

Operation #Northern Shield: Countdown to Another Israel-Hezbollah War?

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Global Research, December 06, 2018

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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The State of Israel has conducted an operation to destroy tunnels on the Israeli side of the what is internationally known as the Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) tweeted “We have just launched Operation Northern Shield to expose and neutralize cross-border attack tunnels dug by Hezbollah from #Lebanon to #Israel. #NorthernShield.” According to a report by The Times of Israel ‘IDF says 200-meter attack tunnel from Lebanon uncovered as operation launches’:

The Israeli military on Tuesday said it uncovered the “first of sure to be many” cross-border attack tunnels dug by the Lebanese Hezbollah terrorist group, this one from under a house in the Lebanese village of Kafr Kila, across from the Israeli town of Metulla.

This was the first tunnel that the Israel Defense Forces has said it discovered as part of a newly launched operation — Northern Shield — to find and destroy the offensive subterranean passages from Lebanon, which the army said are not yet operational and do not present an immediate threat to Israelis.

“At this time, having exposed the tunnel, IDF soldiers are conducting engineering and operational efforts before neutralizing it,” the army said in a statement.

The report quoted what IDF Spokesperson Ronen Manelis had said in regards to the operation and how far it can go,

“IDF Spokesperson Ronen Manelis indicated that other tunnels may be destroyed within Lebanon as well. “We are prepared for all options, and the operation is only in its first day. The neutralizing of the tunnels will not necessarily take place within our territory,” he said.”

What Manelis is stating that the Israeli operation will continue into Lebanese territory as a precursor to war between Israel and Hezbollah.

“The IDF said the “terror tunnel” originated under a Lebanese home in Kafr Kila and extended some 40 meters (130 feet) into Israeli territory. The army said the tunnel was approximately 200 meters (650 feet) long, some 25 meters (80 feet) deep, and was two meters (six feet) tall by two meters (six feet) wide” according to the report.

Arutz Sheva (also known as the *Israel National News*) interviewed Professor Moshe Maoz of

the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem who claimed that

“The operation will not improve relations because the two sides are on the verge of war,” Maoz said, “Since 2006 there has been a cease-fire and mutual deterrence.”

Professor Maoz also spoke about Hezbollah’s ties with Iran and that Israel has the potential to use its undeclared nuclear weapons against Iran:

“They are connected to Iran. They work in cooperation with Iran, and a single incident can have repercussions for the entire region. Therefore, I think that the sides will be more cautious,” Maoz said. He recalled Hezbollah’s decision to respond to Israeli actions in the past, a decision that they repeat over and over again in order to be considered as defenders of Lebanon.

“They will have to respond. The question of how they will respond, whether with gunfire or not. No one wants to get a response from mutual missile fire because there will be mutual destruction. We will be able to destroy large parts of Lebanon and they will be able to hit the Galilee and further south. I assume that even Nasrallah, who is a religious fanatic, is neither crazy nor stupid, and therefore he is also careful.

“Iran also knows that according to foreign sources, Israel has atomic bombs and we can inflict tremendous damage on them, so they will consider twice whether to attack Israel, unless it is a very extreme case.”

Israeli politicians and military officials including Israel’s Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu can possibly use its nuclear weapons against Iran in what would be called a catastrophic mistake against Iran. It would create a backlash of extreme proportions of the Muslim majority in the region. Neocon extremist and warmonger in the Trump administration, John Bolton has also expressed “*strong*” support for Israel’s operation when he tweeted

“The US strongly supports Israel’s efforts to defend its sovereignty, and we call on Hizballah to stop its tunneling into Israel and to refrain from escalation and violence. More broadly, we call on Iran and all of its agents to stop their regional aggression and provocation, which pose an unacceptable threat to Israeli and regional security.”

In the 2006 Lebanon War, according to a 2007 *Human Rights Watch* (HRW) report, there were at least 1,109 Lebanese civilians deaths whom the majority were civilians with 4,399 injured adding an estimated 1 million people displaced. According to the HRW report, there were 43 Israeli civilian and 12 IDF soldiers dead and hundreds of civilians were wounded. There were also 300,000 Israelis displaced during the course of the war. Hezbollah has been a thorn on the side of Israel since its creation to fend off Israeli expansion into Southern Lebanon. Hezbollah understands that Israel wants a destabilized Middle East so that they can rule over the Muslim people. It is clearly stated in *Oded Yinon’s ‘A Strategy for Israel in the Nineteen Eighties’* where he stated the following:

The plan operates on two essential premises. To survive, Israel must 1) become an imperial regional power, and 2) must effect the division of the

whole area into small states by the dissolution of all existing Arab states. Small here will depend on the ethnic or sectarian composition of each state. Consequently, the Zionist hope is that sectarian-based states become Israel's satellites and, ironically, its source of moral legitimation

Israel wants to be the Imperial power in the Middle East controlling the Muslim people and it's the natural resources including oil, gas and water which would benefit both Israeli and U.S. business interests. With the Trump Administration's full support of Israeli actions against its neighbors, war is inevitable. Israel knows that it cannot move forward on its attack on Iran without neutralizing Hezbollah. Israel also knows that without the help of the U.S. military forces in the region, an attack on Iran is not possible. However, It is important to know that Iran has the backing of Russia, China and most of the Muslim world if Israel were to attack Iran, therefore it would guarantee a defeat for both Israel and the U.S.

It is clear that Israel's time is running out in regards to the declining superpower of the U.S. Empire. With the U.S. suffering from its recent military failures against Iraq and Afghanistan with an added \$21 Trillion to its national debt and a collapsing U.S. dollar, Israeli officials know the time is now to start a new war because the U.S. will not be capable of fighting for the "Jewish State" especially when it's experiencing its rapid decline.

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