General Command (PFLP-GC)	Ahmad Jabril	500	Marxist--Syrian/ Terrorist
Arab Liberation Front (ALF)	Abd al-Rahim Ahmed	400	Ba'athist--Dominated by Iraq
Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF)	Abu Abbas (Mahmud as-Zaida)	300	Radical--Terrorist/ Out of PLO Mainstream
Palestinian Liberation Front--Abu Nidal Faction	Abu Nidal (Sabri al-Bana)	500	Radical--Terrorist/ Outlawed by PLO

Source: Heller, The Middle East Military Balance, pp. 186-187, and Cobban, The Palestinian Liberation, pp. 139-165.

Faced with the growing power of the PLO in Lebanon and monstrated weakness of the Lebanese Army, the Christians in Lebanon began seriously to arm themselves. Tensions within the country rose during the spring of 1975, exemplified by endless demands and ultimatums, political violence, and denial of Lebanese government authority by all factions. These tensions had a number of causes: the PLO was an armed force not integrated into Lebanon's political system; the Palestinian issue strained relations between Lebanese Christians and Muslims, since the former felt abused by Arab support for PLO activities and the latter felt an almost sacred duty to provide that support; the Marxist and leftist PLO factions reinforced the Lebanese Left as a political force; and as southern Lebanon became a PLO base, the geo-political problem was further exacerbated by the movement of the Shia population north to Beirut.³⁶ In April, an armed clash between radical Palestinians and Phalange militia in the Ein al Rumani quarter of Beirut ignited a civil war which officially lasted eighteen months but which in fact continues today. That internal conflict has been described in detail elsewhere,³⁷ but since it directly affected the Israeli-PLO conflict and set the stage for the 1982 Israeli invasion, it is worth recounting in broad terms.

The 1975-76 civil war in Lebanon can be broken into four relatively distinct phases. Figure 5 shows the line up of forces as it evolved during the civil war. During the first phase, from April to June 1975, the clashes between the PLO and leftist militias on the one hand and the Phalange on the other

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN LEBANON



intensified. Phase two, which lasted from June 1975 to January 1976, consisted of all out war between two coalitions: the coalition for status quo consisted of the Lebanese Front and other mostly Christian forces, and the revisionist coalition was made up of mostly Muslim and generally leftist militias and -- sometimes, but not always -- the more left-leaning factions of the PLO. The third phase saw the initial intervention of Syria from January 1976 to May 1976; this intervention at first consisted of sending Syrian-controlled Palestinians to aid the revisionists, then attempting political mediation, and finally (when the revisionists spurned Syria-backed reform plans) dispatching al-Saiqa and Syrian PLA units to aid the Lebanese Front. In the fourth phase, in May 1976, limited Syria armed forces invaded Lebanon on behalf of the Lebanese Front and were defeated; in September, Syria launched an all-out military offensive which brought the revisionist and PLO forces to the brink of defeat. By the end of the year, although some sporadic fighting continued, some sense of normalcy returned in Syria-controlled Lebanon.³⁸

As a result of the Civil War, the lines were drawn which continued for several years: the Syrians controlled the north, east, and Beirut areas; the Christians dominated from Beirut north along the coast; the Druze controlled the Shouf; and the PLO exercised authority along the coast from Tyre to Beirut. Although Syria initially fought against the PLO, it switched sides once again when Syrian efforts to impose a long-term political solution (one which would preserve Syrian superiority in Lebanon) came to nought. Syria-PLO cooperation increased with

FIGURE 5 -- LEBANESE FACTIONS

<u>Group</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Orientation</u>	<u>Militia</u>	<u>Strength</u>
<u>Lebanese Forces</u>				
Phalange	Bashir Gemayel	Arab/Secular	Kataeb	10,000
National Liberal Party	Camille Chamoun	Western	Tigers	3,000
Franjehists	Suleiman Franjeh	Pro-Syrian	Giants	2,000
Guardians of the Cedar	Etienne Saqr	Pro-Israel	same	?
Tanzim	George Adwan		same	?
Guardians of the South	Saad Haddad	Pro-Israel	South Lebanese Army	2,000
<u>National Movement</u>				
Social Progressive Party	Kemal Junblatt	Druze/Leftist	PSP	2,000
Ba'ath Party	Michel Afloq	Pro-Syrian	--	750
Independent Nasserites	Ibrahim Qulitat	Socialist	Murabitun	1,000
<u>Independent</u>				
Movement of the Disinherited	Nabih Berri	various	al-Amal	2,500

the coming of peace between Israel and Egypt, and by 1980 Syria had withdrawn from the coastal areas and turned them over to the PLO. Of all the combatants, the PLO came out of the war in the best position, with a free hand within the Palestinian "mini-

state." By the early 1980's, the key players in Lebanon had clearly defined roles. Syria, with military forces in the Bekaa and Beirut, was able to influence events in Lebanon. The Druze controlled the Shouf and the enmity between Druze and Christians had become implacable hatred. The Christians had received the worst of the fighting, had lost Damour and other towns on the coast and in the Shouf, and tenuously hung on to the reins of Lebanese government. The leftist militias had failed to reform the Lebanese government. The PLO was free to expand its forces and to concentrate on the struggle against Israel. The Shiites were building their own forces and attacking the PLO in the south, after having been a minor player in Lebanon despite their huge population.

ISRAEL-PLO CONFLICT, 1970-1982

Each instance of PLO-sponsored international terrorism in the early 1970's brought about swift Israeli response in the form of bombing attacks on Palestinian refugee camps. For example, after a PLO attack on a school in Maalot in May 1974, the IAF launched extensive attacks on PLO positions throughout southern Lebanon. Other types of retaliation also occurred, such as the assassination in Beirut of three prominent PLO leaders by Israeli commandos and agents in April 1973. These retaliatory raids reflected Israel's belief in swift and severe retribution for attacks on its citizens, but they also were intended to persuade the Lebanese government to deal with the PLO in the same way as King Hussein had in September 1970.⁴⁰ The Lebanese did not have the strength to clamp down successfully on the PLO, and the real

effect of the Israeli raids was to intensify Lebanese internal conflicts and polarize the Lebanese into pro- and anti-Palestinian camps -- thus contributing to the outbreak of civil war.⁴¹

Israel's response to the Lebanese Civil War was to strengthen its ties to the Maronite Christians. In response to appeals for weapons and training, Israel began a program of covert aid which grew as the Christians began to lose ground in the fighting.⁴² In the early months of the war, Israel established the "good fence" policy wherein southern Lebanese were provided medical and other care at locations along the border and were even allowed to enter Israel to work. Israel provided limited support to Christian militias in the south by the use of air and artillery attacks on threatening PLO forces. When the Syrians entered Lebanon, they did so under a tacit agreement with Israel that Israel would only tolerate Syrian presence north of a "red line" roughly along the Litani River. In February 1977, in a rare merging of Syrian and Israeli interests, the PLO was forced to agree to withdraw its forces from the Israeli border area in return for the cessation of Syrian shelling of PLO camps in Beirut. In April, Christian militias supported by Israeli artillery launched a drive to clear the border area of PLO and leftist forces, a drive which quickly stalled but which brought an Israeli declaration that no Palestinian presence would be tolerated within six miles of the border.⁴³

Soon after Menachem Begin was elected Prime Minister in May 1977, Israeli intervention in the south increased and the IDF

openly coordinated with Christian militias -- establishing training programs, conducting joint patrols and support operations, and building the militia of Lebanese Army Major Saad Haddad. Responding to a PLO announcement of its intent to increase operations within Israel, IDF armor and infantry units crossed into Lebanon in September 1977 in support of Christian forces, remaining until late in the month. As the PLO grew in strength with increased arms and a joint pact with the revisionist Lebanese National Movement, it stepped up its artillery and rocket attacks on Israelis northern settlements. The object of Israeli activities in southern Lebanon was to create a Christian buffer between Israel and the PLO, and during early 1978 that object seemed plausible. But on 2 March, a joint leftist-PLO force overran the Christian village of Marun al Ras, just one mile north of the border, and captured a quantity of IDF-supplied weapons and vehicles.⁴⁴ Some response was deemed necessary by Israel to ensure continued Christian cooperation, and during the next week IDF forces concentrated at the border as IAF planes flew reconnaissance missions over Tyre and other towns in southern Lebanon.⁴⁴ On 11 March, in an action Israel could not ignore, PLO terrorists landed on the coast near Tel Aviv, commandeered a full Israeli bus, and conducted a running gun battle with security forces before being killed; 37 people died and 82 were wounded. At dawn on 14 March, the IDF launched Operation Stone of Wisdom, soon to be known as Operation Litani.

In an action planned for some time, some 15,000-20,000 IDF soldiers crossed the border and advanced frontally about seven miles into Lebanon, attacking suspected PLO bases along the way.

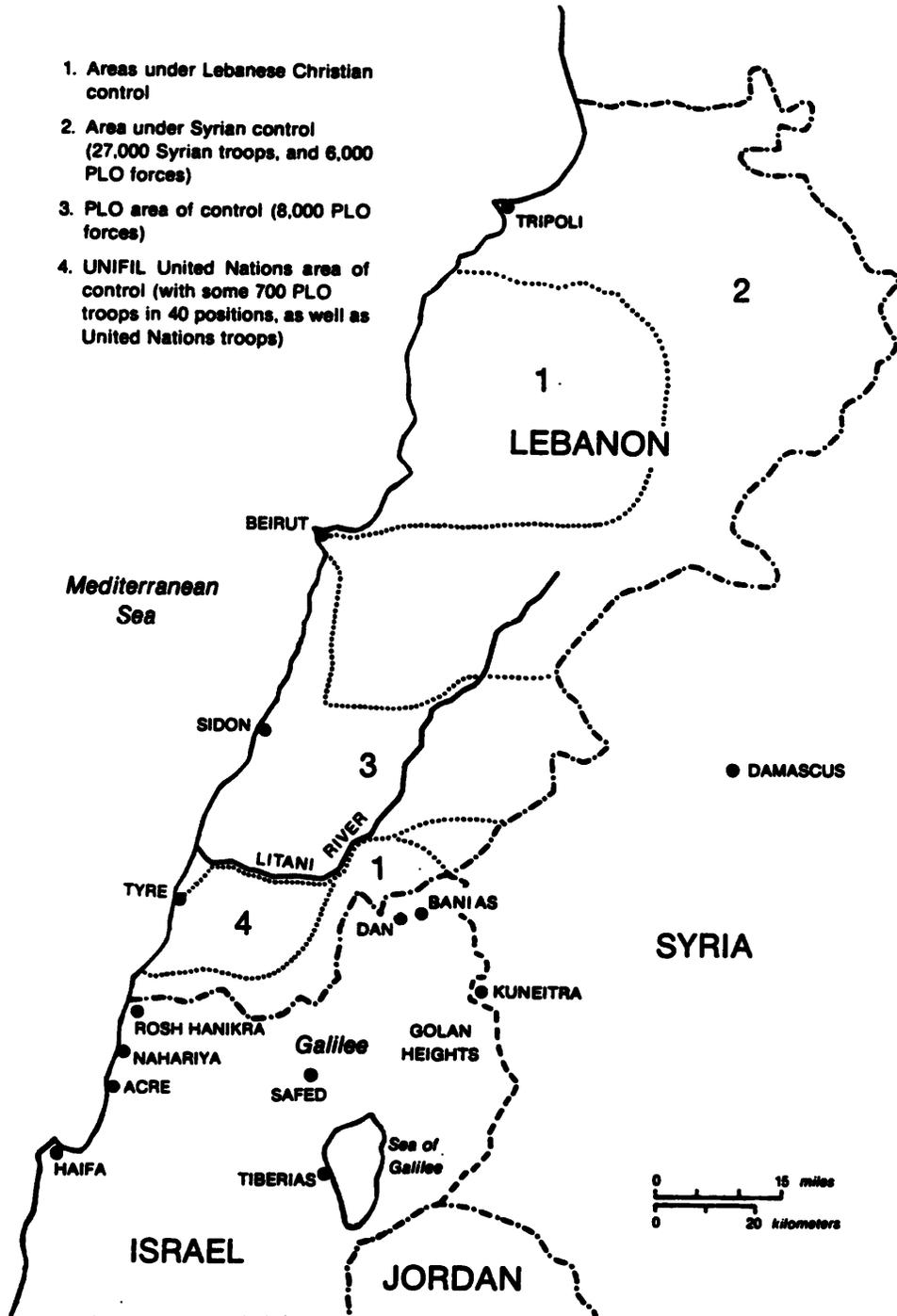
The PLO, having had ample warning of the impending attack, withdrew most of its forces northward. The IDF then advanced all the way north to the Litani River, and in this move a number of PLO fighters were caught in villages and in the camps around Tyre. With little regard for civilian casualties, the IDF attacked villages used by the PLO and leftist militias⁴⁶ cordoned off the Tyre area without entering it, and attacked PLO locations around Tyre with air and artillery. The IDF intended to push the PLO out of artillery range of Israel, to destroy its bases, and to inflict such losses as to discourage PLO activities in southern Lebanon. Sufficient Palestinian resistance was met, particularly from al-Saiqa fighters, for the IDF to suffer 16 dead against an estimated 200 PLO fighters killed.⁴⁷ IDF troops remained in Lebanon until a ceasefire agreement was concluded, withdrawing in June.

The results of the Litani operation were mixed: the PLO had been pushed north of the Litani and a double buffer created to keep them from returning -- the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) zone and the Haddad enclave; the Israeli commitment to the Christian forces was strengthened; Israel received, for the first time in any substance, adverse publicity in the world press for its heavyhanded treatment of southern Lebanon; some 200,000 people fled the area, mostly Shiites who ended up in the southern suburbs of Beirut; and, as an indirect result, the Syrian forces in Lebanon turned against the Christians in late June. It was this switch by Syria that brought about the crises of 1981 and ultimately made the 1982 invasion almost inevitable.

After shelling Christian East Beirut for several months in the summer of 1978 and overrunning several Phalange strongholds in the north -- and also in the face of ominous Israeli moves on the Golan Heights -- the Syrians considered their hand sufficiently strengthened to stop the attacks. However, the reduced circumstances of the Christians allowed the PLO to greatly increase its store of arms, consolidate its position in Lebanon, and take the first steps toward building a conventional army. In the meantime, Bashir Gemayel had come to the conclusion that only a unified Christian force could improve Christian fortunes and had begun merging, sometimes by sheer force, the various militias into the Phalange-dominated "Kataeb." By the spring of 1981 Bashir felt strong enough to begin efforts to establish control of the Christian city of Zahle, in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley. A number of Phalange provocations resulted in a serious attack on Zahle by Syrian forces, during which Israel aided the Phalangists by shooting down two Syrian troop helicopters. The Syrians reacted by moving a number of SAM batteries into the Bekaa. Israel threatened military action and

AREAS OF CONTROL IN LEBANON

1. Areas under Lebanese Christian control
2. Area under Syrian control (27,000 Syrian troops, and 6,000 PLO forces)
3. PLO area of control (8,000 PLO forces)
4. UNIFIL United Nations area of control (with some 700 PLO troops in 40 positions, as well as United Nations troops)



war was narrowly averted by American mediation -- but the missiles remained in the Bekaa.

Then, in May, Israel resumed air and sea bombardments of PLO concentrations in southern Lebanon; Palestinian reaction was restrained and the attacks halted in early June. But the next month, Israel renewed its air strikes, and after five days the PLO responded by shelling the coast town of Nahariya. Israeli retaliation came in the form of an air attack on Palestinian headquarters in West Beirut in which, despite IAF attempts at pinpoint bombing, over 100 people were killed, only 30 of whom were PLO fighters. The PLO then began a twelve-day artillery and rocket barrage that caused over 60 Israeli casualties and brought northern Galilee to a standstill, with Israelis fleeing south for the first time since 1947. The strength of the bombardment and the IDF's inability to completely stop it made it relatively easy for Philip Habib to negotiate a ceasefire. This ceasefire, although halting the attacks, left Israelis with a feeling that they were at the mercy of PLO guns in Lebanon. The combination of that feeling and the appointment of Ariel Sharon as Defense Minister made invasion a mere matter of time.⁴⁸

CHAPTERS II NOTES

¹There is a strong tendency among certain groups in Israel to speak of Israel's place in the Middle East in Biblical terms. One who has done so is former Prime Minister Menachem Begin, who invariably has spoken of the West Bank as Judea and Samaria. A growing political/social movement, Gush Emunim, rationalizes its many settlements on the West Bank and its generally antagonistic stance toward Arabs by Biblical argument.

²Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1979), p. 406.

³Lieutenant Colonel Stephen R. Woods, Jr., *The Palestinian Guerilla Organizations: Revolution or Terror as an End* (Individual Research Report, U.S. Army War College, 1 May 1973),

p. 8.

4Ze'ev Schiff, *A History of the Israeli Army* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1985), pp. 1-4.

5Fisher, p. 407.

6Edward N. Luttwak and Daniel Horowitz, *The Israeli Army, 1948-1973* (Cambridge, Mass.: Abt Books, 1983) p. 8.

7Ibid., pp. 10-27 and Schiff, pp. 9-23.

8Schiff, pp. 22-44.

9Luttwak and Horowitz, pp. 141-64. In light of the subject of this paper, it is worth noting that after Ariel Sharon, who was the Brigade commander at Mitla Pass, attacked in violation of orders with severe casualties, two of his battalion commanders went over his head to urge Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan to remove and prosecute him. These two young paratroopers were Mordechai Gur, Chief of Staff during the late 1970's, and Rafael Eitan, Chief of Staff during the Lebanon War. Dayan took no action, but Gur and Eitan thereafter refused to serve under Sharon (Gabriel, p. 172).

10Ibid., pp. 209-281.

11Schiff, pp. 178-89.

12Ibid., pp. 207-226.

13Reuven Gal, *A Portrait of the Israeli Soldier* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 3-10.

14Ibid., pp. 11-14.

15Ibid., pp. 15-18.

15Ibid., pp. 15-18.

16The Military Balance (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1973 and 1982).

17Gal, pp. 20-24.

18Lawrence Meyer, *Israel Now: Portrait of a Troubled Land* (New York, Delacorte Press, 1982), pp. 315-23.

19Chaim Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars: War and Peace in the Middle East* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1982), pp. 321--322. Also confirmed by interview with Major General Amos Yaron, 4 May 1987.

20Yoav Ben-Horin and Barry Posen, *Israel's Strategic Doctrine* (Rand Corporation, September 1981).

21John K. Cooley, "The Palestinians," in P. Edward Haley and Lewis W. Snider, eds., *Lebanon in Crisis: Participants and Issues* (Syracuse University Press, 1979) p. 22.

22Itamar Rabinovich, *The War for Lebanon, 1970-1983* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1984), p. 40.

23David Gilmour, *Lebanon: The Fractured County* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1983). p. 89.

24Helena Cobban, *The Palestinian Liberation Organization: People, Power and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 6. Yasser Arafat was born Abdel-Rahman Abdel-Raouf Arafat al Qudwa al-Husseini in 1929. His organization was named Harakat al-Tahru al-Filastiniyya (Palestine Liberation Movement) whose acronym, Hataf, means "death" in Arabic; Arafat reversed the acronym to form Fatah or "victory".

25Ibid., p. 24.

26Woods, p. 16.

27Gresh, Alain, *The PLO: Towards and Independent Palestinian State* (Bath: Zed Books, Ltd., 1985), p. 15.

28Woods, pp. 20-21.

29Gresh, p. 14.

30Gilmour, p. 93.

31Luttwak and Horowitz, pp. 310-311.

32Cobban, p. 44.

33Cooley, p. 31-32.

34Cobban, pp. 48-53.

35Cooley, pp. 32-33.

36Rabinovich, p. 42.

37See the following sources: Rabinovich, pp. 34-120; Haley and Snider, pp. 21-112; Cobban, pp. 63-77; Gilmour, pp. 86-157; et al.

38Rabinovich, pp. 43-56.

39Cobban, p. 55. The commandos landed at night on a Beirut beach, were met by Israeli agent and driven to the apartments of the Fatah leaders, killed them, and escaped by sea. The dead Palestinians were Kamal Udwan, Muhammed Yussef al-Najjar (called Abu Yussef and PLO "foreign minister"), and Palestinian poet Kemal Nasir.

40Gilmour, p. 147.

41Halim Barakat, "The Social Context, in Haley and Snider, p. 19.

42Lewis W. Snider, et al., "Israel," in Haley and Snider, p. 91. For a revealing and detailed account of the initiation and development of Israeli-Phalange ties between 1975 and 1982, see Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari, *Israel's Lebanon War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984).

43Ibid., pp. 93-95.

44Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), 5(43), March 2, 1978, p. G1. Hereafter cited as FBIS.

45FBIS 5(48), March 10, 1978, p. N1.

46The Chief of Staff of the IDF, Mordechai Gur, explained in an interview on Israeli television that "the questions faced us: How justified was it for us to take casualties by using less fire on these villages, and what was the most correct way to hit the terrorists. We decided that, on all grounds, it would be better to use the method of directing fire and afterwards moving in to mop up. As a result of that, these villages were badly hit. FBIS 5(59), 27 March 1978, p. N9.

47Snider, pp. 97-107.

48Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 25-37.

CHAPTER III -- PLANS AND PREPARATIONS

IDF PLANNING

IDF planning for an invasion of Lebanon in some respects began in 1978, as the IDF reviewed its performance in Operation Litani. These lessons formed the basis of the "Pine Tree" plan, in preparation since 1980 and virtually completed for about six months prior to the invasion. Actually, the plan comprised three alternative plans, subject to decision and approval by the civilian authorities. The first, commonly known as "Little Pines," was an expanded version of Operation Litani, and called for an advance to the Awali River, north of Sidon. The plan's salient features were as follows: a hard strike against the PLO, particularly its military formations and artillery and rocket

positions; avoidance of combat against the Syrians at all costs; and a forty-kilometer limit of advance as measured from Rosh Hanikra (on the junction of the coast and Lebanese border). The question of whether or not to conduct operations in the cities of Tyre and Sidon was not defined.¹

The second plan was a more ambitious version of the first. The IDF would advance as far north as the vicinity of Beirut, but would not enter the city, which would be taken by the Phalange militia. The IDF would avoid combat with Syrian forces and again a forty-kilometer line was mentioned, this time measured from Metulla, in the east.² The advantage of this plan was that it would include the PLO training and operational base at Damour, some 12 kilometers south of Beirut.

The third and most ambitious plan, called "Big Pines," included war against both the PLO and the Syrians. This plan called for the seizing of Lebanese territory up to and including Beirut, which would be taken in a coordinated operation with the Phalange forces; an advance beyond the Beirut-Damascus highway, which would cut off Beirut from the main Syrian forces; and the expulsion of Syrian units from the Bekaa valley.³ One would expect that this plan would entail deep penetrations, landings north of Beirut and the Beirut-Damascus highway, and other tactical maneuvers of the type espoused in IDF doctrine. Yet, when Major General Amir Drori took over the Northern Command in September 1981, he instructed his staff to take into account the contingency that the operation would unfold in successive stages as approval came piecemeal for further advances deeper into Lebanon in a more open-ended campaign.⁴

Detailed planning proceeded throughout the winter and early spring, even though a decision had not been made as to which plan would be implemented. When the "Big Pines" plan was proposed to the Israeli cabinet in December 1981, the reaction was totally negative. Within the IDF disagreement existed concerning the efficacy of the plan, with a number of high ranking officers expressing reservations concerning the abilities and intentions of the Phalange and the wisdom of attacking the Syrians as well as the political and military advisability of operations in Beirut, an Arab capital. Despite these reservations, a number of Israelis (including Sharon, Eitan, and Drori) visited Beirut and held liaison discussions with the Phalange. In addition to these discussions, IDF officers were able to survey the terrain on the ground, send out reconnaissance patrols to check narrow roads, passes, and bridges. and even to observe Syrian positions of the 85th Brigade in Beirut.⁵

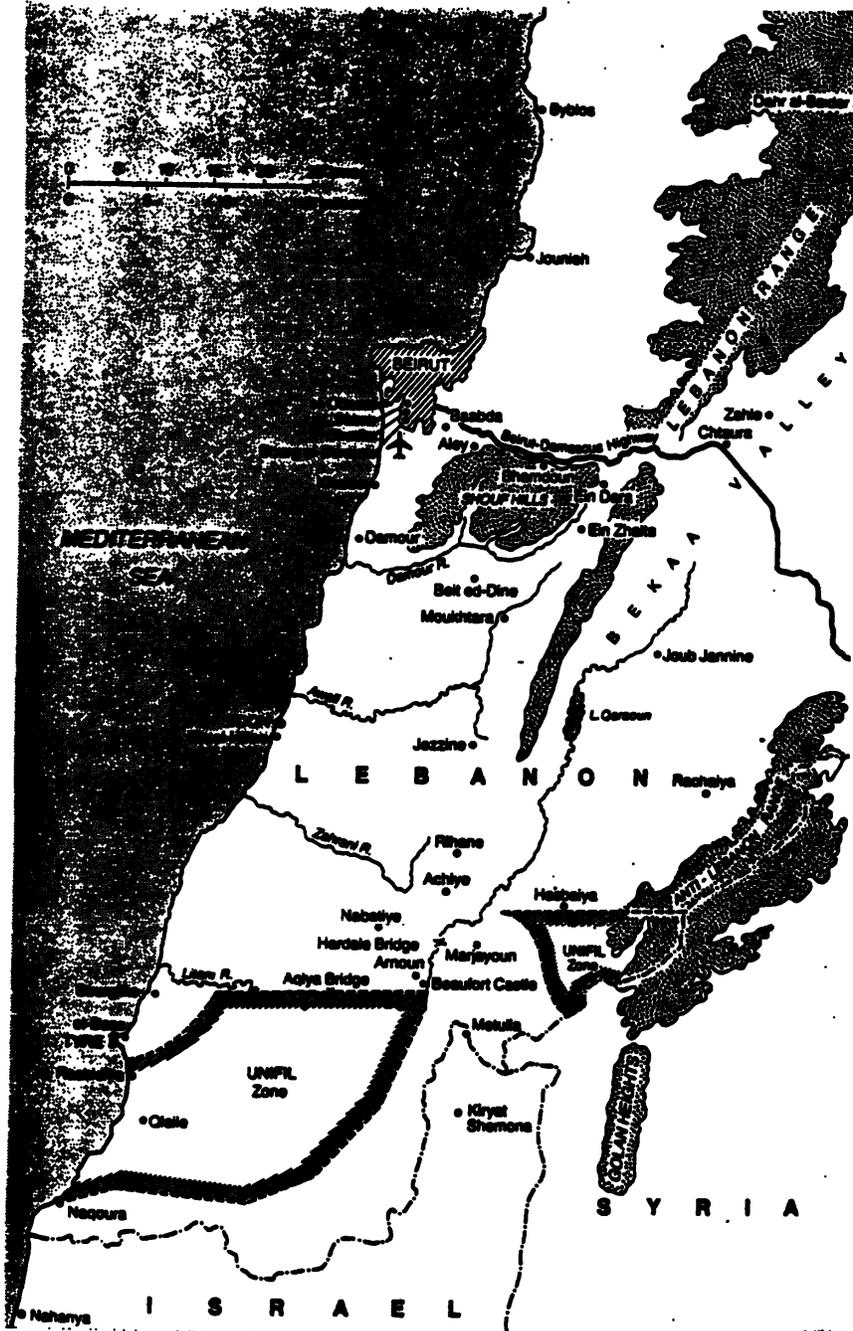
Drori's detailed plan for the "Big Pines" contingency had originally included final objectives in the Beirut and the Beirut-Damascus highway areas, deep landings and assaults at key points, and other creative tactical measures. However, because his mission was being only vaguely defined, and as it became obvious that the objectives of the Israeli Cabinet were less ambitious than those of the plan, Drori's planners were forced to fall back on a more conventional operation -- primarily a mechanized frontal assault on a wide front -- which could, if necessary, be tailored to fit any of the three plans.⁶

TERRAIN

Comprising a rough rectangle some 100 kilometers north to

south and 75 kilometers east to west, southern Lebanon is compartmented in both directions. Several key rivers flow into

TOPOGRAPHY OF LEBANON



the sea from the east and form potential barriers: the Litani, north of Tyre; the Zaharani, eight kilometers south of Sidon; the Awali, just north of Sidon; and the Damour, 14 kilometers south of Beirut. The major terrain zones, however, run north-south: the coastal plain, which extends anywhere from a few meters to several kilometers from the Mediterranean to the foothills of the mountains; the Lebanon ridge, which ranges from foothills to heights of 6,000 feet, encompasses the Shouf and Jbaal Barouk subranges, and covers roughly two-thirds of the area of southern Lebanon; the Bekaa Valley, a flat but narrow plain beginning some 25 kilometers north of the Israeli border and extending into northern Lebanon; and the Anti-Lebanon Ridge, which forms a natural border between Lebanon and Syria from Mount Hermon in the south to the Beirut-Damascus highway.

In tactical terms, the terrain is ideally suited to the defense, especially against armor. In all zones the roads are few, narrow, and poor. In the coastal zone, the main road is bordered by the sea and the hills, and when the plain does widen somewhat, citrus groves cover the area. Few parallel tracks exist, and wadis and ravines inhibit off-road movement. Along the road itself, the rivers form obstacles, and the towns of Tyre, Sidon, and Damour are built astride the road. In the Lebanon ridge, the roads are worse, steep and serpentine, with villages at every level area, hilltop, and crossroads; in the Jbaal Barouk area, only one north-south road exists, with numerous turns overlooked by steep cliffs. In the Bekaa, the valley floor does have several roads and allows for off-road movement, but the entire valley can be covered by direct-fire weapons from the

bordering hills; in addition, the lower Lebanon ridge must be crossed in order even to reach the Bekaa. The Anti-Lebanon is virtually impassable, with almost no road: and numerous steep wadis. The overall effect of the terrain on tactical formations is to slow and channelize motorized movement, reducing a formation's combat strength to that of its lead element [see Appendix A].⁷

TACTICAL PLAN

The tactical plan, then, consisted of a three-pronged attack corresponding to the Coastal, Lebanon, and Bekaa zones. Drori, as Northern Command, would divide his forces into three sectors -- West, Center, and East. The invasion would begin in all three sectors simultaneously, with a pre-dawn attack preceded by night attacks to seize key areas, bridges, crossroads.⁸

In the West, a task force commanded by Major General Yekutiel Adam would originally consist of one division, the 91st, under Brigadier General Yitzhak Mordechai. Mordechai would attack north along the coastal road with two brigades of mechanized infantry and a lead armored brigade, the 211th, whose mission would be to punch through army defenses, bypassing Tyre and Sidon. Follow-on brigades would mop up resistance in those cities. The lead task force would link up with the 36th Division striking from Metulla through Nabitiye to the Zaharani and Sidon areas. Elements of the 96th Division, under Brigadier General Amos Yaron, would conduct an amphibious landing at one of three sites -- the mouth of the Zaharani, or the Awali, or north of Beirut at the Christian port of Jounieh. The mission of the western force as a whole was to destroy the PLO strongpoints up

to and including Sidon.

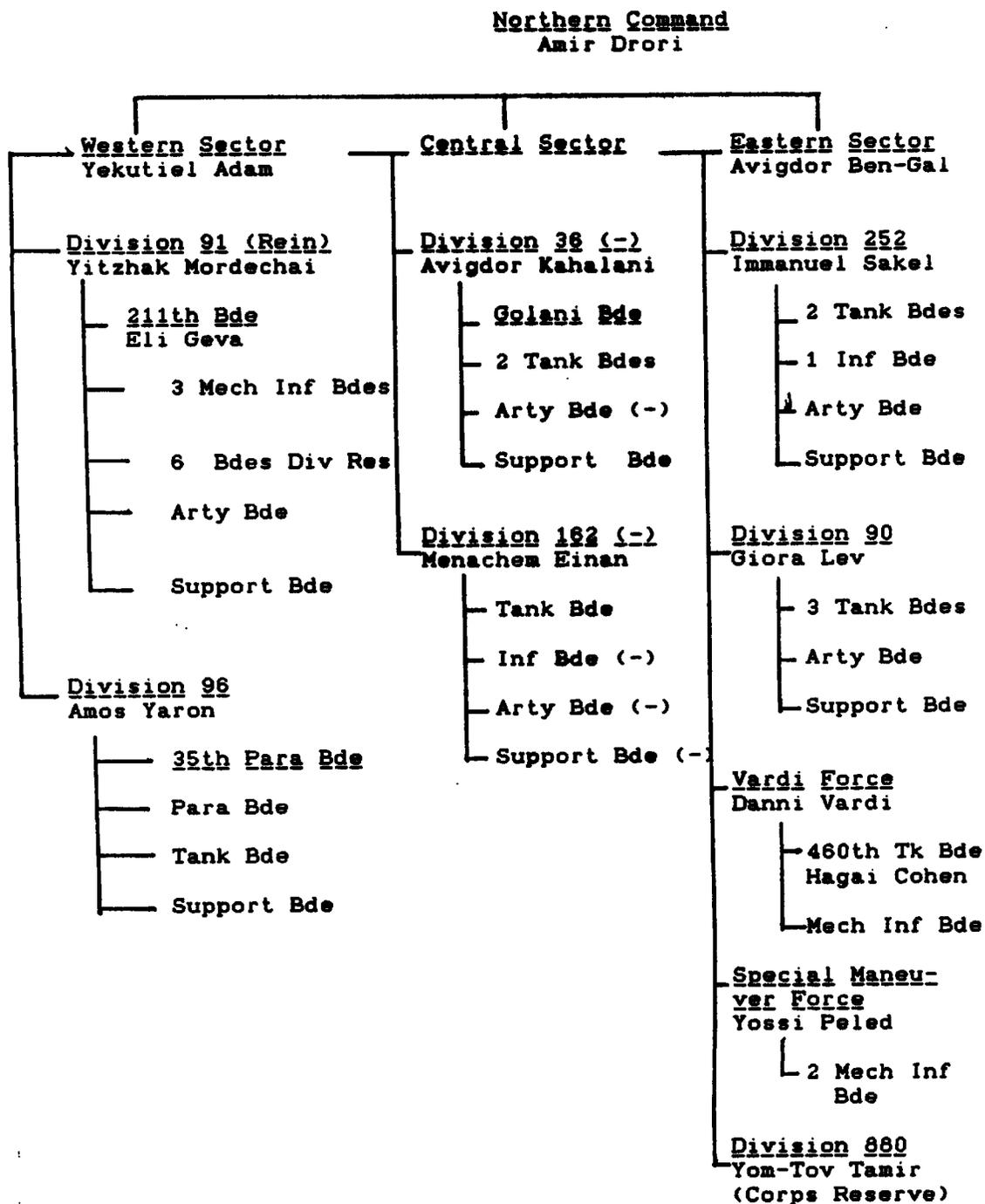
In the center, Division 36 under Brigadier General Avigdor Kahalani would attack from around Metulla, cross the Litani, seize Beaufort Castle and the road junctions around Nabitiye, then swing west along several routes to link up with Mordechai on the coast. Division 162, under Brigadier General Menachem Einan, would follow Kahalani to Nabitiye, then move north around Jezzine along the western slopes of the Jbaal Barouk. Einan's force was somewhat understrength and consisted of a tank brigade, two battalions of infantry, and an artillery regiment -- the 211th armored brigade under Colonel Eli Geva having been loaned to Mordechai. The mission of the central force was to destroy PLO resistance in the Lebanon ridge, to complete the encirclement PLO forces south of the Zaharani, and to prevent reinforcement or withdrawal between the coast and the Bekaa.

The eastern task force was the largest, with three divisions and two independent forces, and was commanded by Major General Avigdor Ben-Gal, former commander of Northern Command. Division 252 (Brigadier General Immanuel Sakel), minus one tank brigade, would advance from the Golan Heights along two routes: one toward the town of Hasbaiya at the head of the Bekaa, and one along Wadi Cheba along the slopes of Mount Hermon toward Rachaiya. Division 90, under Brigadier General Giora Lev, was a full combined arms division which could advance through Marjyoun to the vicinity of Koukaba. Two special task forces were also placed under Ben-Gal: Vardi force, under Brigadier General Danni Vardi was a task organized, two-brigade force which would capture Jezzine and proceed north along the western slopes of Jbaal Barouk; Special

Maneuver Force, under Brigadier General Yossi Reled, was also a two-brigade force, organized for tank killing and made up of paratroopers and infantry supported by anti-tank guided missiles and Cobra helicopters, which would advance along the crest of the Jbaal Barouk. Finally, Division 880 under Brigadier General Yom-Tov Tamir would be in reserve. The initial mission of Ben-Gal's force would be first to block Syrian forces in the Bekaa and second to make untenable any offensive action by them unfeasible by flanking movements to the east and west.

The plan and organization of forces could support either the "Big Pines" or a less ambitious modification. It seems clear from the tactical planning and deployment that Drori's concept of operations was in fact open-ended. In the west, the force could stop at the Awali, continue to Damour, or push on to Beirut. In the center, Einan's division could continue north to cut the Beirut-Damascus highway. In the east, tactical dispositions would be such that favorable position and force ratio would enhance Ben-Gal if combat with the Syrians should take place; if not, then Peled and Vardi would be in position to support Einan in a move toward the Beirut-Damascus highway.

FIGURE 6 -- IDF ORDER OF BATTLE



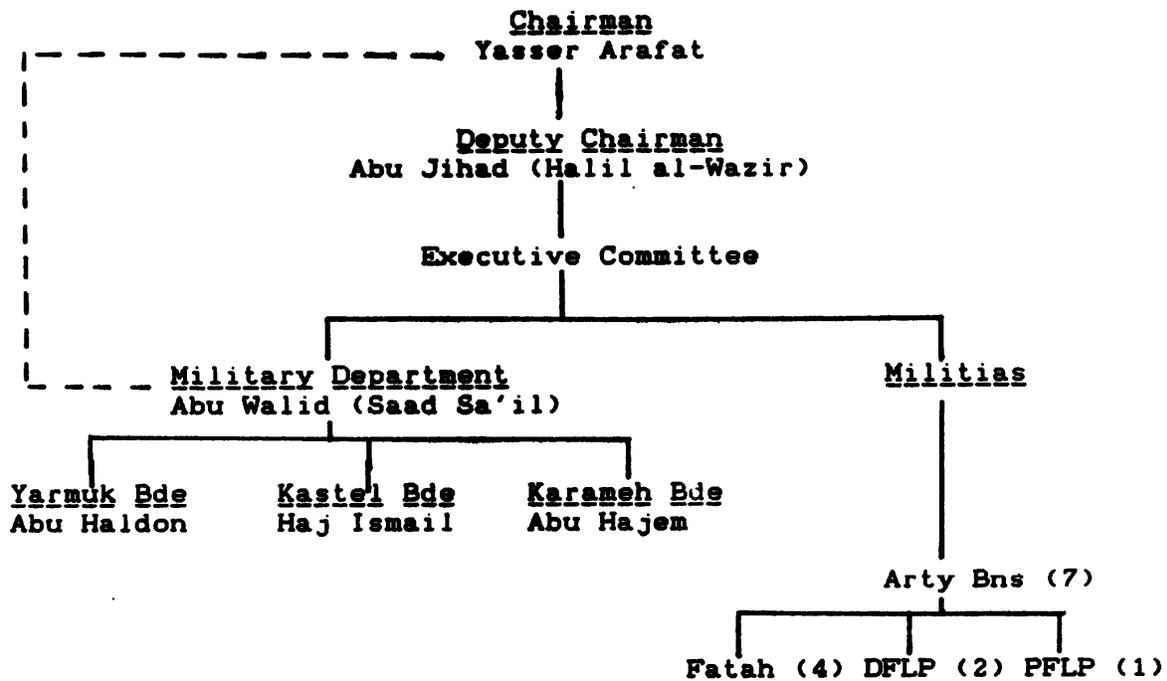
IDF preparation for war in Lebanon had, in effect, been taking place for a number of years. First, the evacuation of the Sinai and the Camp David Accords freed a number of units for deployment in the north. Second, the Operation Litani in 1978 and the near war in July 1981 had further increased Northern Command's readiness. Third, in December 1981 the IDF had concentrated forces along the Syrian and Lebanese borders, ostensibly to deter any Syrian response to Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights. In addition to concentrating its forces, the IDF had surveyed the terrain in southern Lebanon, checked roads and bridges, and created models of key terrain features.¹⁰ Many false alarms, whether by design or coincidence, had occurred during early 1962; during April, after the death of an IDF soldier in southern Lebanon from a land mine, an alert even went so far as to designate D-Day and H-Hour.¹¹ The effect of these preparations and alerts, followed by the inevitable stand downs, was to allay the fears of Israelis, Palestinians, and Syrians alike.

PLO PREPARATIONS

The PLO had ample warning of an impending Israeli invasion. The massing of troops on Israel's northern border in December was followed by a statement by the Israeli ambassador to the United States that an Israeli invasion was only "a matter of time."¹² Incidents such as the killing of an Israeli diplomat in Paris and the ensuing retaliatory attacks in Lebanon by the IAF produced war predictions in both the U.S. and Lebanon.¹³ Arafat's response to these events, and particularly to the July 1981 confrontation, was to increase his available firepower. He more than tripled the PLO's artillery capacity from July 1981 to June 1982, from about

80 pieces and rocket launchers to 250; these he divided among seven new artillery battalions.¹⁴ In addition, he took a number of other steps to prepare the PLO fighters for war: standing orders, along with range cards, were issued to Fatah units assigning specific targets in northern Israel; brigade-level

FIGURE 7 -- PLO ORDER OF BATTLE

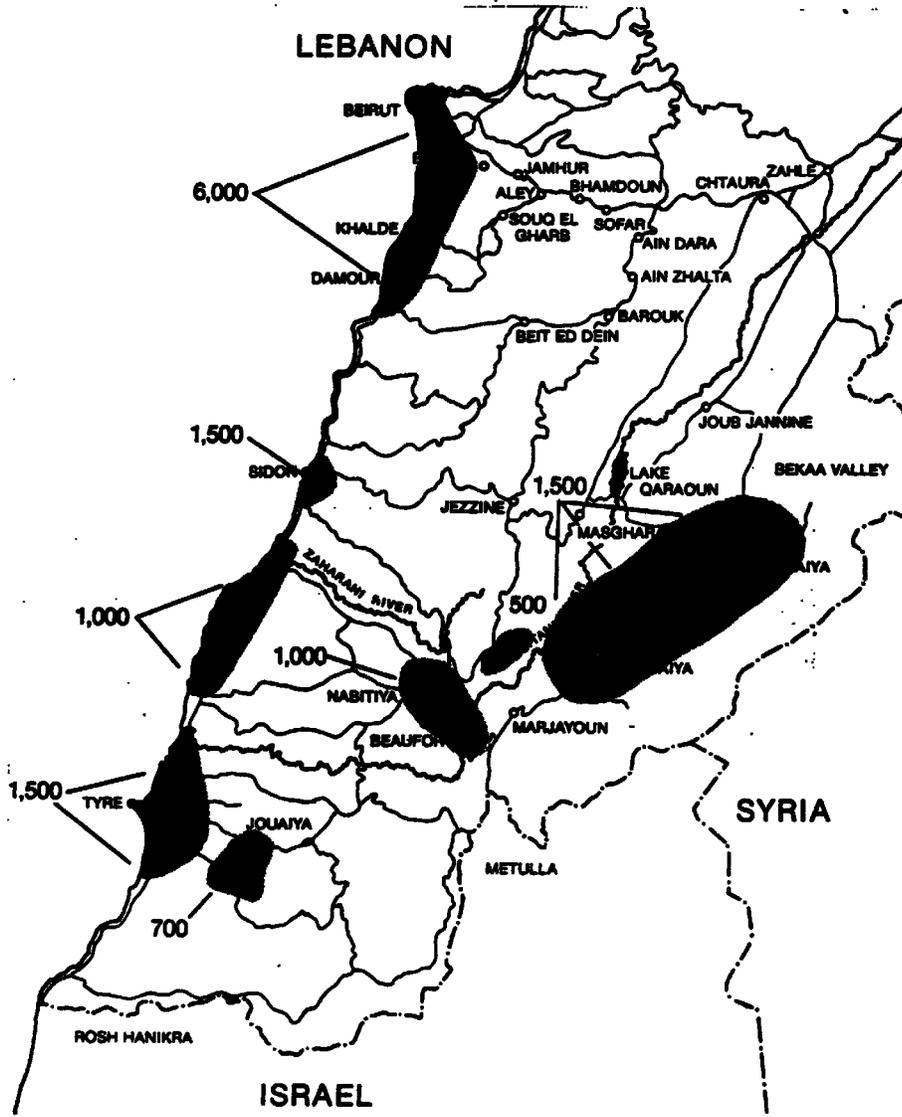


maneuvers were held with the Karameh Brigade in the Bekaa Valley using 130 mm guns and T-34 tanks; regional commands were established in an attempt to provide some unity of command and transcend factional loyalties; militias in the refugee camps were given increased training to free the battalions in the south to fight a more flexible campaign; shelters and emergency stores were established in the camps and hillside tunnels; ammunition

and supplies were distributed from main dumps to likely areas of combat; and fortifications were constructed, particularly around Nabitiye and Beaufort. As the likelihood of war increased in April, Arafat attempted to mobilize all Palestinian males from age 16 to 39, a move which elicited little response. Finally, Arafat raised the level of alert in 28 April and deployed the 460th Battalion, with T-54/55 tanks, along the coast between the Awali and Beirut.¹⁵

PLO defensive strategy was predicated on the assumption that the IDF would stop short of Beirut. For this reason the Karameh and Yarmuk Brigades were pulled back closer to the Syrian positions in the Bekaa and orders were issued to other units to hold back the Israelis, but not at the expense of sacrificing entire units -- in short, to fight a delaying action. The objective apparently was to offer stiff resistance, yet avoid the Israeli trap until a ceasefire imposed by the superpowers could take effect.¹⁶ Although PLO defensive strength has been estimated at 10,000 to 15,000 (including Beirut), only about 4,000 of this total were trained members of the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA); some of these were divided into three

PLO DISPOSITIONS



brigades -- Kastel around Nabitiye, Yarmuk in the so-called "iron triangle" south of the Litani, and Karameh integrated with Syrian

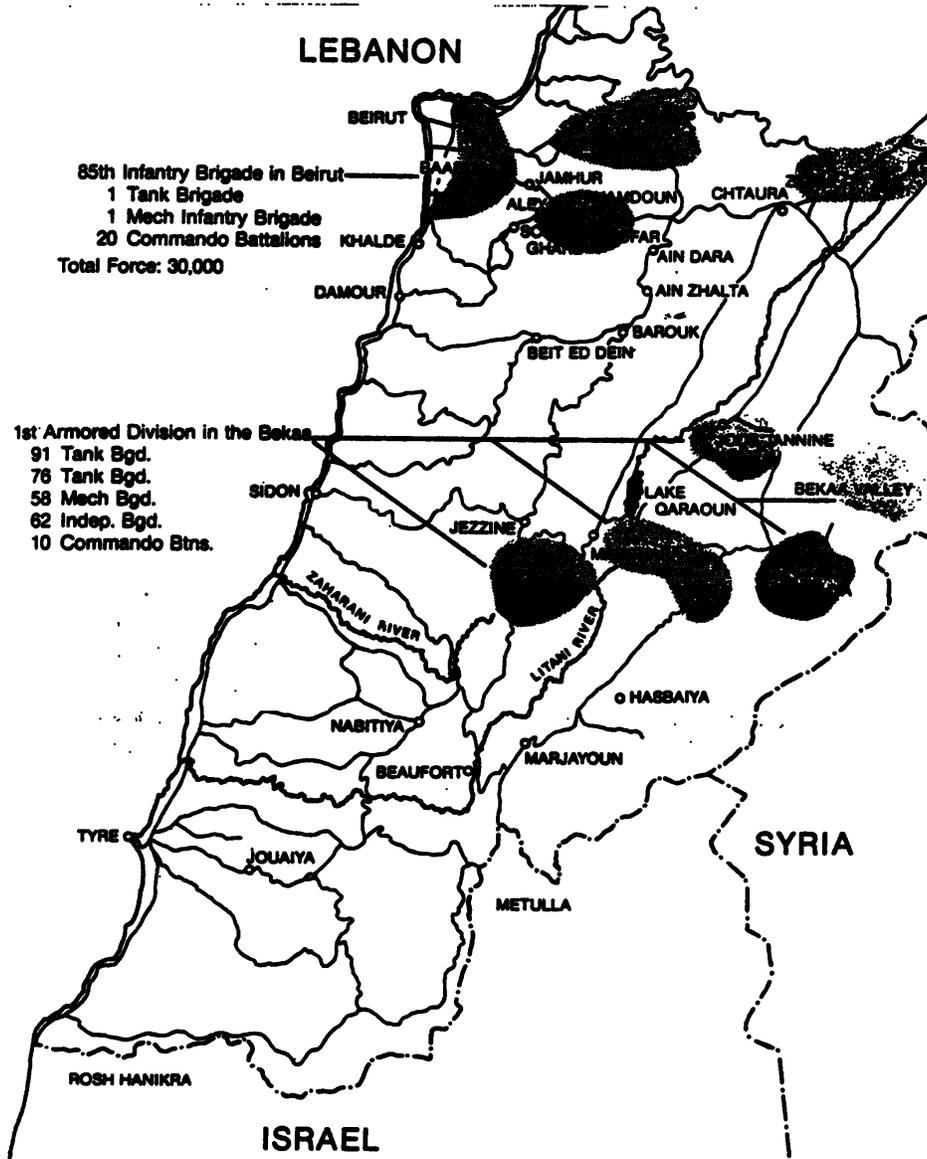
positions in the Bekaa -- and one newly formed tank battalion near Beirut. This deployment consisted both of a series of platoon-sized outposts built on high ground, with trenches and bunkers protected by wire and minefields, and of other concentrations in groves, wadis, and open areas. Additional PLA forces were under direct control of the Syria Army in the Bekaa. The remainder of the PLO fighting strength consisted of armed militia in the refugee camps, particularly al-Bas and Rashidiye near Tyre, Ein Hilwe near Sidon, and the Beirut camps.

In terms of equipment, the PLO did possess some 80 tanks (60 of which were obsolete T-34's), over 250 artillery pieces and rocket launchers, numerous small arms, and considerable ammunition. But despite this appearance of conventional strength, no battle plan was ever disseminated, and the PLO had no ability either to coordinate units or move supplies within the battle zone.¹⁷

SYRIAN PREPARATIONS

The Syrian presence in Lebanon had diminished from three divisions in 1976 to one division and one mixed brigade -- roughly 30,000 men. The 1st Armored Division in the Bekaa, commanded by Rifaat Assad (the brother of Syrian President Hafez Asaad), was deployed in defensive positions in depth. Both Syrian formations and doctrine followed the Soviet model, and

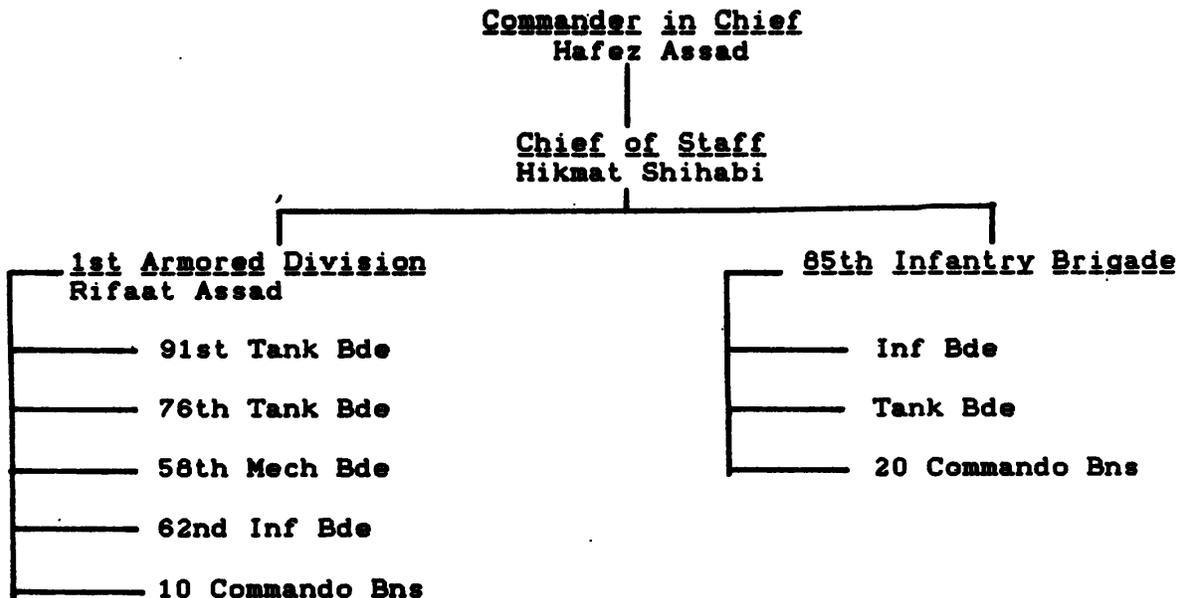
SYRIAN DISPOSITIONS



defensive doctrine called for combined-arms operations, combat teams whose structure was fixed in advance, and a defense based on massive firepower. To provide this firepower, the Syrians

depended on air defense in depth by various SAM sites reinforced by anti-aircraft guns, and a ground defense characterized by a profusion of anti-tank weapons and units. The defense would depend on intensive fortifications and exploitation of natural obstacles to a depth of 20-30 kilometers.¹⁸ The 85th Brigade was deployed in the Beirut area in an armed presence role, with the additional of the security of the Beirut-Damascus highway.

FIGURE 8 -- SYRIAN ORDER OF BATTLE



TOTALS:	
Tanks	612
Men	30,000
Cdo	30 Bns (7,500 men, with SAGGER, MILAN, RPG)
APC	150 (BMP-1)
Arty	300
SAM	30 Btry's (SA-2, -3, -6, -8, -9)

In addition to the three main antagonists, Lebanese militias could possibly become involved in any fighting. The Israelis expected the Christian Lebanese Forces, some 10,000 strong, to fight as allies against the PLO. The leftist National Movement

coalition counted some 10,000-11,000 fighters who were nominal allies of the PLO.¹⁹

As war neared, the opponents consisted of some seven divisions and two independent brigades of the IDF, 60,000-78,000 strong, arrayed against 15,000 PLO fighters, one Syrian armored division, and one Syrian brigade.

CHAPTER III NOTES

1Gabriel, pp. 60-61.

2Ibid.

3Ibid.

4Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 45.

5Ibid., pp. 47-55.

6Ibid., p. 109.

7Gabriel, pp. 72-75.

8Ibid., pp. 75-80. See also Schiff, pp. 47-55.

9Personal interview with Major General Amos Yaron, 1 May 1987.

10Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 47.

11Ibid., p. 54.

12Facts on File (New York, 26 February 1982), p. 87.

13Current History (81:476, September 1982), pp. 282-285.

14Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 84.

15Ibid., pp. 85-90.

16Mark Heller, ed., *The Middle East Military Balance*, 1983 (Tel Aviv: Jaffe Center for Strategic Studies, 1983), p. 11.

17Gabriel, pp. 47-53.

18Heller, p. 233.

19Ibid, pp. 153-154.

CHAPTER IV - INVASION

The Israeli attack was preceded by two days of preparatory fires. All day Saturday IDF artillery had fired on targets within range, and on Sunday morning the IAF had attacked selected targets such as suspected bunkers, weapons storage areas, and known PLO positions. The storage areas were known to be well dug-in, so the IAF used ordnance to suit the occasion: delayed fuze bombs and cluster bombs around bunker entrances which effectively prevented Palestinians from gaining access to stored weapons and ammunition.¹ As the Israeli Cabinet announced that an operation was under way which was designed to push the PLO beyond a forty-kilometer line and urged the Syrians to refrain from action, the tanks of Colonel Eli Geva's brigade attacked, supported by air strikes conducted along the coast and artillery fires which preceded the lead units.²

6 JUNE

At 1100 on Sunday, 6 June, Colonel Eli Geva's 211th Brigade began moving north up the coastal highway through the UNIFIL zone. Already assembled in the Haddad Enclave north of the Israeli-Lebanese border, Geva's armored brigade formed the spearhead of the main attack as Operation Peace for Galilee began. Although Geva himself was a veteran of the desperate fighting on the Golan Heights during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, only two of his company commanders had seen combat.³

The 211th Brigade was followed by the remainder of Mordechai's Division 91. This division, like others in the Central and Western Sectors, was strung out along the narrow coast road. Its lead echelon consisted of Geva's tanks, M-113 armored personnel carriers (APC's), and jeeps with mounted

machineguns. These were closely followed by combat engineer units with an array of bridges by which to pass over the river and wadi obstacles. Next came communications vans, supply trucks and ambulances, and bringing up the rear were self-propelled howitzers and 175mm guns, reserve infantry, and the remainder of the logistics vehicles.⁴ From the start, traffic jams plagued the column as Geva's brigade moved north.

A half hour after starting, Geva's lead company ran into the first PLO ambush. Using RPG's (rocket propelled grenades), PLO fighters waited until Geva's column was extremely close before opening fire. IDF tanks destroyed the position, but the column lost time; ordered to push on by Geva, the tanks raced into a road junction just as IAF planes bombed it, resulting in some damage and further delay.⁵ Further ambushes from positions among the citrus orchards led Geva to order his leading elements to push on and leave the mopping up to follow-on units.⁶ This tactic increased the speed of advance, but PLO fighters were thus able to fire a second and third time from the same positions; RPG fires that left tanks unscathed had a greater effect on the following APC's, setting some on fire and causing the troops to ride on top or walk rather than risk burns. Acknowledging the risk, Geva ordered fuel and ammunition trucks to stay behind the mop-up forces, which prevented their destruction but also made rearming and refueling the tanks a slower process.⁷

Geva's mission was to bypass Tyre and push on toward Sidon. Tyre itself is located on a peninsula to the west of the main coast road, but six refugee camps spread roughly east from Tyre, across the Israeli axis of advance. Of the six, three were

heavily populated and developed as PLO defensive strong points-- Rachidiyeh, east of the coast road and south of Tyre; al-Bas, alongside the road west of Tyre; and Burj al Shemali, west of al-Bas.⁸ Geva, with his lead battalion, decided not to drive through the crossroads next to al-Bas, but instead detoured inland off the road and bypassed the camps. Unfortunately, a following paratrooper battalion, under Lieutenant Colonel Uri Geiger, missed the turn and stumbled into the al-Bas crossroads, where it was ambushed. Three tanks and two APC's were quickly lost, including Geiger's, and in the ensuing extrication Geiger was captured.⁹

The main force under Mordechai soon came up and established blocking positions along the coast road. By 1600, using an engineer bridge to replace the Qasmiye Bridge destroyed the day before by the IAF, Geva was across the Litani. At dusk, the 211th brigade halted and laagered in a soccer field at Sarafend, some 22 kilometers north of Tyre. The main force had halted about five kilometers north of the city, having left a brigade deployed around the camps at Rachidiyeh and al-Bas.¹⁰

Meanwhile, Yaron's amphibious force had finally received orders concerning its landing site, which was designated as a site near the estuary of the Awali River, five kilometers north of Sidon. These orders also informed Adam that the advance of Division 91 would continue past Sidon to the outskirts of Beirut. After dark, Navy teams conducted a beach reconnaissance area, and about 2300 Yaron's paratroopers began landing, unopposed but for some unaimed Katyushas. Initially, troops were brought in by helicopter, followed by tanks and other heavy equipment landed by LCU's. Their initial objectives were quickly taken as one platoon

seized the bridges over the Awali and another the heights east of the highway. In only a couple of hours, tanks and other vehicles were brought ashore, the brigade landed, and the beachhead was secured. After disembarking their loads, landing craft headed south to Nahariya to embark more troops and equipment. By dawn, Yaron had cut the line of communication between units in the south and PLO headquarters in Beirut.¹¹

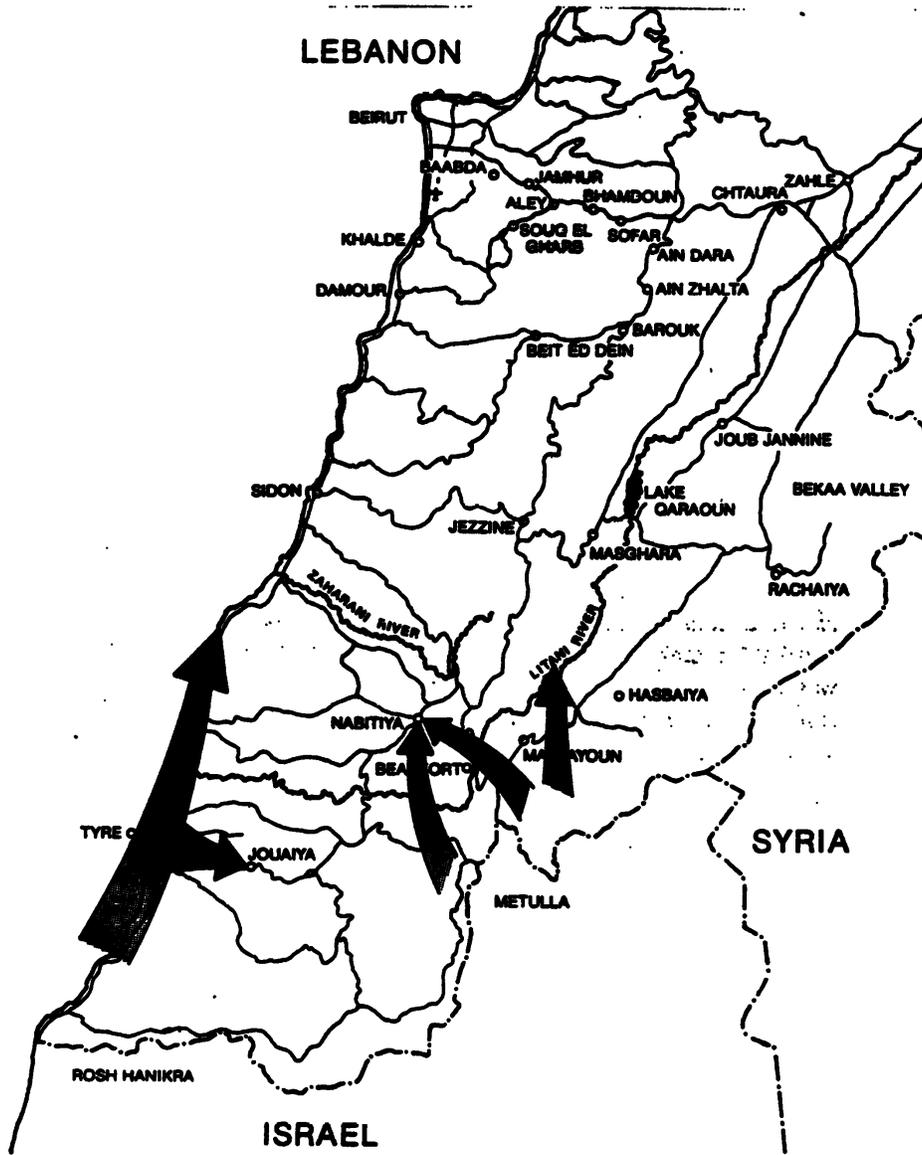
In the Central Sector, Brigadier General Avigdor Kahalani's Division 36 also began its attack at 1100. From its assembly area around Metulla, the division launched a two-pronged attack toward Nabitiye through the Arnoun Heights. The left column, with the armored brigades, crossed the Litani via the Akiye Bridge, west of the PLO strongpoint at Beaufort Castle. The right column, with the Golani Infantry Brigade mounted on APC's, crossed at the Hardele Bridge to the east, under anti-tank and artillery fire from the heights. Both columns bypassed Nabitiye, and after seizing the road junction one kilometer north of the town, the Golani Brigade continued north toward Jbaa as most of the PLO withdrew in front of it; the tank brigades turned left along the road toward the Zaharani junction.¹² As the Division moved toward Nabitiye, it dropped off a reconnaissance unit from the Golani Brigade to seize Beaufort Castle. The castle, with its commanding view of the northern Galilee, had been a source of PLO propaganda and a sore spot for Israelis for years. Although defended by only a small PLO detachment and of little consequence to the invading forces, it was ordered taken despite reservations by a number of Golani officers, and it was seized in a desperate night attack in which several Israelis and all the PLO defenders were killed.¹³

Division 162, under Menachem Einan, was to follow in trace of Kahalani's force, then push north along the western slopes of the Jbaal Barouk. Einan's division had been sent south for exercises in late May; having returned to the northern border only the week before, it had not received either orders or an alert until late on Friday the 4th -- when many men had been sent home on weekend leave. With most of his force reassembled on the 6th, Einan did not receive permission to begin movement until 1530. One half hour later, his orders were changed instead of crossing the Litani at the Hardele Bridge he would cross via the Akiye to the west. After redirecting his force with some loss of time, Einan found himself bunched up behind a traffic jam of Kahalani's logistics vehicles, where he remained throughout the night.¹⁴ Aside from the Beaufort action and isolated PLO resistance, little fighting occurred in the Central Sector on the first day.

Activities were limited in the east. Ben-Gal's force advanced from northern Galilee and the Golan Heights along a broad front. On the eastern flank, Immanuel Sakel's Division 252 advanced from the Golan Heights on two axes: the first through Wadi Cheba on the slopes of Mount Hermon, via a 12-mile engineer road constructed ahead of the column by IDF engineers; the second overland toward Hasbaiya. Division 90, commanded by Giora Lev, moved through Marjayoun toward Lake Qaraoun, with a brigade advancing on its right flank along the main highway leading into the Bekaa Valley. Moving through the night, Lev reached the vicinity of Koukouba in the early morning and halted. Vardi Force, with its three mixed brigades, followed in trace of Division 90, then continued northwest toward Masgharah; one

armored brigade under Colonel Hagai Cohen, followed in trace of Einan's division, as did Peled's Special Maneuver Force. With the Syrians remaining north of the "Red Line," no fighting occurred in the Eastern Sector.

ISRAELI ADVANCES -- 6 JUNE



7 JUNE

The next dawn found the IAF continuing to attack PLO

strongpoints along the coastal route of advance and in Beirut. During the day, a few Syrian MiG's challenged IAF planes over Beirut, with the Syrians losing one MiG in the process.¹⁵ Geva got his brigade on the move early, pushing toward Sidon after overcoming an ambush in Sarafend which cost the lives of his lead tank and lead company commanders, along with the loss of two APC's.¹⁶ As Geva moved north, crossing the Zaharani River after finding the bridge intact, the main force under Mordechai began a series of link-ups and mopping-up operations. Leaving one armored and one infantry brigade to secure the refugee camps around Tyre, Division 91 pressed north after Geva to link up with Kahalani's division moving west from around Nabitiye. The road junction at the mouth of the Zaharani was chosen as the link-up point: it was open enough to assemble a division-sized force; a petroleum refining area offered a refueling capability, if needed; and the area contained a small but excellent port facility. Around noon, Kahalani's two armored brigades linked up with Mordechai's remaining units, and both divisions artillery began to engage targets around Sidon.¹⁷

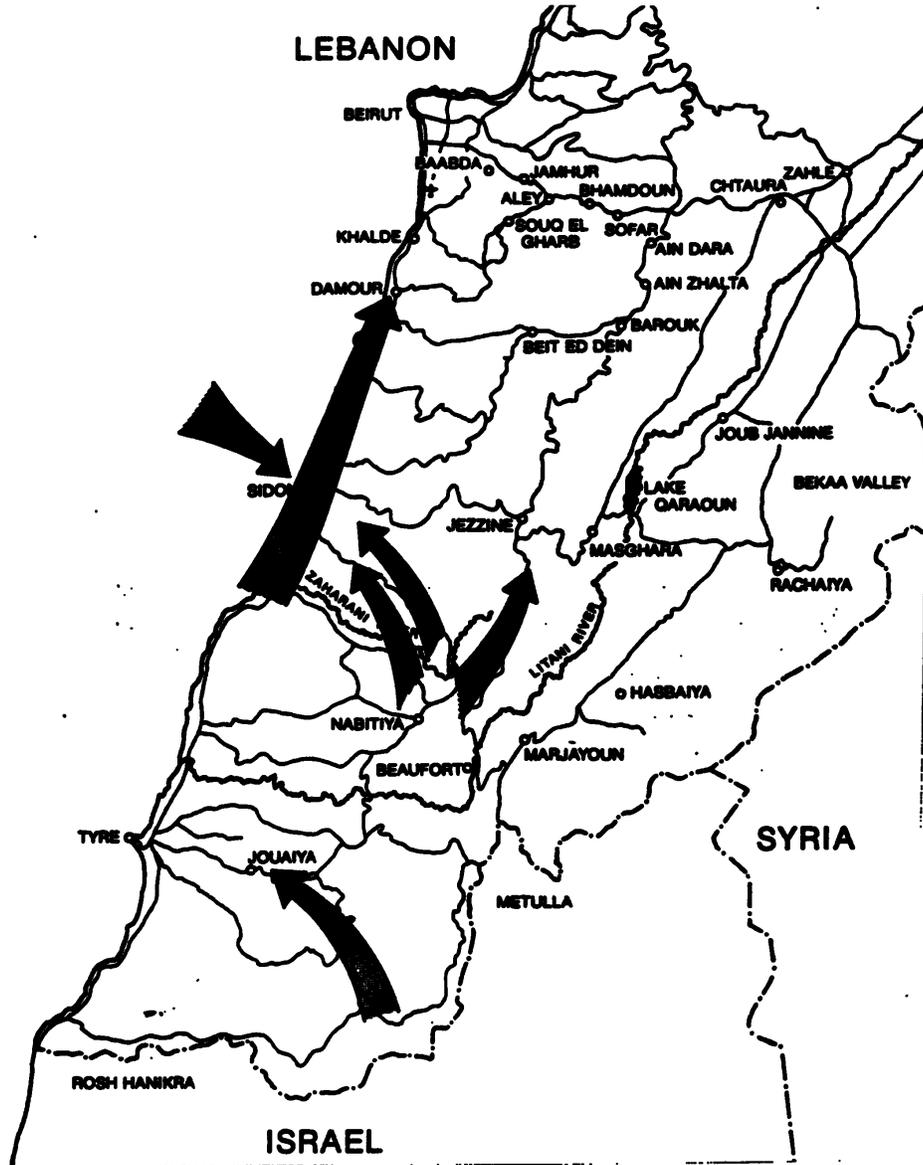
Near Sidon, Kahalani's remaining brigade -- the Golani -- reached the coast just south of the city. The Golani were to open the road, which passed through the Ein Hilwe camp (the largest in Lebanon), so that Geva's brigade could continue north and link up with Yaron's amphibious force. The infantrymen from the Golani Brigade attacked into Ein Hilwe in the early afternoon, but became pinned down and were forced to fight their way out again at dusk.¹⁸ Kahalani was in command. Short one brigade at the start of the operation (loaned to Sakel in the east), he lost two more to Mordechai at the Zaharani; Mordechai therefore sent his

own lead brigade forward to assist Kahalani in opening the road through Sidon. This brigade did not arrive until after dark, however, and at the end of the day, the attack in the west was stalled in front of Sidon.¹⁹

A few kilometers to the north, Yaron's force waited for Geva's column to link up and to bring the empty APC's for Yaron's paratroopers. Meanwhile, though, the beachhead was strengthened as CH-53's ferried troops and equipment from Israel and a second landing was made at 1430. This landing, made in broad daylight less than three kilometers from the port of Sidon, was covered by continuous smoke missions requested by Yaron; Israeli F-4's managed to keep a layer of smoke between Sidon and the landing for nearly two hours, until the landing was completed. Pressure eased on Yaron's force as PLO attention turned to Geva and Kahalani, coming up from the south and east. By nightfall, Yaron's Division 96 was ashore, with one brigade of paratroopers having moved on foot from hill to hill to a position on the ridge overlooking the town of Damour.²⁰ The amphibious operation had gone smoothly, but without the armored strength and additional APC's of Geva's column, Division 96 could make only limited progress.

Behind the lead elements, other units began the task of mopping up bypassed Palestinian resistance.²¹ In the morning, one

ISRAELI ADVANCES -- 7 JUNE



brigade attached to Mordechai had attacked from the Israeli border to the northwest, through Bint Jbail, and linked up at Jouiya with another brigade attacking east from Tyre. With this

movement, the entire area south of the Litani was cut off from the north, and IDF units began the task of reducing pockets of resistance and rounding up suspected PLO members from the villages within the "Iron Triangle."²² Meanwhile, the brigades left by Mordechai around Tyre began the task of clearing the refugee camps.

Palestinian resistance up to this point had been fitful and uncoordinated, largely through the fault of its leaders. The commander of the Kastel Brigade and overall commander in the south, Haj Ismail, fled after hearing of Yaron's landing, turning up the next day in the Bekaa with a report that he had led a tactical retreat when attacked by the U.S. Sixth Fleet.²³ Other PLO commanders likewise ran out on their men, who then either resisted, fled north, or melted into the civilian population. Serious resistance, then, was not offered by the PLO regulars but by the militia forces in the refugee camps, whose built up areas and narrow alleyways afforded excellent defensive opportunities.²⁴

The reduction of the Tyre camps -- particularly Rachidiyeh, Burj al Shemali, and al-Bas -- began the afternoon of 6 June, would take four days to accomplish, and would cost the Israelis 21 dead and 95 wounded. There was little urgency in subduing the Tyre camps, since the northbound column had already moved on, so Israeli soldiers were urged caution in order to hold down casualties. The IDF advanced by steadily securing chunks of the camps and forcing the defenders into an ever-smaller, area. Each camp was ideal for small-unit defense, however, and the PLO fighters were able to block the narrow roads and alleys, use

RPG's at short range, drop hand grenades into Israeli APC's, then flee to other positions. IDF troops were fired on from the ground, windows, and rooftops -- from the front and from behind. All this occurred in an area thick with civilians. When the camps were finally taken, IDF soldiers uncovered some 74 bunkers in Rachidiyeh, 80 in Burj al Shemali, and some 213 underground shelters and arms stores in al-Bas.²⁵ The fighting was made particularly difficult because of the IDF's rules of engagement, which dictated that soldiers in heavily populated areas would take risks to preserve the safety of civilians, that no grenades or satchel charges would be used prior to assaulting buildings, and that damage to mosques and churches would be avoided.²⁶ Yet, mounting Israeli casualties led to heavy IDF use of air and artillery support with attendant civilian casualties.²⁷ In the end, the camps at Tyre were subdued on 9 June, after four days of heavy fighting.

In the Central zone, Einan's lead brigade finally broke free of Kahalani's supply train before dawn, but then had to stop to refuel. Not until after daylight did the brigade reach Nabitiye. Still behind Kahalani's forces, this time the Golani Brigade, Einan did not receive permission to cross the Zaharani until 1400. As the Golani moved west toward Sidon, Einan finally broke free; securing the key crossroads south of Jezzine -- the only east-west road south of the Beirut-Damascus highway between the Bekaa and the coast -- he bypassed Jezzine and pushed north into the Shouf, halting near the Basin River about 0100. During the night, with Cohen's brigade in a blocking position at the Jezzine crossroads, Syrian and PLA units in battalion strength occupied the town of Jezzine itself.²⁸

The Eastern Sector remained quiet, with Lev's division halted around Koukouba and Hasbaiya, Sakel continuing northward along the slopes of Mount Hermon, and Vardi Force moving along secondary roads toward Masgharah--at the foot of Jbaal Barouk between Jezzine and the Bekaa. During the day, Ben-Gal began to mass his artillery in the vicinity of Hasbaiya, from where it could range from Masgharah in the northwest to Kafr Quq in the northeast.²⁹

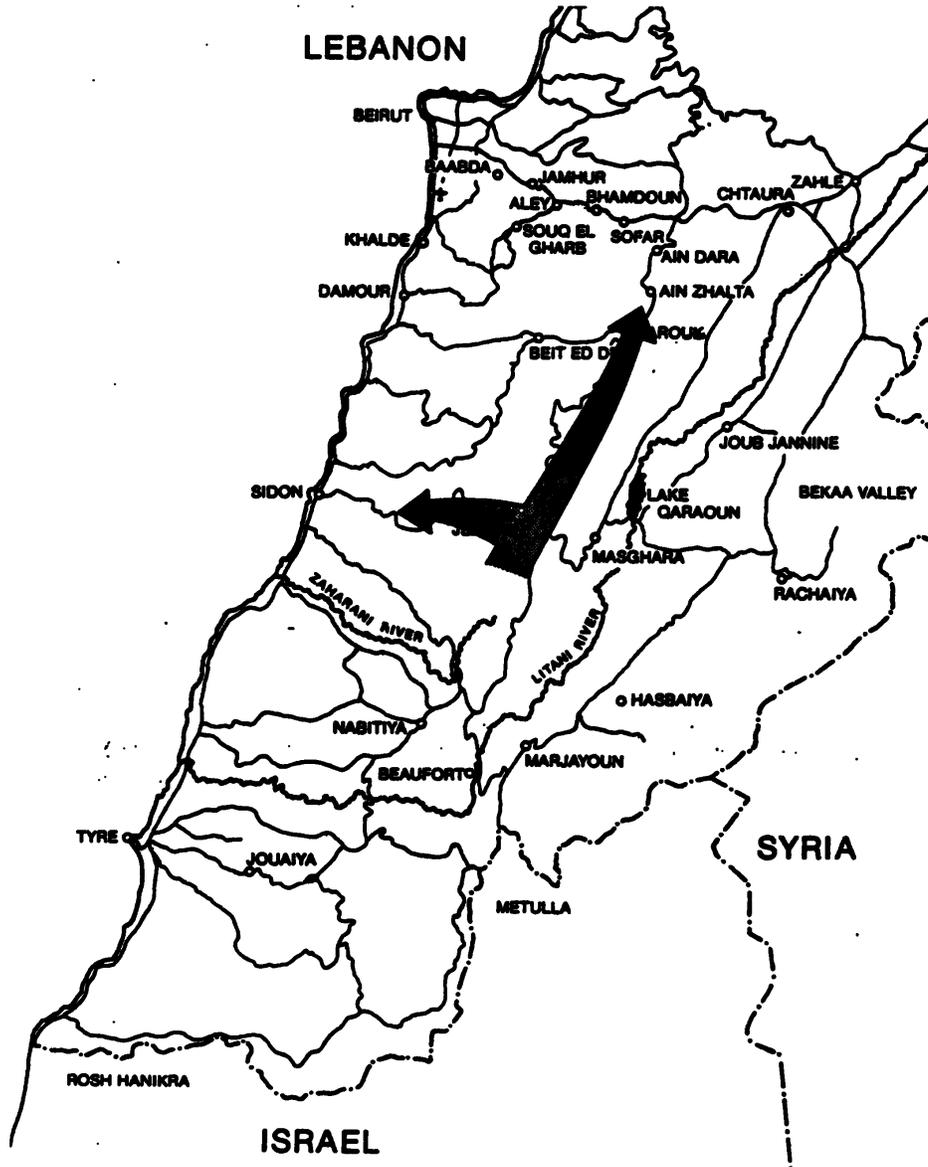
8 JUNE

As in previous days, the IAF began launching strikes in the early morning of 8 June. Strikes against Beirut again brought Syrian reaction, this time resulting in the loss of six Syrian MiG's -- to none for the IAF. As the day progressed, the IAF flew dozens of Close Air Support strikes in the Central Sector and particularly in the west, against resistance at Tyre and Sidon.³⁰ Syrian SAM radars locked on to IAF planes, but the batteries withheld fire. As battles continued at Rachidiyeh and Burj al Shemani, the Golani brigade made another attempt to create a corridor through the Ein Hilwe camp at Sidon. Attacking at 0700, the infantrymen again penetrated the camp only to become pinned down in the narrow streets. A second assault was mounted by paratroopers toward the city of Sidon itself, but it too bogged down. The IAF dropped leaflets and on loud speakers urged civilians to flee, but dozens of airstrikes and considerable artillery support were needed in order to extricate the attacking forces at dusk. Geva, impatient at the delay, requested to be allowed to skirt the bottleneck to the east along secondary roads and tracks in the steep hills inland of the city. Moving out in

the evening, Geva's force slowly worked its way through the hills, without headlights along the tracks and paths which were characterized by steep cliffs on the right and a sheer drop on the left. Although losing two tanks, Geva broke out of the hills north of Sidon and linked up with Yaron's force at dawn on 9 June. Yaron, not content merely to wait, had started his main force toward Damour on foot, supported by naval gunfire from Israeli boats moving up the coast.³¹

In the Central Sector, IDF ground units met Syria resistance for the first time. Einan's tired division moved out at 0700, reaching the road junction leading to Damour before halting for some four hours. Urged forward by Drori, the lead units advanced only to be attacked around 1530 by French-made Gazelle helicopters. The Gazelles popped up above a ridgeline and fired HOT missiles, hitting one Israeli tank; as the tank was being evacuated, the Gazelles fired again from another position. As the helicopters turned toward their base, a tank platoon and infantry

ISRAELI ADVANCES -- 8 JUNE



battalion in APC's managed to find a way around the blocked road

and continued toward Ein Zhalta. Around 2300, this force approached Ein Zhalta, some eight kilometers from the Beirut-Damascus highway but more than 20 by road. Unknown to the Israelis, the area around Ein Zhalta was defended by a brigade-strength Syrian force consisting of a few dozen tanks and commando units. After passing through the villages, the Israelis started descending a steep slope with tanks in the lead when the Syrians opened fire with tanks from the opposite ridge and RPG's and Sappers from the surrounding wadis. After two hours of fighting, during which the IDF infantry attempted to clear the wadis and reach the opposite ridge, the Israelis backed their vehicles out of range. Meanwhile, Einan's main force advanced through Beit ed Dein and joined the lead battalion at Ein Zhalta.³²

To the south, Cohen's 460th Brigade was to advance from its blocking positions near Jezzine to support an attack by Vardi on Masgharah, but Israeli RPV's (remotely piloted vehicles) discovered a Syrian force moving south through the Shouf toward the town. Israeli planes attacked the Syrian force, inflicting some losses, and at 1330 Cohen's attack commenced without artillery support. As IDF tanks reached the center of town they were ambushed by the Syrian and PLA force which had occupied defensive positions during the night. The first Israeli company managed to reach the far side of town, but the following company was attacked by Syrian commandos with Sappers and forced to fall back after losing three tanks. A second battalion was sent into the town, but one company took a wrong turn and found itself on a ridge to the west; it was engaged by Syrian tanks from a nearby

ridge and lost five tanks before retreating back into the town. The battle continued throughout the afternoon until the Syrian forces withdrew around nightfall.³³

Leaving one battalion in Jezzine, Cohen sent two battalions eastward toward Masgharah -- one along the main road and the other on a narrow secondary road. The two battalions simultaneously approached a crossroad at Ein Katrina, mistook each other for Syrians, and engaged in a two-hour firefight resulting in a number of dead and wounded before the mistake became known.³⁴ The day ended with significant casualties among IDF forces in the Central Sector, but with the area west of the Bekaa firmly in Israeli hands to within several kilometers of the Beirut-Damascus highway. On the other hand, Syrian forces had engaged IDF units, inflicted losses, and still held the strategic highway.

In the East, Lev remained halted and Sakel continued toward Rachaiya in the eastern Bekaa. Vardi occupied Masgharah during the night and Peled's Special Maneuver Force began moving northward along the eastern slopes of Jbaal Barouk, to the west of Lake Qaraoun. The Israelis had positioned their forces right up against Syrian positions in the Bekaa, but without attacking.³⁵ However, the Syrian force was being slowly flanked to both sides: with the Israelis controlling the high ground to either side of the valley, the Syrian position in the southern Bekaa was becoming an indefensible salient. Recognizing the threat from both ground and air, the Syrians reinforced on the ground and moved five additional SAM-6 batteries into the Bekaa, bringing the total SAM batteries in Lebanon to 19.³⁶

9 JUNE

The ninth of June was a day when the war dramatically and substantially outgrew the objectives originally approved by the Israeli Cabinets the advance along the coast passed Damour and began to close in on Beirut; in the center, IDF forces immediately threatened the Beirut-Damascus highway; and in the west, the Israelis attacked the Syrians head-on both on the ground and in the air.

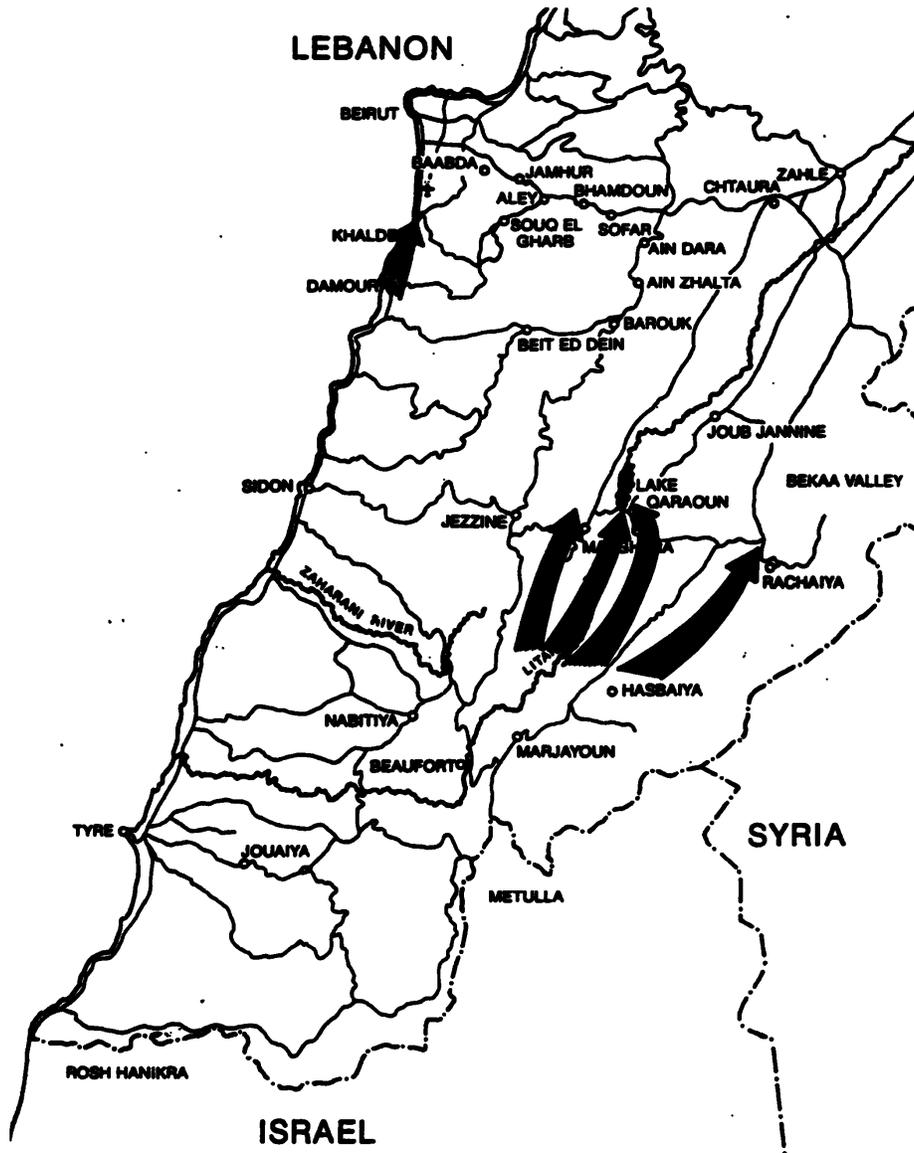
The Eastern Sector battles raged from Tyre to north of Damour. In Damour, the PFLP had created well fortified positions in the ruins of the town, used as a training base for the PLO. After heavy air and artillery preparation (during which the sector commander, Major General Adam was killed by PLO artillery), Yaron's division, reinforced by units from Kahalani and Geva, attacked and seized the town. Faced with the continued prospect of heavy fighting along the coast road, Yaron tasked the commander of the 35th Paratrooper Brigade to take his brigade through the Shouf and approach Beirut from the hills rather than along the coast. Drori approved the maneuver and Yair led his paratroopers, reinforced by tanks, into the Shouf. As the tanks slowly advanced along the winding roads, the paratroopers proceeded on foot along the hills and ridges. In this way, the paratroopers surprised at least two PLO ambushes which were lying in wait for the tanks, routing both. In this maneuver, Yair advanced along the road toward Souk al Gharb, halting around midnight short of Kafr Mata. Meanwhile, as Yair had feared, Yaron's other two brigades were blocked south of Khalde.³⁷

To the south, the camps at Rachidiyeh and Burj al Shemali were finally taken in the afternoon. But the real fight was at

Ein Hilwe, where the main force was still stopped. At dawn, the paratroopers and infantry renewed their attack, concentrating on a route along the edge of Ein Hilwe, a few blocks from downtown Sidon. Preceded by artillery and air bombardment, the Israeli attack slowly advanced along two parallel streets and in the afternoon the way was finally opened through Sidon. Kahalani immediately sped north toward Damour, leaving the unenviable task of reducing Ein Hilwe and the Sidon casbah to Mordechai's men, moving up from their recent battles around Tyre. During the afternoon, Mordechai personally took command and began his systematic campaign by capturing the hills and villages around Sidon. As events unfolded elsewhere in Lebanon, Mordechai began the section-by-section assault on Ein Hilwe that was to take until 14 June to accomplish.³⁸

At Ein Zhalta, Einan's force had closed up during the night and was strung out along the narrow road. At dawn, Syria commandos attacked. APC's and tanks were hit and caught fire. Men were killed trying to rescue the wounded from burning vehicles. Finally, Einan ordered a cessation of rescue attempts and the column retreated in reverse gear, with a loss of 11 killed and 17

ISRAELI ADVANCES -- 9 JUNE



wounded.³⁹ Meanwhile, an infantry battalion was helilifted behind the Syrians and promptly attacked the defenses from the rear as Eina brought fire from the front. After a battle of several hours, the Syrian force withdrew, and Eina reorganized his force

and continued north, halting for the night still some 12 kilometers short of the Beirut-Damascus highway.⁴⁰

Lev's division in the Eastern Sector could advance no farther without meeting the Syrians, but Sakel and Peled could and did continue moving north along the flanks of the Bekaa. On this day, however, the Israeli Cabinet gave approval for offensive air operations against the Syrians in Lebanon.⁴¹ The resulting overwhelming IAF victory over Syrian SAM's and interceptors has been described in detail in a number of publications.⁴² Briefly, the IAF had possessed a plan for attacking the SAM sites in the Bekaa at least since the summer of 1981. By midday on 9 June, RPV's had located most of the SAM sites and had relayed pictures back to Northern Command and the IAF's Northern Regional Control Unit.

At 1400, the attack began. RPV's simulated attacking aircraft, forcing the Syrians to switch on their acquisition and fire control radars, and in some cases actually to engage the RPV's. The drones pinpointed the locations of radars and missile sites and relayed the information to Israeli E-2C Hawkeye and the RC-707 control aircraft. As the Hawkeyes and specially equipped tactical aircraft and RPV's conducted electronic jamming and deception, a flight of 96 IAF planes attacked the missile sites. Led by a flight of F-4's armed with Maverick and Shrike anti-radiation missiles which destroyed most of the radar systems, IAF F-4, F-15, F-16, and Kfir C-2 aircraft destroyed the batteries one-by-one using a variety of ordnance -- laser-guided and tv-guided bombs; television, infra-red, and anti-radiation missiles; and even iron bombs. At the same time, the IDF artillery provided

suppression on all batteries and anti-aircraft gun locations within range. A second wave of 92 IAF planes struck at 1550. As this wave attacked, Syrian interceptors joined the fray, and in the ensuing air battle 29 Syrian MiG-21, -23, -25, and SU-7 aircraft were shot down. By the end of the day, 41 Syrian planes had been destroyed in air-to-air combat, mainly by F-15's but also by other IAF planes using AIM-9L Sidewinder missiles and Israeli-modified versions of the AIM-7 -- Shafir 2 and Python 3. By day's end, 17 of the 19 SAM batteries had been destroyed.⁴³

As the air battle was unfolding, Ben-Gal was ordered to attack, and in mid-afternoon Lev attacked in the center and Vardi on the left, to the west of Lake Qaraoun. Both attacks aimed at the Syrian headquarters at Joub Jannine, some 25 kilometers from the Koukouba-Hasbaiya line.⁴⁴

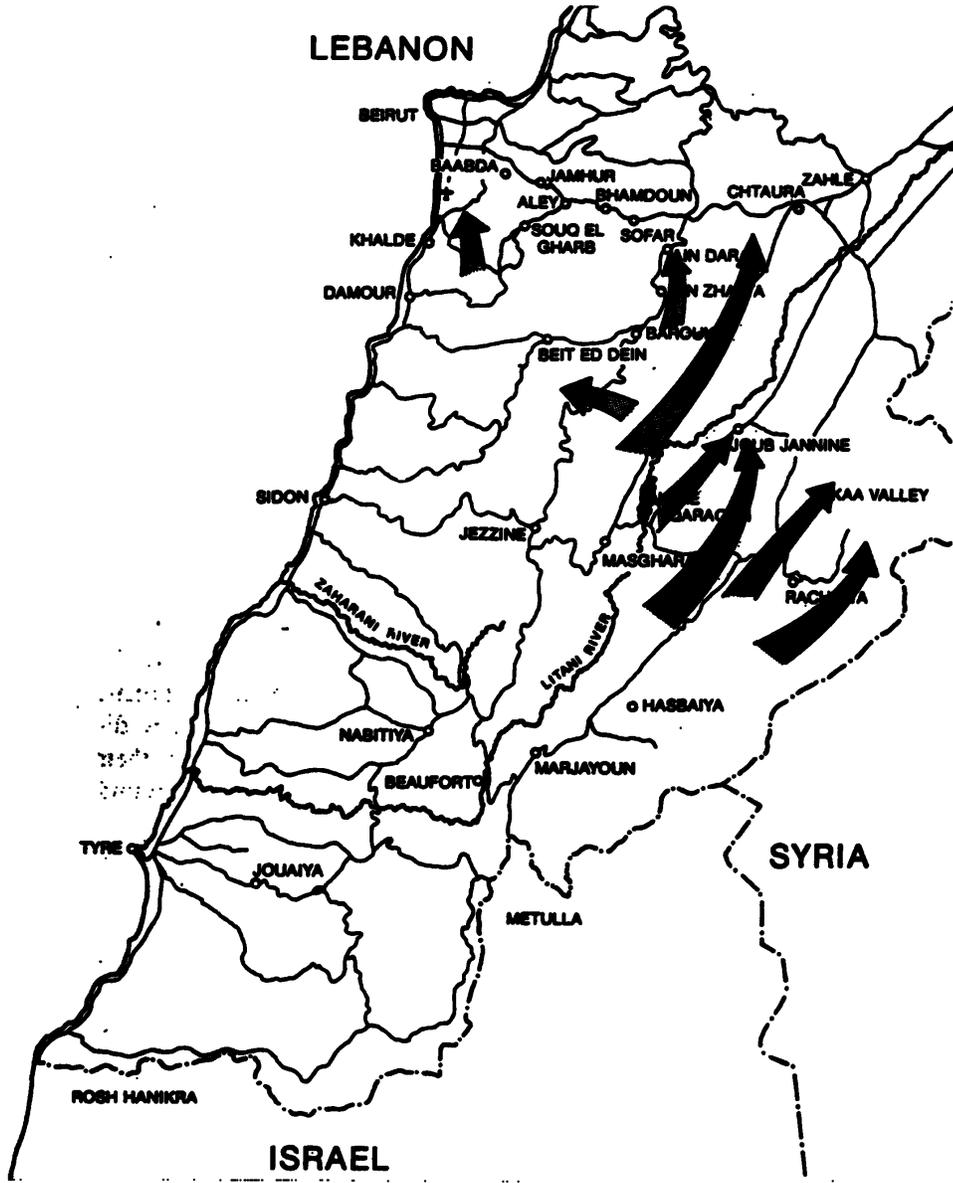
10 JUNE

The Israeli attacks on Syrian positions in the Bekaa brought Syrian reaction in the west. There, Syrian forces had remained in Beirut and out of the fighting, but now the 85th Brigade began to deploy tank and commando teams south and east of Beirut -- around Khalde and the hills south of Beirut and along the Shemlan ridge area. As Yair continued his advance through the Shouf villages toward Souk al Gharb, Yaron remained stalled before Kafr Sil, south of the airport. The Syrians had taken up fortified positions in the village, located on a ridge running almost to the sea across the coast road, with clear fields of fire and no room for Yaron to maneuver. Yaron sent the Golani Brigade, reinforced by a tank battalion and eight bulldozers, into the hills east of Kafr Sil in an attempt to flank the PLO-Syrian defense.⁴⁵

In the Center, Einan pushed past Ein Zhalta and advanced to the outskirts of Ein Dara. During his advance, RPV's had spotted a Syrian ambush, and TOW Cobras were sent into action. Approaching from the rear, the Cobras destroyed several Syrian tanks and effectively broke up the ambush. By nightfall, Einan had deployed his force on the hills around Ein Dara, from where he could observe the Beirut-Damascus highway.⁴⁶ Here he would remain for nearly two weeks.

The main battles of 10 June were fought in the Eastern Sector, between the IDF and the Syrian 1st Armored Division. The Syrian air force again sent up interceptors as the IAF destroyed the remaining two SAM batteries, resulting in 25 more Syrian MiG's being shot down. Meanwhile, Ben-Gal continued to attack along a fairly wide front. On the right, Sakel broke out of the wadis and seized Rachaiya. In the center, Lev attacked along the winding roads, pushing through Syrian resistance. After seizing a key crossroads near Lake Qaraoun, Lev continued on to seize Joub

ISRAELI ADVANCES -- 10 JUNE



Jannine around dusk. Peled had advanced through the foothills of the Jbaal Barouk to within five kilometers of the Beirut-Damascus

highway before being ordered to pull back to more defensible positions by Drori.⁴⁷

Although the advance in the east had covered a good deal of ground, Syrian resistance had been stiff. The Syrians defended a series of strongpoints along the winding roads. Each strongpoint conducted a separate, integrated defense with obstacles, mines, tanks, and commandos using Saggers and RPG's; at times, such as in the defense of the crossroads near Lake Qaraoun, the defense was supported by artillery and by Gazelle helicopters using HOT missiles. The Israelis used counterbattery fire, Cobra helicopters in both the anti-tank and anti-air mode, and infantry assaults to overcome Syrian defenses.⁴⁸

Having breached the Syrian 1st Armored Division's front line and seized Joub Jannine, and with a ceasefire scheduled to take place the following day, Ben-Gal urged his units forward in the night. On the right flank, Sakel's lead unit began advancing from Rachaiya toward Kafr Quq, but was stopped by a destroyed bridge across a wadi; while it waited for engineer support to arrive, Syrian commandos attacked in the darkness, destroying several vehicles before withdrawing. Ordered to resume the advance, Sakel's units were unable to do so due to lack of fuel. The one narrow road which formed Sakel's main supply route was so clogged with traffic that neither the refuelers nor the engineer bridging unit could reach the lead elements until after 0300.

A more severe problem occurred in Lev's advance, where a brigade moved up toward Sultan Yakoub, situated in a narrow valley some eight kilometers northeast of Joub Janine. Lacking intelligence concerning Syrian deployment in the area, the brigade was actually moving into the forward positions of a

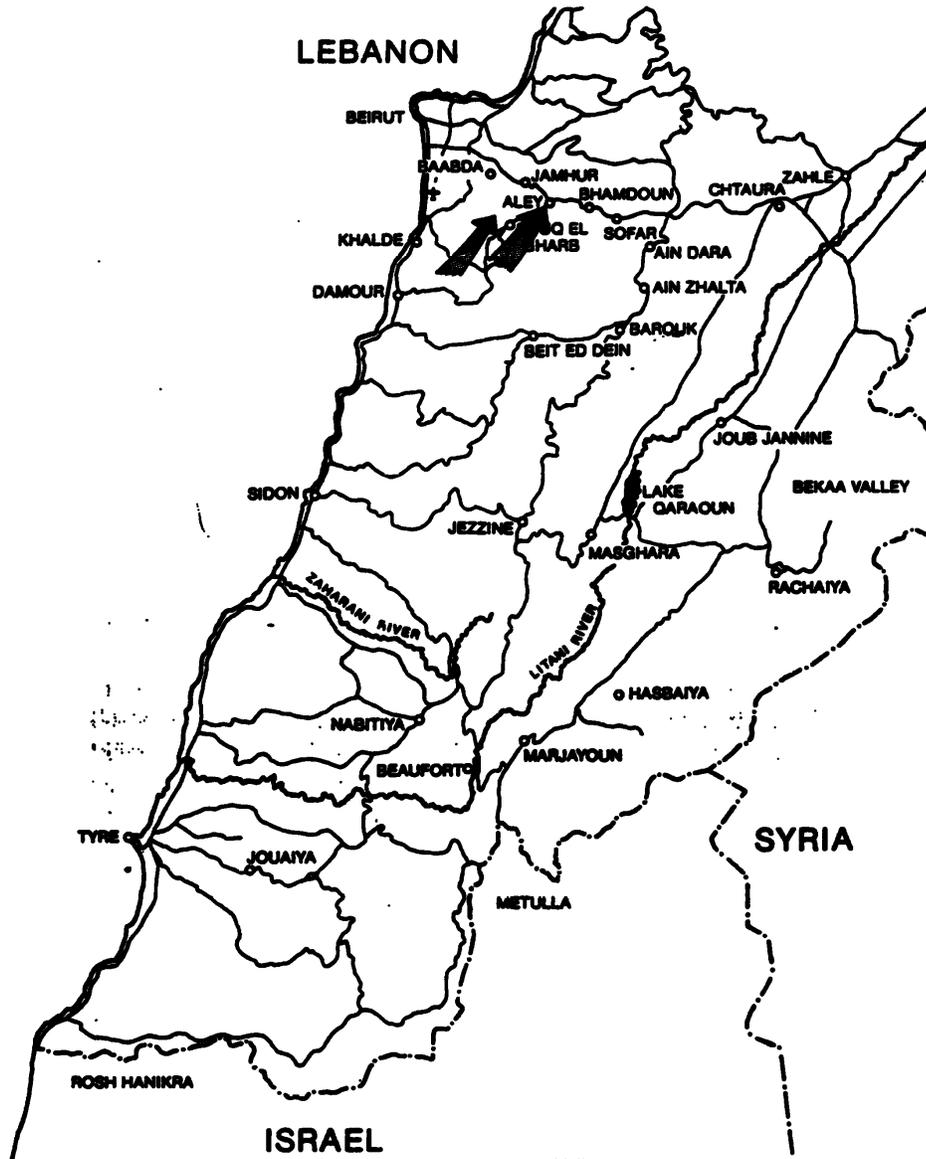
relatively fresh Syrian mechanized brigade. As the lead battalion, a reserve unit, approached the village, it was attacked by Sappers from both sides of the road. Most of the Sappers having been fired from too close, the damage was negligible and the battalion sped through the village. On the other side, now inside the narrow valley, the battalion commander discovered that only three of his companies had made it through the village and decided to wait until light. Unknown to him, he had halted in the middle of the Syrian positions, and during the night the Syrians realigned themselves and closed in toward the force without opening fire. Aware of Syrian presence but unable to pinpoint its location, the IDF tanks and APC's kept up a reconnaissance by fire throughout the night. At dawn, the force began to draw Sapper and armor-piercing fires from the hills, as Syrian commandos approached closer with RPG's and Sappers. An IDF attempt to relieve the force was halted to the east, and the situation began to grow desperate as a result of dwindling ammunition and increasing losses. After seeking help from higher headquarters, the commander coordinated artillery support for a breakout. Supported by some 11 battalions of artillery firing both on Syrian positions and in a box around the withdrawing companies, the Israelis buttoned up and raced the five kilometers back to safety, losing a tank and four men killed in the escape. The engagement had cost the Israelis some eight tanks and 35 men killed or seriously wounded. The tanks, containing equipment innovations and classified materials, were neither recovered nor destroyed, and the next day the Syrians towed them away.⁴⁹

11 JUNE

With a ceasefire scheduled to take effect at noon, both the Israelis and the Syrians spent the morning of 11 June maneuvering to gain the most advantageous positions. Sakel resumed his advance on the right flank of the Bekaa, but was immediately attacked by Syrian Gazelles, which slowed his progress and inflicted some losses. By noon, Sakel had pushed through Kafr Quq and had reached the village of Yanta, only 25 kilometers from Damascus, where it met the advance units of the deploying Syrian Third Division. At around 1100, elements of the division's 82nd Armored Brigade stumbled into Peled's position to the west and lost nine T-72 tanks. At 1200 the ceasefire took effect and fighting in the Eastern and Central Sectors halted.⁵⁰

Such was not the case in the Western Sector, however. Along the coast, Yaron seized Khalde and attempted to advance toward the airport, only to be halted by stiff resistance from a joint force of PLO and Syrian 85th Brigade, dug in and equipped with Sagger and Milan anti-tank missiles. The Golani attempt to envelop to the east ran up against a Syrian ambush in the wealthy suburb of Dokha; the fight continued throughout the day until the Syrian positions were broken by artillery and air strikes. At 1115, Yair attacked Syrian defenses around Kafr Shem Shamoun and by noon had seized the vital crossroads leading to Aley on the

ISRAELI ADVANCES -- 11-12 JUNE



one hand and to Souk al Gharb and Baabda on the other. At noon, the Israelis called for the Syrians to observe the ceasefire by

standing aside -- an offer that was declined. At nightfall, Yair had seized the hills overlooking the road junction but failed to advance farther. At this point, Yair proposed that he change the direction of his attack from Aley, where a strong Syrian force was located, to Baabda, which would bring him to the Beirut-Damascus highway closer to Beirut but without engaging Syrian units. Drori agreed to the change.⁵¹

12 JUNE

On 12 June, Yair cautiously continued his attack, opposed by a mixed battalion of Syrian commandos, PLO fighters, and tanks concealed in draws and among the houses. By 1600, he had advanced only some 500 meters toward the Shemlan ridge, but by nightfall his force had seized the ridge and halted a few kilometers short of Ein Anub, the last position before reaching the suburbs controlled by the Phalange. Meanwhile, the Golani enveloping force was in a serious fight around Kafr Sil. Opposed by a Syrian-PLO force consisting of some 28 T-54 tanks and commando units, the Golanis resumed the attack in the afternoon. As a paratroop battalion (detached from Yair at Damour) assaulted Syrian positions on Radar Hill overlooking the town, the Golani infantry fought their way into the center of town and Yaron's tanks came up from the south, supported by Cobra helicopters making runs from seaward. The battle raged all afternoon and into the night, with Israeli infantry taking on Syrian tanks with RPG's and even climbing tanks to drop grenades down the hatches. The fight continued for 19 hours, centered on two main streets only a kilometer long, and finally ended the next morning with the Israelis controlling the village, from where they could see

the runways of Beirut Airport below.⁵²

It was on 12 June that the main bunker in the Ein Hilwe refugee camp near Sidon was finally captured. On 7 June, a battalion from the Golani Brigade had tried and failed to penetrate the camp; a larger attack the following day yielded the same results. On the 9th, after a route had been opened through Sidon, Mordechai began a systematic attack to seize the Ein Hilwe camp section by section. The defenders, under a Muslim zealot called Haj Ibrahim, were mostly PLO militia fighting on home ground. Mordechai's attacks were made by infantry on foot, with tanks and self-propelled artillery close behind and able to be brought up against enemy positions. On 10 June, the Israelis seized two mosques used as strongpoints by the defenders, but came up against heavy fire from the camp hospital. Rather than attack the hospital and inflict heavy casualties among the civilians sheltered there, Mordechai chose to arrange for its evacuation. By Friday morning, 11 June, the hospital was deserted -- the PLO defenders having chosen to depart along with the civilians. In order to reduce casualties among the numerous civilians and his own force, Mordechai tried a number of means to encourage the civilians to flee and the defenders to surrender: leaflets, loudspeaker broadcasts, local delegations, Israeli psychologists, and demonstrations of fire power against selected targets. However, the defenders rejected all appeals and encouraged (in some cases by execution) the civilian population to remain in the camp. The Israelis resumed the attack, heavily supported by air and artillery; by Friday evening the school was taken, and at 1900 on Saturday, the main bunker was destroyed by Israeli engineers. The fighting would continue for two more days,

when the PLO defenders of last position fought to the last man. The defense was zealous, cruel, and effective.⁵³

13-25 JUNE

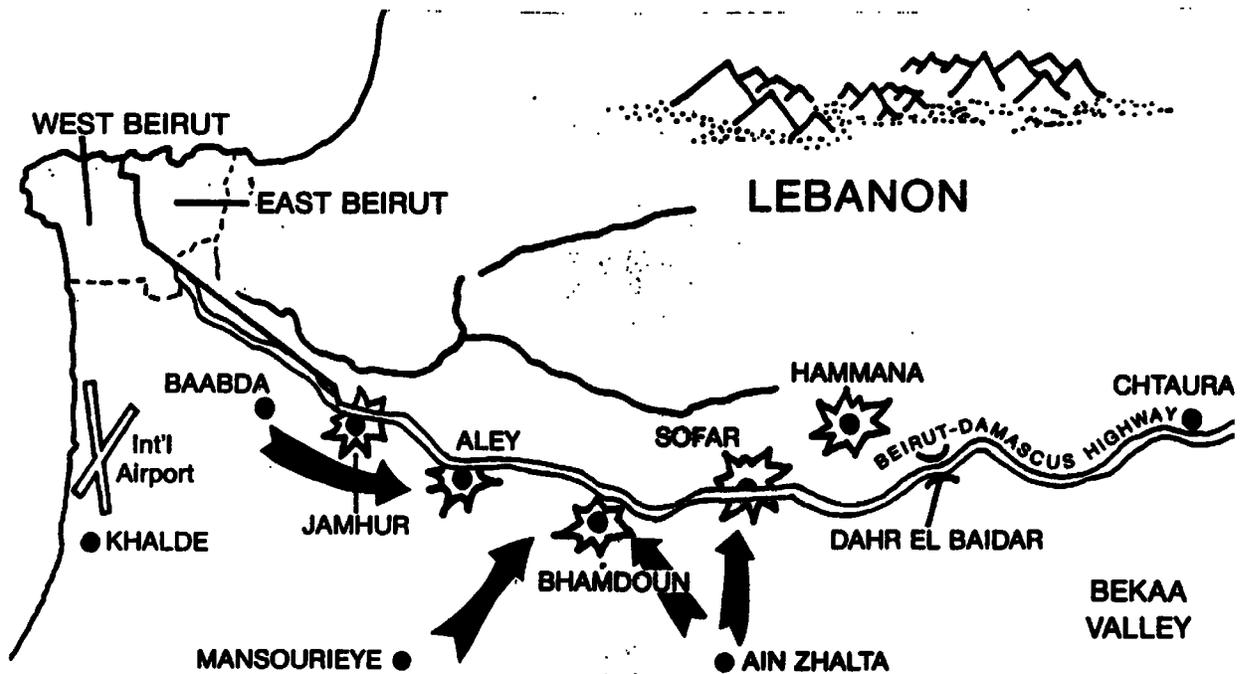
At 0130 on 13 June, Yair continued his attack toward Ein Anub. At dawn, the PLO-Syrian force withdrew. By 1300, Yair had linked up with Phalange forces at Basaba and sent his force speeding toward Baabda, the Christian suburb overlooking the city and site of the Presidential Palace. Resistance had ceased outside the city itself, and by nightfall the Golani had reached Baabda from Ash Shuweifat, and Yaron had positions in the hills south of the airport, in Baabda, in blocking positions facing east along the Beirut-Damascus highway, and across the highway in the Monte Verde area. Consolidation continued on the 14th, and by the end of the day, the Israelis were firmly linked up with the Phalange in East Beirut and deployed across the highway, but with a substantial Syrian force along the Aley ridge and around Bhamdoun. For the next several days, except for artillery duels and occasional firefights in the Beirut area, both sides spent the time consolidating their forces. While the IDF built up its strength around Baabda and waited for the Phalange to act, the PLO began fortifying its strongholds in West Beirut.

On 19 June, IDF paratroopers began to creep forward in the hills south of Bhamdoun in order to gain a more secure hold on the Beirut-Damascus highway. Drori asked permission to mount an orderly attack but, no such attack having been authorized by the Israeli Cabinet, his request was refused. The paratroopers continued their small-unit actions, losing several men. On 22 June, an IDF armored force was ambushed and trapped near the

highway, and that night a Golani battalion was shifted from around Beirut to extricate the trapped tanks. At the same time, the IAF struck Syrian reinforcements moving west, destroying some 130 tanks and transporters. On 24 June, a coordinated attack was launched all along the highway. As paratroopers attacked from Baabda eastward toward Jamhur and the Golani attacked westward through Bhamdoun, other forces under Einan advanced on Sofar from the south. Syrian resistance was weak and units withdrew eastward along the highway, allowed to pass without harm by the Israelis. The Syrians consolidated their defense along the pass at Dar al Beidar, the last pass in the Jbaal Barouk and last strongpoint before the Syrian border. However, with the highway firmly in control from Beirut to Sofar, the Israelis were content to stop the attack except for some occasional shelling.⁵⁴ Another ceasefire was declared on 25 June.

The Israelis now found that they had outrun their own goals and plans. Somewhere along the line the announced war aims had grown from the original one of pushing the PLO beyond a forty-

BEIRUT-DAMASCUS HIGHWAY -- 22-25 JUNE



kilometer zone to goals which were much more, ambitious: establishment of a stable government in Lebanon, one which would be sensitive to Israeli interests; removal of all Syrian military forces in Lebanon; and extermination or expulsion of the PLO. Now, having defeated the PLO in the south, surrounded its forces and headquarters in Beirut, linked up with the Phalange, and pushed the Syrians back nearly to their border, the IDF had no plans for a next step. As it became apparent that the Phalange would not take on the PLO in West Beirut, the Israelis were being forced to decide among the following options: attacking into the city to destroy the PLO; laying siege to a city of half a million people; or attempting to reach a political settlement.

CHAPTER VI--NOTES

1Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 118.

2Gabriel, p. 82.

3Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 118.

4John Leffin, *The War of Desperation: Lebanon 1982-85* (London: Osprey Publishing, LTD., 1985), p. 47.

5Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 120.

6Ibid.

7Gabriel, p. 82.

8Cooley, p. 28.

9Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 120-121, Two days later, as IDF forces overran Al-Buss, Geiger and one of his soldiers were murdered by their captors.

10Gabriel, p. 83.

11Interview with Major General Amos Yaron, 1 May 1987. General Yaron stated to me that although he did not receive the orders until 7 June, he was sure in his own mind that his objective was Beirut.

12Gabriel, pp. 83-84.

13Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 124-31, and interview with Lieutenant Colonel Jacob Amar, Golani Infantry Brigade. The Beaufort Castle action became the subject of some controversy in Israel.

14Ibid., pp. 116-17.

15Gabriel, p. 85.

16Schiff and Ya'ari, pp., 138-39.

17Gabriel, pp. 85-87.

18Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 142.

19Gabriel, p. 90.

20Interview with Major General Yaron.

21Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 123.

22Gabriel, p. 86.

23Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 123.

24Ibid., p. 137.

25Ibid., p. 139.

26Laffin, pp. 52, 59.

27Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 140-41.

28Ibid., pp. 157-60.

29Gabriel, p. 91.

30Ibid., p. 92.

31Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 142-144.

32Ibid., pp. 160-161.

33Ibid., pp. 157-159.

34Gabriel, p. 94.

35Ibid., pp. 94-95.

36Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 159.

37Interview with Major General Yaron.

38Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 144-145.

39Ibid., p. 162.

40Gabriel, p. 97.

41Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 166.

42Details of the air battle can be found in Gabriel, pp. 97-100; Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 164-168; and Laffin, pp. 65-75. A particularly good account is given in Gordan M. Clarke, et al, The 1982 Israeli War in Lebanon: Implications for Modern Conventional Warfare (Research Report, The National War College, April, 1983), pp. 16-21.

43See Chapter VII for a discussion of air tactics and equipment.

44Gabriel, p. 100.

45Conversation with Lieutenant Colonel Amar.

46Gabriel, p. 102.

47Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 173-175.

48Ibid., p. 172.

49Ibid., pp. 174-179.

50Ibid.

51Ibid., pp. 185-190.

52Conversations with Major General Yaron and Lieutenant Colonel Amar.

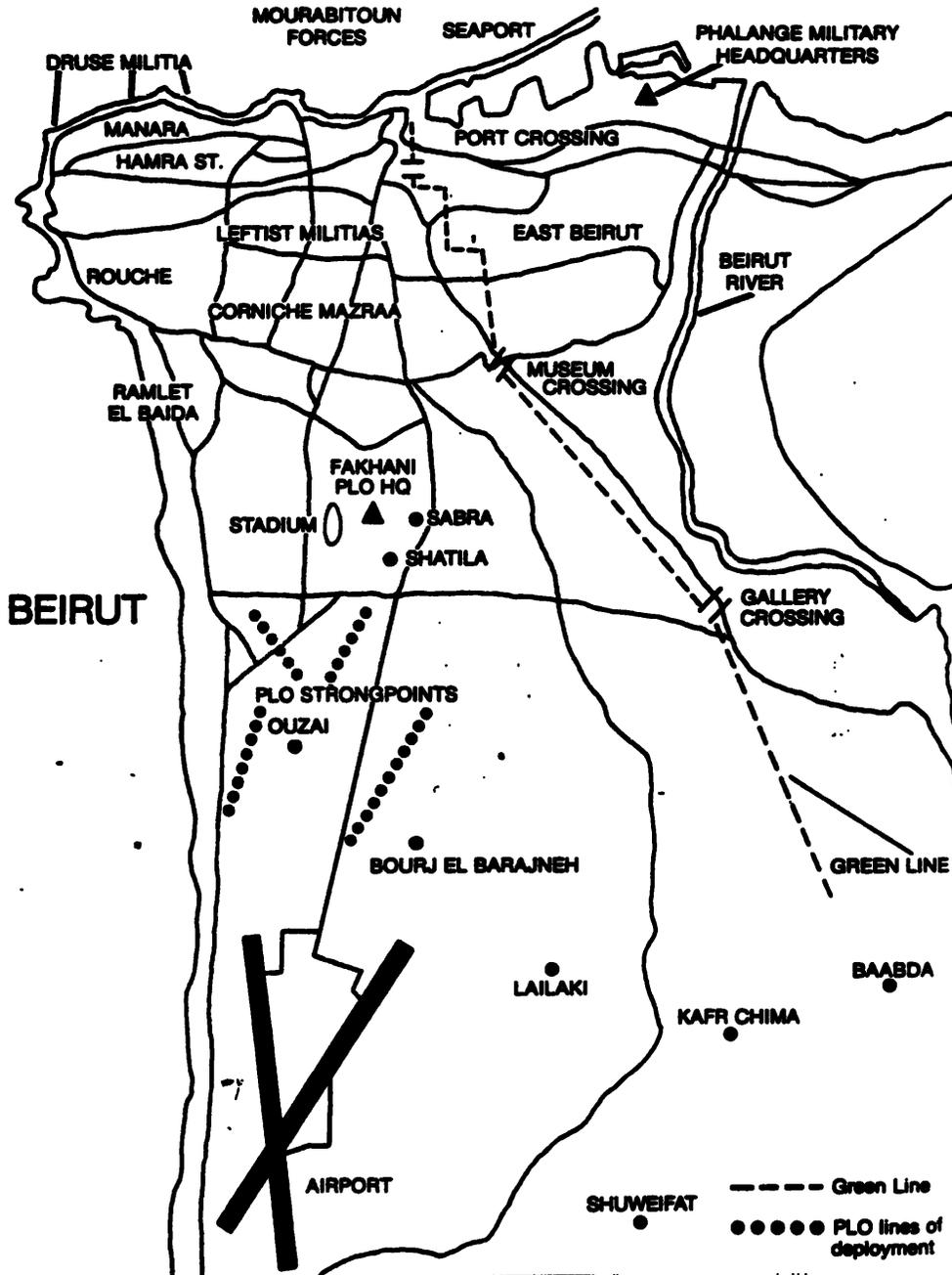
53Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 142-150.

54Gabriel,p. 111.

CHAPTER V -- SEIGE

Several factors mitigated against an early Israeli assault on the PLO in West Beirut: 1) during the last two weeks of June, the IDF was less concerned with the PLO than with the continued Syrian presence along the Beirut-Damascus highway and the possibility of a Syrian attack;¹ 2) the PLO was sending panic signals that it would immediately quit the city;² 3) Israeli leaders still had hopes that Bashir Gemayel's Phalangists would and could attack in their stead;³ and 4) the IDF had neither the numbers of infantry nor the experience in urban fighting to confidently enter the city.⁴ However, by the end of June the PLO leadership had decided that the Israelis would not quickly invade Beirut and that the PLO could perhaps improve both its bargaining position and its political image by holding out. Meanwhile, the United States had begun its attempt to negotiate an orderly evacuation of the PLO and was urging Israel not to enter the city. So the seige was begun, more as an accident of war than by design.

BEIRUT



Once the Israelis decided on a seige, they took several steps to strengthen their hand. First, through psychological operations (PsyOps) they attempted to convince both the PLO and civilians that if they remained in Beirut they would die. Second, they allowed and encouraged the civilian population to evacuate the city, leaving open two well-publicized escape routes. Third, they demonstrated by the use of air and artillery that they would not allow the integration of the PLO into civilian areas to deter them from attacks. Tactically, the IDF made several decisions that affected the seige: they made maximum use of air, artillery, and naval gunfire; they divided targets in the city at the Corniche Mazraa, carefully controlling strikes north of that street but exercising less restraint in bombardment to the south -- the area of the Palestinian refugee camps and the PLO stronghold. They would make no massive ground assaults but would tighten the noose by seizing selected strongpoints.⁵ The IDF went so far as to construct a huge master map, with each of the buildings in West Beirut numbered, so as to provide precise firing data.⁶

When the seige actually began is difficult to determine, but by 1 July, after a ceasefire of nearly a week, the IDF began psychological warfare operations. The IAF dropped leaflets and conducted mock bombing runs, high ranking Israelis made radio broadcasts, and special teams made loudspeaker announcements -- all to convince the PLO that attack was imminent. However, the PLO had decided to dig in and wait, so on 3 July IDF forces moved into East Beirut, seized the key crossings along the Green Line which had separated the city since 1975, and began shelling the

Lailaki and Burj as Barajnah camps just north of the airport. On 4 July, the seige began in earnest as the IDF shut off all food, water, and electricity in West Beirut. Golani Infantry began to inch toward the southernmost Palestinian camps as artillery and gunboats shelled areas of the city in a slow, steady bombardment which was kept up for the next two days. On 9 July, the PLO initiated a severe exchange with a concentrated barrage by 130mm guns and Katyushas; the IDF responded with their own artillery and with some 27 captured Katyusha launchers. This duel lasted for the next two days, with the IDF using its artillery and the 76mm guns and Gabriel missiles of the gunboats against PLO positions around the airport and university. The PLO returned fire on IDF positions from the coast to Baabda, and an IDF ground probe near the airport resulted in several casualties and the loss of two tanks. An unofficial ceasefire went into effect on the evening of 12 July which held for over a week while negotiations proceeded.

On 21 July, the PLO struck back, launching three separate attacks outside the Beirut areas a raid behind IDF lines in the Bekaa, a rocket attack on a bus carrying Israeli soldiers near Tyre, and a Katyusha rocket attack on several Israeli towns in northern Galilee. The next day the IDF launched attacks -- consistent with the announced policy of "disproportionate response" -- which continued through 30 July. In Beirut, the IAF made its first air attack on the city since 25 June, striking the camps and PLO strongpoints in a 90-minute raid supported by artillery and tank fire. Elsewhere, the IDF artillery engaged Syrian positions in the Bekaa, from where PLO ambushes were

initiated, and the IAF struck hard at the PLO camp and Syrian barracks in Baalbek. Air, naval gunfire, and artillery attacks continued for the next three days against PLO headquarters in the Fakhani district of West Beirut, the camps, and PLO positions. By Monday the smoke and dust were so thick in the Fakhani district that Israeli aircraft had to drop flares during the day to illuminate naval gunfire targets. Meanwhile, on the 23rd, three new Syrian SAM-8 locations were detected in the Bekaa and were promptly destroyed by the IAF.

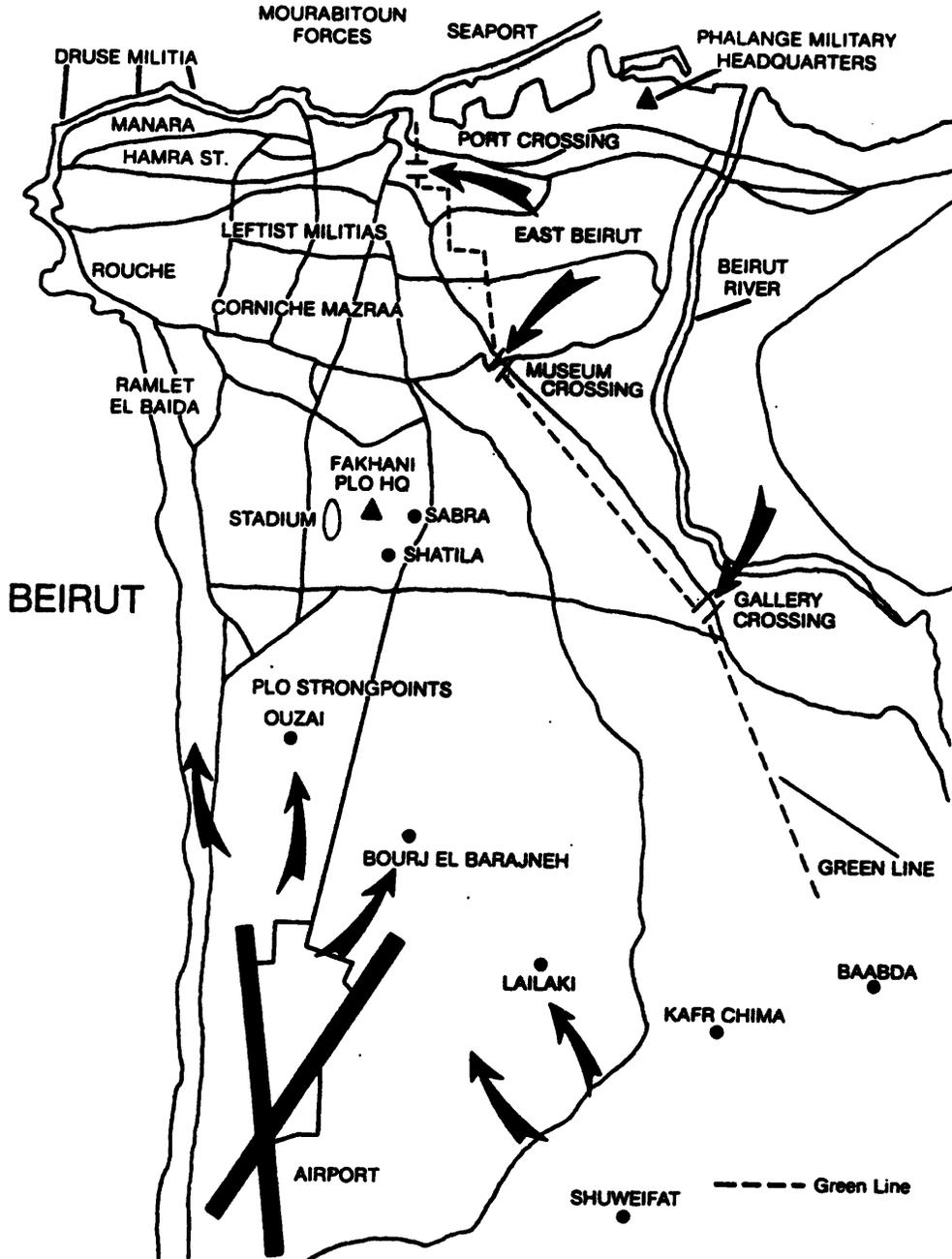
On 27 July, the bombardment of Beirut intensified: targets in non-Palestinian areas (including ambassadorial residences and an apartment building housing staff of the American University Hospital) were shelled for the first time, with heavy civilian casualties; the Corniche Mazraa and the downtown areas were brought under fire; and gunboats pounded the port area. On the next day, the IDF continued to hit the same areas, as well as Manara and Bain Militaire, resulting in a number of large fires that began to burn out of control. The PLO retaliated with a six-hour shelling of IDF positions. Meanwhile, Israeli infantry and armor continued to advance a few yards at a time near the airport, supported by point blank fire from tanks and self-propelled artillery. The bombardment continued on the 29th and 30th, with rising civilian casualties, until a ceasefire went into effect amid progress in the negotiations. 31 July was quiet.

However, apparently in an effort to seize key objectives prior to a negotiated settlement, the IDF struck hard on 1 August. Beginning at 0300, the Israelis subjected the city to

fourteen straight hours of air, naval, and artillery bombardment. At the same time, the IDF launched a two-pronged ground attack in the vicinity of the airport with Golani infantry, paratroopers, and tanks; by mid-afternoon the airport had been seized and PLO forces pushed back to the outskirts of the Burj as Barajnah camp and into the Ouzai district. The IDF continued the attack the next day, with the Israelis battling into the center of the Ouzai district north of the airport and sealing off the Burj al Barajnah camp except for its northern edge. At the same time, the Israelis deployed over 200 tanks along the Green Line, particularly at the Port and Museum crossings. This reinforcement continued on 3 August, when negotiations stalled after an appearance of real progress.

As if in answer to the pace of the negotiations, the Israelis launched the most devastating attack of the siege to date on 4 August. In the morning, the IDF began an intense naval and artillery barrage which struck the length of the city from the port area to near the airport. For the first time, the IDF used white phosphorus rounds, with the resulting, inevitably well-publicized, civilian burn casualties. A three-pronged ground assault began with an attack at the Port Crossing in the north which advanced some 500 meters, then halted. The main attack came at the Museum Crossing, where a force of tanks and paratroopers, with engineers and bulldozers in the lead, headed straight for the PLO headquarters in the Fakhani District. The PLO had expected an attack here and had created a sufficient number of

BEIRUT -- 1-4 AUGUST



fortified strongpoints that the attack made limited progress and stalled completely by nightfall. The third prong was a continuation of the attack in Ouzai. Here the PLO also fought stubbornly, but by dusk the Golani and paratroopers had pushed through the district and reached the main junction in Bir Hanan. By day's end, IDF forces had flanked PLO positions in the camps on three sides, but had sustained their heaviest single-action losses of the war in doing so -- 19 killed and 64 wounded.

Although skirmishing in the Fakhani District and elsewhere continued, the human cost of the 4 August attack (and the extreme displeasure of the United States government) resulted in a tapering off of action for the next several days. By 9 August the negotiations had made a breakthrough and agreement seemed imminent, so much that some PLO units actually disengaged to return to their families, and others caused a run on luggage in West Beirut. But on the 10th, the IAF struck at the PLO camps with bombs and rockets, and naval gunfire and artillery resumed. The shelling and air strikes continued the next day, and, in addition, an IDF armor brigade moved north along the coast to positions only ten miles south of Tripoli, sending a signal to all concerned that the Israelis were willing to destroy the PLO throughout all Lebanon if necessary.

On 12 August, to the public dismay of much of the world, the Israelis staged a massive air attack on Beirut which lasted from 0600 to 1730. Although considerably short of the magnitude described by the press, the damage and civilian casualties were considerable. With its potential to undermine the negotiations, the attack frightened the Israeli Cabinet into rescinding

Sharon's authority to conduct any military operations without first receiving Cabinet approval. Begin ordered an immediate ceasefire that evening. This time the ceasefire held, negotiations were completed, and on 21 August French elements of the Multi-National Force landed in Beirut. The first contingent of PLO fighters departed the following day.

The seige was ended with the cost to the IDF of 88 dead and 750 wounded -- some 32 per cent of the total wounded up to then and 24 per cent of the war's total. Estimates of PLO losses are varied, but it appears that around 1,000 were killed during the seige; equipment losses according to the IDF totaled some 960 tons of ammunition, 243 combat vehicles, 159 anti-tank weapons, 13 heavy mortars, 12 artillery pieces, 38 anti-aircraft guns, and 108 communications sets. Civilian losses are even more difficult to determine, due to the wildly divergent estimates provided by different sources. However, the best estimates (agreed upon by American doctors in Beirut, IDF intelligence, PLO leaders, and Lebanese militia leaders) indicate that between 5,000 and 8,000 civilians were killed in Beirut -- almost 8 civilians for every PLO fighter.⁷

CHAPTER V NOTES

1Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 203-204.

2Rabinovich, p. 140.

3Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 199-201.

4Gabriel, p. 128.

5Ibid., pp. 136-138.

6The information concerning daily events of the seige was synthesized from three sources except where otherwise noted: Gabriel, pp. 139-159; Facts on File, June-September, 1982; and the New York Times, 1 July 1982-15 August 1982. Descriptions of the fighting during this period were validated by discussions

with Major General Yaron and Lieutenant Colonel Amar.

7Various sources.

CHAPTER VI -- OCCUPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Israel seemed to have won a great victory. On 1 September, the last of the PLO fighters had been evacuated from Beirut and scattered throughout the Arab world. Bashir Gemayel had been elected President of Lebanon and seemed potentially capable of restoring order to the country. The Syrians were isolated in the northern Bekaa and unable to influence the action in most of Lebanon. However, the victory was to be short lived.

OCCUPATION

Even before the evacuation of PLO fighters from Beirut, IDF military intelligence had uncovered a PLO plan to leave some 2,000 fighters in the city, equipped with false papers, hiding places, and funds.¹ These armed men, plus the thousand or so members of leftist militias who had fought alongside the PLO, formed a threat not only to IDF forces in Lebanon but particularly to the ability of Bashir Gemayel to establish government authority in Beirut. The IDF therefore was instructed to make plans for the seizure of the unoccupied areas of West Beirut. On 14 September, before the plan could be carried out, Gemayel was killed in a Syrian sponsored bombing while making a speech in the Christian suburb of Ashrafiya. In the wake of Bashir's assassination, the IDF seized control of West Beirut, with Yaron's men pushing south from the positions they had seized in early August and Mordechai moving east from the Port Crossing. Some resistance was met and a number of casualties taken.² The IDF stayed out of the refugee camps, however, because the Phalange had finally agreed to take action, ostensibly against

the fighters believed to have stayed behind. For three days the Israelis guarded the entrances to the camps of Sabra and Shatilla while the Phalange went on a rampage the result of which has been well publicized. The massacre of Palestinians brought the return of the Multi-National Force of French, Italian, and American units to Beirut, upon which IDF withdrew to the hills surrounding the city.³

Earlier, the IDF had begun to confront the situation in the area under its control outside Beirut. In southern Lebanon, the Israelis were forced to make certain decisions concerning the divided population under its control -- Christians, Shiites, Druze, and Palestinians. Even before the war there had been a number of senior officers who were skeptical of the Phalange's ability and willingness to stabilize the country. Now, some of these officers urged a policy that would result in a de facto partition in Lebanon: the arming and co-opting of the Shiite population in the south. The idea was dismissed by Sharon but in July, when Phalangist attempts to exert authority in Sidon resulted in some excesses, the IDF encouraged Haddad's militia to deploy as far north as the Awali River in order to force the Phalangists out of the territory to the south. Although there was much discussion of winning the support of the Shiite majority in the south and of cooperation with the Shiite militia (Amal) which had fought the PLO prior to the war, the presence of significant radical Khomeini supporters among the Shiites precluded such action. In fact, efforts were made to weaken Amal's influence by cultivating rival Shiite groups.⁴

Another problem for the IDF was that of the Palestinian

refugee camps, which housed some 100,000 people. The IDF's initial policy was to destroy those houses which had served as bunkers or arms caches and to leave the camp residents to fend for themselves. However, the IDF did provide the camps with food and medical aid and in October, when the weather began to turn colder, with tents as well. An attempt had been made to convince the Lebanese government to locate the refugees elsewhere in Lebanon, but when that attempt met with little support the IDF began to select and arm a small Palestinian militia in the camps, one made up of men judged to prefer a Lebanese identity to that of a refugee.⁶

The Shouf presented perhaps the most difficult problem. Traditional stronghold of the Lebanese Druze, the mountains had been the scene of cruel and bitter fighting between Kemal Junblatt's militia and Maronite forces during the civil war. Junblatt had asserted Druze control throughout the Shouf and, although closely allied to the PLO, had not allowed a large PLO presence in the area; his son, leader of the Druze after his death, chose not to resist the Israeli advance in June. However, when the IDF began to allow Phalange units into the Shouf in August, the Druze struck back and pushed the Phalangists out except for small pockets of Maronite resistance. During that early period, the IDF chose to adopt a neutral stance and tried to restrict the fighting, a stance which was interpreted by Walid Junblatt as pro-Phalange.⁶

By the time of Bashir Gemayel's death, the Israelis had managed to alienate nearly all the Lebanese factions, even the Phalange. However, having committed themselves to a new order in Lebanon based on Maronite hegemony, the IDF had little choice but

to pursue that goal. It is not within the scope of this study to chronicle the myriad events in Lebanon from September 1982 to June 1985, when the last IDF units left Lebanese soil. The attempts of the Lebanese government to exert its authority and its subsequent near-total collapse, the role of the Multi-National Force, the PLO rebellion in the north, the Druze-Phalange and Shiite-Palestinian fighting -- all contribute to a portrait of a nation in chaos. However, as a natural consequence of the invasion, IDF forces did remain in Lebanon for three years, and its activities as an occupation army contributed to the Lebanese morass.

Soon after the end of the fighting, the IDF reduced its force strength in Lebanon from around 85,000 to 35,000, and by January 1983 that strength had dropped even further, to around 20,000. Deployed generally with a division in the Beirut-Shouf area and another division in the Bekaa Valley, the force was supplemented by reserve units which performed their annual training in the operational setting of Lebanon for about thirty days at a time.

In southern Lebanon, in addition to the activities already described, the IDF rounded up thousands of Palestinian males immediately after the fall of the refugee camps and placed them in detention camps until their loyalties and prior activities could be sorted out. By the end of June, a military governor had been appointed and by 22 June some 5,000 to 6,000 people were under detention with a massive manhunt under way for anyone who might have escaped the Israeli net. The detainees were incarcerated in the camp at Ansar, between Tyre and Nabitiye.⁷

Subsequently, duties in the south became mired in a deadly rut of hit-and-run attacks on IDF personnel followed by searches and reprisals.

Security gradually became stricter as the IDF established more checkpoints and patrols; these security measures in turn alienated the predominantly Shiite population in the south. At the same time, with an eye on future security, the IDF expanded and trained Haddad's militia and other pro-Israeli groups. In the Bekaa, the pattern of attack and reprisal was much the same. In addition to maintaining a defensive posture toward the Syrians, the IDF held the Syrian Army responsible for attacks mounted from territory under its control and did not shy away from retaliation against Syrian military as well as PLO targets. In the Shouf and around Beirut, IDF attentions focused on maintaining order and rebuilding the Lebanese Army as a necessary foundation for government stability.

In addition to the almost daily snipings and attempted ambushes, other military action occurred from September until January:

- 31 August -- the IAF shot down a MiG-25 on a reconnaissance flight over the Beirut;
- 4 September -- a PLO force captured eight Israelis from the Nahal infantry brigade who were manning an observation post north of Bhamdoun;
- 8 September -- IAF planes destroyed Syrian SAM's in the northern Bekaa;
- 12 September -- Israeli planes destroyed one SA-5, then conducted a heavy bombing of Syrian and PLO positions in the Bekaa;
- 3 October -- the IDF suffered 6 killed and 22 wounded in the ambush of a troop-carrying bus near Aley;
- 4 October -- IAF planes attacked and destroyed an SA-5 battery near Dar al Beidar;

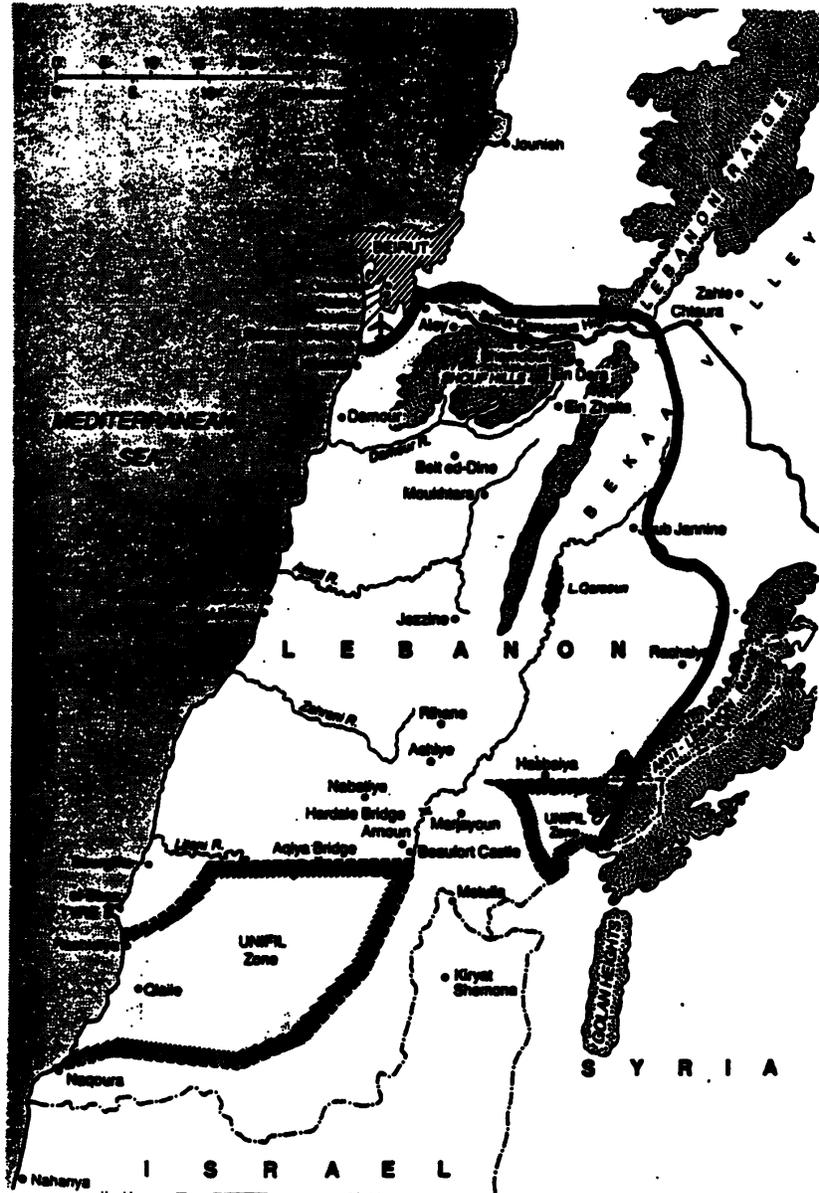
- 31 October -- Syrian forces fired two SAM's at IAF reconnaissance planes;
- 11 November -- the Israeli military headquarters in Tyre was destroyed with 90 killed (originally thought to be a car bomb, it was later determined to have been an accidental explosion);
- 19 November -- gunmen in Sidon fired on an IDF jeep patrol, killing one Israeli.

Negotiations between Lebanon and Israel began on 3 January 1983, under the auspices of the United States. In line with their revised war aims, Israel hoped that the talks would result in a formal peace treaty between the two countries, the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon, and some kind of guarantees for the security of Israel's northern border. It was in order to reach these goals that the IDF remained in Lebanon, roughly in the same positions it had held at the end of June. During the nearly five months that the negotiations lasted, the IDF continued to suffer casualties in guerilla-style attacks in the Shouf, on the Beirut-Damascus highway, and particularly along the coast road. Tensions rose between Israel and Syria, and the two forces traded artillery and mortar fire on a number of occasions.

More serious, however, were three occurrences which did not involve actual fighting. First, a number of increasingly provocative incidents took place between IDF soldiers and U. S. Marines near the southern suburbs of Beirut.⁸ Second, the Kahan Commission, appointed to investigate Israel's role in the September Sabra and Shatilla massacres, published its findings. The commission found that Defense Minister Sharon and high ranking officers of the IDF bore "indirect responsibility" for the massacre and made specific recommendations for the removal of

several from their posts.⁹ These findings, while affirming Israeli doctrines of morality in warfare, shook the officer corps. Many officers felt that they had been asked to fight a difficult war, one not in keeping with Israeli defense doctrine and different from the previous wars of survival, and now they were being punished for mistakes of omission not involving Israeli troops: in the words of the commission, "those who in our view did not fulfill the obligations placed on them."¹⁰ The third occurrence was a result of the decline in popular support for the war in Israel. During a demonstration in Jerusalem by the Peace Now movement, a grenade was thrown into the crowd of marchers,

ISRAELI DISPOSITIONS -- SEPTEMBER 1982-SEPTEMBER 1983



killing one and wounding eleven. The dead man was an IDF reserve officer who had fought in Lebanon, as were several of the wounded. The shock was not so much that IDF members would be

actively opposing the war, for Israel has a long tradition of free expression by its soldiers, but in the depth of division among Israelis that the incident revealed.

On 17 May, an agreement was signed by Lebanese and Israeli negotiators which fell short of diplomatic relations, although it did call for the establishment of "liaison offices." The agreement called for the opening of the border to trade and movement, the establishing of a security region up to the Awali River (to be patrolled for the first two years by joint IDF-Lebanese Army patrols and with two Lebanese Army brigades providing overall security), and the withdrawal of Israeli forces within eight to twelve weeks after the agreement took effect. The agreement brought sharp reaction from Syria, which closed its border with Lebanon, fired on IAF planes, and made menacing movements in the Bekaa and on the Golan Heights. Tensions eased in a few days, but Syria categorically refused to recognize the agreement or to withdraw her own forces, a move required by Israel as a precondition for withdrawing the IDF. As the stalemate continued, Israeli losses in Lebanon mounted: five soldiers were killed in the Shouf during the week of 23 May; two died in a car bomb attack near Beirut on 8 June; three more were killed in an ambush outside Tyre. These attacks could only partly be traced to the PLO, usually small groups who were infiltrated from Syrian-held territory. The remainder were made by indigenous Lebanese -- Shiite radicals, Druze, and leftist Muslims.

WITHDRAWAL

During the summer, with much support building for the move within Israel, talk surfaced concerning an Israeli withdrawal. As casualties mounted and with a political solution seeming less and

less likely, Israeli officials began suggesting a partial withdrawal to more defensible lines, a move opposed by both the Lebanese and American governments as undermining the chances for Lebanese stability. On 20 July, the Israeli Cabinet approved a plan to redeploy Israeli troops south of the Awali River. In tactical terms, although this move would not appreciably shorten IDF lines, it would straighten the front across Lebanon to the Bekaa. More important, it would remove IDF soldiers from the Shouf, the Beirut-Damascus highway, and the area around Beirut -- areas where most of the casualties were being incurred. During August, the IDF constructed defensive positions along the Awali, with bulldozers creating bunkers, gun emplacements, observation posts, supply roads, and helicopter landing pads. As the pullout grew nearer, violence between Christians and Druze increased in intensity. On the afternoon of 3 September, the Israelis began to displace in convoys consisting of hundreds of APC's and tanks moving south from around Beirut and from the Shouf. By the following morning, the withdrawal was complete.

The Israeli withdrawal had two immediate consequences: the Druze militia quickly seized control of most of the Shouf, and the Multi-National Force became increasingly embroiled in the confessional fighting around Beirut -- culminating in the October

ISRAELI DISPOSITIONS -- SEPTEMBER 1983-JANUARY 1985



suicide bombings of the Marine and French headquarters. Meanwhile, the IDF acted to consolidate its hold over south Lebanon. Saad Haddad, suffering from cancer, stepped down as head of the Israeli-backed militia, and the Israelis searched for a replacement.

The IDF continued its attempt to foster good relations with the Shiites in the south, but Shiite antipathy was on the increase. Stringent Israeli security measures -- such as the destruction of houses belonging to members of the anti-Israeli militias, the continuing incarceration of a number of Shiites in the Ansar prison camp (still containing some 7,000 inmates), and restrictions on movement to and from the Beirut area -- resulted in clashes such as one on 17 October: an IDF convoy tried to force its way through a Shiite religious procession, was confronted by the crowd, and opened fire. On 4 November, a suicide driver drove an explosive-laden truck into the IDF headquarters compound in Tyre and killed 28 Israelis and 32 Arabs. The IAF retaliated with strikes on PLO and Syrian positions along the Beirut-Damascus highway, even though the radical Shiite Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the bombing. Immediately following the Tyre attack, the IDF sealed all roads leading from Israeli territory to the north, halting all trade from the agricultural south to the Beirut markets. By 7 November northbound traffic was resumed, but by then the tension had mounted between Syria and Israel as each underwent partial mobilization of reserves. Israel continued its air raids on 16 November against PLO positions behind Syrian lines, with the loss this time of one aircraft.

After serious disturbances at the Ansar camp during the

summer, Israel found a solution to the problem. On 24 November, 4,500 Palestinians were exchanged for six Israeli soldiers and the camp was closed. The six soldiers were initially greeted as heroes, but were later sharply criticized by Rafael Eitan, President Chaim Herzog, and others for their surrender to PLO attackers in September 1982. In December, the PLO bombed a Jerusalem bus, killing four and wounding 46, in the first serious attack by the PLO inside Israel since 1979. The attack did not, however, signify a rise in PLO fortunes. On 20 December, Yasser Arafat and some 4,000 followers staged a repeat performance when they were evacuated by sea from Tripoli under pressure from anti-Arafat Palestinians and Syrian forces. Israel had tried to prevent the evacuation, with Israeli gunboats shelling Arafat's positions in response to the Jerusalem bombing and effectively preventing the evacuation for several weeks until pressured to stop by the United States.

During the remainder of the winter, the situation in Lebanon deteriorated drastically. Israeli planes continued their periodic attacks on PLO positions, and the IDF continued to increase its security measures in the south. On 31 December, the army again closed the crossing points between Israeli territory and the north as it launched a sweep which resulted in a number of arrests by Israeli security forces. In February, Druze and Shiite militias routed the Lebanese Army and took control of West Beirut, leading to the withdrawal of the U. S. Marine contingent of the Multi-National Force. The deteriorating situation, coupled with Katyusha attacks on northern Israel, brought increased attacks by the IAF on known or suspected PLO positions in

Hammana, Bhamdoun, Damour, and Souk al Gharb. On 21 February, a strong armored patrol moved as far north as Damour in a warning to the competing factions. As the Multi-National Forces withdrew, domestic pressure for additional withdrawal grew in Israel. An opinion poll conducted in February found that 39 per cent of Israelis favored immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Lebanon, while only 19 per cent favored remaining; these percentages were probably reflected in the IDF as well. To cap off the sense of frustration felt by Israelis, on 5 March the Lebanese cabinet formally abrogated the May 1983 Agreement. And in the third PLO attack in three months, a bomb exploded aboard an Israeli bus in Ashdod, killing three and wounding seven.

PLO attacks in Israel continued with the seizure of a bus on 12 April and an attack on a Jerusalem crowd by three members of the PFLP which wounded 48 people. Security in Israel itself was beginning to seem more precarious than before the war. And in June, the Lebanese themselves urged Israel to withdraw its forces from Lebanon. The cycle of attack and retaliation continued in southern Lebanon:

- 28 March -- Israeli forces stormed a Shiite village, killing at least six villagers;
- 3 April -- Two IDF patrols were attacked by PLO ambushers near Nabitiye, wounding ten;
- 1-9 April -- IDF and Syrian batteries exchanged fires in the Bekaa;
- 27 May -- Three IDF soldiers were killed in ambush;
- 28 June -- 40 Shiite prisoners were released by the IDF and twenty more by the South Lebanese Army, but on the same day 100 Shiites were arrested in Maarakeh after an IDF soldier was shot dead.

On 21 July, the roads to southern Lebanon were closed yet

again following the Lebanese government decision to shut down the Israeli Liaison Office in Beirut. The roads were reopened a few days later but the IDF imposed tighter restrictions on vehicles, often stripping them completely to search for explosives. Traffic remained snarled and Lebanese travelers increasingly discomodated. In August, automobile traffic was banned altogether as part of the "Iron Fist" policy in Lebanon. Nor was Israel's ally, the South Lebanon Army (formerly Haddad's militia, now commanded by former general Antoine Lahad) helping the situation any: on 20 September, Druze elements of this force attacked and killed thirteen Shiite villagers in reprisal for an ambush the day before. This "army," now 2,200 men strong, was created as an instrumental part of Israel's northern security.

In October, the Israeli government made public a list of four demands to be met before it would completely withdraw its force from Lebanon, a force now down to about 10,000 men. The demands illustrate how far Israeli aims had fallen since the evacuation of the PLO: 1) a Syrian commitment not to move troops into southern Lebanon; 2) a Syrian commitment to prevent guerilla infiltration from territory under its control; 3) the continued deployment of Lahad's South Lebanon Army in a security zone adjacent to the Israeli border; and 4) the redeployment of UNIFIL troops to a zone north of Lahad's and stretching from the coast to the Syrian border. Four days after the announcement, the 600th Israeli soldier to be killed in Lebanon died in a rocket grenade attack on the Zaharani bridge.

On 8 November, pullout talks began between Lebanon and Israel, which broke off in January with no agreement; but on the 14th, the Israeli Cabinet announced a decision to withdraw the

IDF in three stages. The plan called for an initial pullback to a line from the Litani River to Nabitiye, followed by a second withdrawal in the Bekaa to new positions near Hasbaiya, and completed by a total pullback to Israel itself. The first stage began on 20 January 1985 and was completed on 16 February, when IDF troops left Sidon and were replaced by a Lebanese Army force of 1,800 men. This stage was not without conflict, however. During the withdrawal, 15 soldiers were killed and 105 wounded, including the colonel who was senior advisor to the South Lebanon Army (SLA); dozens of SLA members were assassinated; and about one-third of the SLA deserted in the face of Shiite death threats.

In the weeks that followed, the clashes increased as the IDF stuck to its "Iron Fist" policy and the Shiites stepped up their attacks. From mid-February to mid-March, eighteen more Israelis were killed and another 35 wounded. The "Iron Fist" policy called for preventive raids on Shiite villages, dusk to dawn curfews, and severe travel restrictions, and at first seemed to have an effect. However, on 4 March a bomb destroyed a Shiite mosque in Marakah, killing about fifteen people including two Amal leaders. The day before, the village had been occupied by a strong IDF raiding force, and the blast was naturally blamed on the Israelis. On the 10th, a suicide bomber drove a truck into an Israeli convoy and detonated its hidden explosives: twelve were killed and fourteen wounded. The next day, the army attacked the town of Zrariyah, north of the new defense line, in a raid preceded by artillery fire. The IDF force killed some 40 Amal fighters, captured most of the male population and a large store

of weapons, and destroyed eleven houses. On 9 April, a sixteen year-old Shiite girl drove a car bomb into an IDF convoy, and the next day Israeli forces conducted an early pullout from the area around Nabitiye. The same day, the 647th Israeli was killed in the war -- a reserve major who stepped on a land mine near Hasbaiya. By April, the IDF had killed over eighty Shiite guerillas in five weeks, and the Ansar camp -- nearly emptied in the prisoner exchange in November 1983 -- held over 1,800 Shiite prisoners. Early that month, 700 were released and 1,000 were transferred to Israel.

The pullout continued when the IDF withdrew from the Bekaa on 24 April and from Tyre on the 29th. On 20 May, Israel freed 1,150 prisoners in exchange for the release of the last three known Israeli prisoners in PLO hands. This exchange, however, included more than PLO militia: 121 Palestinian guerillas, 150 Shiites from Ansar, and 879 convicted prisoners from Israeli jails -- 380 of whom had been serving life sentences. Some 600 of these were allowed to remain in Israel and the Occupied Territories. The release of a number of well-known terrorists -- including the only surviving member of the Japanese Red Army squad that killed 26 people in the 1972 Lod Airport massacre and two members of the PLO team that killed 33 civilians near Tel Aviv in 1978 -- caused a furor in Israel, but it underscored the long standing Israeli policy of doing whatever was necessary to secure the release of captive Israeli soldiers. Attacks on IDF

ISRAELI DISPOSITIONS -- JANUARY 1985-JUNE 1985



Israeli Lines -- 16 February

Israeli Lines -- 24 April -----

forces continued, and in two separate engagements Israeli missile

boats sank vessels carrying PLO guerilla raiding parties.

On 10 June, after a 53-mile security fence was erected (complete with sensors, search lights, and obstacles -- all connected to a central computer), the last large combat unit was withdrawn from Lebanon. As if to mark the occasion, two Katyusha rockets fired from southern Lebanon impacted in Galilee as the troops were crossing into Israel. After three years, 654 IDF dead and 4,000 wounded, and an estimated 17,000 Lebanese killed, this phase of the continuing Lebanese war was over.

CHAPTER VI NOTES

1Schiff and Ya'ari, p. 250.

2General Yaron informed me that his unit met moderate resistance when it entered West Beirut in September, mostly from leftist militias.

3It is not within the purview of this paper to delve into the detail of the Sabra and Shatilla massacres. Anyone wishing to do so can find a complete account from the Israeli side in Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 250-286, the Report of the Kahan Commission, and elsewhere.

4Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 238-240.

5Ibid., pp. 240-242.

6Ibid., pp. 242-245.

7Facts on File. The information in the remaining portion of the chapter is derived from the editions of Facts on File from September 1982 to June 1983 and from the author's own knowledge of events.

8This series of confrontations, shoving matches, and near shootings reached a head when the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Robert H. Barrow, formally charged that Israeli troops had persistently "harassed, endangered, and degraded" Marines around Beirut. The IDF responded with charges that the PLO was staging attacks from Marine-controlled areas. The situation was somewhat resolved in late March with a more detailed description of IDF-Marine relations, but did not fully end until the IDF pulled back to the Awali in September.

9The Kahan Commission found that responsibility for the massacre was borne by Sharon, Chief of Staff Eitan, Chief of Intelligence Saguy, Northern Commander Drori, and Beirut area

commander Yaron. Eitan was allowed to retire when his term was over a short time after the release of the findings; Saguy was removed from his post and soon retired; Drori was allowed to remain at his post. Yaron was barred from holding a field command for a minimum of three years and today, nearly five years later, still has not returned to command; he was recently denied credentials from the government of Canada for the post of Military Attache to that country.

10Although we did not discuss the subject in detail, General Yaron related to me that he had little faith in the Phalange even before the massacre and that although he was closely watched by higher headquarters, they provided him little assistance or advice.

CHAPTER VII -- IDF LESSONS LEARNED

Each episode of the Arab-Israeli conflict is a test, one in which each side has ample and obvious opportunity to evaluate its warfighting skills, personnel, and equipment. And each war poses problems different from those of the last. As the 1967 conflict was dominated by air and armor, the 1973 war saw the preeminence on missiles designed to counter those same aircraft and tanks. The Lebanon War posed its own problems for all the combatants.

The war in Lebanon gave the IDF the opportunity to test the reorganization begun in 1973, but that reorganization was based primarily on war in the open desert and the Lebanon war was characterized by urban, mountain, seige, and occupation warfare. Viewed from the vantage of June 1982, IDF operations appear up to the high standards which have characterized Israel's other conflicts. Yet there have been a number of military writers who, noticing the absence of the bold strokes which have characterized Israel's past wars, have argued that the IDF's performance in Lebanon reveals a decline in military prowess.¹ However, the only way to judge the IDF's performance in Lebanon is to examine its actions in light of the special circumstances of that war. It would be absurd, for example, to fault the Marine Corps for lack

of mobility at Peleliu by a comparison with Patton's breakout from Normandy, and it is equally misleading to compare IDF operations in Lebanon with those in the Sinai. In order to make a competent judgment, it is helpful to examine the various categories of performance separately.

Tactics

A number of criticisms have been directed at the IDF for its tactics in the June invasion, among which are the following: the IDF showed extreme caution in the MOUT operations in Tyre, Sidon, and Beirut; the rates of advance in Lebanon were too slow, resulting in the failure to capture or kill a single PLO leader; poor tactical measures resulted in a number of serious ambushes, especially by Syrian forces in the Center and East; the IDF exhibited a tendency to substitute firepower and frontal attack for tactical maneuver; the Israeli forces did very little fighting at night; the IDF used conventional military tactics against a guerilla force. Each of these charges contains some truth, but each must be examined in light of the political constraints under which the IDF was forced to operate.

The IDF did exercise a great amount of caution in urban fighting during the invasion and seizure of Beirut. A number of reasons can be advanced for that caution: inexperience in urban warfare, concern for friendly casualties, concern for civilian casualties, lack of time pressure (especially in Tyre and, later, in Sidon), the nature of the Beirut fighting, and the warfighting characteristics of the IDF. The only MOUT operations conducted by Israel in the past 30 years were in Jerusalem in 1973 and Suez in 1973, and neither were of the scale of those in Lebanon. IDF

inexperience did show at first, as units attempted to enter the camps around Tyre and Sidon with tanks in the lead and troops riding in APC's, but the soldiers quickly learned to advance on foot and bring the tanks and self-propelled artillery up only when they had a target. By the time they penetrated Beirut in July and August, IDF soldiers had grasped the fundamentals of urban warfare and were practicing it with some innovation and flexibility. Concern for casualties was a real influence on MOUT operations. The rules of engagement prohibited indiscriminate use of supporting arms, particularly in Tyre and Sidon, and the ethical framework of the IDF makes it very difficult for its soldiers to accept heavy civilian casualties as a necessary part of war. The Israeli concern for friendly casualties is well known, and in a war where time has become less important and where the ends are somewhat controversial, concern for friendly casualties assumes an even greater significance.² Finally, the Israeli warfighting doctrines of speed and maneuver have little place in urban fighting; whether an army can excel at both to the same degree is debatable, and it is doubtful if -- considering its history -- the IDF would wish to allow a lessening of its current offensive cast of mind.

The second criticism, that rates of advance were slow, hinges on several justifications: that the coastal advance was held up for two days before Sidon, that Einan's division in the Center and Ben-Gal's forces in the East failed to reach the Beirut-Damascus highway, and that no high ranking PLO leaders were killed or captured. Again, explanations exist which mitigate these criticisms. On the coast, thanks to Yaron's amphibious landing, IDF troops were as far north as Damour on the third day

of the war, and by 10 June two divisions were past Damour and closing on Beirut. Unless the objective from the beginning was to drive into the heart of Beirut, which no one suggests, this advance seems to have satisfied the operational requirements. In the Center there is perhaps more reason to criticize, although the fault here must lie with the planners who stripped Einar's division of much of its strength and chose a route that would entangle it with the rear elements of Division 36. When Einar ran into stiffening Syrian resistance, he was less a priority than the force struck at Sidon, and by itself his division did not have the strength to push through or the size for significant maneuver. The advance in the East only lasted a day and a half. The Syrians fought from prepared defenses on familiar ground and, most important, had had three days warning prior to the Israeli attack. The failure to kill or capture a PLO leader is easily explained by the fact that nearly all of them fled at the first sound of gunfire, abandoning their units to fend for themselves.³

It is true that the IDF did not display the speed in the advance which has become one of its hallmarks, and it is also true that much of the time during the advance units halted at night. This may be a valid criticism not of IDF tactics, but of force structure and doctrine. Armor heavy forces have a difficult time in terrain that favors the infantry defender (such as most of Lebanon is), and the near disasters at Ein Zhalta and Sultan Yakoub show what can happen to armor when it ventures unsupported into prepared defenses. At any rate, this criticism must be balanced against that of a slow rate of advance: if you want to move quickly, put your tanks in front and don't stop; if you want

to move at night, put dismounted infantry in front and move slowly. There were, however, several instances of night operations which were noteworthy: Yaron's amphibious landing; the Golani attack at Kafr Sil; the Golani and paratroop attack in Beirut in August; and the infantry attacks along the Beirut-Damascus highway in June.

The criticisms of over-reliance on firepower and conventional tactics may possibly be justified in light of past wars, but again, Lebanon was different. One of the reasons a force relies on speed -- hits quickly and hard and flies like the wind -- is that if it does not, it will be overwhelmed by its enemy's superior forces. In Lebanon, the IDF was by far the superior force in every measurable way; it therefore could afford to rely more on its combat power than it could in other wars. Even so, there are a number of examples of imaginative tactics: Yair's indirect attack through the Shouf; Yaron's handling of the battle at Kafr Sil; Peled's move up Jbaal Barouk; and Sakel's advance through Wadi Cheba.

IDF tactics in Lebanon did suffer initially from emphasis on armored warfare, but the soldiers themselves soon learned the lessons of mountain and urban warfare. Criticisms of IDF tactics are in some cases valid, but all can be laid to three causes: 1) IDF force structure had enhanced the roles of tanks and artillery, but virtually ignored the role of infantry on foot; 2) the objectives of the war were revealed gradually, denying commanders the opportunity to look ahead and devise more effective tactics; and 3) the Syrians, against whom the IDF had its toughest problems, had ample warning of the IDF attack and could easily determine what were its final objectives.

Armor

The Lebanon War more than vindicated the Israeli-built Merkava tank. No Merkava crewmen were killed and only six suffered even light burns; moreover, every Merkava hit by enemy fire was repaired within 48 hours.⁴ In addition to its toughness, the Merkava has a number of characteristics which make it appealing to Israelis. The frontal armor and placement of the engine in front make it nearly impervious to frontal hits. The 105mm cannon, although not very large, is supported by highly effective Israeli ammunition and a superior laser range finder, sight, and barrel shroud. Its greatest appeal to the Israelis is the fireproofing of the tank -- with seven armored, self-sealing fuel tanks, fireproof containers for ammunition, and the effective Spectronix fire-suppression system.

The M-113 APC did not fare so well, tending to burn quickly when hit. Such was its reputation that troops sometimes refused to ride in them, preferring to walk alongside and forego the armor protection rather than chance burning to death. Most of the APC's destroyed were deployed with tanks and without an infantry screen, and the majority of APC losses occurred in the Central and Eastern Sectors -- partly because Syrian opposition was more formidable than that of the PLO, but partly because Amos Yaron, an infantryman himself, made good use of dismounted infantry. The shock effect of Israeli armor was severely hampered by the narrow roads which forced the tanks to advance single file.

Infantry

One lesson the IDF did learn in Lebanon was that it had neglected infantry for too long. As has been noted, the IDF opted

for tank formations and relegated infantry to the secondary role of mopping up what the tanks left. The Yom Kippur War showed the ineffectiveness of that doctrine, but the solution of IDF planners was to put infantry in APC's so they could keep up with the tanks and to increase the number of self-propelled artillery. It would be the artillery, it was thought, which would suppress the enemy's anti-tank guided missiles. In fact, the ratio of infantry formations to armored actually declined between 1973 and 1982, at a time when the overall force had increased nearly 100 percent. In Lebanon, however, anti-armor ambushes were sprung at close range from previously unnoticed prepared positions; by the time artillery was brought to bear, the attackers had fled and the losses sustained.

Part of the problem lies in IDF doctrine and part lies in the unwillingness to take casualties. The argument centers on the proposition that overall casualties may be less if infantry takes the lead in terrain which is inhospitable to armor. Although the IDF has acknowledged the problem by starting up an additional infantry brigade, the Givati, it must still structure its forces for the most likely type of warfare -- and that is armored warfare in open terrain.

Artillery

Lebanon was the first real test for the IDF's expanded artillery arm. Artillery was generally effective in Lebanon and was used in a number of different roles: SEAD and counterbattery fire in the Bekaa; fire support for ground units, in the direct fire mode in MOUT; and in long-range sniping based on intelligence from RPV's, aircraft, or other sources. Although its

mobility was not tested, and in fact most Israeli guns could have displaced only once and still provided support over the whole battle area, no problems were discerned either. Despite the publicity surrounding the damage and civilian casualties, which although exaggerated were still disturbingly high, there is no doubt that IDF artillery took pains to put rounds on target. However, its performance must be measured in light of the complete Israeli air superiority and the lack of significant PLO artillery capability.

Air Operations

The offensive air operation against the missile batteries in the Bekaa on 9 June was a meticulously planned and executed operation. The plan itself had been developed in the late 1970's as a result of lessons learned in the Yon Kippur War, and had been fleshed out with information gathered on the Syrian SAM's since their deployment in the summer of 1981. IAF doctrine places priority on offensive air operations against enemy air and air defense as a prerequisite for being able to conduct ground strikes and close air support missions, so when the decision was made to destroy the SAM's the IAF put all its energies into doing so.

The operation called for extremely precise coordination of RPV's, electronic warfare, ground artillery, standoff missiles and bombs, and strike aircraft. The sophistication required central control by the Northern Regional Control Unit (RCU) located at Northern Command. The priorities of the operation itself were first the acquisition and fire control radars of the batteries, then the missiles themselves, and finally the supporting anti-aircraft guns. The radars were taken out while

the launching aircraft were out of range of the guns and the radars themselves confused by jamming, false lock-ons of RPV's, and artillery suppression fires. Once the radars were killed, it was a relatively easy matter to take on the missiles and ZSU's.

The overwhelming Israeli success in the air battle against Syrian interceptors was made possible by a combination of Israeli superiority and Syrian deficiencies. The IAF not only had better airborne radar and excellent air-to-air ordnance, but their command and control was deadly efficient. The RCU was able to obtain sufficient advance warning of Syrian flights from a combination of sources: the E2-C Hawkeye and RC-707 aircraft, ground and airborne spotters, balloon supported radar, and intelligence intercepts of Syrian tower and strike flight frequencies. Guided to the battle by the RCU, Israeli pilots were then virtually on their own to carry on the fight, which they did with deadly efficiency.⁵

Close Air Support missions were flown from the first day of the invasion. The IAF primarily flew missions against preplanned targets, but answered a number of on-call and immediate requests as well. These were forwarded from Northern Command, who received them from the divisions, where an air liaison officer was located. The RCU did the allocation and mission tasking for these strikes, the speed of which was improved by the fact that all field intelligence reports were forwarded directly to the operational flying units. Once the Syrian SAM and interceptor threat was removed, CAS missions were flown not only by attack aircraft but also by tactical fighters on strip alert or Combat Air Patrol.⁶ There were some instances of air support being slow

to arrive and other instances of friendly casualties from IAF missions. This may be due to the IDF belief that positive control by air or ground observers is not necessary; in fact, the IAF does not provide air officers below the division, or sometimes separate, brigade level.⁷ The pilots themselves tend to be careful in releasing their ordnance, and there were numerous instances, especially in Beirut, where pilots returned to base with their ordnance because they could not positively identify and engage their targets.

Among the aviation innovations of the war were the Cobra and Defender gunships, used by the Israelis for the first time in a significant anti-tank role. Under the control of the ground commander, these helicopters proved a valuable asset and accounted for a high percentage of the Syrian armor destroyed by the Israelis. However, they were under virtually no anti-air threat, so their utility against a more sophisticated defense is yet to be determined.

Engineers

Combat engineers were a vital part of Israeli operations throughout the war. From truly impressive engineering feats such as the construction of a twelve-mile road in Wadi Cheba during the first days of the war to the combat role of leading the attack at the Museum crossing in Beirut, the engineers compiled an enviable record. Often walking beside the lead tanks, IDF engineers opened five critical routes of advance for the armored vehicles, spanned a number of obstacles, and built a number of roads -- often while under fire. During the occupation and withdrawal phases of the war, engineers laid some 400 miles of road and constructed defensive positions and compounds. Their

performance more than justified their post-1973 integration into the combined arms units of the IDF.⁸

Logistics

The logistics capability of the IDF has improved considerably since the 1973 war. Although not nearly as devastating a conflict, the Lebanon War demonstrated that Israel does have a logistical capability which can serve its needs. Unlike the American method of resupplying front line units, in which supplies are sent forward in answer to requests from the front, the Israelis method is to stockpile ammunition and supplies as close to the leading units as possible. Although equipped with sufficient vehicle for overland transport, the Israelis quickly ceased to rely on that means due to the clogged roads, preferring instead to conduct most resupply by air. Helicopters were used to ferry supplies to the lead units, while C-130's delivered supplies near the battle zone by using roads as landing strips. The navy played a limited role in resupply, except during the first few days of the war when Yaron's force was heavily resupplied by sea. In the end, however, the logistics effort in Lebanon did not tax the IDF very much due to the limited forces involved, the short distances, and the proximity to Israel proper.

Israel Naval Force (INF)

The Lebanon War marked the first time that the IDF conducted joint operations in anything larger than a raid. The INF made several contributions to the operations blockade of the southern coast of Lebanon and of Beirut; naval gunfire against Palestinian targets in support of ground operations; and the amphibious

landing north of Sidon on 6 and 7 June. Throughout the summer of 1982, INF surface craft and submarines patrolled the coast of Lebanon, both to prevent the escape of PLO fighters by sea and to prevent their resupply. This the Israelis did successfully.⁹ Naval Gunfire support, particularly for Yaron's force, was readily available but, like air support, depended on preplanned targets identified by near real time intelligence rather than on requests from the ground units. During the siege of Beirut, NGF was integrated into the overall bombardment plans along with air and artillery. The most significant action of the INF was in the amphibious operation at the mouth of the Awali; although this operation was aided considerably by the use of IAF helicopters and does not represent any long range amphibious capability, it did demonstrate the tactical utility of amphibious warfare in a coastal area such as that surrounding much of Israel -- so much so that by 1985 the INF had increased its number of Amphibious ships and landing craft from nine to fifteen, including two hovercraft.¹⁰

Command and Control

Although the IDF has historically espoused unity of command, unit integrity, and the practice of tasking commanders then allowing them to fulfill their missions with little outside interference, the Lebanon War marked a departure from that practice. From the beginning, unit integrity on the division level was lost: units were given from a division in one sector to a division in another (such as Kahalani, who gave a brigade to Sakel in the Eastern Sector); units began their attacks in one sector and completed them in another, such as Kahalani's attack

from the Center to the West and Cohen's attack on Masghara which was launched from the Central Sector; units were switched frequently, such as the Golani Brigade, which belonged at various times to Kahalani's 36, Mordechai's 91, Yaron's 96, and Einan's 162 -- all in the space of less than three weeks. In addition, the switching and combining of units often resulted in one man commanding while another of equal rank remained on the scene with nothing to do while his forces were being commanded by the other. The fact that the war was fought on a single front (and that it was above all Ariel Sharon's war) meant that the commanders on the scene were often visited by senior officers who tended to make decisions on the spot. This was especially true at Beirut, which for a while was the only game in town: Yaron was frequently graced by the presence of Drori, Eitan, and Sharon, which made it somewhat difficult for him to plan and carry out his own actions. In short, the IDF worked under some command and control constraints which would have crippled many armies, and its commanders showed a considerable flexibility in dealing with the situation¹¹

In summary, the IDF demonstrated some remarkable warfighting capabilities, and also discovered some incipient flaws in the organization as it had expanded since 1973. However, possibly the most severe result of the war may have been to the character of the IDF itself. Most of its cherished principles were tested in Lebanon, from the fighting in heavily populated areas to the bombardment of Beirut. But most potentially damaging was the long period of occupation between 1982 and 1985. During this period, the IDF was taken out of its self-styled role of mobility and

combat decisiveness and placed into one of static police-type functions. Forced into continual conflict with the local population, many IDF soldiers reacted with confusion, doubts, and resentment -- particularly when the occupation itself proved so unpopular in Israel. Four years worth of conscripts gained their experience (which they would carry with them into the long years of reserve service) in Lebanon. This, combined with the lack of normal training during this period and the cutback in training due to economic constraints caused by the war's cost, may portend a period of diminished ability on the part of the IDF for some time to come. Worse, in a service where ethics and morality are real and inherited parts of military doctrine, the erosion of morale, motivation, and the sense of ethics which occurred during the occupation could have far reaching effects --effects which may not become apparent until the next major conflict.

CHAPTER VII NOTES

1The critics include a number who are highly regarded in military affairs and whose writings are normally pro-Israeli; see Trevor N. Dupuy and P. Martell, *Flawed Victory: The 1982 War in Lebanon*, Richard Gabriel, *Operation Peace for Galilee*, and Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari, *Israel's Lebanon War*.

2General Yaron told me that after the initial invasion, when the political struggle became paramount, the highest priority among commanders from the small unit level on up became to conserve the lives of their men.

3See Schiff and Ya'ari, pp. 136-137.

4Gabriel, pp. 197-200.

5Clarke, pp. 16-20.

6Ibid., pp. 20-21

7Interview with General Yaron.

8Gabriel, pp. 208-210.

9Having been on a ferry bound from Jounieh to Cyprus during the summer of 1982 which was stopped by Israeli patrol craft, I can

testify to the thoroughness of the blockade.

10Mark A. Heller, ed., *The Middle East Military Balance*, 1985, (Tel Aviv: Jaffe Center for Strategic Studies, 1986), p. 126.

11General Yaron pointed out that the command and control problems associated with the frequent shuffling of units were not the problem for the IDF that they might be for another service: the IDF is a small service where the senior officers tend to know one another fairly well, and the basic unit of the IDF is the brigade, which can operate independently or as part of a larger force with no diminution of its capability.

12Gal, pp. 246-251.

CHAPTER VIII -- CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult to assess the results of the war in Lebanon in the same way that one can with most wars. Israel's past wars have ended with the attainment of the objectives set by the government, both military and political, and a clear sense of victory on the part of the IDF. Had the IDF packed up and gone home in September 1982, having attained more than the limited goal it set out to achieve, then the results could have been more clearly determined: expulsion of the PLO from southern Lebanon up to and including Beirut; the weighting of the Lebanese domestic scene in favor of the Christian factions; removal of Syrian presence from much of Lebanon and a vastly reduced Syrian influence in that country; and a Lebanese populace which was fairly sympathetic to Israel.

In such a case, the Israeli use of military force would have been consistent with doctrine, and even the seige warfare in Beirut could have been accepted as a necessary action in a war fought to protect the existence of the state. However, the IDF remained in Lebanon for three years in a role inconsistent with Israeli doctrine, a role which reflected a more Clausewitzian approach in which the military force acts as an instrument of

foreign policy. At any rate, in order to reach an understanding of the results of this war, an evaluation of the war must be made on two levels: first, the military performance of the IDF and, second an assessment of the results in light of the announced war aims.

In terms of military performance, the IDF would have appeared highly successful had the war terminated prior to the seige of Beirut. As has already been discussed, certain flaws in performance have been noted by observers and IDF officers alike, and the IDF has already made some hard choices in the correction of those deficiencies. Some will not be corrected because the IDF sees its most likely future conflict as not in the mountains and built up areas of Lebanon but in the more open terrain to the east and south.² If one breaks the war into three phases -- invasion, seige, and occupation -- the evaluation of IDF performance becomes easier.

During the invasion, the IDF performed well, despite the tactical constraints placed on the IDF in the beginning. These constraints consisted of the refusal or inability to determine final tactical objectives from the outset, restrictive rules of engagement, and a force structure not designed for the terrain of Lebanon. Nevertheless, the IDF did reach Beirut in six days, did seize much of the Beirut-Damascus highway, did push the Syrians back in the Bekaa while inflicting severe losses on them, and did virtually destroy air and air defense capability in Lebanon. However, the Syrians fought stubbornly and well on the battalion level and below, causing Israeli setbacks and withdrawing slowly and in good order while continuing to hold key Israeli

objectives.³ Overall, however, the Israeli performance during the invasion must be considered consistent with its performance in past wars, although its superiority in numbers and equipment made Lebanon less than a true test of its capabilities.

Neither the seige nor the occupation were indicative of the IDF's military competence. In these phases there was no room for innovation or for fast, hard-hitting warfare. Decisions were made above the level of the commanders on the scene, to include when and where to initiate bombardments and when and where to attack on the ground. This was a type warfare for which the IDF was unprepared, and any mistakes in execution must be directed more toward the policy makers who placed the IDF in the position of maintaining a seige and acting as an army of occupation than at the IDF itself, for nothing in the army's doctrine or previous guidance from civilian authority indicated that it would be asked to perform these types of duty. Observers of the war are divided as to just how careful the IDF was in its concern for civilian casualties in Tyre, Sidon, and Beirut, with the more responsible experts insisting that the IDF took great pains to hold casualties to a minimum; nevertheless, civilian damage and casualties were significant and the number of civilians killed and wounded far exceeded the casualties among the combatants on either side.⁴ For this also the Israeli civilian authority must take most of the responsibility. In sum, the IDF's performance during the seige and occupation was mixed, but even though it was acting out of the role for which it was designed and trained, the IDF did conduct itself satisfactorily within the constraints under which it operated.

The results of the war in terms of Israel's war aims is

somewhat easier to assess in light of the events of the past five years. But the war aims themselves reflect the nature of the conflict as one out of the mainstream of Israeli doctrine. When the war began, the only announced aim was to push the PLO out of southern Lebanon in order to provide for the security of northern Israel. This aim was reflected in the operational plan under which the invasion started. However, very quickly, that objective was replaced with a number of other aims much more ambitious and much more in the nature of political, rather than national security, policy.⁵ These aims, as has already been mentioned, were the destruction of the PLO infrastructure in Lebanon, the creation of a stable and sympathetic Lebanese government, and the removal of Syrian armed presence from Lebanon.

The first goal seemed to have been accomplished in August 1982, when the PLO was evacuated from Beirut and its fighters scattered from Yemen to Algeria. In the following year the PLO became even more fragmented when dissident elements forced the withdrawal of Arafat's followers from Tripoli and northern Lebanon. However, there remained in Lebanon some 6,000 PLO fighters under the wing of the Syrian forces in the northern Bekaa,⁶ and by the end of 1985 that number had increased to 8,500, including some 2,500 in Beirut and 2,000 in the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon.⁷ In addition, recent attempts by al-Amal to defeat the PLO in the camps of Sidon and Beirut have been unsuccessful, causing some observers to foresee a resurgence in PLO presence and influence in Lebanon.⁸ Even if the PLO fails to reestablish itself in Lebanon, the possibility exists that its hostile presence in southern Lebanon has been replaced by the

equally hostile presence of armed Shiite radicals. The growing conflict between IDF occupation forces and the Shiite community has been previously discussed, but a new dimension to that conflict may be emerging with the anti-Israel activities of the Hizbollah group.⁹ Thus far those activities have been directed at Israeli and SLA targets within the security zone in southern Lebanon itself, but the conflict has the potential to spill over Israel's northern border at any time. In addition, there have been several recent incidents of attempted PLO infiltration of Israel which may signal a renewed PLO strength and aggressive policy in Lebanon. In summary, although the number of incidents inside northern Israel have been drastically curtailed as a result of the defeat of the PLO in 1982, the potential exists for an increase in anti-Israeli actions originating from Lebanon -- this time from both the PLO and Shiite groups. In total, the first objective of the Lebanon War must be judged only a partial success.

The second aim, to establish a stable government in Lebanon, is without doubt an unqualified failure. Without detailing the waxing and waning of the Lebanese government's fortunes since 1982, it is sufficient to say that today (in fact, since 1983), there is no Lebanese government capable of anything more than issuing passports. Not only did the war fail to establish a friendly, Christian-dominated government, but the possibility of any stable government in Lebanon seems more and more remote.

The third goal was to remove Syrian presence from Lebanon. The recognition that this goal was obviously unsuccessful must be tempered by an awareness of the Lebanese situation since 1982. Even when the first two aims seemed to have been met, Syrian

recalcitrance acted as a stumbling blocks the Syrians would by no means agree to a withdrawal from Lebanon in conjunction with the Israelis and therefore were able to effectively scuttle the May 17, Agreement between Israel and Lebanon before it had any chance of fulfillment; Syria offered a haven for PLO fighters in the Bekaa Valley from which they could stage raids on the IDF in Lebanon and from which many have now moved back into Beirut and Sidon; and despite having taken severe losses during the June fighting, Syria was able to quickly replace those losses with better Soviet equipment accompanied by a number of Soviet advisors.

Yet, this war aim is a total failure only when considered hand-in-hand with the other two. Since the collapse of any hope of effective government in Lebanon, the Syrians have themselves become bogged down in the never-ending cycle of confessional warfare and changing factional alliances. Syrian troops have returned to Beirut, but they have been no more able to establish order than were the Americans and Israelis before them. In fact, however, it may be that Syrian power in Lebanon will be the one thing which prevents any radical change to Lebanon's form of government, for despite Syrian support for Iran in its conflict with Iraq, Syria has no interest in seeing a Shiite Islamic government in Lebanon and would rather maintain some form of the status quo. At present, Syria is the only party with whom one can deal concerning Lebanon and that situation is better than having factional anarchy -- for the Israelis as well as for the Lebanese.

In conclusion, the overall results of the Lebanon War have

been mixed. Although the IDF generally fought well, the experience in Lebanon during the seige and occupation may have had some detrimental long-term effects on its underlying character. The failure of Israeli war aims reflects the ill-advisedness of attempting to solve long-standing and complex political problems in the Middle East by military action. Such an approach simply does not work, as many have found out to their regret. Any solution to the problems of Lebanon and of the Palestinian must be found outside the arena of armed conflict, a lesson that the Israeli experience in Lebanon teaches well.

CHAPTER VIII NOTES

1Zvi Lanir, "political Aims and Military Objectives." Israeli Security Planning in the 1980's (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984). pp. 40-43.

2In this sense, the IDF has reacted somewhat like the U. S. forces after Vietnam, where the prevailing idea was not so much to learn the lessons of counterinsurgency and limited warfare but to return to the traditional focus on conventional warfare.

3An indication that the IDF placed more importance in the drive up the coast than in the limited engagement with Syria may be inferred by the fact that the elite units (paratroopers, Golani Brigade, Geva's 211th Brigade) were all on the coast.

4The author has personally seen evidence of pinpoint accuracy in the IDF bombing in West Beirut, particularly north of the Corniche Mazraa; in some cases a single building was destroyed while those around it remained untouched. On the other hand, I have also seen whole city blocks which were level led by the IDF.

5Ze'ev Schiff argues convincingly that the final aims were those held by Defense Minister Sharon from the beginning and that much of the operational planning was predicated on Sharon's desire to lure the Israeli Cabinet into step-by-step decisions which would eventually encompass those war aims. Schiff's argument has credence in Israel and within the IDF.

6Heller, The Middle East Military Balance, 1983, p.187

7Heller, The Middle East Military Balance, 1985, p.197

8See Nora Bustany, "Palestinian's Victories in Lebanon Mark Arafat's Resurging Influence," Washington Post, December 23,

1986, p. A15. Ms. Bustany is Lebanese and lives in Beirut, and her reporting concerning Lebanon is accurate and responsible. Ironically, the reemergence of the PLO in Lebanon has been accomplished with the aid of the Phalange, which now sees al-Amal and the Shiites as a greater threat than the PLO.

⁹See the Washington Post, February 15, 1987, pp. A1 and A22; also, September 23, 1986 and May 5, 1987.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alpher, Joseph, ed. Israel's Lebanon Policy: Where To?. Jerusalem: Jaffe Center for Strategic Studies, 1984.
- Amar, Jacob, Lt. Col., Golani Infantry Brigade. Personal Interviews.
- American Friends Service Committee. A Compassionate Peace: A Future for the Middle East. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982.
- Bavly, Dan and Eliahu Salpeter. Fire in Beirut: Israel's War in Lebanon with the PLO. New York: Stein and Day, 1984.
- Ben-Horin, Yoav and Bary Poser. Israel's Strategic Doctrine (Rand Publication Series). Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corp., 1981.
- Chafets, Ze'ev. Double Vision: How the Press Distorts America's View of the Middle East. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1985.
- Chami, Joseph G. Days of Wrath: Lebanon 77-82. Beirut: Arab Printing Press, 1983.
- Clarke, Gordon M. et al. The 1982 Israeli War in Lebanon: Implications for Modern Conventional Warfare. Washington: National War College, 1983 (unpublished Strategic Studies Project).
- Cobban, Helena. The Palestinian Liberation Organization: People, Power, and Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Cutter, Paul S. "EW Won the Bekaa Valley Air Battle." Military Science and Technology: January, 1983.
- Dowty, Alan. "Israel: A Time of Retrenchment." Current History 83: 489 (Jan, 1984), 13-16 ff.
- Draper, Thomas, ed. Israel and the Middle East (The Reference Shelf). New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1983.
- Dupuy, T. N. and P. Martell, Flawed Victory--The 1982 War in Lebanon. Fairfax, VA: HERO Books, 1985.
- Fisher, Sidney Nettleton. The Middle East: A History. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979.

- Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Middle East and Africa
(FBIS/MEA). Washington, DC.
- Gabriel, Richard A. Operation Peace for Galilee: The Israeli-
PLO War in Lebanon. New York: Hill and Wang, 1984.
- Gal, Reuven. A Portrait of the Israeli Soldier. Westport, CT:
Greenwood Press, Inc., 1986.
- Gavron, Daniel. Israel After Begin: Israel's Options in the
Aftermath of the Lebanon War. Boston: Houghton Mifflin
Company, 1984.
- Gilmour, David. Lebanon: The Fractured Country. New York: St.
Martin's Press, 1984.
- Gordon, David C. Lebanon: The Fragmented Nation. Stanford, CA:
The Hoover Institution Press, 1982.
- Gordon, David C. The Republic of Lebanon: Nation in Jeopardy.
Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983.
- Grest, Alain, tr. by A. M. Berrett. The PLO: The Struggle Within.
London: Zed Books, Ltd., 1985.
- Haley, P. Edward and Levis W. Snider. Lebanon in Crisis.
Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1979.
- Heller, Mark, ed. The Middle East Military Balance 1983.
Jerusalem: Tel Aviv University, Jaffee Center for Strategic
Studies, 1983.
- Heller, Mark, ed. The Middle East Military Balance 1984. Tel
Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Jafee Center for Strategic
Studies, 1984.
- Heller, Mark, ed. The Middle East Military Balance 1985. Tel
Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Jaffee Center for Strategic
Studies, 1986.
- Herzog, Chaim. The Arab-Israeli Wars: War and Peace in the Middle
East. New York: Random House, Inc., 1982.
- Hirst, David. The Gun and the Olive Branch: The Roots of Violence
in the Middle East, 2nd ed. London: Faber and Faber, Ltd.,
1984.
- Judkins, James C. "The Expanding Role of the Shi'a in Lebanon."
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth,
1983.
- Laffin, John. The War of Desperation: Lebanon 1982-85. London:
Osprey Publishing, Ltd., 1985.
- Lanir, Zvi, ed. Israeli Security Planning in the 1980's. New
York: Praeger Publishers, 1984.

Luttwak, Edward N. and Daniel Horowitz. The Israeli Army 1948-1972 (2 vols.). Cambridge, MA: Abt Books, 1983.

Meyer, Lawrence. Israel Now: Portrait of a Troubled Land. New York: Delacorte Press, 1982.

Miller, Aaron David. "Palestinians in the 1980's." Current History 83: 489 (Jan., 1984), 17-20 ff.

"The Month in Review." Current History, 83: 489 (Jan., 1984), 43-44.

The New York Times. New York, 1982-1985.

Olsen, Robert. "Syria in the Maelstrom." Current History 83: 489 (Jan., 1984), 25-28 ff.

Orelli, Patrick J. "Civil Affairs Requirements Evident in the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon." U.S. Army War College, 1983.

Perlmutter, Amos. Israel: The Partitioned State. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985.

Rabinovich, Itamar. The War for Lebanon, 1970-1983. Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984.

Sahliyah, Emile F. The PLO After the Lebanon War. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1986.

Schahgaldian, Nikola B. "Prospects for a Unified Lebanon." Current History 83: 489 (Jan., 1984), 5-8 ff.

Schiff, Ze'ev. A History of the Israeli Army. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1985.

Schiff, Ze'ev and Ehud Ya'ari. Israel's Lebanon War. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984.

Tal, Israel. "Israel's Doctrine of National Security: Background and Dynamics." The Jerusalem Quarterly (Summer, 1977), 51-55.

Timmerman, Jacobo, trans. by Miguel Acoca. The Longest War: Israel in Lebanon. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982.

Turki, Fawaz. The Disinherited: Journal of a Palestinian Exile. New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1974.

United States Board on Geographical Names. Lebanon: Official Standard Names. Department of the Interior (U.S. Army Topographical Command), 1970.

United States Department of the Army. Conduct of Israeli Operations: Ground Forces Lessons Learned (SECRET). 9 May 1983.

U.S. Joint Publications Research Service--Middle East and North Africa. Washington, DC.

U. S. Marine Corps. Israeli Military Operations in Lebanon (June 1982): Programmatic Implications and Recommendations (SECRET). 1 February 1984.

Wallach, Jehuda L. Israeli Military History: A Guide to the Sources. New York: Garland Publishers, Inc., 1984.

The Washington Post. Washington, DC, 1982-1985.

Woods, Stephen R., Jr. The Palestinian Guerilla Organizations: Revolution or Terror as an End. Unpublished individual research report, U.S. Army War College, 1973.

Yaron, Amos, Major General. Commander of 96th Division, 1982. Personal Interview on 1 May 1987.