

The Test of Consciousness: The Crisis of Signification in the IDF

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The Czech philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) claimed that as we are thinking creatures amassing life experiences, assisted by language and descriptive capabilities and endowed with the ability to judge, draw conclusions, and make decisions, and as we are constantly in search of truths, from time to time there occur conceptual developments in our understanding of reality, followed by linguistic developments.¹ Husserl, who preceded the era in which post-modernism has assumed intellectual hegemony, also claimed that “to live always means to live in the certainty of the world. To live alertly means to be alert to the world, to be ‘aware’ constantly and tangibly of the world and of yourself as living in the world.”²

In an article entitled “The Third Lebanon War: Target Lebanon,” Giora Eiland points to some lessons learned in depth by the IDF as a result of the Second Lebanon War, and the serious efforts made to implement them. One of the lessons concerns the quality of command centers and the nature of the command and control processes. According to Eiland, once the efforts were made, we may assume they yielded fundamental improvements, at least in the first years after the war. Another important lesson is that of military thinking, which Eiland assesses the IDF has not yet fully internalized. These two items on the military’s agenda include subtopics such as intellectual thinking, ongoing critical examination of

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fundamental assumptions, and a creative approach, along with a clear, cohesive operational concept, clarity of language, and the existence of processes that ensure coherence and synergy in the use of force.³

These lessons, as well as the host of conclusions drawn by the IDF from the post-Second Lebanon War debriefings and investigations about the language and validity of the documents on doctrine, the applicability of operative plans and their assimilation, and the clarity of commands and their rationale, all point to a crisis of signification. This crisis, which has dogged the security establishment as well as its civilian and military foundations, began its slow growth in the early 1990s. Those were the days of trial and error in the pursuit of settling the conflict in the Middle East or managing it in ways more convenient to Israel. Many sectors within the public were tired of war and of internal struggles, especially in the security-political arena. New approaches adopted in the art of war were not always properly adjusted to Israel's reality, with concessions to post-modern, global ideas⁴ imparting a transition to peace-seeking militarism or reflecting new definitions of old military goals.⁵

The crisis encompassed four dimensions worthy of study: (a) the meta-strategic dimension, linked to the policy of containment adopted by Israel; (b) the social dimension, linked to internal social and political processes that regularly sent conflicting messages to the IDF and gave different – sometimes even contradictory – meanings regarding its responsibilities and the expectations of it; (c) the military-conceptual dimension, linked to a new understanding of the use of force that while tried by the IDF failed to define the principles of optimal use of force in the face of challenges and constraints; and (d) the military-organizational dimension, linked to the organizational culture and new language that crept into field ranks, with lofty concepts that were difficult to understand and assimilate.

The two intra-military dimensions of the crisis of signification that engulfed the IDF were not approved by the top command structure and emanated without prior warning from command and control bodies, with the exception of the State Comptroller.⁶ They stemmed in part from the failure to formulate a concept of the use of force and combat doctrines that would provide a response to the new complex reality facing Israel and give clear, goal-oriented meaning to the understanding of the enemy and its methods.

This essay examines each of the four dimensions of the crisis of signification along with their origins, components, and relative weight. Not only individuals but also organizations – including the army – weave webs of meaning around their existence and crises of consciousness damage their performance and ability to act. The proper management of operational meanings, which reviews a list of probabilities one by one, their opposites, and their aptness, is thus a tool for more successful execution of tasks by any organization, especially the military, which must often deal with critical tasks while putting lives at risk.

The Grand Strategy: The Policy of Containment

On October 7, 2000, nearly five months after the IDF's withdrawal from the security zone in southern Lebanon and a few days after the outbreak of the second intifada, three Israeli soldiers were abducted from the Mt. Dov sector.⁷ Despite the declarations by the prime minister about the high cost Israel would exact if the state, its citizens, or its soldiers were attacked after the withdrawal to the international border,⁸ the government chose not to allow this severe event to foment unrest along the northern border. This was in effect the start of the "era of containment."⁹ The restraint and forbearance chosen by the Israeli government were later evident after a shooting attack on the road between Shlomi and Kibbutz Matzuva,¹⁰ as well as after an abduction attempt that was foiled near the Rajar checkpoint and the attempted infiltration of the Gladiola fortification on Mt. Dov that same day.¹¹

The policy of containment, called by then-Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz "a wise policy,"¹² sought to set in place a pattern of conflict management to prevent deterioration along the northern border. From its inception, the framers of the policy justified it along several lines: it avoided opening another front in addition to the Palestinian one, which at the time was placing a taxing burden on the IDF's regular forces and reservists; it allowed the economy in the north to continue to flourish, and it maintained the calm for the residents of the north who for years had lived under sporadic attacks; it allayed the fear of returning to the "Lebanese quagmire" and the "cycle of responses and counter-responses"; it allowed for changes in the internal power structure of Lebanon; and it garnered international sympathy and helped erode Hizbollah's legitimacy given the restraint Israel demonstrated in face of the organization's provocations. These interests tipped the scales even

at the cost of the image of Israel's "giving in to terrorism" and despite the fear, which proved prescient, of Hizbollah's growing strength.

The practical conclusion that the IDF drew from the government's political directives¹³ was to downplay Hizbollah's provocations, see them as localized events, and contain them before they developed into a campaign with strategic ramifications. In other words, the IDF exhibited passivity and resorted to limited, measured responses to acts of hostility, usually in the form of standoff fire. For years, and even during the war itself, this reality made it conceptually difficult to classify operational targets and did not create the appropriate circumstances either to define missions or, as shown below in a different context, to define methods of operation. After the war, Moshe Kaplinsky¹⁴ explained:

In my opinion, our failure to change the general mindset of the army grew even worse because of the approach that developed on the northern border since the withdrawal from the security zone in May 2000, at whose center lay the principle of "sit and wait." The primary mission was simply to prevent kidnappings, and nothing more. The security of IDF soldiers was defined as of overriding importance. The combination of all these elements, together with our inability to say, "That was then – this is now. From this point onwards, the situation has changed," was among the central causes – if not the central cause – for the manner in which the war was conducted.¹⁵

After the withdrawal from the security zone, the IDF thinned out the forces stationed on the northern border and streamlined means for achieving long term stamina and absorbing attacks. Patrols and activity along the northern border were reduced in an attempt to lower the friction with Hizbollah and the risk to IDF soldiers, especially border abductions. Open-fire directives were changed and soldiers' mandates to respond to hostile activity from the other side of the border were curtailed.

The new line of fortifications built along the international border with Lebanon, at the cost of over NIS 1 billion, was adapted to the low signature operational concept.¹⁶ Because of budgetary constraints, front-line fortifications were closed, and beginning in 2002 reservists replaced regular soldiers on the northern border. In addition, the deployment of technological means such as cameras and sensors along the border

was never completed and intelligence gathering efforts were thereby weakened.

In face of the policy of containment, Hizbollah, which grew steadily stronger, adopted a policy of targeted, measured attacks punctuated by long periods of calm. This brinkmanship highlighted the asymmetry already in existence between Hizbollah and the IDF and demonstrated the extent to which the IDF's responses to Hizbollah's provocations were too little, too late. Israel's retaliation lagged behind Hizbollah's initiatives and left the organization with the power to determine when to act and how to fulfill its objectives of upsetting the IDF's mindset and that of the country, its civilians, and elected officials.

Some in Israel harbored reservations about the policy of containment and its strategic objectives. Within the IDF, and even more so among the residents of the north, there were those calling on the government to release the safety catch, put an end to the policy of restraint, push Hizbollah back from the border, and restore self-confidence to the frightened residents of the north. Some accused the government of leveling empty threats when it asserted it would settle scores with Hizbollah and cast the IDF as a paper tiger.¹⁷

Although in practice the policy of containment was implemented from the IDF's withdrawal from Lebanon on May 24, 2000 until the morning of July 12, 2006 and under the governments of Prime Ministers Barak, Sharon, and Olmert, the roots of this policy are actually to be found seven years before the withdrawal, during Yitzhak Rabin's tenure as prime minister.

On July 31, 1993, after seven days of fighting in Hizbollah villages in southern Lebanon, Operation Accountability came to an end, and an informal agreement between the sides was reached with American mediation; the agreement was known as the Operation Accountability understandings.¹⁸ At that stage, the talk was of containing the events in southern Lebanon and preventing them from causing an overall deterioration that included potential Syrian involvement. Controlling the flames was considered imperative at the time lest an escalation, to the displeasure of the United States, derail the Madrid process, which had seated Israeli and Syrian representatives together for bilateral negotiations.¹⁹

Israel derived the term “policy of containment” and particularly its abstract meaning from the American experience in the Cold War. In an article published anonymously in 1947 entitled “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” and in a telegram sent a year earlier by the article’s author, American diplomat George Kennan²⁰ proposed including a central component of consciousness psychology in US relations towards the Soviet superpower. In Kennan’s vision, the policy of containment included restraint as well as assertiveness and alertness: the United States would be careful not to maneuver the Soviet Union into a corner without leaving it a dignified way out. Some of Kennan’s notions regarding containment, defined in *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security*, allowed the United States to concentrate its forces in key locations critical to its interests instead of attempting to defend difficult borders.²¹ In later years, Kennan made the following seminal statement:

Anyone who has ever studied the history of American diplomacy, especially military diplomacy, knows that you might start in a war with certain things on your mind as a purpose of what you are doing, but in the end, you found yourself fighting for entirely different things that you had never thought of before...In other words, war has a momentum of its own and it carries you away from all thoughtful intentions when you get into it.²²

The policy of containment that the political-security echelon passed on to the IDF disrupted the mindset of both commanders and soldiers. It muddled the principle of striving for contact, and planted doubts as to the nature of responses to offensive enemy activity. Without addressing the statement made by GOC Northern Command Udi Adam, that “the practical meaning [of the policy of containment] was ceding Israeli sovereignty of the northern border and giving Hizbollah free rein to act on the border,”²³ one could say that the containment policy, which was tantamount to strategic handcuffs and operational restraint, eroded the longstanding IDF approach, namely that the IDF had no choice but to strive for decision, or at least neutralize the enemy’s military force in every round of violence, at whatever cost. David Ben-Gurion, the father of Israel’s security doctrine, stated: “If they attack us in the future, we want the war to take place not on our soil but on enemy territory, and attack rather than defend.”²⁴

The Social Dimension: From Nuclear Reactors to Spider Webs

In the early 1990s, after the collapse of the USSR and the crumbling of the Soviet bloc, which was an aegis for the Rejectionist Front; after the American invasion of Iraq and its establishment as the sole leader of the international community, including the Middle East; and after the Madrid Conference to promote peace in the Middle East, there was a convenient platform for a policy of making peace with the Arab world. In Israel, peace was viewed not only as a cherished yearning, which would include recognition of Israel and its acceptance by the other Middle East states, but also as a fundamental component of its strategic considerations.²⁵

The atmosphere of peace that took hold in Israel, where many had long tired of war, also swept through the IDF. Israel's wars since the state's inception and the human toll they exacted had greatly eroded the immediate and almost self-evident willingness to enlist in support of any military move. The Israeli public was hungry for a life of calm without emergency situations and the obsessive concern with security. It was eager to lighten some of the burden of reserve duty and sought easy answers to difficult existential questions in post-modern patterns of thought. Years after the words "no more wars, no more bloodshed" echoed through the region, the hope that swords would be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks was swelling. The message that the civilian leadership was sending was, "a time for war – and a time for peace."²⁶

Still, yesterday's enemy, which now became the partner or partner-in-peace, included elements that sought to undermine that peace. In a dichotomous division between the enemies of peace and peace partners, the significance of the word "enemy" was lost. Moreover, since the mid-1990s, Israel has found itself in an acute identity crisis. This crisis intensified with the many twists, turns, and reversals of the Oslo process. The absence of public consensus on the correct road to pursue and the proliferation of ideas on the justness of Israel's conduct have robbed the state of a valuable cognitive resource essential to an army and its soldiers. A cognitive problem emerged in understanding the phenomenon of war and the functions of the army in an era of appeasement facing enemies whose shifting categorization made it difficult to understand concepts such as deterrence or decision in a confrontation. This also complicated

earning support for the war on terrorism and terrorist organizations that enlist public opinion both within Israel and within the international community in order to undermine Israel's self-confidence.

The struggle for an Israeli identity expressed in part in a struggle over the nation's collective memory, narratives, myths, and shared values is an important factor in the enemy's psychological warfare estimations, notwithstanding Israel's image as a state with nuclear capabilities and clear military strength. Hence the dismissive words of the Hizbollah leader: "Israel may have nuclear weapons and heavy weapons, but, as God lives, it is weaker than a spider web...There was a time when we feared Israeli threats, planes, tanks and gun ships that impinged on our sovereignty of the skies, on land, and in the air, but that time is long since gone."²⁷

The Military-Conceptual Dimension: Levers and Effects

In the early 1990s, discussions began in the IDF about formulating a new understanding of force application. The echoes of the Scud missiles from Iraq that landed on Israeli soil and the lessons learned by the Americans from the 1991 Gulf War gave rise to new thoughts regarding firepower versus ground maneuver in warfare. The new understandings lent greater weight to the psychological and cognitive dimensions of a "limited engagement" in an age of "asymmetrical warfare," in particular to the concentration of effort to change the mindset that would stop terrorist organizations from acting against Israel and perhaps even bring them to the negotiating table. The authors of the new approach referred zealously to the enemy as a complex "system" against which it was necessary to apply "levers" and "cumulative effects" whose power lay in their ability to cause cognitive collapse.

The IDF was tempted by this "sterile" approach, which departed from the bloody encounters typical of ground maneuvers, and lowered the risk to soldiers from anti-tank missiles, suicide bombers, or combat in the "nature reserves" in southern Lebanon or in densely populated areas strewn with booby traps and explosives. It was also free of the bothersome political ramifications embedded in the occupation, patrolling, and clearing of territories, and retaining them over a long period of time.²⁸

The ouster of the ground maneuver as a central component of military decision and the adoption of "indirect levers" and "effects-

based operations" (EBOs) required a cognitive change involving both an emphasis on undermining the enemy's intentions by stressing damage to the enemy's military capabilities and a different attitude to firepower – from being a supportive element in the battle for decision to a primary element in attaining effects. Moreover, territory, which in military thought was traditionally considered an asset, now came to be seen as an encumbrance. In the new understanding, no response was provided to the challenge of rocket fire at Israel's civilian front.

The "system" model did not fit Hizbollah fully, as it is an organization not constructed as a system with critical intersections and clear centers of gravity or slow-moving forces. Hizbollah is a decentralized, flat organization, endowed with unique methods of entrenchment. It disappears into the environs and deploys in a densely populated rural setting. Its arrays of launchers, defenses, command, control, and logistics are dispersed in various positions in wooded terrain and in urban centers. The organization has created for itself both strategic stamina, as expressed in extensive and scattered stockpiles of ammunition and easy to operate weaponry, and operational depth that allow it to deploy over large areas deep in Lebanon and from there launch long range missiles at Israel's rear from different distances and far apart from one another. Moreover, the organization has autonomous end-units that take their own initiative, thereby increasing its operational weight.

In addition, Hizbollah uses civilians as human shields, and the shelter they provide Hizbollah operatives lends the organization much propaganda value. Its relative insensitivity to damage to state structures and infrastructures, the distress of civilians, and the number of casualties in its ranks made the operational and tactical notions underlying the system model ineffective and almost impossible to apply in terms of firepower, orders of battle, objectives, sectors, successes, and methods of warfare. To a great extent this limited the cognitive advantages Israel could have accrued using aerial or artillery standoff fire in the context of an operational understanding that preferred "the creation of effects" and "levers" over classical conquest of territory.²⁹

The Military-Organizational Dimension: Objectives and Swarms³⁰

Language is a critical component in the organizational culture of an army. Verbal language is the medium for inter-organizational communication,

including the definition of military objectives and targets, and it creates an intelligible common cognitive denominator to match ideas with their execution and to connect the commanding echelon with the planning and operational levels. In the Second Lebanon War, unclear, unfocused commands were given regarding the soldiers' actions and the achievements that were expected of them. A lack of clarity about the objective at the conceptual and planning levels was compounded by unclear language. More than once, the formulation of the commands described the desired effect of the action rather than the manner of executing the action itself.

One of the terms that presented more than a few difficulties during the days of fighting was "taking control," as distinguished from "occupying." While in a naval or aerial battle "control" over a sector is enough to neutralize it, on the ground only occupation and defeating the enemy – including clearing the area of combatants and active positioning in the central locations in the heart of the territory, at times accompanied by a symbolic planting of the flag – are likely to neutralize a sector. In the military discourse and practice formulated since the 1990s, the term "occupation" has carried political connotations, linked to the reality in the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria, and therefore there was a clear impetus to excise this term from public discourse. Consequently, terms such as control, symbolic control, massive control, deepening the hold, surrounding, and clearing emerged as vague linguistic substitutes attempting to define a mission that had to be carried out or to describe a mission that had already been carried out.

Another term lacking clarity that emerged from the war was "disruption." In the early days of the war and until August 8, 2006, the Northern Command issued a command to "disrupt" the activity of the terrorists launching Katyusha rockets at the northern part of the country, using precision fire from the ground. This command pertained to the narrow strait between Israel's border in southern Lebanon and the so-called Yellow Line (the Litani River) that was the limit of the IAF's responsibility during the fighting. This term, associated more with electronic systems and automatic data processing, replaced the established terms in the IDF lexicon, "harassment" or "neutralization," which were goal-oriented and familiar, and had clear denotations.³¹

The re-conceptualization of terminology is not necessarily reason for a crisis of signification as long as the new terms are transmitted to the fighting units and their commanders, both in the regular army and the reserves. However, the terms that made their way into operational and tactical layers in the golden years of think tanks in the IDF were not systematically introduced or taught in ongoing training. They were couched in esoteric abstractions, lacked clear, unequivocal meanings, and were void of basic familiar military terminology (objectives, intentions, methods, forces, and missions).³² The language of commands that was supposed to be intelligible to all, simply formulated, and free of terms lacking operational purpose became clumsy and open to different – even contradictory – interpretations.³³ Thus, the chief IDF tool for commanding soldiers at the various levels, the reservists in particular, was lost.

Among the terms from the new unwritten doctrine and the linguistic patterns accompanying the changes in understanding the enemy that found a foothold in the IDF General Staff and trickled into the sector commands and various field ranks were “absorbent tissue,”³⁴ “maneuver of opinion,”³⁵ “snailing,”³⁶ “swarming attack” or “one-night sting.”³⁷ These were not fully understood at all ranks in the regular army and the reserves.³⁸ Justifications for commands from upper to lower echelons were couched in terms of “directives,” “instructions,” “discussion summaries,” “recommendations,” “advice,” and “proposals” by senior commanders or at the General Staff – but never “commands,” as if to downplay the commanders’ authority. The clear, formative cognitive tool of military language was gone because of the fear of assuming responsibility.³⁹

An Exposé, in Place of a Conclusion

On July 12, 2006, a short time after the news broke of the abduction of two IDF soldiers in the northern sector, the “Hannibal protocol” went into effect and the government gathered for an emergency session. Israel, long under the influence of the containment policy, embarked on a high intensity military operation. The abduction and the fire on northern population centers met with an unprecedentedly aggressive response. The speed of the response and the rejection of any delay in order to prepare for a thoughtful military deployment reflected the Israeli fear of the belief that has become entrenched within the various terrorist

organizations, especially Hizbollah, that Israel is so weak that it would find it difficult to extricate itself from international efforts and pressures to desist from undertaking the response that was called for.⁴⁰ Moreover, Israel viewed this activity as an opportunity to effect a fundamental change in the reality that became entrenched since the IDF withdrawal from the security zone, and also psychologically undermine the enemy's self-confidence that had grown in the interim and endowed the enemy with a feeling of might and prestige – in its own eyes, in the eyes of its Iranian and Syrian patrons, and in the eyes of its fellow terrorist networks waging war against Israel.⁴¹

The transition from the containment policy to an offensive, taking-charge policy and from a low signature operation to a brisk military move surprised Hizbollah.⁴² Yet this type of high intensity, focused activity following a restrained, measured era undoubtedly creates cognitive problems not only for the enemy but also for any army that suddenly finds itself in the midst of an abrupt about-face, from limited passive conduct to energetic, initiated activity. No doubt the result is cognitive uncertainty. The fact that the fighting lasted for 34 days while the army was losing fighters and the rear was exposed to uncontrolled missile and rocket fire undermined the IDF's confidence in its own abilities and, in terms of consciousness, affected its understanding and performance.⁴³

The war revealed a failure stemming from the (mis)understanding of the use of force. The failure was the result of ongoing, defined damage to targets with major psychological importance to the organization, its commanders, its leaders, and its home front. "Effects," which meant tackling only the enemy's intentions using overly-decentralized forces, without concentration, efforts, or momentum that are in fact capable of causing the enemy to collapse and wresting a decision against its capabilities, were set aside. It became clear that the power of the classical maneuver had not disappeared in terms of using ground forces, conquering territory, clearing them of combatants by way of concentrating forces, making optimal use of forces, storming enemy targets, taking offensive initiatives, maintaining continuity, providing role models, and demonstrating professionalism and dedication to the mission.

More than three years after the Second Lebanon War and with the experience of Operation Cast Lead in Gaza, it is clear that the IDF is

successfully tackling the military-organizational dimension and has progressed in understanding the essence of the military-conceptual failure preceding the war in Lebanon. Nonetheless, as a result of conflicts and rifts in political stances and the lack of unanimity about the many layers of the conflict with the enemy, the social dimension has not yet been solved. Cognitively, no new grand strategy has emerged. Although the policy of containment seems to have vanished, Israel still lacks the initiative in terms of dictating the moves and maintaining the military balance, even with regard to Hizbollah's massive rearming, which may yet find expression should hostilities break out. This dimension no doubt affects the clear formulation of the use of force, e.g., one that adopts a systematic operational approach of initiating limited, creative punitive operations or acts designed to damage infrastructures and deter the enemy, in short – actions that would deny Hizbollah its leading role in the violent haggling over the land and would continuously force it to cope with challenges to its own survival.

Notes

- 1 Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, translated by David Singer (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1996), p. 244.
- 2 Ibid., p. 145.
- 3 Giora Eiland, "The Third Lebanon War: Target Lebanon," *Strategic Assessment* 11, no. 2 (2008): 9-17, [http://www.inss.org.il/upload/\(FILE\)1226472866.pdf](http://www.inss.org.il/upload/(FILE)1226472866.pdf).
- 4 A discussion of post-modern and global changes in the last decade of the twentieth century may be found in Avi Kober, "Low-Intensity Conflicts: Why the Gap between Theory and Practice?" *Defense and Security Analysis* 18, no. 1 (2002): 15-38.
- 5 See Uri Ben-Eliezer, "From a Nation in Uniform to a Post-Modern Military: Military Politics in Israel in the New Era," in Stuart Cohen, ed., *A Culture of Democracy* (Bar-Ilan University and the Israel Democracy Institute), Vols. 4-5, pp. 55-97.
- 6 See Israel State Comptroller's Annual Reports: Report No. 44 for 1993, pp. 1067-78; Report No. 46 for 1995, pp. 894-900; Report No. 51A for 2000, pp. 109-48; Report 52A for 2001, pp. 82-109; and Report No. 57A for 2006, pp. 45, 61-66.
- 7 On October 7, 2000, an IDF patrol was ambushed at Point 590 in the region of the Shab'a Farms. Staff Sergeant Adi Avitan, Staff Sergeant Benny Avraham, and Staff Sergeant Omar Suad were killed and their bodies abducted to

- Lebanon. After 1,210 days, on January 29, 2004, the soldiers' bodies were returned in a hostage exchange with Hizbollah.
- 8 Prime Minister Ehud Barak: "I have made it clear in completely unequivocal terms how Israel will conduct itself should any entity in Lebanon try to attack our citizens or soldiers after Israel withdraws to the international border. I have announced that Israel would view this as an act of war and that no target or element in Lebanon will be safe from a harsh response." See speech made in the Knesset, May 25, 2000.
 - 9 Winograd Commission Interim Report, 2007, p. 44.
 - 10 IDF officer Lieutenant German Rozhkov, a deputy commander of a Nahal company, and five civilians were killed on March 12, 2002, in a shooting attack by two terrorists who penetrated Israel from Lebanon, dug themselves into a hill west of the Shlomi-Matzuva road, and fired light weapons and threw hand grenades at passing cars. In addition, seven other civilians were injured in the incident.
 - 11 On November 21, 2005, a Hizbollah attempt to abduct a soldier from the village of Rajar was made during an exchange of fire, under the cover of which a terrorist cell infiltrated the local council building in the village. Twelve soldiers and civilians were injured in the incident. The same day, there was another incident when terrorists approached the Gladiola fortification in the Mt. Dov sector and opened fire at the soldiers manning it. *Ynet*, November 21, 2005.
 - 12 Shaul Mofaz, in his summary of the annual intelligence assessment submitted on March 5, 2004: "We must continue with the wise policy we have used to date in an effort to restrain the northern system and 'crack it' and we must complete our preparations for a possible confrontation in a way that will allow us to neutralize Hizbollah's rocket structure with maximal efficiency and speed." The Military Secretariat, April 19, 2004.
 - 13 Gabriel Siboni, "From Gaza to Lebanon and Back," *Strategic Assessment* 10, no. 1 (2007): 66-69: "The supreme job of any military is to achieve the grand strategic objectives as defined by the political leadership, even if in many cases the military is an important partner in defining these objectives. Once defined, these objectives become the goals of the political leadership." See <http://www.inss.org.il/publications.php?cat=21&incat=&read=26>.
 - 14 Maj. Gen. Kaplinsky was deputy chief of staff in 2005-2007.
 - 15 Moshe Kaplinsky, "The IDF in the Years before the Second Lebanon War," *Military and Strategic Affairs* 1, no. 2 (2009): 32, [http://www.inss.org.il/upload/\(FILE\)1268646037.pdf](http://www.inss.org.il/upload/(FILE)1268646037.pdf).
 - 16 Low signature is a way of functioning in a ground war and creating operational patterns with a low profile. See Gal Hirsch, *A War Story, a Love Story* (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot Press, 2009), p. 141.
 - 17 Shlomo Buhbut, Chairman of the Front Line Forum and Mayor of Maalot, in letter to Prime Minister Ehud Barak: "It is wrong to tie the hands [of the IDF] when it comes to responding appropriately... You must desist from the

- policy of restraint... I am sorry to say that it is seen as moral bankruptcy and weakness on the part of the nation's leadership." *Haaretz*, November 3, 2000.
- 18 See Reuven Erlich, *Israeli Involvement with Agreements, Settlements and Understandings on the Lebanese Arena in the Last 30 Years: Background, Data, Lessons and Conclusions*, Tel Aviv, Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israel Intelligence Heritage & Commemoration Center (IICC), 2006.
 - 19 See statement by Maj. Gen. (ret.) Rehavam Zeevi (Moledet) in the Knesset: "When Hizbollah operatives renewed their terrorist attacks in the security zone, the IDF barely reacted, at the government's request, so as not to kill the joy of the understandings. Operation Accountability could have stopped the attacks also in the security zone, but the government was overjoyed by achieving the limited understandings and did not demand that these be applied also to this sector...To a great extent, Syria is responsible for Hizbollah operations. It dominates the organization's supply routes and has the ability to rein it in. But Syria enjoys the fact that Hizbollah continues to attack Israel, to destroy and to maim. And the Jews continue to come to peace talks with them." Speech in the Knesset, August 30, 1993.
 - 20 "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," was published in *Foreign Affairs* and signed by X. On February 22, 1946, George Kennan, deputy head of the diplomatic mission stationed in the USSR, sent a telegram to the Secretary of State in Washington, D.C., which was called "The Long Telegram."
 - 21 John L. Gaddish, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 57-59.
 - 22 George Kennan in an interview with Albert Eisele in *The Hill*, September 26, 2002.
 - 23 Partial report of the Winograd Commission (2207), p. 47.
 - 24 David Ben-Gurion, *Singularity and Destiny* (Tel Aviv: Maarachot Publications, 3rd ed., 1980), p. 142.
 - 25 Minister of Foreign Affairs Shimon Peres, after the signing of the Taba Agreement: "The personal security of Israel will be ensured by a strategic map in which no foreign army will set up camp, from the Jordan River in the east to the Mediterranean in the west, and from the Mediterranean in the west to the border with the Gaza Strip. The only army that will be deployed in this area and in its military sites is the Israel Defense Forces. The IDF will be responsible for the safety and security of the State of Israel, for the safety and security of Israelis, for the safety and security of Israeli settlements, and it will be as interested in fighting terrorism as in fighting the other side." Speech in the Knesset, October 23, 1995.
 - 26 Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, announcing to the government the Declaration of Principles about the interim arrangements of an autonomous entity and the exchange of letters with the PLO: "If and when peace comes, the peace we want so much, our lives will change from one extreme to the