

Dear Readers,

Once again, the Hamas rockets are bombarding Israel. Never before has every Israeli citizen become a potential target. Gone are the days when I could drive 5 kilometers outside of my Kiriya Shimon home and be out of rocket range. Yet life goes on: People go to work, kids go to summer camp, excited fans in outdoor cafes boo every time a goal is scored on Brazil. The sirens go off, those who can run make a run to the nearest protected area, and after ten minutes resume whatever they were doing.

It's more intense than the last war: We now have ultra sophisticated defense systems that can actually knock out a rocket that was fired a few minutes away; But they have tens of thousands more rockets, bigger and better, acquired in violation of the agreements they agreed to last time. We used to fantasize about such a defense system in the Katyusha days of the '80s and '90s, and now it's a reality. Many of the incoming missiles are knocked out of the sky. Still, there will be a price to pay: the cost of repairing hundreds of homes, cars, public buildings, the cost of repairing wounded bodies and the months of rehab. So far, miraculously there has been no loss of life: may it stay that way.

However, there is an unsung victim of this war that has gone unnoticed and that is the damage to the English language. Somewhere deep below the Kiria (Israel's pentagon—or in short-- the spentagon) is a secret list of names for the future skirmishes, campaigns, operations and outright wars. And in a top-secret office sits the official name translator.

This time they got someone who failed English for International Purposes. Because this week's war has been given the English cognomen

" Operation Protective Edge."

OMG, this is so terrible! It sounds like a razor blade – or even worse, a condom! Who did this? Who is responsible? Who taught him for bagrut? (after ten years of marking bagruts, I can sense when the writer is m , f or undecided. This is definitely a him.

What is a protective edge? Does it mean that we have a slight edge over our enemy in the protection department? And therefore, we may infer, we lack such an edge in the attack department?

Are we living on the edge?

Are our edges in danger due to faulty protection? (Edge protective is a term from the world of document preservation: E.G.: laminating a document gives it good edge protection.)

In Hebrew, they call it צוק איתן . (Tsook Ay TAN). A tsook is a high natural structure. Like a cliff, a pillar, an outcropping; Babylon calls it a bluff. They all contain the

elements of high, steep, sheer. On a more figurative level, pride, grandeur, nowhere do I see edge, which connotes narrow, risky, margin.

And איתן ? Eitan means strong. So, we have a number of choices here, Mr Military Translator Sir: Outcropping sounds like an eagle's nest, pillar recalls Lot's salty wife or somebody's Hispanic maid, and bluff is right out, even though it best describes what this war is really about, on the Hamass's side. What do you think of *cliff*? Cliff's not bad.

There's Tsook Menara, =Menara Cliff: It's steep, imposing. I'm willing to go with Steadfast Cliff; Stalwart Cliff, anything is better than Protective Edge!

/ Barry Silverberg, Kiriath Shmona (so far unbombed) July 13, 2014

1. Why am I jumping back and forth with the fonts? Because I just returned from a workshop on exam writing and I was told to stop using Comic Sans and Times New Romance, and try Calibri and Verdana instead.

2 Turns out that in Lebanon War II, when I penned a daily journal of the war for English teachers and communities abroad, I wrote a piece called "Name That War," in which I invited participants to guess the name of the operation, and come up with a new name to replace Lebanon II.

For example:

inveigh zaam	(grapes of wrath)
dean v' hashbon	(accounting)
homm at ma again	(prophylactic barrier)
shelom hagail	(peace of the toilet paper roll)
geesh may kites	

3 Turns out number II that someone else did a similar piece when the Americans invaded Irak (2003). I was amazed how many if the jokes and puns in *this article*, which I had never read before now, appear in my articles and unpublished pun list.

Great minds think alike?

So, for your reading pleasure, and a historical perspective, I offer you, Name That War I

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/11/29/opinion/name-that-war.html>

All the best,

Barry Silverberg I.