

Heard on the Hill

Congress extends Iran sanctions. Both houses of Congress voted to extend the Iran Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA)—which was set to expire this month—until Sept. 29. The short-term extension will allow Congress more time to consider provisions that would strengthen the existing sanctions on foreign companies investing in Iran's energy sector.

• • •

House approves U.S.-Israel energy cooperation. The House passed the U.S.-Israel Energy Cooperation Act, authorizing \$20 million annually through 2012 for joint research-and-development ventures between U.S. and Israeli businesses and academic institutions. The bill would authorize a grant program to be administered by the Department of Energy in conjunction with BIRD (U.S.-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development) and BSF (Binational Science Foundation) for the development and commercialization of alternative renewable energy sources. The act was spearheaded by Reps. JOHN SHADEGG (R-AZ) and BRAD SHERMAN (D-CA). A similar bill introduced in the Senate is led by Sens. GORDON SMITH (R-OR), TIM JOHNSON (D-SD) and DIANNE FEINSTEIN (D-CA).

• • •

Key lawmakers travel to Israel. Members of the House Intelligence Committee traveled to Israel's border with Lebanon to show solidarity with the Jewish state as it continues its defensive war against Hizballah. Upon returning, Chairman PETER HOEKSTRA (R-MI), Ranking Member JANE HARMAN (D-CA) and Reps. RICK RENZI (R-AZ) and DARRELL ISSA (R-CA) reported that "Hizballah and Hamas initiated the current crisis by killing and capturing Israeli soldiers in undisputed territory and attacking innocent civilians.... We are standing with Israel." Rep. ROBERT WEXLER (D-FL) also traveled to Israel to "express solidarity...as Prime Minister Olmert and the Israeli Defense Forces seek to remove the threat of Hizballah and its deadly arsenal of weapons." •NER•

INSIDE

NER Interviews:
The IDF's Former Chief of Staff

AIPAC Analysis:
Minimizing Lebanon's Civilian Toll

NEAR EAST

Report

AUGUST 7, 2006

AIPAC'S BIWEEKLY ON AMERICAN
MIDDLE EAST POLICY

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Clear Demands

After strong U.S. prodding, the U.N. Security Council has at last adopted a binding resolution demanding that Iran halt its nuclear activities. Should Tehran persist in its rejection of the resolution, the Council would have to impose meaningful sanctions on Iran to compel it to end its dangerous nuclear weapons program.

The Security Council resolution unambiguously demands that Iran "shall suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development." The Council states its intention to impose sanctions on Iran in the event that it fails to suspend its nuclear activities by the end of this month.

"It's a strong resolution," President Bush said. "The Iranians must hear loud and clear that the world is intent on working together to make sure that they do not end up with a nuclear weapon or the know-how to build a nuclear weapon."

Tehran responded defiantly. Rejecting the resolution, Iran's U.N. ambassador said "dealing with this issue in the Security Council is unwarranted and void of any legal basis or ...see Editor's Comments cont'd on pg. 56

Isolating Terrorists

CONGRESS ASKS FOR INCREASED PRESSURE
ON HIZBALLAH AND ITS SYRIAN SPONSORS

Immediately following Congress' overwhelming statements of support for Israel's right to self-defense, the House and Senate turned their attention to holding one of Hizballah's key state sponsors accountable and to closing loopholes that allow the terrorist group to openly fundraise throughout Europe. In just one week, hundreds of lawmakers joined in efforts to sever some of Hizballah's most essential lifelines.

Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Eliot Engel (D-NY) led 115 House members in a letter urging the president to impose the full range of possible U.S. sanctions on Syria for its continued support for Hamas and



Photo by the Associated Press

Hizballah leader Hassan Nasrallah said his group depends on funds raised in Europe.

Hizballah. Syria harbors Hamas leaders such as Khaled Meshaal and serves as a conduit for Iranian rocket and missile shipments from Iran to Hizballah in Lebanon. It also provides arms directly to Hizballah.

The letter urges the president to impose a wide range of sanctions on Damascus, including a ban on U.S. firms operating in Syria and a reduction of diplomatic contacts.

Congress also is seeking to close another avenue of financial and political support for Hizballah, pressing the European Union (EU) to designate it as a terrorist organization. Led in the House by Reps. Elton Gallegly (R-CA) and Robert Wexler (D-FL), Gary Ackerman (D-NY) and Steve Chabot (R-OH), and Sens. Gordon Smith (R-OR) and Bill Nelson (D-FL) in the Senate, the letter...see *Isolating Terrorists* cont'd on pg. 56

NER INTERVIEWS

LT. GEN. MOSHE YA'ALON, FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES

As chief of staff for the Israel Defense Forces from 2001 until 2005, Lt. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon directed Israel's struggle against Lebanon-based Hezbollah and Palestinian terrorist groups such as Hamas. Now a visiting fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Ya'alon recently provided Near East Report with his perspective on Israel's current effort to degrade Hezbollah's ability to threaten its northern border.

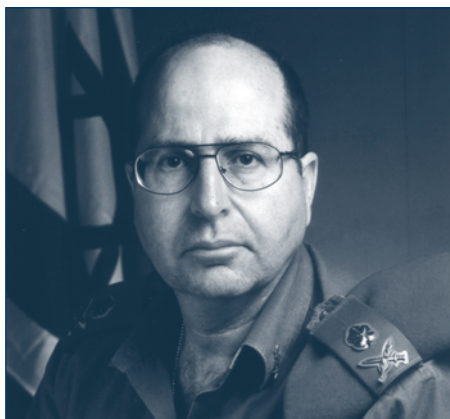


Photo courtesy of the Associated Press

For four years, Lt. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon led the Israel Defense Forces.

NER: How does Israel's fight against Hezbollah differ from the battle against Palestinian terrorist organizations?

Moshe Ya'alon: First of all, both Hezbollah and the Palestinian groups present formidable challenges to Israel due to the fact that they are terrorist organizations. For Israel, hitting civilians is a failure; for the terrorists, hitting civilians is a success. But Hezbollah and other terrorist groups use their own civilians as human shields. So Israel is at a considerable disadvantage because we risk our soldiers in order to avoid civilian casualties, and they risk their own civilians to save themselves.

On top of this, though, Hezbollah has weapons and expertise that other terror groups do not possess. It is actually a well-trained and equipped armed force. They are armed with state-provided weapons, technology and training from Syria and Iran. They have rockets capable of reaching deep into Israel, as we have seen, as well as coast-to-sea guided missiles and drones. The average terrorist organization does not possess such weapons.

NER: How important to Hezbollah is Iran's support?

MY: Hezbollah would not have emerged in the early 1980s without the Iranian revolution. From its very beginning in 1979, the idea of the Iranian revolutionary regime was to export Islamic extremism. They approached Shiite Muslim elements all over the globe. And they found in Lebanon that the Shiite sector was suppressed by the other sectors. The Christians, the Sunnis and the Druze didn't allow the Shiites to play a significant role in Lebanese politics and the Lebanese economy. So Iran recruited Shiite Lebanese youngsters to form Hezbollah. I met a couple of these recruits on the battlefield. They had gone to Iran for training and come back to Lebanon with a lot of money and with a mission—to spread the radical ideology of the Iranian revolution and set up the terror cells that became Hezbollah.

NER: How has Iran's support for the terrorist group evolved since its inception?

MY: As time has gone by, Iran has equipped and trained Hezbollah with more sophisticated weapons for attacks on Israel. In the last 10 years they have provided the group with Fajr-3, Fajr-5 and Zelzal rockets, which can strike much deeper into Israel than the Katyusha rockets that Hezbollah fires most routinely. Some members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard are in Lebanon helping Hezbollah operate the weapons. Israel has hit Hezbollah sites and killed Iranians. So the Iranians are deeply involved in using Hezbollah as a proxy.

Of course, Iran could not arm Hezbollah without Syrian permission. Tehran has actually been using Damascus' international airport to ship weapons to Hezbollah.

NER: Is it possible for Lebanon to disarm Hezbollah?

MY: I believe that with international pressure and encouragement, the Lebanese themselves could disarm Hezbollah just like they pushed the Syrian troops from Lebanon without one shot, simply by demonstrating in the streets of Beirut. To be sure, we are talking about a weak government, so they should be pressed

and encouraged. But it's ultimately up to Lebanon. As far as I know, 75 percent of the Lebanese don't like having their country used for the interests of Iran. Their military has 70,000 troops, 11 mechanized brigades with 340 tanks, five special-forces regiments and more. They can cope with it.

NER: Do you support any of the proposals now circulating for an international force to land in Lebanon and disarm Hezbollah?

MY: It might be a good idea if the force came in with the power to help the Lebanese disarm Hezbollah. But it would not be a good idea if the force was similar to UNIFIL [a U.N. force that arrived in the country in 1978 after attacks on Israel by Lebanon-based terrorists]. Because of their rules of engagement, they are not allowed to open fire except when under threat. So when somebody is going to kill you, you are allowed to kill him, but that's it. If you see a terrorist going to launch an attack in Israel, you are not allowed to hit him. You can only watch and report.

This kind of international force won't serve the goal of stopping Hezbollah attacks. Any force should be able to kill terrorists, not just report on what it sees. Now, the terrorists will fight back with suicide bombers, rockets, et cetera. But if the international community wants to try it, to help the Lebanese Armed Forces for a while, it may be a good idea.

NER: What are the reasons that Israel so strongly support the current operation in Lebanon?

MY: You know, we in Israel have been told for almost 40 years that our occupation of Arab lands was the cause of the violence against us. Well, we have never claimed Lebanese land and haven't had troops there for six years. We invited the U.N. in, and it certified that we had withdrawn from all Lebanese territory. But still we face attacks from Lebanon. It shows that occupation is not the issue. Hezbollah objects to Israel's very existence as an independent Jewish state. And the Israeli people will strongly support action against such an enemy. •NER•

Protective Steps

ISRAEL'S DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS IN LEBANON HAVE BEEN MARKED BY A COMMITMENT TO MINIMIZING CIVILIAN CASUALTIES, A PRINCIPLE NOT SHARED BY THE HIZBALLAH TERRORISTS WHO ARE ATTACKING THE JEWISH STATE

While continuing defensive operations against Hizballah, Israel is taking steps to minimize casualties among the Lebanese civilians whom the terrorist group is using as human shields.

The precautions have been rigorous, even placing Israeli soldiers' lives at risk for the sake of reducing dangers posed to Lebanese. Conversely, Hizballah has deliberately exposed civilians to the risk of death or injury by using their neighborhoods for terrorist operations against Israel.

Backed consistently by the United States, Israel has made clear that it will agree to a cease-fire in Lebanon once the international community forces Hizballah to leave the hideouts it now uses for attacks on Israel.

Hizballah Endangers Civilians by Operating From Residential Areas

The villages of southern Lebanon have served as safe havens for Hizballah, which hides its forces and weaponry in and around homes and religious buildings in violation of internationally sanctioned rules of war.

One Shiite Muslim Lebanese told a German newspaper that the terrorist organization had built homes and schools over rocket caches in his village. Hizballah's leaders, he said, "do not care about the Lebanese population, they use them as shields, and, once dead, as propaganda."

This tactic recently earned the condemnation of U.N. humanitarian operations chief Jan Egeland, who last week implored

Hizballah to stop "cowardly blending... among women and children."

Hizballah's disregard for civilians is similarly evident in its continuing attacks on Israel. Hizballah has launched more than 4,000 rockets at Israel, deliberately aiming at homes, businesses and other buildings. One million Israelis have been displaced.

Among the weapons launched at Israel are Syrian-made rockets containing hundreds of metal ball bearings capable of ripping through steel. The ball bearings—also used in suicide bombers' vests—serve no purpose other than maximizing civilian casualties.

Israel's Military Strives to Minimize Civilian Casualties

While it has been fighting for nearly a month to end the rocket strikes on its citizens, Israel's determination to avoid civilian casualties in Lebanon has been reflected at every level of its current operation.

Israel's government has so far used only a fraction of the air power at its disposal. Most of Lebanon has been spared Israeli air strikes, which have been limited to areas of the country that host Hizballah leaders and key elements of the group's infrastructure.

Additionally, Israel typically gives advance notice to residents of areas targeted by its air force, dropping leaflets, making automated phone calls and broadcasting radio warnings that advise the citizens to temporarily leave town. These tactics diminish the element of surprise considered crucial

to success on the battlefield, but Israel has said its commitment to waging war morally takes precedence over other concerns.

The United States Has Consistently Backed Israel's Lebanon Operations

Because of Hizballah's pervasive infiltration of civilian areas in southern Lebanon, Israel's efforts to protect citizens have not completely prevented tragic accidents.

After Hizballah launched more than 150 rockets into Israel from Qana, Israel warned residents of the town to leave in advance of air strikes. Still, at least 28 Lebanese were tragically killed when Israeli planes targeted rocket launchers in the town.

Israel immediately took responsibility for the error and apologized. It also partially suspended air operations over southern Lebanon for 48 hours, giving Lebanese civilians an opportunity to leave the area even though the pause could afford Hizballah a chance to re-arm and regroup.

U.S. officials reaffirmed support for Israel's Lebanon operations after the Qana incident. The Lebanese deaths were "awful," President Bush said. "But it's also awful that a million Israelis are worried about rockets being fired from their neighbor to the north."

In the United States and Israel's view, the elimination of that threat under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559—which calls for Hizballah's disarmament—must come before Israel is forced to end its current operations against the terrorist group. •NER•

MORAL PRECAUTIONS

ISRAELI MOVES TO MINIMIZE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN LEBANON



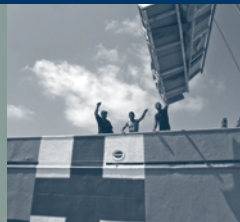
LIMITED POWER

Israel's political leaders have decided to use only a fraction of the air might at their disposal, leaving large parts of Beirut and the rest of Lebanon unscathed.



TARGETED STRIKES

Israel's air force has avoided hitting civilian infrastructure not used by Hizballah.



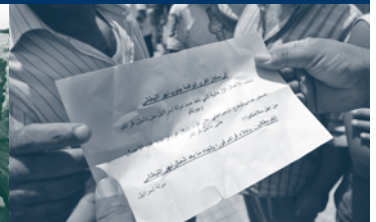
HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

Israel is maintaining open corridors to facilitate delivery of food, medicine and other supplies to southern Lebanon.



GROUND OPERATIONS

Israel has committed troops to close-quarters combat in terrorist strongholds rather than risk killing civilians with air strikes.



ADVANCE WARNINGS

When targeting civilian areas used as cover by Hizballah, Israel has dropped leaflets and made phone calls and radio broadcasts advising residents to leave temporarily.

practical utility.”

In all likelihood, Iran will fail to meet the Aug. 31 deadline for halting its nuclear activities. Instead, Tehran will probably ask for further negotiations—a tactic it has used successfully in the past to buy time for advancing its nuclear weapons program.

This must not be allowed to recur. In recent months, Iran has made great strides in its quest to develop atomic arms. Any further delay in forcing it to stop would enable Tehran to master the technology for producing nuclear weapons.

The only way to persuade Iran that it will pay a heavy price for its continued intransigence would be the immediate imposition by the Security Council of meaningful economic and diplomatic sanctions upon expiration of the Aug. 31 deadline. Given the poor state of Iran's economy and its international isolation, it might then decide that the costs of continuing with its nuclear program are too high.

There is no bigger threat to the world's peace and security than the possession of nuclear weapons by the radical Islamic regime in Tehran. Under U.S. leadership, the Security Council must take the necessary measures to prevent this from happening. •NER•

Editor's Note: The next edition of NER is scheduled for Sept. 4. For daily news updates and in-depth analysis, visit AIPAC's website at www.aipac.org.

Testimony Time

A NEW BOOK GIVES 80 PROMINENT AMERICANS A CHANCE TO SHARE THE REASONS BEHIND THEIR STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE STATE OF ISRAEL

When future historians study the roots of the United States' strong relationship with Israel, few books will be more helpful than *What Israel Means to Me* (John Wiley and Sons, 2006).

Edited by one of Israel's most ardent and prolific advocates, Harvard Law School professor Alan Dershowitz, the volume is a collection of 80 essays by people with strikingly little in common.

It transcends political and cultural barriers, featuring the thoughts of Jews and Gentiles, Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals. It's hard to imagine another book that could draw contributions from both evangelist Pat Robertson and Monty Hall, who became famous as the host of the television game show "Let's Make a Deal."

Aside from displaying the pro-Israel movement's diversity, Dershowitz's book also demonstrates the depth of support the



Jewish state enjoys in America.

Sharing stories that alternate from heartbreaking to hilarious, the 80 authors identify as many reasons for their love of Israel.

Some see its existence as a divine promise kept. Others view the country as a symbol of the Jewish people's survival, or as a fulfillment of universal ideals of democracy and human rights.

The writers convey these ideas in essays notable for their brevity. None of the entries exceed 10 pages, and one could digest three to five of them in less than an hour.

Having previously authored incisive defenses of Israel's right to exist, Dershowitz has now produced an entertaining and lively summation of what motivates the majority of Americans to support their nation's alliance with the Jewish state. •NER•

Isolating Terrorists....cont'd from pg. 53

ters urge EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana to outlaw Hizballah in Europe.

The letters follow a July 19 interview in which Solana said the EU lacked "sufficient data" to assess whether Hizballah would qualify as a terrorist group, despite continuing rocket and missile fire against Israeli civilians. "The addition of Hizballah to the EU terrorist list would send an unequivocal mes-

sage that Europe will no longer tolerate its insidious agenda.... Such action is long overdue," Wexler said.

In 2005, Hizballah leader Hassan Nasrallah acknowledged that such a designation would cause Hizballah funding sources to "dry up."

More than 200 members of the House and more than half the Senate have signed the letters to Solana. •NER•

NEAR EAST REPORT



(ISSN 0028-176X).
Published biweekly
except when Congress is
out of session by Near
East Research, Inc. at
440 First St., NW
Suite 607
Washington, DC 20001

**Subscriptions \$50
per year. For circulation,
subscription and
billing information,
call
202-639-5200.
E-mail: update@aipac.org**

#AAABS

Board of Directors:
Abe Pollin
President
Gerald Charnoff
Vice President
Edward Levy, Jr.
Treasurer
Amy Friedkin
Secretary
Howard Kohr

Dr. Raphael Danziger
Editor-in-Chief
Renee Rothstein
Executive Editor
Evan Nierman
Managing Editor
Benjamin Bryant
Assistant Editor
Steven Beckerman
Senior Research Analyst
Niv Elis
Research Analyst
Betsy Grobovsky
Research Analyst
I.L. Kenen
Founder, 1905-1988

NEAR EAST RESEARCH, INC.

440 First Street, NW, Suite 607
Washington, DC 20001
www.aipac.org