

Ceasefire!

August 14. I breathe again. After over a thousand useless deaths, it's over... for now.

Now don't fuck it up. Please?

If by some odd chance you're in a position to do something and are reading this, specifically, this is what I think you should do:

If you can get to Hezbollah, explain to them that they fought courageously, gave the IDF a bloody nose, whatever, but now it's time to honor the resolution they endorsed, pull back from the Litani, and disarm. I'm sure the Lebanese Army would be overjoyed to get some blooded fighters as trainers. You could even start a new special forces brigade trained by Bint Jbeil veterans. Anything, as long as it puts command and control with the Lebanese government.

If you can get to the Israeli government, explain to them that right about now would be a good time to get rid of the Sheba'a farms and deprive Hezbollah of their excuse to remain armed. If they'll start talking about the Seven Lost Villages later, you can deal with it then; you'll get a lot more sympathy too. And now would be a good time to start negotiating about Golan, not to mention the Palestinians, as well -- you haven't given up a damn thing through negotiations since Sinai, and if you want to change the impression that the only thing that works with you is force, you had better do something about it fast. And no, this wasn't an existential war: you still exist, no?

If you can get to the Iranian government, explain to them they can rightly claim a part of Hezbollah's honor, and their assistance in reconstructing South Lebanon in the past and yet again now is greatly appreciated... and that doing something that'll tear the fragile fabric of the Lebanese polity would not be a good idea right now. Let Hezbollah's armed wing be absorbed into the Lebanese army. The alternatives will be worse for everyone, including you. You can destroy Israel some other day.

If you can get to a rich Western (European or American) government, explain to them that the absolute crux of the matter is the strength of the Lebanese state, including its army. Ask them to do whatever's needed to help strengthen them. If you and not only Iran and Saudi Arabia help rebuild what Israel has destroyed, you will do more to help defuse terror and improve stability than a million Al-Hurras (not to mention invasions). Also, understand that the reason for Hezbollah's military wing's support in Lebanon is that it is the only thing standing between the Lebanese and Israel, a country that has attacked Lebanon more times than I care to remember: if this is to change, the Lebanese state and army must be strong enough to defend its territorial integrity. This means military assistance, training, modern anti-aircraft and anti-shipping weapons systems, and so on. Do whatever you can to help get there.

Second, demand that your government bring some balance to the way it treats Israel. More than mere hand-wringing and calls for restraint is needed. For example, demand a 20% duty on all trade with Israel, with the proceeds used to finance the reconstruction and military aid. This would give Israel the message that they cannot destroy a country on a whim without having to pay some kind of price, light as it is.

If you can get to an Arab government, tell them to get their act together and stop acting like whiny babies and get their countries to the 21st century, pronto. Whatever your motivation is, what they're doing

now isn't working.

Oh, and... bravo, ya Siniora. I hope you Lebanese realize what a treasure you have in him. One of the most horrible things about Hariri's assassination was the feeling that there was nobody around big enough to step into his boots. Turned out there was. If Lebanon can turn out statesmen of this caliber at this rate, perhaps there is yet hope.

August 12. The people I mentioned in my original message on this page are now safely (?) in Beirut. They were in the convoy of several hundred UN, Red Cross, and civilian cars that left Marjayoun yesterday. An Israeli drone fired twelve rockets on the convoy, killing seven people and wounding several more. The convoy had contacted the IDF previously, and believed their departure had been cleared.

This is the first time in thirty years of on-and-off war that Marjayoun is left empty.

Oh, and they blew up his house and his car too. But that hardly matters in this scale of things.

On August 10, 2006, the UN unanimously adopted a resolution calling for a ceasefire. The Israeli prime minister announced that Israel would accept it.

Then it went on to bomb locations all around Lebanon, including the power plant at Saida (Sidon), and order that the push to the Litani go ahead. Dozens more civilians got killed. So did a few Israelis.

What possible purpose can this serve?

On July 27, 2006, the Israeli justice minister Haim Ramon said

[\[http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/27/world/europe/27cnd-mideast.html?pagewanted=1&ei=5088&en=e6d1cf60212e\]](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/27/world/europe/27cnd-mideast.html?pagewanted=1&ei=5088&en=e6d1cf60212e) that "all those now in south Lebanon are terrorists who are related in some way to Hezbollah."

Here are some of these terrorists, from Tyre. Obviously a Hezbollah combat diver, a courier running orders to launch Katyushas, a marine commando prepping his craft for a surprise assault... and isn't that kid's jacket suspiciously thick?







How is this different from Nasrallah or Bin Laden or Mashal who say that "there are no civilians in Israel, only colonial-imperialist occupiers?"

People I know for a fact to have nothing at all to do with Hezbollah are stuck there with no way to get out. I know someone who is in danger of his life because he is running out of essential medicines.

This is madness. It has to stop. We need an immediate ceasefire now, before any more "terrorists" or "occupiers" get killed on either side of the border. If you happen to be reading this and are in a position to actually do something about it, please, *please* drop whatever else it is you're doing and... do something.

To find out how it looks from Beirut, please take a moment to check out this blog. <http://mazenkerblog.blogspot.com/> It's worth it even if you're not particularly keen on politics.

Pietà, by Mazen Kerbaj. *If you have the time, please do check out his blog.*

Thanks for reading. Feel free to proceed to the usual What's New [[../a Recent changes.html](#)] page now.

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