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Hello everybody.

This is just to end this morning's episode of Memories Military, a story by a military that I'm broadcasting today, has a certain echo with the news because it tells the operations of the Israelis against the tunnels, seemingly dug by the Hezbollah, at the border with Lebanon.

And of course, it's a coincidence because it's one of the primary objectives of Israel in the days or weeks that come, the fight between the tunnels of Hamas, this time under Gaza, which is a particularly complex task when you see it, when you hear it, the way we took it to the south of Lebanon, and that we multiply it by the colossal amount of tunnels that are currently under Gaza.

So it's an episode that we recorded a while ago, there are several months, so obviously there is no question about the tunnels of Hamas under Gaza, but it shows that it's a threat, it's a concern that Israel has, of course, for years, and it allows to face certain action modes that Israel could put to the point against these tunnels, for example, the injection of concrete at high pressure.

On the other hand, it also deserves to be put a little ahead of the work of French military in Lebanon, since all this is told from the point of view of the soldiers of the Finul, which is a regular deployment and important for the French armies, and which must obviously be kept in mind because there is always a French contingent there, charged to maintain, say, balance and peace, while we obviously wonder if there is no risk that a second front opens for Israel to the north, facing Osbola, in the coming weeks.

Hello everyone and welcome to this new episode in the viewer,

of operations testimonies, in any case, of military life.

Today, with Colonel Olivier Passo, so Colonel in the Army of Earth,

on the other hand, a social researcher here, I can not forget to tell the audience that you were already coming from afar.

This is the first time we meet, but you had told us about Israel and the Israeli-Libani relations and the Israeli-Libani operations since 2006.

Now there is time, I think it must have been during the first lockdown, something like that.

And today, to talk to us, to tell us a story, which is not very far,

since it refers to this same geographical region, which is less ancient too,

since I think it's quite recent, it dates back to 2018.

So maybe tell us where it was exactly and what you were doing,

so I can say it in Liban at that time.

Hello Alexander, I was affected in the south of Liban, within the Finul,

the strength of the United Nations between Liban and Israel.

At the end of 2018, I was within a team called Liaison, which I was the head of.

This team of Liaison has the permission of a Liaison and a tactical mediation

between the two Belligerents, Liban and Israel, in any case, their respective army forces,

because the two Belligerents do not talk, there has been no peace agreement or armistice since the most recent wars.

So it's the Liban, the Liban, or is it the Hezbollah too?

I mean, Israel, on the other hand, we can see quite well, but on the Lebanese side,

with whom do you talk directly?

So the Finul and the UN do not talk directly with the Hezbollah,

we only address the army forces, so the Lebanese army forces on one side,

the Israeli defense forces on the other.

On the field, especially because we evolve on the blue line,

which is 120 km long, and in all operations, we are led to engage,

as we say, with all kinds of other people who can be people of training,

elected officials, NGOs, etc.

But officially, it's the Lebanese army forces, the Israeli defense forces.

So what message do you have? What do they say to you?

In fact, it's often the messages from claims,

from protests against what they estimate as violations of the blue line

or agreements of the UN resolution.

So it can be people suspected of the blue line,

it can be a violation of the blue line,

it can be shots that are heard or alleged,

works by the Israelis or the Lebanese who are going to cross the blue line,

it can be people who cross the blue line, it happens.

Mutant troops who cross.

There are really a lot of activities and each time,

they take themselves physically and militarily to the other belligerent,

but they do not talk to them.

And so the tension rises, they must be regulated by the United Nations.

And the only ones who are on both sides

and who can engage with the two parties are the allies.

And it's easy.

I mean, I imagine that it's not quite easy,

but I mean, since time immemorial,

now there are procedures that are well rolled out, etc.

and that everyone knows how it works,

or is it a bit of a balance game that you see every time?

Yes, there are always news,

there are actually a lot of SOP, procedures.

The UN is a procedure machine,

but on the ground, there are always things that are unlikely.

People are not necessarily there on the ground for years,

so there are permanent reliefs, so there are things ...

Do you want to say on the blue side?

Yes, that's it.

And then even on the protagonists.

I think of people on the Israeli side,

the units that turn, they come from the Gaza Strip or the territories,

the action modes are much more aggressive,

and so they find themselves in front of another enemy,

and they tend to be too aggressive compared to what would actually be needed,

and that makes the tensions rise.

We can discover, for example,

I remember, we discovered suspicious objects

that could be separated from the IEDs,

the flags that were planted on the grid,

on the blue line, to provoke or create a particular tension.

So flags, flags, etc.

So each time, you have to think,

you have to coordinate with the old people,

and each time, the liaison,

we always take care of informing the other party

of what we are going to do, etc.

to always try to make it look like a dream,

to keep it at the lowest possible level.

So, first of all, how long did you stay?

I stayed a year.

It's a good duration.

You take the blow, and then...

Yes, my predecessor was two years old.

The more we experienced situations,

incidents, the lighter we were,

and then there was a kind of...

an exact knowledge,

a knowledge of the ground,

because all the blue lines ended up being known by the parkers.

We know the incidents,

we anticipate a little more easily the incidents

that happen,

which in this case is the strongest in some places. We know that, for example, B-30, it's a blue line, it's the place where the 2006 war began, when the people of the U.S. Bola crossed that place and heard an ambush at an Israeli patrol. So these things, we know them in places where there were, for example, shooting starts, from Palestinians who shot at the mortars on the other side. So all of that. it's not in two months that we discover it. So you have to stay for a long time to know the hot places, and not for too long to... not only to get the hang of it, or at least to use... There is a fatigue, because indeed, in the detention camps, and the one I'm going to talk about now, we work a lot, we sleep little, there are always incidents that put a little bit of tension and nervousness. So precisely, this incident, you said it was in 2008, so maybe, where were you from your passage there, and how did it start? So we'll say, I was already there for a few months, because it was in December, and everything started, this story begins on December 4th, in the night, actually, in the early morning,

which is the headquarters of the Finul,

by a phone call,

at Nakoura.

while I was in my bed,

well, the major state, in any case, and there, an Israeli officer, the major state of the northern region, of the northern command, calls, and he says, there is something important happening, the northern command is mobilized, and we have to see it, we have to come. with the command of the force, we arrive at 7 am, at the post-front, so there, I call the command of the force, I call the general of the major state, General Gravett, that I greet here, in general French, and then the team, mv team. which was in Israeli territory, or CE. who calls me, I don't remember, and he tells me, well, it was in the middle of the night, because we are not very aware, but there is a deployment of force, really unusual, there are things happening, it's amazing. So after, with the Italian general, we coordinate, we go to the point of passage of Roshan Igra, which is the only point of passage, which is on the border of the Mediterranean between Lebanon and Israel, and there we arrive, and indeed. we see that there is a lot of force deployed, a more aggressive posture than usual,

and so the meeting begins, and there is a general, the Israeli general, who addresses our general, and who tells him. well. something serious happened, we discovered tunnels, we discovered tunnels on our territory, they are transfrontal, and it's attack tunnels. So the Israeli government... It's very new, the idea that there are tunnels between Lebanon and Israel. So. there are many, there are many, there are many tunnels in Gaza. In Lebanon, there have always been tunnels presented, but it's the first time that they had manifestly discovered the existence of these tunnels, which were well built. which are ready to be used. And because, like that, we know that there are many tunnels between Egypt and from Egypt, etc. So we could say, it's logical, he was necessarily going to have the other side too. Especially that the Hezbollah has not been a mystery for several years, that he wants, without taking,

not only defending Lebanon, but now attacking the Israeli attack, by all means possible, by drones, by the sea, or, indeed, by the tunnels. So, in any case, there. it was the first time that they had it, in any case. In any case, they announced it. They announced it, let's say that the tunnels, we see small parts of the tunnels, parts of the gallery, of the Liban side, but not necessarily near the blue line. In the class, it was really the Israeli side, they had discovered it, quite far, without a doubt, hundreds of meters inside the Israeli territory. And they had the conviction that it was a tunnel, because they had not believed that it was a tunnel from the Lebanese side. So... It's verified, it's enough to enter, we see where it goes. It's not so obvious, because there, you think it's a tunnel in which we can enter like that, but it was not tunnels that were going down, they wouldn't flow, if you want.

It was...

The tunnels they discovered,

they were tunnels

that were, in fact,

huge galleries,

but several tens of meters deep,

and there are,

in fact,

only one in which

we could enter at the height of man.

All the others were galleries

that were very deep,

and we knew,

in fact, we had to...

Yeah,

they would have had to make probes

to see where they went.

Well, that's what they did,

that's what they did.

So,

what were their...

So, they protested,

very well.

So, the...

At first,

they often had an idea

behind them.

So,

in any case,

what's important to say

is that they launched

this operation,

it's the Israeli government

who decided to launch this operation.

So.

it was called

North,

North on Shield.

And so,

from there,

their operations

tended to try to show

that it was a tunnel

that they had

identified the departures,

in any case,

the existence

of several hundred meters

of the blue line

was really under the blue line.

But for that,

they had to make holes.

They had to dig a little everywhere.

They had to dig

very close to the blue line,

because otherwise,

we couldn't...

well.

we could always refute

the fact that

it was a very...

really close to Lebanon.

And so,

for that,

to do...

to do operations

of terracing,

of genius

near the blue line,

it was obviously

a generator

of a lot of tension

and risk of escalation.

And just,

they had never found

the place where they dug the tunnel.

Well,

the Israeli side?

Yeah.

No.

No, because in fact,

these tunnels were,

let's say,

starting from the principle

that these tunnels

existed well,

which had been dug

by the Esbola,

let's say. In fact, the tunnels went from the Lebanese side, sometimes guite far from the blue line. They had a very deep way, well, so as not to wake up under the sound of... because it makes noise. It was machines that dug inside. And so, the tunnels, once they passed the blue line, continued also to several tens or hundreds of meters in Israeli territory, went up, but in no case had these tunnels reached the surface, because otherwise, they would have been seen. So the idea was that the gallery was there and that the day they were going to use it, it would end up the persimmon. Exactly. That's it. The doctrine that was behind it was to keep them at 2 meters, 2 meters, 3 meters. And here, in one night, we could pierce them

and take them out,

make an action, a command operation in an incubator, for example. So. since there is no indeed to take out the Israeli side, you have to join them, you have to go all the way to the place. And so, you need big machines and you can see it. So, you can see it in all the activities of the Blue Online, as I mentioned earlier, creating tensions and the Lebanese don't like it at all. The people of the Israeli genius are protected by the Israeli forces of the FDI. the Israeli Defense Forces, which generates, on the other hand, by Efe Mirouard, the forces of the Lebanese forces but also of civilians who are often from the U.S. Bola, people of training, people of the Afinul, etc. So, all of this generates tension. The Israelis had suspicions about the departure of this tunnel.

They thought

to know where some of this tunnel was going, but these tunnels weren't free. They were in houses or in factories. And so. in any case, all private properties. And they asked us, in fact, the Israelis asked the Afinul to investigate the places they thought this tunnel was going, but as it was private property, on the one hand, and that the Liban, by principle, refuted the existence of this tunnel and all that came from the Israeli, anyway, is fallacious and potentially nuisible, perverse, etc. There were two questions that gave us the potential of this tunnel departure. Yes. So, they asked you to do

your thing in their place,

so... So. on the Israeli side, they were doing their job and so, they had launched this operation that mobilized a lot of resources, in particular, means of genius or of landmines, of forage, that they didn't have, that they had rented. And this operation cost a lot, because they had called for reserves, etc. People were working night and day, so they wanted to go fast and they asked us, Afinul. to test the existence. So, they were convinced of their work, but they wanted, in addition, the UN, as a referee, confirm the existence of this transfrontal tunnel, which was not easy for Afinul, because we didn't have any technological means, we didn't have the genius unit that was deployed within Afinul,

so to do it, it was really hard to get back to Israeli technology. By the way, they told you how they knew it? So, there is a whole set of sensors all along, and SO, it is undoubtedly by acoustic or seismic means, some say, it is difficult to know that some of these tunnels had been located for a long time, but manifestly, they had there, they had discovered the existence of tunnels that they feared that one of them would allow an imminent attack. And there, the fear, on the other hand, was to say that if Ebola, knowing that this tunnel had been discovered and destroyed, it could be said that we are going to use it before it is destroyed.

And so,

an imminent attack

was a risk.

And so,

what are the steps after?

So,

there were

quite a few fields,

there were maybe

four, five,

six fields

that were...

So,

we had to

follow

the Israeli activities,

on the one hand,

to observe the documentary,

and above all,

to avoid

all kinds of tensions.

And there,

I have a little...

an incident

that I would like to tell you about.

It is in the village of

Miss Ejbel,

which is a Shiite village,

where

there were enormous

works of

Israelis.

There was, at the time,

a storm,

but also a earthquake,

because...

A Shiite village,

but on the Israeli side.

The Lebanese side.

Ah, okay.

So, they went,

they crossed the blue line.

No, no, no,

they crossed the village

of Miss Ejbel, but really to the side, because the blue line, the blue line, in fact. on the Lebanese side, there are many villages. On the Israeli side, they are further away, because it is a military zone. There are a few quibuts, let's say, but most of the houses are still in retreat. On the Lebanese side, they are really very close to the blue line in some places. So, there are Israeli engines on one side, the Lebanese village just on the other side of the censer. Well, the village was a little further, there was a lot of detachment. And the fact that these people, these genius engines and these Israeli employees' forces, this was the nervousness, the interest, a certain intrique from the Lebanese side, which was that there were always boats coming, especially on the weekend. And so.

it was detachment,

the attraction of the thing.

And a good day,

a weekend,

there was really

a very important detachment

in this village

of Miss Ejuel.

And so,

we had to be there.

There were also

the people of La Finule.

It turns out that

in this village,

there is an old contentious

because

the blue line

was not accepted.

The blue line

was delimited

in some places,

but it was not delimited

because the villagers

estimate

that the

Israeli lands

belong to them.

They have never accepted

the existence

of this blue line

and therefore

they even contest La Finule.

So,

we had deployed

soldiers from Nepal,

because

in this place,

it was the battle in Nepal

that was responsible

to at least delimit

the area

and that it

rendiga a little the crowd.

What is ironic is that

they are also used to

frontal quarries

on

border locations.

Yes.

That's why

they should be good.

In any case,

it was difficult

because

there was a political recovery.

The mother

was a mother of Esbolin

and

I remember

he was

put

and interrogated

back

to the Israeli military

in order

to vote against

the Israeli occupation.

I must not say

very nice words

against La Finule.

And then

at a given moment

there was someone

who arrived

and there were many people

who arrived with him.

It was a deputy,

a deputy from Esbolin

who came from Beirut

and there too

he was accompanied

by many people

and he

put himself

towards the blue line.

The crowd was well heated

and

what was coming

was coming.

They

entered the Israeli territory.

The Malorenne Palace

was made in French

and so

we found ourselves

I was on the Lebanese side.

There was a team

of allies

who were

on the Israeli side

with a

Shepriot officer

who

was called

Christos.

And then

after a certain time

Christos

contacted me

and told me

that the Israelis

they will no longer accept

they leave us

10 minutes

to rest

everyone

in the Lebanese territory

otherwise they will use

weapons.

So

obviously

there we were

the tension was rising

we

we mobilized

there was a colonel

of the Fal

who was

who helped us a lot

and forced the Lebanese

and who

had authority

on the population

which is not always the case

and

we succeeded

we pushed

really physically

the Bado

I remember

I was with my

sergeant

sergeant Max

who was

a physical

of Boucheron

who was particularly appreciated

in this circumstance.

It's interesting

because it's all the

the paradigm also of the Finul

that is to say

the idea is still

not to use weapons

it's to interpose

without really using

weapons

and so

we find ourselves

to physically interpose

and she played

drugs

more than anything

But we don't have weapons

SO

it's an episode

as there was a lot

there were faces

between the two

etc

there were

there were

pointed weapons

there were

summations shots

but

here

in any case there was no declension of hostility no party wanted it but as always it's even if the two belligerents do not want a return in war we are we are never forced an isolated act is misinterpreted by the other side and then it ends with nothing so we arrived little by little to what the Israelis decide to neutralize its tunnel how do we neutralize its tunnel they proceeded in two ways SO the first way it's the first historically in time

around the 20th of December

I think it was

we were

the bond

was assembled

in a dinner

of adieu

for

an Italian officer

in a restaurant

of Nakora

and there

I'm called

so we were all there

so it was rather positive

but it was still

the subject

the evening

it was already night

and

the Israeli mayor

called me

he said

there

we

decided

to

destroy

by explosive

the tunnel

the name

the code

in any case

towards the village

of Ibanet

of Ramia

and

we're going to do it

the explosion

will take place

at 21.30

so

it will be

a powerful explosion

S0

you have to

evacuate

this area in a radius of 1 km before 21.30 you have 1.30 we have 1.30 they are nice so there we we we moved a bit the diner was a bit short the diner was short unfortunately and we called everyone how strong it was already in the current I'm called the Ibanet the Ibanet who said no, it's not possible etc. he reminded me to tell me ok but you have to ask a more important forecast otherwise it's not possible well marches of course to the failure the Israeli they have their plan they will not they will not change their plan

like that

so it was when we

after all the lines

it was

20.30

and then we said

we left

with a small team

so I left

with Mona Jean-Hirlanda

with Sergeant Max

and then with a Ibanet

called Joseph

and we left

towards Ramia

it was raining

it was night

not well lit

and

there was

20 minutes of road

about 25

we arrive there

and we see

that the faults

had already put

perimeters

to block the roads

which was

what was good

the people of La Funule

also

the major team

of the César

there were people of La Funule

who were also in interposition

then we

ourselves

with our car

we also

we walked

a little everywhere

in the 5 minutes

that were left

and we said

where to go

to get out

as much as possible

and then

it's a few minutes

before the big boom

we too

we took

as little as possible

and we put behind

a building

and we waited

the explosion

in fact

there were two

they said there were two

one small

and one big

and then

after

as we said

and there

it really was

a big boom

it was

there was

a tunnel

afterwards

where

I think

the explosives

were more important

it was not

as spectacular as that

the closure

there were

there were

but it was between the land

or

yes

in the other tunnel

where I was not present

or the day

of the explosion

there was a huge crater

but there

for this tunnel

it seems that

the explosion

is rather deep

there were still

projections

of stone and gravel

over more than 100 meters

so it was

it was still

risky to walk

SO

that's how they neutralized

a tunnel

and then

the other

the other way

especially

the tunnels

they discovered

they said

there were six

it was

the 26th of December

a few days later

and

and there

a team

this time

from the Lebanese side

which was

an Armenian officer

who was in patrol

some Ovanese

called me

and told me

there is a problem

there is

an Israeli drone

who flies

very low

the Kferkela village

and

I specify it because drones drones and combat aircraft who fly Liban, Israeli they were there all the time practically every day but they fly very high these drones generally with them it's a small tactical drone so bad memory and the Ripper it's a long distance long endurance of this type and there it was a small drone who flew very low and in general it was the first time I saw that the Israelis don't fly their little drone on the Lebanese side of the blue line there was something unusual but we didn't realize about it I specify that this place in Kferkela there is a wall which is the blue line and finally the Israeli territory is hidden by a wall

and so

the work that was conducted to foray towards the tunnel was quite invisible on the other hand and we could only access if the Israeli military let us the possibility to go which was not always the case we didn't know what they were doing on the Israeli side still on the Kferkela side there was this drone 5 minutes later there is the Lebanese officer who calls me saying there is a violation of the Lebanese territory there is an Israeli drone a drone enemy which overrides our territory it's a violation of our sovereignty etc I call the Israelis who tell me there is no problem the drone will come will come back to us he comes back from the Israeli side and then Ovanes calls me

a little later

a few minutes later and then he tells me something strange happens

there

there are

many people

who come out of everywhere

in the village

military

guards

infantry

people with

municipalities

people in uniforms

in uniforms

they are blocking the roads

they are nervous

there are people running from everywhere

and

and we

well

it's a little weird

in fact

they were

blocking

blocking a perimeter

and

I say

to Ovanes

if you want to see

what's going on

try to take pictures

it's not too dangerous

in the meantime

we learn that

another team

not of the Finul

but

of the UN

which belongs to the UN

of the observers

but who

they

against us

do not make mediation

they got involved

by a group

of civilians

they made bad money

molested

and they made

pick their

material

SO

here

I have

the coup

of the consign

that I had given to Ovanes

I said

well

this morning

maybe

not too much

Ovanes

should have kept the camera

and it was

in life

but he

it was a guy

who was

particularly intelligent

and

as I said

he managed to

escape

I do not know

the place

in fact

the Ovanes

in question

wanted to

simulate

and in fact

it was a

factory

or an old factory

disinfected

in which

we saw

cement

that came out

everywhere

so

there was cement

that

overflowed

from the factory

and even in the street

incredible

so people

were even

glued to the ground

practically

it was incredible

and so

this story

of cement

that overflowed

in fact

it was because

on the Israeli side

from the tunnel

that they had discovered

they had injected

tons

or hundreds

thousands of tons

I do not know

of cement

at high pressure

and the thing had overflowed

on the other side

and they did

communication operation

because the drone

was there

to film

all this

SO

they have

used

a kind of cement

quickly

two tunnels

I think

the others with explosives

they have to keep

they have to pay more

but it's

it's more funny

and it's probably

less dangerous

to put cement

at high pressure

SO

it's a system

that

has not been

confused

and it's the only

it's the only place

of the blue line

that we knew

without mistake

that it was

a tunnel

and

then

what is the next step

that is

anyway

the Lebanese

have always refuted

the existence of these tunnels

because they estimate

for example

as I said

it's always

what comes

what comes in the middle

is never

is never

something to consider

but

they have

their argument

was to say

that it was a tunnel

that dated

a very long time ago

that is

from the time

where

where even

the faults

were not present

in the tunnel

but

in the tunnel

in the tunnel

were not present

in the Liban

so

there were

Palestinian groups

who had believed

things

well

it is obvious that

these tunnels

some had been

some were in

very very good state

in any case

the one

in which

we could

penetrate

was

recent

in fact

it seems that

the Israelis

surprised

there were still

tools

materials

the tunnel

the most

standing

and there was electricity

there was ventilation

and

in the south

you went to see the Israelis

they were happy

their cost

they were very happy

and

in fact

their goal

was obviously

to neutralize

all possible

attacks

but also

to make

recognized by

the international community

the fact that

there are

terrorist attacks

or attacks

in general

against their territory

and the debate

where

the Israelis

set up

a resolution

I don't remember

how many

and how many

were voted or not

but in any case

the fight

also took place there

with their allies

thank you very much

Colombian people

they took it

I'm Vanessa Zoltan

and I'm a Jewish

atheist non-denominational chaplain and I'm Matt Potts and I'm an Episcopal priest and a professor at Harvard Divinity School and we co-host the podcast Harry Potter and the Sacred Text which is a week-by-week read-through of the Harry Potter books where we treat those books as if they were sacred texts what we mean by that is not that we think that the text is perfect or that we respect their author but that they can teach us how to be more loving in the world listen to the show or wherever you get your podcasts new episodes drop on Thursdays