

Israel, Oil and the “planned demolition” of Lebanon

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“The world has become accustomed to the idea of mass migrations and has become fond of them...Hitler—as odious as he is to us—has given this idea a good name in the world.” Ze’ev Jabotinsky; Ideological founder of the Likud Party “One Palestine Complete” p 407

“The raw logic of Israel’s distorted self-image and racist doctrines is exposed beyond confusion by the now-stark reality: the moonscape rubble of once-lovely Lebanese villages; a million desperate people trying to survive Israeli aerial attacks as they carry children and wheel disabled grandparents down cratered roads; limp bodies of children pulled from the dusty basements of crushed buildings. This is the reality of Israel’s national doctrine, the direct outcome of its racist worldview.” Virginia Tilley “The Case for Boycotting Israel” Counterpunch

By bombing the highways and main bridges into Beirut, Israel has cut off the capital from the outside world and put the entire nation under siege. Israel can now execute its plan to pummel Lebanon into rubble without the threat of foreign intervention.

The north has been effectively severed from the south allowing the IDF to continue its ethnic cleansing operations as well as its search-and-destroy missions for Hezbollah fighters. They have meticulously destroyed all the main points of entry at the Syrian border and blockaded the coastline. Israel believes that their earlier occupation (which ended in year 2000) failed due to the unrestricted flow of supplies and weaponry from Syria and Iran. The Bush administration has assisted this effort by providing crucial intelligence from the NSA about the movement of material from the outside.

By now, it should be apparent that Israel’s military campaign has nothing to do with Hezbollah’s capturing of the 2 Israeli soldiers on July 14. The present plan, which was drawn up more than a year ago (and which high-ranking members of the Bush administration were fully briefed) is designed to establish a new northern border for Israel at the Litani River and create an “Israel-friendly” regime in Beirut.

The plan to annex the land south of the Litani River dates back to the founding of the Jewish state when Israel’s first Prime Minister David Ben Gurion described the country’s future borders this way: “To the north the Litani River, the southern border will be pushed into the Sinai, and to the east, the Syrian Desert, including the furthest edge of Transjordan.” (See Map of post WW1 Zionist plan for region

<http://www.palestineremembered.com/Acre/Maps/Story1045.html>)

In 1978 the IDF launched Operation Litani with the intention of annexing the southern part

of Lebanon and setting up a Christian client-regime in Beirut that would take orders from Tel Aviv. Israel said that it needed a “buffer zone” for its security, the same excuse that it uses today. The 1982 invasion devolved into an 18 year onslaught which ravaged the Lebanese economy and killed more than 20,000 civilians. In 2000, Israel was driven from Lebanon by the persistent attacks of the Lebanese resistance organization, Hezbollah.

The media portrayal of the current conflict is blatantly absurd. It has nothing to do with “captured soldiers” or Israel’s “right to defend itself”. This is a traditional war with clear territorial and political objectives. The border controversy is nonsense. Israel is trying to seize more land to realize its vision of “Greater Israel” while reducing an adjacent Arab country to a “permanent state of colonial dependency”. This explains the vast and deliberate destruction to Lebanon’s civilian infrastructure. Israel’s dominance requires that its neighbors endure abject poverty and oppression. By destroying the infrastructure and life-support systems, Israel hopes to eliminate the rise of a potential rival as well as to diminish the ability of the Lebanese resistance to wage war against the Jewish state. Once Lebanon is decimated, it will be delivered to Zionists at the World Bank (Paul Wolfowitz) who will apply the shackle of reconstruction loans and structural readjustment, which will keep Lebanon as an indentured servant to the global banking establishment. This model of economic servitude has been used throughout the developing world with varying degrees of success. It anticipates Israel’s regional ascendancy while ensuring that Lebanon’s sovereignty will be compromised for decades to come.

The United States has played a unique role in Israel’s war on Lebanon. In its 230 year history the US has never deliberately assisted in an attack on an ally. That record will end with Lebanon.

Lebanon was demonstrably “pro-American” government on friendly terms with Washington. In fact, American NGOs and intelligence organizations helped to activate the “Cedar Revolution” which gave rise to the Fouad Siniora government and the eventual expulsion of Syrian troops. To a large extent, Washington and Tel Aviv had achieved what they wanted to by meddling in Lebanon’s political affairs. The country was singled out as a shining example of Bush’s “global democratic revolution”, which was the stated goal of American intervention in the Middle East.

Lebanon has since been rewarded for its cooperation by the total obliteration of its economy and infrastructure. The Bush administration has abandoned any pretense of being an “honest broker” and is now providing Israel with precision-guided missiles to prosecute a war against a (mainly) civilian population. They are also actively collaborating with the Olmert regime to foil all plans for an immediate ceasefire. The United States is a fully-engaged partner in the premeditated destruction of a democratic country. It is as much a part of the Israeli aggression as any IDF tank commander rumbling towards Beirut.

The United Nations has been sidelined by the administration’s obstructionism at the Security Council. The efforts of the Bolton-Rice team are tantamount to a “declaration of war”. So far, the Israeli offensive has uprooted nearly 1 million people in the south; making refugees of approximately 25% of the Lebanon’s total population. The UN has done nothing to respond to this calamity. Its ineffectiveness casts doubt on whether it will survive the present crisis. Security in the new century will ultimately depend on alliances between the individual countries. The UN model of one, monolithic international institution trying to “preserve the peace” has proved to be a wretched failure.

The scene in the south of Lebanon is hauntingly similar to the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948; the Nakba. Once again, Israel is seen driving Muslims from their homes in an attempt to expand its territory. The “deliberate” attack on Qana, which killed 57 civilians, as well as the bombing of clearly marked ambulances and “white flag-waving” mini-buses chock-full of fleeing villagers, shows that the Israeli high-command still understands the importance of using terror as a means of controlling behavior. Israel’s carefully calculated atrocities have had the desired effect; triggering the mass-exodus of hundreds of thousands of frightened civilians and leaving Hezbollah guerillas to fight it out with the IDF.

The Bush administration is now attempting to pacify its critics by pushing a resolution that calls for a “full cessation of hostilities”. The resolution does not demand that Israel stop attacking Hezbollah nor does it require the IDF to leave Lebanon. It is Munich all over again; a miserable “sell-out” by the Security Council that guarantees a steady increase in the violence as well as an intensification of the rage that is sweeping across the Muslim world. The UN has unwittingly endorsed Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and created the foundation for another generation of terrorists. The resolution shows that the UN is nothing more than a “cat’s paw” for US/Israeli geopolitical ambitions and that the “post-colonial” European allies are willing to succumb to the neocon plan for a “New Middle East”.

The UN is not an “honest broker”; its bumbling attempts at peace have only provided the cover of international legitimacy to Israel’s rampage. Israel will now continue its crusade unobstructed; setting up outposts throughout the south, pushing the Shia off their land, attacking Hezbollah as they see fit, and installing an Israeli-client in Beirut.

Israel will never return to its “internationally recognized” northern border unless it is beaten-back by the Lebanese national resistance, Hezbollah.

What does Israel want?

The only way that Israel can maintain its dominance in the region is by becoming a main-player in the oil-trade. Otherwise it will continue to be dependent on the United States to strengthen its military and defend its interests. Israel’s determination to “stand on its own 2 feet” is outlined in the neocon plan for “rebuilding Zionism” in the 21st century; “A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm”. The document is the blueprint for redrawing the map of the Middle East and eliminating rivals to Israeli power. Most of the attention has been focused on the parts of the paper which presage the attacks on Iraq, Lebanon and Syria; including this ominous passage:

“Securing the Northern Border: Syria challenges Israel on Lebanese soil. An effective approach, and one with which America can sympathize, would be if Israel seized the strategic initiative along its northern borders by engaging Hezbollah, Syria, and Iran, as the principle agents of aggression in Lebanon, including by:

paralleling Syria’s behavior by establishing the precedent that Syria is not immune to attacks emanating from Lebanon by Israeli proxy forces.

striking Syrian military targets in Lebanon, and should that prove to be insufficient, string at select targets in Syria proper.” (“A Clean Break”; Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, David Wurmser)

Clearly, this is the basic schema for US/Israeli aggression in the region. What has been overlooked, however, is Israel's determination to "break away" from its traditional dependence on American support. As stated in the text:

(Israel intends to) "forge a new basis for relations with the US—stressing self-reliance, maturity, strategic cooperation on areas of mutual concern, and furthering values inherent to the West. This can only be done if Israel takes serious steps to terminate aid, which prevents economic reform. Israel can make a clean-break from the past and establish a new vision for the US-Israeli partnership based on self-reliance, maturity, and mutuality—not one narrowly focused on territorial disputes. (Israel) does not need US troops in any capacity to defend it...and can manage its own affairs. Such self-reliance will grant Israel greater freedom of action and remove a significant lever of pressure used against it in the past....No amount of weapons or victories will grant Israel the peace it seeks. When Israel is on sound footing, and is free, powerful, and healthy internally, it will no longer simply manage the Arab-Israeli conflict; it will transcend it".

Israel's "economic freedom" depends in large part on its ability to become a central petroleum-depot for the global oil trade. In Michel Chossudovsky's recent article "Triple Alliance: US, Turkey, Israel and the War on Lebanon", the author provides a detailed account of the alliances and agreements which underscore the current war. As Chossudovsky says, "We are not dealing with a limited conflict between the Israeli Armed Forces and Hezbollah as conveyed by the Western media. The Lebanese War Theater is part of a broader US military agenda, which encompasses a region extending from the Eastern Mediterranean into the heartland of Central Asia. The war on Lebanon must be viewed as 'a stage' in this broader 'military road map'". Chossudovsky shows how the recently completed Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan pipeline has strengthened the Israel-Turkey alliance and foreshadows an attempt to establish "military control over a coastal corridor extending from the Israeli-Lebanese border to the East Mediterranean border between Syria and Turkey."

Lebanese sovereignty is one of the unfortunate casualties of this Israel-Turkey strategy. Most of the oil from the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan pipeline will be transported to western markets but, what is less well-known, is that a percentage of the oil will be diverted through a "proposed" Ceyhan-Ashkelon pipeline which will connect Israel directly to rich deposits in the Caspian. This will allow Israel to supply markets in the Far East from its port at Eilat on the Red Sea. It is an ambitious plan that ensures that Israel will be a critical part of the global energy distribution system. (See Michel Chossudovsky, "The war on Lebanon and the Battle for Oil", July 2006)

Oil is also a major factor in the calls for "regime change" in Syria. An article in the UK Observer "Israel Seeks Pipeline for Iraqi Oil" notes that Washington and Tel Aviv are hammering out the details for a pipeline that will run through Syria and "create and endless and easily accessible source of cheap oil for the US guaranteed by reliable allies other than Saudi Arabia." The pipeline "would transform economic power in the region, bringing revenue to the new US-dominated Iraq, cutting out Syria, and solving Israel's energy crisis at a stroke."

The Israeli Mossad is already operating in northern Iraq where the pipeline will originate and have developed good relations with the Kurds. The only remaining obstacle is the current Syrian regime which has already entered the US/Israeli crosshairs. The Observer quotes a CIA official who said, "It has long been a dream of a powerful section of the people now

driving this administration and the war in Iraq to safeguard Israel's energy supply as well as that of the US. The Haifa pipeline was something that existed, was resurrected as a dream, and is now a viable project—albeit with a lot of building to do.”

Former US ambassador James Atkins added, “This is a new world order now. This is what things look like particularly if we wipe out Syria. It just goes to show that it is all about oil, for the United States and its ally.”

The Middle East is being reshaped according to the ideological aspirations of Zionists and the exigencies of a viciously-competitive energy market. Behind the bombed-out ruins of Qana and the endless sorties laying Lebanon to waste, are the tireless machinations of the energy giants, the corporate media, the banking establishment and Israel.

Don't expect a quick return to peace. This war is just beginning.

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