

The Premeditated Nature of the War on Lebanon: A Stage of the Broader Middle East Military Roadmap

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It is apparent after careful examination, that there has been longstanding intent to attack Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. Alleged reasons or pretexts are merely a form of justification to implement otherwise unjustifiable intentions and actions. These intentions (*mens rea*) and the subsequent actions (*actus reus*), meaning aggression and war, against Lebanon, Syria, and Iran are criminal acts.

There is enough direct and circumstantial evidence, including the Winograd Commission in Tel Aviv, Israeli activities prior to the 2006 attacks on Lebanon, White House statements, and NATO operations, to demonstrate the premeditated nature of the war against Lebanon as part of a broader war campaign.

Longstanding War Plans against Lebanon, Syria, and Iran out in the open from 2000 and 2001

In January of 2001, according to Daniel Sobelman, a correspondent for *Haaretz*, the U.S. government warned Lebanon that the U.S. would take action against the Lebanese in 2001. The White House made these threats to Lebanon at the start of the presidential term of George W. Bush Jr., approximately eight months before the events of September 11, 2001. According to Daniel Sobelman, quoting *Al-Hayat*, a Saudi-owned newspaper in London, the White House sent a message to Lebanon that the U.S. government regarded Hezbollah next on their list for elimination after Al-Qaeda. This was before Al-Qaeda became a household name. By the start of the presidential term of George W. Bush Jr. the Clinton Administration had established the blue prints for the so-called global war against Al-Qaeda.

Wesley Clark, a former Supreme Commander of NATO in Europe, also said that in 2001 that the U.S. government had already decided to attack Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Iran, amongst several other states. The retired American general's statements complement various other assertions that Iran is the last objective of the first stage of the "long war." This includes a correlation with war plans drawn during the Clinton Administration that indicated Iraq would be invaded, followed by attacks against Iran, sometime later.

While being interviewed in New York City, Wesley Clark stated candidly that he was told on September 20, 2001 that the U.S. would attack Iraq, aside from Afghanistan. He went on to say that only a few days later in the Pentagon he was told that "we're [meaning the U.S.] going to take out seven countries in five years, starting with Iraq, and then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and, finishing off, Iran." [1] It should be noted that, in 2003, Syria was immediately accused of having weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and Damascus was

also threatened with invasion after the fall of Baghdad by the U.S. government. [2]

Richard Perle's 2002 Hints: U.S. Preparing to Attack Lebanon, Syria, and Iran

In 2002, Alexander Meigs Haig Jr., another former Supreme Commander of NATO in Europe with close ties to the White House, alleged that Syria should be the next nation to be attacked after Afghanistan. [3] Haig was also heavily involved in playing Iraq and Iran against one another during the Iraq-Iran War and was aware of the long-term strategy of the U.S. and Britain in the Middle East. Also in late-2002, Richard Perle, the top advisor on the Pentagon's policy board, stated that the U.S. was also prepared to attack Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. Richard Perle made the forecast to Steven Paikan and a panel of Canadian international affairs experts in an appearance on *Diplomatic Immunity*, a program on TV Ontario. [4]

Eric Margolis, one of Canada's most respected writers on international affairs, was also present when Richard Perle talked about future American-led wars against Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. Consequently, Eric Margolis wrote about the hawkish assertions of future wars by Richard Perle in a November 8, 2002 editorial, *Next Target: Iran*. In his syndicated column Eric Margolis notified his readers that Richard Perle asserted that the Pentagon was planning on attacking Lebanon, Syria, and Iran after an invasion of Iraq. In 2002, before Iraq was even invaded Eric Margolis predicted that Iran would be a future target of hostilities after the subjugation of Iraq because of his encounter with Richard Perle.

Iran, Syria, and Lebanon Expected Hostilities in 2003

The Washington Post reported that in 2003, during the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq that the Pentagon had also prepared war planes in regards to attacking Iran. [5] The Iranians were not startled by U.S. war plans, but believed that the U.S. would go after the Syrians and the Lebanese. After the fall of Baghdad, Lebanon was the weakest of the last three Middle Eastern nations outside of the orbit of the Anglo-American alliance. *The Washington Post* and Tehran's predictions were also substantiated by Seymour Hersh in 2006.

Seymour Hersh reported that the U.S. and Israeli militaries jointly collaborated on the bombing of Lebanon before the 2006 war occurred as part of a larger campaign that would ultimately target Tehran. [6] As Seymour Hersh quotes one U.S. government consultant with close ties to Israel in regards to the attacks on Lebanon, "It would be a demo for Iran." [7] While holding talks with Israel, Condoleezza Rice triumphantly declared that the bombardment of Lebanon was the "birth pangs of a new Middle East," which would be shaped by the interests of America, Britain, and Israel.

In 2006, the Syrian military immediately went on standby when the Israeli campaign against Lebanon started based on the well-established assumption by Damascus that Syria could also be attacked. Iranian, Syrian, and Lebanese leaders publicly expected some form of "New Crisis" to take shape in Lebanon and Syria since 2003. [8] The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) also reported in 2003 that the Syrian, the Iranians, and the Lebanese understood that the Levant would be targeted in some form or another by the U.S. government and its allies. [9]

In fact on October 8, 2003, months after the fall of Baghdad to U.S. tanks, Israel launched air raids into Syria. [10] The Syrians restrained themselves and refused to be baited into a war by the Israelis on behalf of the Americans, especially while the Anglo-American

momentum for war was strong. Damascus knew that the White House wanted to extend the war from Iraq into Syria. The Syrian President gave a rare and direct televised public response in regards to the Israeli air raids inside Syria. Syria accused Ariel Sharon and the Israeli government of trying to drag Syria and the entire region into a “new war,” following the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq. [11] It would also be under Ariel Sharon that the blue prints for the 2006 Israeli attacks on Lebanon would be drawn after careful consultations with the White House.

Looking into the Abyss: Syria’s Acquaintance with the Pentagon’s War Agenda

Even on the eve of the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the Syrian President warned the Arab World that the U.S. had initiated a roadmap to redraw the borders of the Middle East starting with Iraq. He stated that the U.S. would deliberately plunge Iraq into chaos so that it would become a “brainless” nation that could not think independently. While in chaos Iraq would be exploited for its energy resources. Since 2003, the Syrians have proven that they are fully aware of the neo-colonial project unfolding before them and opening the doors into the abyss, so to speak, from the Middle East. This is also one of the reasons the Syrians quickly left Lebanon after the Hariri Assassination. It should be noted that the Syrians also left at a time when there was intense Israeli and NATO military movements near Syria that signaled possible strikes in a scenario that could have been portrayed like the liberation of Kuwait from Iraq in 1991.

During the Israeli war against Lebanon in 2006 when Baalbek was being attacked by Israeli jets, 10 kilometres (approximately 6.21 miles) from the Syrian border, there was anticipation in Washington D.C., London, Paris, and Berlin that Syria would enter the war. There was also the hope that Iran would not get involved if Syria were to be dragged into the war by Israel. Dr. Sami Al-Khiyami, the Syrian ambassador to Britain, joined Anna Jones, a Sky News anchorwoman, for an interview in regards to Syria’s military provisions during the war. What Dr. Al-Khiyami said during his interview with Sky News was dismissed by U.S., British, and Israeli officials, but is important.

The Syrian diplomat told Sky News in an overtly predisposed televised interview that “Syria is making preparations to defend itself; the idea is that Israel really wants to involve Syria [in the war].” [12] Dr. Al-Khiyami also added, “The American administration probably really wants Syria to be involved, but Syria is paying a lot of attention not to be drawn in to this type of conflict.” [13] When asked by Anna Jones why he believed the U.S. and Israeli governments were trying to drag Syria into the war, the Syrian diplomat austere responded: “Because they want a ‘new Middle East,’ however not a Middle East of democracy and peace, as some of them say, but a Middle East of violence— and a Middle East that is torn apart.” [14] This was a connotation for new borders and the projection of weaker states in the region.

“The war has been prepared for a long time; Israel has been planning for this for a long time, and the capture of the soldier[s] was only used as a pretext,” Dr. Al-Khiyami told Ms. Jones who swiftly changed the direction of the conversation. [15] His statements revealed the existence of advanced Syrian knowledge of a military roadmap that has been drawn for controlling the Middle East. According to Damascus the capture of the two Israeli soldiers was merely used as a justification for the bombardment of Lebanon in 2006 or an Israeli “trump card” for a pre-planned war.

The Syrian statements have proven to be correct. Israeli reserve units had mobilized weeks

before Israeli troops were captured and a justification was created for the Israeli military to start its attack on Lebanon. It just happened that the mobilized reserve units were necessary to the Israeli war effort and the thwarted Israeli invasion of South Lebanon. The impeccable timing of the mobilization of Israeli reservists was not a case of serendipity. *The Jerusalem Post* reported during the beginning of the campaign on July 12, 2006 that “weeks ago, an entire [Israeli] reserve division was drafted in order to train for an operation such as the [current] one.” [16] It would be months later that the Winograd Commission in Israel would finally reveal that the war was preplanned and involved “foreign powers.” [17]

The Significance of Daniel Halutz’s 2005 Appointment as Ramatkal

The promotion of Major-General Daniel Halutz, an Iranian Jew, to the rank of lieutenant-general or *rav aluf* in the Hebrew language was a historic milestone in Israel. Israel only has one lieutenant-general and that person is the commandant of the entire Israeli military. It is not coincidental that an air general was chosen as the commandant of the Israeli military on June 1, 2005. This date was about a year after July of 2004 when Daniel Halutz, as a major-general, was promoted to deputy commander of the Israeli military. The 2004 promotion was made to guarantee his future ascension to the top military post in Israel.

The appointment caused controversy in Israel because of its break from tradition. The selection of Daniel Halutz was unprecedented in Israel because the top position in the Israeli military traditionally was a post reserved for land or army generals. In hindsight it is apparent why an Israeli air pilot was chosen for the post; Israel was preparing itself for the 2006 war against Lebanon and emphasizing on air power in future campaigns that would be not only aimed against Lebanon, but also Syria and Iran.

Ariel Sharon and Israeli Preparations to Invade Lebanon

Israel leaders are getting their instructions from Washington D.C. and London, but also have warrants to use their own judgments and act in autonomy. The selection of Daniel Halutz was made by Ariel Sharon through Shaul Mofaz, the Israeli defence minister at the time, for the top military post in Israel. This decision would coincide with the fact that it was under Ariel Sharon’s leadership that the plans to attack Lebanon were drafted as part of the broader American-led military strategy in the Middle East.

In March of 2005, one month before Halutz became the commandant of the entire Israeli military, *The London Times* reported that Israel had received deliveries of bunker buster bombs from the U.S. and that Ariel Sharon had given the “initial authorization” for air strikes against Iran. [18] It was also months earlier from the date of Ariel Sharon’s “initial authorization” in February of 2005 that the White House had arranged for the delivery of American bunker buster bombs to Israel as part of a joint Middle Eastern strategy.

The series of talks between Ariel Sharon and the White House would turn out to be the 2006 Israeli attacks against Lebanon, the prelude to an attack on Iran. However, something unexpected would happen on January 4, 2006. Ariel Sharon would fall into a permanent coma and Ehud Olmert, the deputy prime minister at the time, would become the new leader of Israel. It would be Ehud Olmert who would travel to Washington D.C. in May of 2006 to confirm the Israeli plans in continuation of what Ariel Sharon was preparing. This Israeli-U.S. meeting would take place just before the war against Lebanon would breakout. The bunker busters that started arriving from America during Ariel Sharon’s leadership would be used in Lebanon against the bunkers of the Lebanese Resistance and civilian

targets. The radioactive fingerprints of the depleted uranium (D.U.) in these explosives have also left their traces in Lebanon and have been collected by international teams of scientists and environmentalists.

The Year of Withdrawal, 2005: Israeli Withdrawal from Gaza; Syrian Withdrawal from Lebanon

Daniel Halutz's selection under Ariel Sharon was also days before Israeli soldiers under Ariel Sharon's command evacuated most the Gaza Strip and Israeli settlers were forced to leave. In hindsight, the evacuation appears to be linked to the Israeli operations in Lebanon and the Israeli role in the broader war campaign in the Middle East. The so-called Israeli disengagement from Gaza looked like a step forward and also eliminated a potential front during Israeli operations against Lebanon and potentially Syria. Why else would Ariel Sharon need to consult with the White House, as he did in April of 2005, about the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza?

A war may have been initiated sooner with both Lebanon and Syria. Military movements were taking place that alarmed the Syrians in late-2004 and early-2005. Damascus rightly believed that because of the Cedar Revolution there would be an attack on Syria. This is why just after Ariel Sharon's meeting in Crawford, Texas with George W. Bush Jr. the Syrians rapidly left the portions of Lebanon they were stationing. The last Syrian troops left Lebanon on April 26, 2005. At the risk of some repetition, this was during a time in which Israel and NATO were mobilizing around Syria's borders in what could have been an attack on the pretext of liberating Lebanon.

Hamas could have fought with Israeli forces during the attacks on Lebanon according to the same Israeli mentality that links Hamas and Hezbollah within the same regional alliance against Israel, but this is a minor factor. The so-called disengagement from Gaza allowed the Israeli military to concentrate its resources on its Northern Front for a potential 2005 offensive against the Lebanese Resistance and Syria. This planned offensive would materialize into the 2006 offensive against Lebanon, because of the faster than anticipated Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005.

Moreover, if one remembers the Israelis also wanted to invade Lebanon up to the southern banks of the Litani River. This would require additional manpower, especially if the Israelis intended to reoccupy more Lebanese territory again. The planned Israeli push to the southern banks of the Litani River would also have been the logical step toward invading Syria and quickly occupying the Syrian capital, Damascus. This would also have been the best route because the Syrian border with Israel is heavily entrenched by troops and armed, while the Syrian-Lebanese border is not heavily armed. An Israeli drive towards Damascus through the Golan Heights would have been an impractical military operation, but an offensive Israeli drive through Lebanon would have bypassed the heavy Syrian fortifications on the Israeli border.

An invasion of Syria through Lebanon would have been the Israeli equivalent to the Schlieffen Plan in the First World War, whereas Germany invaded Belgium to bypass the heavily fortified French positions in Alsace-Lorraine. This is another reason why Lebanon is still in danger of another Israeli attack. The failure of the Israeli military on the ground in Lebanon is another reason, aside from the Syrian alliance with Iran, why the Syrians were not attacked in 2006. Additionally, the added manpower from the Gaza disengagement

would have also been essential if Israel were to go to war with Syria too.

The Israeli disengagement also simultaneously opened the door for proposals of a NATO/E.U. presence in Gaza and also helped drive a political wedge between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank by empowering Hamas. Through Ariel Sharon the Israeli government started the process of creating feudalistic Palestinian warlords and empowering them. The concept was that the establishment of a contemporary feudal system in Palestine would lead to the carving of the Palestinian Territories into small, yet bickering, rival territories that would be ultimately controlled by Israel. These warlords would also side with the Israelis against one another. It should be acknowledged that this policy has been in a state of continuum since before Ariel Sharon's time, but some of its fruits are visible in the form of the Hamas-Fatah split and the degeneration of democratic norms in the West Bank under Mahmoud Abbas.

In Retrospect, NATO and the E.U. have been long-term partners in the Anglo-American Wars

NATO's role has not been completely scrutinized by the general public in the series of post-Cold War conflicts that have been unfolding in the Balkans, the Middle East, East Africa, and Central Asia. NATO is garrisoning Afghanistan and all 26 NATO members as a unitary body are involved in the security-military-intelligence training aspects of Iraq. [19]

After Baghdad fell to U.S. tanks there were discussions at official levels of NATO deployment in Iraq. Unlike the invasion of Afghanistan, the use of NATO was not permitted by French, German, and Belgian opposition in Brussels. This was due to differences of interest between the Anglo-American alliance and the Franco-German entente. It would be after the fall of Baghdad that a rapprochement by both sides would take place.

Looking back in retrospect at international events and developments; the 2006 bombardment of Lebanon was not an exclusively Anglo-American sponsored campaign but a full-fledged NATO campaign with the covert approval of the French and German governments. Israel is an important partner in this campaign and also a de facto NATO member.

Both the Franco-German entente and the Anglo-American alliance cooperated overtly and covertly in the preparations prior, during, and after the Israeli attacks on Lebanon and its civilian infrastructure. Much of this has become a matter of public record, especially in Israel.

The "Bad Cop" (Anglo-American) and "Good Cop" (Franco-German) Tactical Approach

In framing policy on Syria and Iran, the French and Americans have consciously played a good cop-bad cop routine. The Americans demand tough U.N. language; the French bring the Russians and Chinese on board for a slightly watered-down version. It's a classic diplomatic minuet, but it has probably produced tougher and better resolutions than would have emerged if either side went alone.

-David Ignatius, *The Washington Post* (February 1, 2006)

During the Israeli bombardment of Lebanon, France and Germany stated that they believed "NATO would be too closely identified with the United States and would not be trusted by

the Lebanese to be impartial.” This led to an informal deployment of troops and ships from NATO nations under the banner of U.N. peacekeeping. The French and German government also claimed to oppose the bombings, unlike the British and U.S. governments. These Franco-German statements were merely part of a series of psychological diversions that attempt to conceal the unified NATO approach in Lebanon.

A tactic of employing two opposite approaches is being used in which the Anglo-American alliance has partially made the most of its image as an outright aggressor with an overtly violent and negative bearing. The Franco-German entente and in general the European members of NATO, coinciding with the E.U., on the other hand are portrayed as the progressive, supportive, liberal, and sympathetic of the pair in regards to foreign policy. This is a manufactured foil that is designed to conceal the collaboration of America and Western Europe and the function of NATO within American geo-strategy. [20]

The European members of NATO are being deliberately presented as an alternative to the Anglo-American alliance and as impartial peacekeepers, but this is incorrect. Their governments’ at times will even pretend to oppose Anglo-American endeavours and campaigns, while actively supporting military operations. This is a mere psychological tactic meant to mislead the international general public. Any genuine disagreements are on the approaches of achieving objectives and on the division of spoils. This relationship is similar to the collaborationist dichotomy of the Democrats and Republicans within American politics.

Lebanon: The Litmus Test that Concedes NATO is a Partner in the “Long War”

If one looks at the behaviour of NATO, despite what their leaders may say, their collective activities have been supportive of the Anglo-American wars. Even the case of Iraq is questionable. The unified stance of the Franco-German entente and the Anglo-American alliance in Lebanon starting with the Valentine’s Day assassination of the late Rafik Hariri concede that there is a level of deep coordination and collaboration between the two sides. It is no mere coincidence that France and the U.S. sponsored Resolution 1559, which demands Syrian troops leave Lebanon and that the Lebanese Resistance disarm. This resolution was passed on September 2, 2004, almost half a year before the Hariri Assassination.

After the Hariri Assassination, the U.S. and France both revealed a synchronized diplomatic initiative in regards to Lebanon and Syria. Moreover, it should be noted that the responsibility for U.S. military planning in regards to Lebanon and Syria was transferred from United States European Command (EUCOM/USEUCOM) to United States Central Command (CENTCOM/USCENTCOM) in March of 2004, just before the Cedar Revolution and the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon. It is apparent that the strategy for Lebanon and Syria was now being coordinated with the strategy in Iraq by American planners.

It is through an examination of E.U. objectives in the Middle East and pre-2005 U.S. war plans in Lebanon that one can deduce that the synchronization between the U.S. and France was calculated before the assassination of Rafik Hariri on February 14, 2005. The involvement of NATO in Afghanistan, the Indian Ocean, and Lebanon, albeit informally, also confesses the nature of this relationship. All these facets will be examined to divulge NATO’s function in the Pentagon’s war agenda.

Pre-existing Plans for NATO Deployment and E.U. Expansion in the Levant

Britain and America were pictured to split the Eurasian landmass as far back as 1997 by Zbigniew Brzezinski, but in compact with France and Germany. American strategist had singled out the E.U. as an American apparatus in the division of Eurasia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Steven Everts of the Center for European Reform wrote in July of 2001 that the U.S. and Europe, meaning the E.U., must muster a military force to enter the Middle East, "a region of vital interest to both." [21]

In the E.U., officials such as Dominique René de Villepin of France argued that the E.U. should send troops under peacekeeping mandates to the Middle East. It was argued that Israel would never accept a force from the E.U. and that NATO or an international force dominated by NATO would be ideal. While the Franco-German entente wanted a mandate for the E.U. because they would have the upper hand, Anglo-American supporters argued for NATO due to American domination. Regardless, a NATO contingent in the Eastern Mediterranean was portrayed as something that would be a triumph for the European Union. In early-2001 NATO was still viewed as an occupation force in Eastern Europe that would move into the post-war vacuums left by American-led wars. [22]

The NATO Function in the 2006 Israeli Summer War on Lebanon

According to the famous investigative journalist Seymour Hersh; the U.S. and Israel essentially jointly mapped out the attacks on Lebanon before July 12, 2006. [23] *The New Yorker* reported in August of 2006 that the U.S. had major strategic interests in the Israeli attacks on Lebanon. NATO also had a major interest in the Israeli campaign and the post-war environment it would create in the Levant. The Israeli campaign plans were portrayed as an Israeli initiative when in reality they were written and approved by NATO powers.

The governments of Britain, the U.S., France, and Germany, all major NATO powers, had scripted functions to play during and after the war. During the war the embassies of France, Germany, and other E.U. and NATO member states in Beirut were accused of relaying intelligence information to Israel. These allegations were made not only by Hezbollah, but by various groups within Lebanon that cut across the political spectrum. These allegations were later supported when European agencies were caught secretly coordinating with the Israelis in Lebanon [24].

It was premeditated that France and Germany would direct a NATO force that would almost immediately deploy in post-war Lebanon. France would oversee land operations in Lebanon and Germany would control the naval armada, after a brief Italian command, gathered off the Lebanese coast. Just to understand the level of NATO complicity it should be understood that NATO warships were in Israeli waters just before the war was initiated. [25]

France and the U.S. both insisted Israel attack Syria in 2006

The U.S. and British governments also obstructed all international efforts to immediately end the fighting between Israel and Lebanon. The French and German governments played contradictory public roles against the Anglo-American alliance. This was merely a public show on the diplomatic stage for the global public. France, working with the U.S. government, even secretly insisted that Israel attack Syria. [26] Both the Anglo-American alliance and Franco-German entente, the two main pillars of NATO, were united in regards to the Israeli attacks on Lebanon. According to Israeli sources; U.S. officials were even furious with the Israeli side for hesitating to attack and extend the war to Syria, which in conformity to important reports was the main military and strategic objective of the Israeli campaign.

[27]

Meyrav Wurmser, a policy maker and an associate of the office of U.S. Vice-President Cheney, even recounted in a *Yedioth Aharonot* interview with Yitzhak Benhorin, that “the anger [in U.S. ruling circles] is over the fact that Israel did not fight against the Syrians.” [28] Meyrav Wurmser went on to reveal to the Israeli journalist, Yitzhak Benhorin, that “Instead of Israel fighting against Hezbollah, many parts of the American administration believe that Israel should have fought against the real enemy [objective], which is Syria and not Hezbollah [in Lebanon].” [29]

“Operation Active Endeavour”: NATO Blue Print for Militarizing the Eastern Mediterranean

It is stated by NATO that it had readjusted itself for the so-called “post-9/11” reality in international relations and the global environment since late-2001. What exactly is this change? Can terrorists be fought by the standing armies of countries? Or is there more to this picture than meets the eye at first glance?

In October of 2001 NATO produced a blue print for security operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. This was less than one month after the dreadful events of September 11, 2001. “Operation Active Endeavour,” initiated on October 9, 2001 became an integral part of the “Global War on Terror” and its timetable in the Middle East.

There was intent to send NATO warships to Lebanese and Syrian waters. NATO established a task force to operate in the Eastern Mediterranean. Operation Active Endeavour is what has prepared both the mechanisms and the naval capabilities of NATO to undertake monitoring and security operations in Lebanon and the Eastern Mediterranean. Israel is also integrated in NATO’s naval operations in the Eastern Mediterranean through Operation Active Endeavour.

Operation Active Endeavour was initiated four years before the Israeli bombardment of Lebanon. This is clearly not mere coincidence when added to the other preparatory events that took place before the Israeli attacks. One can not be blamed for arguing that very little is left to coincidence in contemporary military planning or international relations. This is where one should refer to Napoléon Bonaparte’s famous quote; “International incidents must not be allowed to shape foreign policy [for countries], foreign policy must shape the incidents.” This is a quote that is worth repeating.

In 2001, similarly the Eastern Mediterranean, the Horn of Africa, and the Persian Gulf were all designated as areas where the “Global War on Terror” would be waged and conducted. All three areas became the location of three wars in Lebanon, Somalia, and Iraq. It is evident that U.S. naval operations in the Persian Gulf were linked to U.S. war preparations against Iraq. In retrospect a similar analysis can be made about official and unofficial NATO naval operations in the Eastern Mediterranean and both official and unofficial NATO operations in the Horn of Africa. [30] Before the 2007 stage of fighting in Somalia and the Horn of Africa that was initiated with a land invasion from Ethiopia, NATO had security programs already in place.

The Precursor to the 2006 UNIFIL Deployment: NATO's Standing Naval Force Mediterranean

In October of 2001, Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED), NATO's naval contingent and a maritime division of NATO's immediate reaction forces, was created to deploy to the Eastern Mediterranean if considered necessary. Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED) was also created in 2001 to insure a permanent NATO presence in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Red Sea and the coast of the Horn of Africa are also monitored by a NATO armada that surrounds all the bodies of water around the Middle East. Germany and France have been major players in these operations.

The following and revealing statements about the NATO presence in the Eastern Mediterranean are according to an American public policy organization based in Alexandria, Virginia (near the Pentagon); [Standing Naval Force Mediterranean's] primary mission is to be able to deploy rapidly to an area of tension or crisis [such as Lebanon in 2006]. It [Standing Naval Force Mediterranean] also forms the nucleus around which to build a more versatile and powerful naval force, whenever required." [31]

"The nucleus around which to build a more versatile and powerful naval force, whenever required" had come to recognition in 2006 with the Israeli attacks on Lebanon, under the pretext of peacekeeping. The same source goes on to explain "Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (SNFM) began Operation Active Endeavour in early October 2001, and in that time the eight [NATO] ships established contact with more than 1,000 merchant vessels and conducted 32 replenishments at sea to allow continuous maritime operations in the [Eastern Mediterranean] area." [32] This NATO force is clearly the precursor to the German-controlled naval contingent of UNIFIL.

Lebanon Peacekeeping was originally suppose to be a formal NATO Mission

While the Israeli military was still bombarding Lebanon, talks of the post-war security configuration of Lebanon were well underway. NATO was originally slated to send military contingents into Lebanon, but it was apparent that the Lebanese would be hostile to NATO troops. [33]

General James L. Jones, the Supreme Commander of NATO in Europe, immediately proclaimed during the Israeli campaign "that if the [NATO] alliance was asked to play a peacekeeping role in Lebanon, it would be up to the job, despite its commitment to relieve U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan." [34] General Jones also acknowledged that what NATO does "would depend on consensus," and that NATO has immense capabilities, but that the course of action "depends on what the mission might be." [35]

What General Jones was alluding to when he mentioned consensus within NATO was accord between the Franco-German entente and the Anglo-American alliance. His statement also lightly insinuates the use of NATO in a broader war in the Middle East, should France and Germany allow it. These statements cannot be ruled out to exclude the possibility of expanded war and a new shape to NATO's mission in the Eastern Mediterranean. The "mission" being described by General Jones was a variable. Should a war start with Syria and ultimately Iran, NATO could fully intervene against both. NATO ships were also docked in Israel under the pretext of military exercises, just before the Israeli attacks. [36] These NATO warships were undoubtedly there in relation to the war and the possibility of expanded war.

If one also looks back at official statements from Israel, such as those of Ehud Olmert, and from the officials of countries that are NATO members, they will notice that originally NATO was publicly proposed to takeover peacekeeping operations in Lebanon, as if it was predetermined, but these calls were quickly muted. It could be that the calls for NATO troops were silenced so as not to disclose the nature of NATO involvement in the march to war that was launched after September 11, 2001. [37]

The E.U., in affiliation with the U.N., was called on later to perform the task of so-called “peacekeeping operations” over Lebanon. This seems to be because of the less controversial and threatening image of the E.U. in comparison to NATO, but the differences were only nominal.

The use of the United Nations as a cover for NATO

NATO is working under the cover of the United Nations. This should come as no surprise. NATO forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the former Yugoslavia were deployed under a U.N. mandate. Bosnia-Herzegovina set the precedent for NATO peacekeeping. Even NATO troops under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan have U.N. approval. ISAF has a mandate under Resolution 1386, which was authorized through the U.N. Security Council in December of 2001.

NATO also has peacekeepers in the Serbian province of Kosovo, which is predominately Albanian. These peacekeeping mandates are very questionable. In the case of Kosovo and Afghanistan, NATO and NATO members were one of the combating sides. How can a combatant be expected to be both a neutral and an objective peacekeeper in a post-war environment against an enemy?

The NATO Trojan Horse: UNIFIL

Foreign troops and sailors eventually deployed to Lebanese soil and waters as demanded by Israel and pushed for by the U.S., Britain, France, and Germany. Instead of flying the banners of NATO, the renewed and expanded U.N. mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was used for the predominately NATO set of troops entering Lebanon.

All the E.U. members who sent troops to Lebanon or naval deployments are members of NATO and most the military contributions sent under the U.N. flag are comprised of NATO members or close NATO allies. Conclusively, NATO did end up deploying in the Levant, but informally unlike in Afghanistan, where NATO was deployed under a formal mandate. After the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel, the region has become discreetly characterized as a European sphere of military operations.

The UNIFIL that came into existence after the 2006 Israeli war against Lebanon is not the same force as the UNIFIL of 1978. UNIFIL is no longer an observational force, but is developing into a military force that is becoming ready for combat. The composition of UNIFIL was totally changed and distinctly acquired a NATO characteristic in 2006. “Since last year [2006], UNIFIL has been transformed from an observational force of just 2,000 soldiers to the current [July, 2007] 13,600 battle-ready force, including a 2,000-strong naval component,” according to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). [38] It is clear that NATO has entered Lebanon under the cover of U.N. peacekeeping. What the “Trojan Horse” does is yet to be seen, but it is apparent that that it will involve Syria.

Russian and Chinese Forces in Lebanon: Counterweight to NATO?

Even when UNIFIL was being deployed to Lebanon there was outrage and reservations by many in Lebanon who said the force would work against Lebanese interests. Hezbollah and its political allies reluctantly accepted the force's presence so as to keep Lebanon from being deliberately divided like Yugoslavia.

Russian troops and units were also deployed to Lebanon too for peacekeeping and reconstruction efforts in 2006. Russian soldiers were deliberately placed outside of the mandate or flag of the U.N. through a bilateral agreement between Russia and Lebanon; there was good reason for this and it indicates something about the neutrality of UNIFIL in Russian eyes. NATO is at the helms of the U.N. contingent in Lebanon and the Russians are aware of this. However, unlike Russia, the Chinese deployed under the U.N. flag. This is a means for Russia and China to keep an eye on the force.

Russia and China both took on rebuilding missions that involved the reconstruction of bridges and infrastructure. This has a lot to do with Russian and Chinese opposition to the NATO agenda in the Middle East. The rebuilding of bridges has allowed the Lebanese Resistance to refortify and facilitated easier travel. The Russian and Chinese military presence in Lebanon could never become an effective counterweight to NATO forces. It is clear the Lebanese Resistance is the most effective counterweight to Israel and NATO land forces in Lebanon. The rebuilding missions of Russia and China can be read as an act to facilitate the quick recovery of the Lebanese Resistance.

Turning Lebanon into a NATO Garrison

Aside from the failed or delayed objective of attacking Syria, the other objective of Israel was to ensure the militarization of Lebanon by NATO and to allow an expansion of the Franco-German sphere of influence. This objective appears to have been successful and only the first phase of militarizing Lebanon. The fighting in Lebanon, near Tripoli, that has broken out in May of 2007 between the freshly inaugurated Fatah Al-Islam and the Lebanese Army seems to be a continuation of the objective of turning Lebanon into a large NATO garrison.

It was only in February of 2007 that Seymour Hersh wrote that the U.S. and its Saudi and Jordanian allies, with the help of the Hariri-led Lebanese government, were importing radical terror groups into Lebanon to create sectarian fighting within Lebanon. [39] This was denied by the Hariri family and the office of Fouad Siniora. It was only days before this fighting that the U.S. Under-Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, David Welch, met with the Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces. Under-Secretary Welch made it clear that the U.S. wanted the Lebanese Army to suppress the Lebanese National Opposition.

Because of the fighting near Tripoli the U.S., other NATO members, and several Arab governments intensified their suspicious transportation of large amounts of weapons and military aid to Lebanon. There were assertions amongst the Lebanese National Opposition that Western-backed militias were being covertly armed through the pretext of military aid to Lebanon. There also seems to be a faulty wish to convert the Lebanese Army into an enforcer of foreign interests in Lebanon on the part of the White House.

It should be noted that there have also been reports about the establishment of an American or NATO base near Tripoli that go back to the period of time just before the Hariri Assassination. It was reported in 2005 that the Pentagon had awarded the construction

contract of a future planned military base in Lebanon to Jacobs Engineering Group and Bechtel Corporation, even though the Lebanese government, which included Hezbollah, had not consented officially at the time. This military base can become the home of a rapid deployment force. Any U.S. or NATO facility near Tripoli would also be close to Russian positions in Syria, energy routes going through Syria, and the Syrian gas fields in Homs. The destabilization of Lebanon has also given further justification for the continuation of a foreign troop presence in Lebanon.

Using Israel to do the “Dirty Work” of Launching a Major War in the Middle East?

“The red line is not in Iran. The red line is in Israel. If Israel is adamant it will attack, the U.S. will have to take decisive action,” and “The choices are: tell Israel no, let Israel do the job, or do the job yourself,” Patrick Cronin was quoted as saying by *The Guardian* (U.K.) on July 16, 2007. [40] *The Jerusalem Post* has even reported that Israeli Military Intelligence is also identifying and pinpointing Iranian targets for an attack. [41] Israel appears to be designated by the Pentagon and NATO to initiate hostilities against Iran and Syria.

The Israeli population has been persuaded to believe that they face liquidation from Iran and naturally support air strikes against the Iranians. Israel is being used to do the dirty work of possibly launching an illegal war against Iran for the Pentagon and NATO. Military action against Iran would be too unpopular within the U.S. to the point where the U.S. government may be paralyzed or lose authority to a restless domestic population. This may explain the legislation that has been passed by the Bush Jr. Administration that theoretically allows the establishment of an American dictatorship under such conditions. Rather than risk direct confrontation the U.S., Britain, and NATO are prodding the Israelis forward against Iran and Syria. Any attack on Iran and Syria by Israel will prove disastrous for Israel and the Middle East.

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[20] Character foils are employed in regards to two or more individuals or entities, in direct or indirect comparison or contrast to highlight their characteristics or character traits. Foils

facilitate the identification of the characteristics of individuals or entities and are used often in literature to help delineate the protagonist and other characters.

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ANNEX: A Timeline of the Battle for Lebanon

January, 2001: According to *Al-Hayat* and *Haaretz* the White House warns the Lebanese that they would eventually target Lebanon.

September, 2001: According to Wesley Clark, a former NATO commander, Lebanon was on the Pentagon's list of nations to be attacked or conquered nine days after the attacks on the World Trade Towers.

October, 2001: Operation Active Endeavour launched by NATO to militarize the Eastern Mediterranean. NATO creates a naval contingent and a maritime division of for its immediate reaction forces to deploy to the Eastern Mediterranean if considered necessary in the future.

January, 2002: Alexander Haig suggests that Syria (and by extension Lebanon because of Syrian control) be attacked after Afghanistan.

September, 2002: Richard Perle, a top Pentagon advisor, reveals on TV Ontario that the U.S. government is planning on attacking Lebanon, Syria, and Iran after Iraq.

April, 2003: One month after invading Iraq the U.S. government was considering extending the war into Syria. The White House also unsuccessfully tries to use the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) case against Syria.

March, 2003: Days before the invasion of Iraq, Syria warns the Fifteenth Non-Emergence Arab League Summit that a war against Iraq is part of a strategy to redraw the Middle East.

May, 2003: Iran discloses the fact that it is acquaint with the fact that the U.S. wants to attack Lebanon, Syria, and Iran.

October, 2003: Israel tries to provoke Syria into war. The Syrian President accuses Ariel

Sharon of trying to drag Syria into a regional war as an extension of the Anglo-American war march in the Middle East.

March, 2004: Syria and Lebanon are transferred from the jurisdiction of EUCOM to the jurisdiction of CENTCOM. This is done so to allow operations in the Levant to be tied to operations in Iraq.

July, 2004: Daniel Halutz is promoted to deputy commander of the Israel military, thus preparing him for the post of commander.

September, 2004: The U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 1559 that was drafted by France and the U.S. that demands Syrian troops leave Lebanon and that the Lebanese Resistance disarm.

January, 2005: Israel and Turkey hold a joint naval exercise off the Syrian coast.

February, 2005: Rafik Hariri is assassinated via car bomb in Beirut on Valentine's Day.

February, 2005: Ariel Sharon gives "initial authorization" to the Israeli military for future aerial attacks in the campaign against Iran. This would be attacks aimed at Lebanon.

March, 2005: Israel and NATO hold naval exercise and send an indirect message to Syria.

April, 2005: Prime Minister Ariel Sharon visits President George W. Bush Jr. in regards to pulling out from Gaza.

April, 2005: Syrian troops withdraw fully from Lebanon. Syria fears that it will be portrayed as an occupying force similarly to how Iraq was in Kuwait and attacked by the U.S., Israel, and NATO.

June, 2005: Ariel Sharon appoints Daniel Halutz, a pilot, as the head of the Israeli military.

August, 2005: Israeli military disengages from most of Gaza under the orders of Ariel Sharon. This allows Israel to prepare its Northern Front for an invasion of Lebanon and a possible war with Syria.

May, 2006: Ehud Olmert meets President George W. Bush Jr. as the Israeli prime minister for the first time one and a half months before Israel attacks Lebanon on July 12, 2006.

May, 2006: NATO warships arrive in Israeli waters and concentrate in the Eastern Mediterranean.

June, 2006: Israel and NATO naval forces hold joint exercise.

July, 2006: Weeks and days before the Israeli attacks on Lebanon, Israeli reservists are mobilized in large numbers that are consistent with the manpower needed to attack and invade Lebanon in a war.

July, 2006: Israel launches mass attacks on Lebanon and initiates war under the pretext of a border incident with the Lebanese Resistance.

July, 2006: Condoleezza Rice, the U.S. Secretary of State, declares that the Israeli attacks on Lebanon are "the birth pangs of 'new Middle East,'" meaning a geo-strategic shift in the

regional balance of power.

July, 2007: NATO deployment suggested for Lebanon under peacekeeping mandated.

April, 2006: Seymour Hersh reports that the Pentagon and Israel planned the attacks on Lebanon as part of a broader campaign involving Iran.

April, 2006: Israel joins NATO's Operation Active Endeavour.

January, 2007: Avigdor Lieberman, Israel's deputy prime minister at the time, meets with Condoleezza Rice and says that NATO will also deploy to the Gaza Strip in the future.

February, 2007: Seymour Hersh reports that the governments of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the U.S., and the Hariri family-dominated Lebanese governments are importing religious and sectarian extremists into Lebanon to wage war against Hezbollah and the Lebanese National Opposition.

February, 2007: Foud Siniora, the Lebanese Prime Minister, calls the report by Seymour Hersh a falsified report.

March, 2007: The Israeli government admits that the war against Lebanon was preplanned to the Winograd Commission

May, 2007: Just a week before fighting breaks out between radicals and the Lebanese Army the U.S. Under-Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, David Welch, requests an unprecedented meeting with General Michel Sulaiman, the Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces. David Welch tells General Sulaiman that the U.S. expects the Lebanese Army not to be neutral in the Lebanese political crisis. David Welch could also have been trying to make a deal with General Sulaiman to have him posted as the president of Lebanon.

May, 2007: Just a week after David Welch's meeting with General Sulaiman the Lebanese Army launches attacks against Fatah Al-Islam, a group that it housed in Palestinian refugee camps near Tripoli to the anger of the Palestinians. A mini-war is ignited in the Nahr Al-Bared Palestinian refugee camp. The fighting has raised General Sulaiman's popularity. Seymour Hersh's report is also vindicated as correct.

May, 2007: The U.S. government and both its NATO and Arab allies start sending arms shipments to Lebanon. The Lebanese National Opposition questions where these weapons are being delivered.

August, 2007: General Sulaiman and the Lebanese Army announce that Fatah Al-Islam is not supported by Syria. Fouad Siniora and his political allies are further discredited.

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