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Exploding Pagers in Lebanon, Another Israeli Terrorism Blunder?



Youtube screengrab.

Benjamin Netanyahu's security cabinet has approved a plan to wage a war on Lebanon under the pretext of returning Israeli settlers to their colonies in the north part of historical Palestine. Historically, the Israeli government does not usually discuss its military plans in the public arena. The security cabinet meeting, initially scheduled for Sunday, was delayed to Monday until after the arrival of American envoy, Amos Hochstein. Following their meeting, Israeli Prime Minister told Hochstein thanks for U.S. support, but Israel "will do what is necessary" for the return of the Israeli settlers to the "Jewish only" colonies located along the borders with Lebanon

According to Israeli sources, the Biden administration wanted to avoid a broader regional conflict that might involve the Resistance in Lebanon, Yemen and Iran, at least until after the U.S. elections in November. However, all indications suggest that Netanyahu is resisting the

American demands, and even disregarding the opinion of his own war minister who does not believe it's the right time to expand the war. Netanyahu's preparations for the war could also include dismissing Yaov Gallant and replacing him with Gideon Sa'ar from the New Hope Jewish racist party. This prompted Biden to send Hochstein to warn the Israeli prime minister of dangerous consequence if he moves ahead and dismisses Gallant.

The political posturing and the unusual public nature of these discussions—potential dismissals of a minister, and talk of military action—suggests that a decision to launch a war against Lebanon may have been imminent. Furthermore, the infighting within the Israeli government appears to have caused confusion or disorganization exhibited by “unapproved” actions taken by Israeli military units along the Lebanese border.

As an example, on September 16, leaflets in Arabic were dropped in South Lebanon ordering residents to leave their homes and warning that civilians who remain become legitimate Israeli targets. But shortly afterward, the Israeli military announced that no official evacuation order had been issued and that the leaflets were distributed without proper authorization.

Besides the hollow excuse for a lack of proper authorization, army units do not have printing machines to prepare leaflets that include the exact date and timing □4 p.m. (13:00 GMT) □by which civilians should complete their evacuation. Leaflets are typically brought by other specialized units to the frontline.

This raises the questions, could the leaflets have been part of an earlier war plans? Did Hochstein's visit force a delay in the timing, but the change wasn't communicated down to the unit responsible for distributing the leaflets?

Then on the following day, Tuesday September 17, approximately 3,000 pagers exploded simultaneously across Lebanon.

Is there a connection between the original timing of the leaflets and the detonation of the pagers?

The above two incidents suggest a serious misstep and could have possibly derailed the original Israeli war plans against Lebanon. In fact, these miscalculations may potentially become larger than Israel's security screw-up on October 7, 2023.

Before arguing the points for this hypothesis, one must acknowledge that booby-trapping the pagers was possibly one of the most sophisticated espionage operations orchestrated by the Israeli Mossad; no less than the assassination of Ismail Hania in Tehran. Having stated the above, however, one might be surprised in concluding that as far reaching as this covert action was for the Israeli spies, in all likelihood, this was a failure.

The Israeli terrorist assault resulted in the killings of nine Lebanese, including a child, and injuring close to 3000 individuals. Despite what was reported in the managed Western media, many were innocent civilians, some were driving cars, while others were shopping in crowded markets.

In this attack, Israel did not aim to terrorize civilians only, they do that daily. More importantly, targeting the pagers intended to interrupt the communication channels for Resistance operatives, as well as the civilian infrastructure such as hospitals and civil defense. Therefore, for the above to achieve optimum effectiveness, such an operation would need to have taken place during the initial Israeli military attack, not on a normal afternoon in Lebanon. Hence, the relationship between the “unauthorized” leaflets ordering Lebanese civilians to evacuate by 4 p.m. September 16, and the flub of the exploding pagers precisely 24 hours later.

In essence, it appears that Israel had initially prepared to order the evacuation ahead of a planned military action on the 16th. At the same time, the pagers were programmed to detonate during the initial phase of the war, 24 hours later, to disrupt communication channels, create confusion and disarray in the midst of war.

However, the overextended Israeli army that failed in preventing the release of the evacuation leaflets on May 16, when the war was likely delayed. It also did not halt the premature detonation of the pagers on September 17. The last oversight, the second within 24 hours, may have resulted in a missed strategic opportunity for the Israeli army, and another blunder for the Israeli leadership.

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