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“LEBANESE SECURITY” IS THE PRETEXT FOR THE NAVAL BABEL AROUND LEBANON’S SHORES

September 4, 2006 DEBKAFfile.com reported: “The extraordinary buildup of European naval and military strength in and around Lebanon’s shores is way out of proportion for the task the European contingents of expanded UNIFIL have undertaken: to create a buffer between Israel and Hizballah.

Close investigation by **DEBKAFfile**’s military and intelligence sources discloses that “Lebanese security” and peacemaking is not the object of the exercise. It is linked to the general anticipation of a military clash between the United States and Israel, on one side, and Iran and possibly Syria on the other, some time from now until November

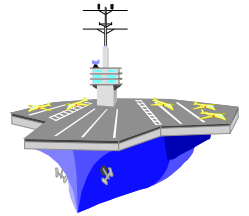
This expectation has brought together the greatest sea and air armada Europe has ever assembled at any point on earth since World War II: two carriers with 75 fighter-bombers, spy planes and helicopters on their decks; 15 warships of various types – 7 French, 5 Italian, 2-3 Green, 3-5 German, and five American; thousands of Marines – French, Italian and German, as well as 1,800 US Marines.

It is improbably billed as support for a mere 7,000 European soldiers who are deployed in Lebanon to prevent the dwindling Israeli force of 4-5,000 soldiers and some 15-16,000 Hizballah militiamen from coming to blows as well as for humanitarian odd jobs.

A Western military expert remarked to **DEBKAFfile** that the European naval forces cruising off Lebanese shores are roughly ten times as much as the UNIFIL contingents require as cover, especially when UNIFIL’s duties are strictly non-combat. After all, none of the UN contingents will be engaged in disarming Hizballah or blocking the flow of weapons incoming from Syria and Iran.

So, if not for Lebanon, what is this fine array of naval power really there for? First, according to our military sources, the European participants feel the need of a strong naval presence in the eastern Mediterranean to prevent a possible Iranian-US-Israeli war igniting an Iranian long-range Shahab missile attack on Europe; second, as a deterrent to dissuade Syria and Hizballah from opening a second front against American and Israel from their eastern Mediterranean coasts.

Numbers alone do not do justice to the immense operational capabilities and firepower amassed opposite Lebanon.”...”



ISRAELIS DISCOVERS ROCKET LAB 'FINANCED BY HIZBULLAH'

September 6, 2006 The World Tribune reported: “Israel’s military has found an explosives laboratory operated by the Fatah movement and two rockets in the West Bank city of Tulkarm. The military reported the arrest of two Fatah operatives — identified as Tahar Amar and Hassan Ufi — and accused them of being responsible for the laboratory, Middle East Newline reported. “The Fatah people were financed by Hizbullaha,” a military source said. The sources said Hizbullaha supplied funds and directions for rocket strikes against Israel.

The arrests took place on Sept. 1 by the Israel Security Agency and the border police. The sources said the Fatah operatives were preparing to fire two rockets into Israel. Tulkarm, at the edge of the West Bank, is located about 13 kilometers from Netanya, a major Israeli city. Tulkarm has been a haven for Fatah and Islamic Jihad insurgents.

In July, a Fatah-financed cell was accused of attempting to fire rockets from Tulkarm. One rocket was said to have exploded during launch. In another operation, the Israel Air Force struck Al Atatra and Jabalya in the northern Gaza Strip. The military said the targets were buildings used for the storage of weaponry.

“Terrorist organizations operate from within the civilian population, while cynically exploiting uninvolved civilians and using them as human shields, exploiting their homes to store weaponry and launching rockets...from populated areas,” the military said.”

RUSSIA: SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN COULD BACKFIRE

September 6, 2006 The Voice of America News reported: “A top Kremlin official says imposing sanctions on Iran, because of its nuclear program could be counterproductive. Russian presidential adviser Igor Shuvalov made the comment Tuesday in Moscow. He called on the United Nations Security Council to act with caution.

Earlier, China called for Iran’s nuclear standoff with major powers to be resolved through dialogue, even after Iran defied a U.N. Security Council deadline to stop uranium enrichment.

European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana is expected to meet with top Iranian nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani this week to clarify Tehran’s indication that it wants to negotiate a resolution.

President Bush has said there must be consequences for defying the Security Council and he has stressed that Iran cannot be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon.

The Council’s five permanent members - the United States, Russia, France, Britain and China - along with Germany are to meet soon to discuss their next move.

AL-QAEDA CALLS ON US TO CONVERT

September 3, 2006 BBC News reported: "Al-Qaeda has urged non-Muslims - especially in the US - to convert to Islam, according to a new videotape. The call is made by a man identified on the film as "Azzam the American", a convert also known as Adam Gadahn who is wanted for questioning by the FBI. He says ignorance of Islam leads Westerners to accept wars waged by their governments and Israel against Muslim countries. The video opens with an introduction by al-Qaeda number two Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Separately, Palestinian militants who held two Fox News journalists hostage for almost two weeks last month vowed to target all non-Muslims who entered the Palestinian territories.

"Any infidel blood will have no sanctity," the Holy Jihad Brigades group said in a statement posted on the internet. The group, which was previously unknown, had forced the captured journalists to convert to Islam at gunpoint, according to one of the released hostages.

In the al-Qaeda tape posted on an Islamic website, Zawahiri made a brief statement urging viewers to listen carefully to the message, entitled: "An Invitation to Islam".

The speaker in the new video was identified as Azzam the American and appeared in the video dressed in a turban and seated in front of a computer. Gadahn is believed by US authorities to be running al-Qaeda's propaganda operation.

He is thought to have appeared with his face covered in a 2004 video shown by ABC News in which the speaker threatened al-Qaeda attacks.

"To Americans and the rest of Christendom we say, either repent [your] misguided ways and enter into the light of truth or keep your poison to yourself," he said in English on the new tape. "But whatever you do don't attempt to spread your misery and misguidance to our lands," he added."..."

FRANCE REJECTS "WAR ON TERROR"

September 7, 2006 Reuters reported: "France issued an implicit criticism of U.S. foreign policy on Thursday, rejecting talk of a "war on terror". Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin, speaking in parliament, expressed these views on global terrorism, while President Jacques Chirac backed France's claims to the international front rank with a fresh defense of his country's nuclear arsenal.

Villepin noted Chirac's strong opposition to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 and said the Arab state had now sunk into violence and was feeding new regional crises.

"Let us not forget that these crises play into the hands of all extremists," the prime minister said in a debate on the Middle East. "We can see this with terrorism, whether it tries to strike inside or outside our frontiers," he added.

"Against terrorism, what's needed is not a war. It is, as France has done for many years, a determined fight based on vigilance at all times and effective cooperation with our partners.

"But we will only end this curse if we also fight against injustice, violence and these crises," he said. Villepin's remarks, which came a day after U.S. President George Bush admitted that the CIA had interrogated dozens of terrorism suspects in secret foreign locations, did not explicitly mention the United States. But his rejection of language employed by Bush, who often uses the expression "war on terror" underlined the longstanding differences between Paris and Washington."..."

KILLER TB OUTBREAK SPREADING, EXPERT SAYS



September 7, 2006 The Associated Press reported: "A deadly new strain of extremely drug-resistant tuberculosis discovered in South Africa is likely to spread beyond the rural area where 52 of the 53 people diagnosed with it have died, the doctor who discovered the super bug said.

The extent of the outbreak in the Kwazulu-Natal region of eastern South Africa is unknown because tests are expensive and specialized, Dr. Tony Moll said.

Moll identified the strain in tests carried out at King George V Hospital in Durban, South Africa, the provincial capital about 150 miles southeast of Tugela Ferry, where he works at a government hospital. "Most hospitals don't have such facilities and support," Moll said.

Extremely drug-resistant TB has identified among highly mobile miners and probably can be found all over the country, Moll said. "In some of the mines, they have identified (extremely drug-resistant TB) and, because our population is mobile, if you looked in other provinces, no doubt you will find" the new strain, he said...

TB has been on the rise because AIDS has lowered so many South Africans' ability to fight it and other infections. All 53 patients who had extremely drug-resistant TB tested positive for HIV or were suspected positive, Moll said."..."