ground forces -- "made the IDF pay for every inch of ground that it took. At the same time, crucially, Hizbullah dictated the rules of how the war was to be fought." It is worth noting that the fighters Hizbullah deployed in southern Lebanon were not its best. "One of the war's ironies," Andrew Axum writes, "is that many of Hizbullah's best and most skilled fighters never saw action, lying in wait along the Litani River with the expectation that the IDF assault would be much deeper and arrive much faster than it did."

The Hizbullah scored its most impressive military victory in the area of intelligence. Israel's electronic warfare systems are amongst the most advanced in the world; they are war-tested and developed in cooperation with the United States. Indeed, the Israeli commanders were certain at the outset of the war of their ability to jam Hizbullah communications. They were wrong. Hizbullah's command and control system remained operational throughout the war; they evaded Israeli jamming devices by using fiber-optic lines instead of relying on wireless signals.

The Hizbullah had blocked the Barak anti-missile system on Israeli ships; hacked into Israeli battlefield communications in order to monitor Israeli tank movements; and, they monitored cell-phone conversations in Hebrew between Israeli reservists and their families. They intercepted Israeli military communications on battlefield casualties and announced them on their media network.

They successfully employed decoys to hide the locations of hundreds of bunkers they built in southern Lebanon to store weapons and shelter their fighters. As a world leader in weapons technology and communications, Israel had a decisive advantage in electronic warfare in its wars with Arab armies. In July 2006, the Hizbullah neutralised this advantage.

Israel claims that it killed 400-500 Hizbullah fighters. Crooke and Perry insist that these numbers are exaggerated. "It is impossible for Shi'ites (and Hizbullah)," they argue, "not to allow an honourable burial for their martyrs, so in this case it is simply a matter of counting funerals. Fewer than 180 funerals have been held for Hizbullah fighters -- nearly equal to the number killed on the Israeli side."

The Israeli setback in the July War of 2006, then, represents a paradigm shift -- not something that can be pinned on careless errors in decision-making. Unlike the Arab armies in the past, the Hizbullah had fought a people's war. It neutralised Israel's technological superiority by deploying its mobile, elusive, disciplined and skilled guerilla detachments -- not a centralised, conventional army -- to fight the Israelis.

The Hizbullah fights in small groups, it is evasive, it is secretive, it owns its terrain, it trains, it has high



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