

## Lebanon war might end, but Gaza is endless and soldiers will keep dying

Amos Harel

On the backdrop of the lengthy battles between Israel and Hezbollah taking place on a daily basis and throughout most of the day, there are also accelerated negotiations being held in an attempt to achieve a cease-fire between the two sides, with American encouragement. From time to time some news from Jerusalem or Washington leaks out, indicating an optimistic outlook for reaching a deal in the near future. Reports coming from Beirut are more skeptical.

### Soldier killed in Lebanon

News, Page 2

Hezbollah (which will not be an official party to the deal) and the Lebanese government are not keen on an agreement that removes all the organization's military capabilities from the border while leaving Israel the authority to independently apply force in case any infringements occur on the Lebanese side of the border. Even though Israel has an obvious upper hand in this war, and even though it appears that all sides, including Iran, are interested in stopping the war in the north, it's not certain that this is an attainable goal in the near future.

The new Defense Minister, Israel Katz, rushed to



Family members of hostages campaigning for their release, in Tel Aviv on Saturday evening. See story, Page 2.

declare victory over Hezbollah last week, discovering to his surprise that in contrast to the Foreign Ministry, there is some weight attached to words he utters in his new role. Most of the Israel Defense Forces' brass is seeking to end the fighting against Hezbollah, out of a

desire to hasten the end of the war on all fronts and possibly bring about, finally, the release of the hostages held by Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

There are also those who believe that the drive for an agreement now in the north is premature. In their view, despite a host of impressive

achievements that began in Lebanon two months ago, Hezbollah has not yet sustained sufficient military blows that would deter it for years to come, such as happened, unexpectedly, during the 17 years of relative calm after the end of the Second Lebanon War in 2006.

According to this stance, deeper strikes should be launched at the organization's systems, involving land operations reaching close to the Litani River, and air operations reaching into the Beqaa Valley and Beirut, so that the desired level of deterrence is achieved.

When comparing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's few declarations regarding Lebanon with his declarations about Gaza, one can discern the different "temperature" pertaining to the latter. In Gaza,

See GAZA, Page 4

## PM's adviser questioned by police in BibiLeaks affair

Michael Hauser Tov

Jonathan Urich, an adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, was questioned by police on Friday on suspicion of involvement in the leaking of classified information from the Prime Minister's Office.

Urich is an outside adviser to Netanyahu, meaning that he is not part of the official PMO staff. He is considered to have a lot of influence on Netanyahu's media policy, and has also taken part in briefings that the prime minister has held at the army's headquarters in Tel Aviv during the war.

The BibiLeaks affair was cleared for publication two weeks ago. Another member of Netanyahu's inner circle, Eli Feldstein, was also arrested.

Earlier Friday, a court ruled that Feldstein would remain in jail until Sunday after the prosecution filed an appeal with Israel's top court and requested that it overturn the district court's decision to release Feldstein to house arrest.

Feldstein is currently being detained on suspicion that he unlawfully received highly classified documents from members of Israel's defense establishment, which later surfaced in international media with a manipulated interpretation that aligned with the narrative of Netanyahu's office.

In addition, Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara warned the head of security in the Prime Minister's Office, Alon Haliva, over Haliva's alleged efforts to interfere in the current criminal investigations into the conduct of staff at the office.

A letter on behalf of the attorney general that was sent to Haliva on Wednesday by Deputy Attorney General Gil Limon alleges that Haliva asked the legal adviser to the Prime Minister's Office, Shlomit Barnea Farago, to brief him regarding any steps that the police take in investigating recent allegations of wrongdoing in the office, which include purported mishandling of confidential documents and the altering of the minutes of sensitive meetings.

Limon's letter claimed that Haliva had demanded that the Prime Minister's

### Islamic Jihad angling for deal

News, Page 2

Office staff brief him on their contacts with the police, even if they had been asked not to talk about it. The letter was first reported by Channel 12 News.

Limon also expressed concern that Haliva had written a disciplinary note in the personnel file of a security officer in the Prime Minister's Office who had been involved in the investigation and had not reported to Haliva about it, even though he had been instructed not to do so.

"There is no basis for a disciplinary step against an employee who acted according to the directives of law enforcement officials," Limon wrote.

In addition, the letter alleged that, after a search by law enforcement of the

See ADVISER, Page 4

## AG to PM: Rethink Ben-Gvir as nat'l security minister

Chen Maanit

Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara informed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that he must reconsider his stance on Itamar Ben-Gvir's position as national security minister.

In her letter addressed to Netanyahu, Baharav-Miara said, "The combination of the alleged improper inter-

ventions in police operations and the dependency of police officers on the minister for their promotions undermines the assurance that the police will act in loyalty to the public rather than the politicians." However, she clarified that the decision is ultimately

Netanyahu's to make. Baharav-Miara noted that incidents presented in the petition, as well as incidents that precede it, "create a rare, severe, and ongoing pattern of law violations, breaches of duty, and harm to fundamental governance principles, alongside the po-

litization of police work." She added that evidence suggests Ben-Gvir has "allegedly influenced and repeatedly interfered, in a blatant and improper manner, in police operations, contrary to judicial decisions." She further noted that during his time in office,

the minister made remarks that could discourage judges from performing their duties, undermine their rulings in the eyes of police officers, intimidate law enforcement officials from executing their responsibilities, and delegitimize investigations of police misconduct by the

Police Internal Investigations Department, thereby eroding respect for its work within the Israel Police.

Baharav-Miara suggested that Netanyahu meet with Ben-Gvir and request their responsibilities, and delegitimize investigations of police misconduct by the

See BEN-GVIR, Page 4



Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara  
Tomer Appelbaum

### Listen to AG: Ben-Gvir is dangerous

Editorial Page 5

## New defense chief: Thousands of Haredim to receive draft orders

Yaniv Kubovich and Aaron Robinowitz

Defense Minister Israel Katz said on Friday that 7,000 draft orders will be issued to ultra-Orthodox men, per the decision of his predecessor, Yoav Gallant, who was fired earlier this month.

The Defense Ministry announced that the order will be issued gradually, beginning on Sunday, "at the Israel Defense Forces' discretion." According to data the army presented on Thursday, between 900

and 1,000 ultra-Orthodox men are currently serving in the IDF.

The army also announced that the rate of ultra-Orthodox conscription remained negligible this year, even though more than 3,000 draft orders were issued to Haredi men since the beginning of the war, and 930 arrest warrants were issued to Haredi men who did not report for duty.

According to the IDF, due to the increasing shortage of combat soldiers, reservists can be expected to

be called up for at least 42 days of military service a year, and that it is preparing to draft reservists for up to 70 days next year.

Moreover, in cases in which there is an urgent need to draft reservists, the army will call them up under Order 8 emergency call up orders, which are unlimited in time.

The army submitted a plan to the security cabinet detailing its evaluation of enlisting reservists in the

See DRAFT, Page 4

## What if Trump's America really moves away from NATO?

Alon Pinkas

Four fundamental terms will soon be rendered obsolete and should be taken out of the international-relations lexicon, the one written by the Americans in 1945 after World War II and revised when the Soviet Union disintegrated in the early '90s: "American exceptionalism," "the indispensable nation," "Pax Americana" and "soft diplomacy."

These terms all had a great run. They were the foundations of both the "realism" and "idealism" strains in American foreign policy, and they projected American power.

Now they all seem to have exhausted their relevance, and the peculiar thing is that whatever happens will be the result of a conscious American decision, not a

real decline in power.

In terms of foreign policy, a vote for Kamala Harris would very likely have been a vote for the status quo – status quos, actually – while providing a level of stability and predictability. This approach tends to lead to stagnation and outdated solutions for increasingly more complex problems.

A vote for a Trumpian foreign policy – and only a minuscule fraction of American

See NATO, Page 2

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### Arrests, passport confiscations and expulsion:

## Israel's war on the foreign activists aiding Palestinians in West Bank

Hagar Shezaf

When American human rights activist Jaxson Schor, 22, was arrested in the West Bank about a month ago, he did not understand what was happening. That morning, he had gone out with several other foreign activists to help Palestinians harvest their olives near the village of Qusra in the area of Nablus when suddenly soldiers called to him. "They said to me, 'Hello, hello,' and asked for my passport," he recalls. "I gave it to them and asked if there was a problem." The soldiers told him he wasn't allowed to be there. "It was very surreal," he adds, and describes the continuation of a long day that included questioning at a police station, accusations of being "a supporter of Hamas," humiliation by police and a hearing at the Population and Immigration Authority. At the end of the saga, his visa and that of another activist who was arrested with him were revoked. And thus, the two foreigners who had come to Israel with the aim of volunteering with Palestinians found themselves expelled from the country.



American human rights activist Jaxson Schor in Tel Aviv.  
Tomer Appelbaum

They are not the only ones. This past year, more and more foreign activists who volunteer with Palestinians are being expelled. Figures obtained by Haaretz show that since October, 2023, at least 16 such activists have been deported from Israel, after having been arrested in the West Bank on suspicion of various violations.

Attorney Michal Pomeranz, who has represented some of the activists who were expelled, says there has been an increase in the number of arrests of foreign volunteers on false pretexts, in an attempt to apply pressure on them to leave. "The situation isn't surprising in light of the character of the decision-makers in the government

– but it is infuriating," says Pomeranz. "It is perturbing and based on extraneous considerations."

It is not by chance that the number of expulsions has increased. Rather, it is a result of a declared policy of National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, which is being

See ACTIVISTS, Page 7