

# **ISRAEL UPDATE FROM DAVID DOLAN**

**THURSDAY, JULY 20**

Shalom from Jerusalem,

Armed clashes continue along the Israel-Lebanon border today, with reports that several more Israeli soldiers have been wounded in the exchanges after two were killed yesterday. That comes after the Iranian-proxy militia force audaciously tried to infiltrate the upper Galilee Israeli town of Metulla late yesterday, lobbing rockets into the town, followed by an attempt to cut the border security fence. The apparent goal was to take Israeli residents of Metulla hostage into Lebanon. Along with the heavy border fighting yesterday and today, the attack shows that the extremist Shiite militia is still very active right along the border even after a week of intensive Israeli air force bombings and tank and artillery fire. This comes after Israel dropped some 23 tons of bombs overnight onto a building in southeast Beirut believed to be covering a bunker containing Hizbullah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah. Although the group claimed no Hizbullah leaders were killed in the strike, we have so far had no word from Nasrallah some 18 hours later, which some believe is a sign he was indeed killed or wounded in the massive strike.

Israeli officials are beginning to concede that the Lebanese Shiite militia force—funded and trained by Iran and commanded by an estimated 200 Iranian Revolutionary Guards stationed with them—is proving harder to neutralize than many had anticipated. Thus, a substantial Israeli ground operation is becoming more likely every day. This was basically confirmed today in remarks made by Defense Minister Amir Peretz and Armed Forces Chief Dan Halutz. While visiting portions of northern Israel hit hard by some 1,600 Iranian and Syrian produced rockets over the past week, Peretz told reporters that, "Hizbullah must not think that we would recoil from using all kinds of military measures against it." He added that while Israel does not intend to reoccupy portions of Lebanon, it would "not retreat from any military measures that might be needed to finish the job." This came after the army announced last night that all Lebanese civilians should immediately leave their homes in the southern border region with Israel, up to the Litani River. This is estimated to be tens of thousands of people, including residents of the biblical town of Tyre.

Even more telling, Chief of Staff Halutz issued his first official missive to his troops during the current conflict today, declaring that the fighting may last for "an extended period of time." Here is a portion of his written comments: "The State of Israel is in the midst of fighting an extremist Islamic terrorist organization that denies our right to exist, and is operating under the auspices of Iran and Syria, which aim to threaten Israel's sovereignty. The fighting was aggravated after provocations by Hizbullah and Hamas, which carried out terrorist attacks in Israeli territory, in which a number of IDF fighters were killed and Corporal Gilad Shalit and reservists Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev were abducted. We are responsible for defending our country's independence and sovereignty, and for the security of its citizens."

"The fighting in the north was tagged on to the fighting in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, and may continue for an extended period of time. This is a test for us. Our moral and ideological strength will reflect on the country's citizens and will aid their ability to face the threat on the home front. The society's strength and the trust has in the IDF strengthens us and will continue to do so. We will do whatever it takes to maintain the state's security. The terrorist groups misread the map and misinterpreted the resolve of Israeli society and the IDF. The army is operating on the Lebanese front to destroy terrorist infrastructure and terrorist-supporting infrastructure. We hit and will hit Hizbullah strongholds in Lebanon, as well as the organization's rockets, while also hitting Palestinian terror."

### **ARE WE MISSING ANYTHING?**

I just completed an interview for a radio network program based in Ohio, and was asked if there is anything that western television news viewers are not being shown in the current conflict. I mentioned two things. Having viewed dozens of reports over the past 48 hours via CNN International, the BBC World Service, the British Sky network and its sister American Fox News Channel (all carried on Israel's two main cable-satellite systems), I noticed that while all are naturally focusing on foreigners and Lebanese citizens fleeing the fighting in Lebanon, not one that I saw mentioned that around a quarter of a million Israelis have also fled their homes in the north in recent days to escape Hizbullah's rockets that have already killed over a dozen civilians and wounded hundreds. This large exodus helps explain why the Israeli death toll has not been higher.

The flight for safety was personally illustrated to me last night when a close Israeli friend, who heads a youth ministry here in Jerusalem, told me that he and his wife and two children are hosting his wife's aunt and her family who had fled their home north of the coastal town of Nahariya, which has been hit hard by rocket fire in recent days. He noted that other relatives wanted to join them, but there was simply no more room for them. Indeed, he told me his wife's aunt was shocked to hear that a rocket had landed just outside her abandoned home yesterday. This refugee situation is being duplicated in tens of thousands of Israeli homes in the center and south of the country (most of them typical smallish apartments that don't really have room for visiting families), but no one in the international media seems to be taking any notice of this aspect of the story.

Another thing I mentioned is that hundreds of thousands of Syrians moved into Lebanon during the 27 years that Syrian forces occupied two-thirds of the country, mostly for employment purposes, especially in recent years when the economy substantially expanded. Although some followed Syrian troops back into Syria last summer, many others did not, and therefore it is only reasonable to assume that at least a fair portion of the thousands of "Lebanese refugees" crossing the border into Syria in recent days—in a highly televised movement—are actually Syrians returning home to avoid the fighting. This is not at all to minimize the real suffering that the Lebanese population is going through at present, but just to illustrate that the story is often more complicated than the international media portrays.

Another thing I could have mentioned, but did not, is that I have not seen one international

media report interviewing friends or relatives of the two young Arab Israeli brothers, aged just 3 and 7, who were brutally slaughtered when a Hizbullah rocket slammed into the alley where they were playing soccer last evening in the biblical town of Nazareth. As a journalist, I would have thought that this was a natural story to cover more intensively, but as far as I have seen it has not been the case, at least on the international outlets mentioned above. The two boys were from a Sunni Muslim family, and it would have been interesting to hear how such Israeli Muslims feel about a Shiite paramilitary force from a neighboring country lobbing rockets into their mostly Arab town—the largest Arab population center inside of Israel’s pre-1967 borders. By the way, as a result of the deadly strike, Israel television has stepped up home front command announcements in Arabic instructing the country’s million-plus Arab citizens how to better protect themselves during the current conflict.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

**DAVID DOLAN** is a Jerusalem-based author and journalist who has lived in Israel since 1980. His new DVD, titled “FOR ZIONS’S SAKE—REPORTING FROM THE LAND OF THE BIBLE,” is now available on both PAL and NTCS versions. Details are posted at his web site, [www.ddolan.com](http://www.ddolan.com)

- **[HOLY WAR FOR THE PROMISED LAND](#) (Broadman & Holman)**, his latest book, is an overview of the history of the Israel and of the bitter Arab-Israeli conflict that rages there, plus some autobiographical details about the author’s experiences living in the land since 1980. It especially examines the important role that militant Islam plays in the conflict.
- 
- **[ISRAEL IN CRISIS: WHAT LIES AHEAD?](#) (Baker/Revell)**, which examines the political and biblical prospects for a regional attack upon Israel, settlement in the disputed territories, and related topics, is also available for purchase, **along with an updated edition of his end-time novel, [THE END OF DAYS](#) (21st Century Press).**

You may order these books at a special discount price by visiting his web site at [www.ddolan.com](http://www.ddolan.com), or by phoning 888-890-6938 in North America, or by e mail at: [resources@yourisraelconnection.org](mailto:resources@yourisraelconnection.org)

TO RECEIVE THESE FREE ISRAEL UPDATES DIRECTLY, FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS BELOW. YOU WILL ONLY RECEIVE DAVID DOLAN’S UPDATE AND ANALYSIS INFORMATION FROM THIS ADDRESS. THE LIST WILL NOT BE TRADED OR SOLD.

TO SUBSCRIBE (or to unsubscribe), GO TO his web site, [www.ddolan.com](http://www.ddolan.com) or to: <http://www.ddolan.com/subscribe.asp>