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Who wants to escalate the war in the Middle East (and why)?

In this article, Enrico Tomaselli explains how Israel is dangerously trying to expand the Middle East conflict in the face of the problems it is having with the massacre in Gaza and the unanimous rejection of the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians



Illustration: Alejandra Svriz, Spain.

Throughout the first phase of the renewed Palestinian conflict, which began with the Resistance attack on 7 October, the Israeli press has insisted on the danger posed by Hizbullah; after all, when Israel tried to invade (again) Lebanon in 2006, it took a beating from the Shiite militia, which was then far less powerful.

It is no coincidence that more than 230,000 Israelis have been displaced from the north of the country, precisely for fear of attacks from Lebanon, and that the IDF keeps most of its Iron Dome anti-missile systems there.

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Amid War's Horrors, an Interlude



AP/Photo: AP An Israeli soldier played the violin at a military camp near the border with the Gaza Strip on Monday while U.S. officials pushed for a new round of diplomatic talks to replace hostages held by Hamas and to end the war. [AP](#)

Pentagon, Allies Create Force To Protect Shipping in Red Sea

By Charles Branson and Ben Motzkin

The U.S. launched a multi-national force to protect merchant vessels in the Red Sea after months of attacks thwarted the State Dept's central role in global trade.

The U.S. and other nations are joining to launch a force to protect shipping lanes, said U.S. officials Monday.

The U.S. launched a multi-national force to protect merchant vessels in the Red Sea after months of attacks thwarted the State Dept's central role in global trade.

The blond violinist playing music to the massacre. An image that illustrates the moral suicide of the Zionist press.

The Israeli government is well aware that a confrontation with Hezbollah is potentially devastating, not least because it would immediately mobilize, to a much greater degree than at present, all formations of the Axis of Resistance; not only in Lebanon, but also in Iraq, Yemen and Syria.

Already, there are believed to be several thousand Iraqi fighters in the country of cedars. And, of course, U.S. support — which would certainly not be lacking — could not go much further than naval air support: the few thousand U.S. troops in the area are almost everywhere surrounded by hostile forces.

Deep down, therefore, as much as they would like to, Tel Aviv is well aware that a war with Hezbollah would come at a very high cost; but apart from the desire to remove what they consider to be a thorn in their side, the greatest ambition is to be able to strike at Iran, at least in a way that postpones the possibility of building a nuclear device as long as possible, and to carry out a first strike against Israel.

But Iran is also not what it was a few years ago, and a conflict with Tehran would have enormous costs for Israel. Unless, of course, the U.S. is dragged into it as well. Or, rather, the Israeli calculation is that it would continue to suffer great damage, but thanks to American intervention, he thinks, Iran's war potential (nuclear and otherwise) would be annihilated, so the game would be worth it.

The point is that Washington is not at all in favour of getting involved in such a conflict now. Firstly, because it would paralyse trade routes and cause the price of oil to skyrocket: Bab el Mandeeb and Hormuz would immediately be completely closed to maritime traffic. Second, because they are still trying to find a way out of the Ukrainian quagmire, and Israel is 100% dependent on US supplies. Not to mention that the U.S. has many military bases in that area, which would become so many targets in a short time. And not because of the rockets with which the Iraqi militias hit them, but with Iranian hypersonics. And not only the bases in Iraq and Syria, but the strategic ones in Djibouti and Qatar. The U.S. wants to destroy the ayatollahs' regime at least as much as the Israelis, but not now.

The problem is that Israel is at an impasse. The genocidal campaign in the Gaza Strip has clearly failed in its goal of provoking an exodus of Palestinians to Egypt or elsewhere, not only because they do not leave, but also because the project of a new Nakba seems unacceptable even to Israel's best friends.

The war against the Resistance is thus a total failure. Almost three months after October 7, the IDF has failed to gain control of the Strip, destroy the infrastructure network of Hamas and other armed groups, or release a single prisoner. On the contrary, the losses, no matter how much they try to hide them, are very high, both in men and in means. In the first three days of the year, the IDF admitted the loss of more than 70 soldiers and officers. A disaster, a prelude to a manifest defeat.



Resistance

Hence the urgency of changing not only the approach, but the entire axis of the conflict. The whole band of extremist fanatics who rule the country know that their days are numbered, and that the end of the war also means its political end; all the more so if it ends in defeat. A shock to all of Israel, which would initially take its toll on the political and military leadership.

Thus, while the United States withdraws the naval squadron led by the aircraft carrier G. Ford, and stutters at the gates of the Red Sea with the unsuccessful "*international naval mission*", three very selective attacks are carried out in a very short time (also and above all in a political sense): *an air strike in Syria that kills a senior general of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards*, then the *assassination of Hamas' number two in Beirut*, in the heart of a district controlled by Hezbollah, and finally the devastating terrorist attack in Iran (more than 100 dead) *a few steps from the grave of General Soleimani* and on the anniversary of *the attack in which he was killed*.



Image: OTL: War in the Red Sea. *A major world war is underway pitting the US-led Western empire against the countries challenging its dominance.*

The intention to provoke a reaction is blatantly obvious, and the aim is precisely to raise the issue to cover up the fact that Israel is losing.

A very risky move, which risks triggering a potentially devastating conflict far beyond the regional sphere, and which would burn the dust in an area of global strategic interest, where, among other things, the Russian and American militaries are located a few kilometers from each other (in Syria).

Without forgetting that, if it is unimaginable for the US to let Israel be destroyed, for Russia (but also for China) it is unacceptable to let Iran be destroyed; which, it should not be forgotten, is not only an important military partner, especially for Moscow and a member of the BRICS+, but also a key node in the Eurasian trade routes that Russia and China are developing.

Unleashing a conflict in that area, where multiple strategic interests intersect, would be sheer madness.

But Israel has always shown that it is totally disinterested in the rest of the world, and only considers what it believes to be its own interest. Moreover, at the moment the Jewish state finds itself at a peculiar juncture, with a fanatical but fragile government, with armed forces that have lost their aura of invincibility in 48 hours and are struggling with obvious difficulties, and with a dazed and frightened country that takes refuge in religious fanaticism and exaggerated racism as an antidote to fear.

In short, we find ourselves at a juncture in which the chances of avoiding an epochal disaster lie almost exclusively with those we consider barbarians, autocrats and terrorists, since the outbreak or not of the conflict closest to a world war depends on their foresight, their ability not to fall prey to the most serious provocations.



Fortunately for us, Khamenei, Nasrallah, Haniyeh, Jibril and the others have so far demonstrated this ability. It remains to be seen how far Israel will go, if this is not enough, and how far they will know and may not lend their side to the enemy.

Enrico Tomaselli

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