

# Assess the impact of the israeli invasions of lebanon in 1978 and 1982 on the dev...

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Assess the impact of the Israeli invasions of Lebanon in 1978 and 1982 on the development of the Arab Israeli Conflict The Israeli invasions in Lebanon negatively contributed to the development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. The impact of the assaults lead to an increase in Palestinian hostilities, a switch in international sympathies, the development of a terrorist organisation and ultimately, a step back on the road to peace. This is due chiefly to the nature of the violence and the Israeli occupation of Southern Lebanon.

From the beginning of the Arab Israeli conflict, Lebanon had been a very minor player, contributing only in sending troops during the 1948 war. Following the Israeli War of Independence, approximately 100 000 Palestinian refugees settled in Southern Lebanon. This number more than doubled following the 1967 war and Black September, leaving more than 300 000 refugees in camps along Israel's northern border. This increase in Palestinian settlement had two key negative effects on Israel, causing their interest in Lebanese affairs to greatly increase to the point of drastic and violent action.

The first of these effects was the unbalancing of the Christian majority in Lebanon. Throughout the 1960's, Lebanon had a predominately Christian government. This was a security blanket for Israel as they had significant sympathy from the Lebanese government. The influx of Palestinian Sunni Muslims on such a large scale threw off this balance, leaving Israel vulnerable to Palestinian hostile attacks from Lebanon, with the Christian minority government unable to prevent them.

Secondly, Palestinian settlement in refugee camps along the southern boarder of Lebanon lead to the development of a ' state within a state'. Such a large group of Palestinians prompted the Fatah to relocate to West Beirut, Lebanon's capital. The Fatah used these camps as a base for guerilla attacks on Israel. By 1971 the PLO controlled the camps and became very involved in the domestic dispute between the Christian and Muslim Lebanese.

Following a PLO raid into Israel on the 11 March 1978, and the death of thirty-four Israelis, the Likud invaded South Lebanon.

Israel aimed and succeeded at destroying PLO infrastructure and setting up a 15km security buffer zone. In the process however, over 1000 Palestinians were killed, and 200 000 Palestinians and Lebanese were left homeless. The 1978 Israeli attack on southern Lebanon had a tremendously negative impact on the conflict. Though significantly setback, Palestinian hostilities only inflated in the face of such drastic retaliation by Israel. The international community reacted swiftly and the UN Security Council released a resolution that insisted Israel withdrew.

The UN Interim Force in Lebanon was also established. Israel was beginning to loose international support and sympathy, as the nature of the retaliation was immensely larger than the actual threat. The conflict also heightened Israel's resentment to both Palestine and the International community, firstly because they resented being made to withdraw and secondly because they did not achieve their aim of destroying the PLO. Though Israel was forced to withdraw, they kept some influence over the region with the formation of the predominantly Christian South Lebanon Army.

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The aim of this force was to prevent future PLO attacks on Israel. This added to the tensions on the boarder, creating a situation ripe for further conflict thus substantially developing the conflict. The army had little success in stopping PLO attacks, and by 1982 the build up of tension exploded in a second Lebanese raid, under the pretext of ' defense of the Israeli people. ' Though PLO terrorists were indeed firing rockets into Israel, they were inferior technology incapable of serious damage, Russia's surplus from WWII.

On the 9th June 1982, 40 000 Israeli troops entered Southern Lebanon. the objectives outlined by the Israeli government were contradictory to the perceived ' real aims'. The ' official' aim of the attack was to drive the PLO north as to remove Israel from the range of the rockets. The Likud claimed it had no alternate motives or aims, claiming the operation, known, as Operation Peace for Galilee would be over within two days. The reality of the attack however was much different.

Firstly, the operation extended to Beirut as to install a friendly Christian government, and force the Palestinians into Jordan and strengthen the buffer zone between Lebanon and Israel. Secondly, the attack continued long past its two day estimate, and by the fourth day bombardments of Beirut began, and continued for approximately 80 days. The international community again became involved, principally the US who attempted to negotiate a ceasefire, which was eventually signed in mid August. The second invasion contributed greatly to Israel's declining reputation in the international community.

Due to the large number of Lebanese and Palestinian casualties Israel received international condemnation, while the world's sympathies shifted towards Palestine. It was however, a partial success for Israel as they did drive the PLO out of Lebanon, and expand the security buffer zone. Without the protection of the PLO however, the 370 000 Palestinian refugees could no longer operate as a 'state within a state'. Due to this lack of recognition, they lost all sense of security and thought the international community could provide aid, state sovereignty prevented Lebanon from having to support the refugees.

The second raid greatly increased the Arab Israeli conflict as it directly led to the creation of the Lebanese Muslim terrorist wing, Hezbollah, a group which would prove instrumental in future hostilities. Israel's continuous occupation of Southern Lebanon only aggravated the terrorist cell, to the point of retaliation. Israel's invasions of Lebanon in 1978 and 1982 greatly contributed to the negative development of the Arab Israeli Conflict. Though retaliation to various Palestinian guerilla attacks can be readily justified, the scale of violence in both 1978 and 1982 were unwarranted and unjust.

The displacement of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon coupled with the abortion of the PLO from Lebanon greatly developed the already hostile nature of the conflict. Similarly, the creation of the Arab terrorist group, Hezbollah was a mammoth step backwards on the road to peace in the Middle East. By the end of 1982 the Arab Israeli Conflict was no closer to being resolved and, in some instances further away from the ultimate goal of

peace. This increase in Middle Eastern tension was both a direct and indirect result of the two Israeli invasions of Lebanon in the period 1978 to 1982.