

[Israel Facing the Islamist Declaration of War Part II](#)

Author : Jacob Thomas on Jul 23, 2006 - 11:45 AM

The Goal of Iran: Dominating the Region

While most of the print Arab media have focused their attention on the details of the tragic events engulfing the Middle East, some Arab journalists are pointing specifically to the role of the Iranian regime in initiating the bloody confrontation between Hezbollah and Israel. An editorial on the **Elaph** online newspaper for Sunday, 16 July, appeared with this headline: ***“Iran’s New Alliance Ignited the Fire that’s Burning Lebanon.”***

The following are excerpts from the article that underline the unease of several Arab commentators about the growing Iranian influence in the region.

“Hezbollah embarked on a military operation that ended with the killing and kidnapping of Israeli soldiers within Israel’s borders. It was an operation that could not have been justified at all; it was totally and completely against Lebanon’s interests. The Lebanese are extremely tired and weary, due to the wars that have been inflicted upon them. Consider the number of killed and wounded, and the terrible destruction that’s going on in Lebanon, and realize the gigantic nature of the tragedy of the Lebanese!”

“The big question is: for whose advantage was that operation which started this war? In order to understand who benefits from the Hezbollah operation, we must consider the timing for the attack. It is well-known that the Lebanese economy relies heavily on the tourist season as an essential part of the yearly income. Why did Hezbollah not wait until the summer season was over, to initiate their attack on Israel? What a lame excuse that Hezbollah gave for the goal of its operation, namely the liberation of their prisoners that were still being held in Israel! But those prisoners had been there in custody for years!”

*“In order to understand the timing of Hezbollah’s operation we should consider the words of King Abdallah II, of Jordan. He warned about the rise of a **‘Shi’ite Crescent’** that would extend from Iran to Hamas in Palestine, passing through Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. His warning was in place as the current events have demonstrated. It is turning out to be much more than a **‘crescent.’** It has become a **‘deadly scorpion’** whose head is in Tehran, while its tail is in southern Lebanon, and in the south suburbs of Beirut. This dangerous situation can no longer be dealt with by the resort to vapid diplomatic declarations. Hezbollah’s foolish acts have rendered such a course totally ineffective.*

“Let’s consider again the ‘timing’ of the operation. For whose advantage was it undertaken? We should not forget that Iran was under great international pressure due to its nuclear program. So, it continued to play for time and prolonged its diplomatic negotiations. At the same time, Iran pursued her plan to cause troubles all over the Middle East. It was Iran that prompted the action of Hezbollah in Israel. Thus, the leader of Hezbollah offered Lebanon and its people, as a sacrifice on the altar of Iranian

interests. Hassan Nasrallah never bothered to inform the legitimate government of Lebanon, or the Arab governments, about his plans to initiate an attack on Israel. The real decision for Hezbollah's action was taken in Tehran, and was accomplished through the help and cooperation of Syria.

"Iran and its allies thought that the 'sacredness' of the 'Palestinian Cause' and of the 'Resistance Movement in Lebanon' would immobilize the Arabs, and render them unable to unmask the true nature of Iran's schemes in the region. Iran's calculations failed due to Saudi Arabia's warning about Tehran's plan. Added to the Saudi position were the declarations of Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates that decried the actions of Hezbollah. As a result of their incursion into Israel, the destruction of Lebanon has begun. The Arab countries must construct a plan to face the Iranian strategy that seeks to dominate the Middle East. Iran must be stopped from executing its plan; this whole matter has taken on an existential nature!"

Thus far, the comments of an Arab editorialist on the deteriorating situation in the Middle East. His remarks centered on Iran's role in igniting the fires that are burning Lebanon. He did not deal with the broader issues of the type of war that is being waged by the Islamists, not only in Lebanon and Israel, but all over the world.

Unfortunately, the general media took up the words of Jacques Chirac regarding the "disproportional" Israeli response to Hezbollah attacks, and began to repeat them ad nauseam. What they failed to emphasize was the radical changes that have taken place in the method of warfare as practiced by the Islamists, and the logical and necessary responses to such tactics.

We are grateful therefore for the publication in June 2006, of a book dealing with this subject under the title of, "INSURGENTS, TERRORISTS, AND MILITIAS," by Richard H. Shultz Jr. and Andrea J. Dew (Columbia University Press, 316 pages, \$29.50) It was reviewed in the 19 July, 2006 issue of **The Wall Street Journal** by Robert D. Kaplan. He titled the review, **The Tribal Way of War**. I highly recommend his review as it throws a great light on the new circumstances that we face in the global war against Islamic jihadism. The URL for this article is:

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB115325852604910271.html>

Unfortunately, it is available only to subscribers, but your Public Library would certainly provide you with early editions of the Journal so that you can peruse this valuable piece of information.

I restrict myself to a few quotations from **The Tribal Way of War**.

"While the U.S. spends billions of dollars on sophisticated defense systems, the dime-a-dozen kidnapper and suicide bomber have emerged as the most strategic weapons of war. While we tie ourselves in legal knots over war's acceptable parameters, international law has increasingly less bearing on those whom we fight. And while our commanders declare 'force protection' as their highest priority, enemy commanders declare the need for more martyrs. It seems that the more advanced we become, the more at a

disadvantage we are in the 21st-century battlefield.

“In **‘Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias,’** Richard H. Shultz Jr. and Andrea J. Dew, both of Tufts's Fletcher School, have produced a wise and cogent briefing book about who our enemies are and how to anticipate their field tactics. The problem, they state early on, is that the Pentagon -- the product of a rational, science-based Western culture -- relies on objective quantification for its analysis. But what happens, the authors ask, if there is nothing to quantify? What happens if the enemy is merely an organic part of the landscape, revealing its features only at the moment of attack? Well, then all we can do is study these ‘idiosyncratic’ human landscapes and use anthropology to improve our intelligence assessments.

“The Somali way of war -- so startling to U.S. Army Rangers in Mogadishu in 1993 -- emerged from Somalia's late-19th-century Dervish movement, on which the country's top warlord, Mohammed Farah Aidid, based his strategy. What the West viewed as fanaticism was merely the Somali proclivity for judging a man's character by his religious conviction and his physical ability to fight without limits. In the Somali worldview, our aversion to killing women and children was a weakness that could be exploited by using noncombatants as human shields. Clearly, the task of anticipating the enemy's tactics requires thinking that goes beyond Western moral categories.

“Our progressive global culture -- with its emphasis on convenience and instant gratification -- finds it difficult to cope with such warriors, for whom war is a first resort rather than a last one. And what if a warrior takes command of a large and modernizing nation-state, as Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has done? We are accustomed to adversarial states with rational goals, like China. In the long run, China may constitute a greater threat to American world leadership than Iran. Yet China is a traditional and, therefore, legitimate power. We will have a serious military competition with the Chinese, but only through miscalculation would we ever fight them. Yet the darkest cloud on the 21st-century horizon is big states whose leaders may simply like to fight. Their reasons are tied up with pride, vengeance and martial religiosity and cannot be gratified through negotiations.”

To read the **Elaph** article dealing with the fire Iran ignited in Lebanon, and then to proceed to the book review of 19 July in the WSJ, is a very frightening experience. But both articles provide us with a realistic description of our “**New World Disorder.**” Are our leaders giving heed to these early warnings; or are they, by neglecting these warning signs, repeating the costly mistakes of Western leaders during the 1930s? Only time will tell.