



ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
From the Bet El Twinning / Israel Action Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

Commentary...

Neutrality in the Fight Against Genocidal Terror isn't Moral

By Jonathan S. Tobin

It's always a mistake for politicians to get into arguments with popes. The symbolism of the papacy for Catholics, and even non-Catholics, around the world is potent. Even today, when religion is generally on the decline in the developed world, the pope still matters. Anyone who asks today, as Soviet dictator Josef Stalin did about one of the current heads of the Catholic Church's predecessors, "how many divisions" the pope has, is demonstrating their cluelessness. The power of faith and the ability of a spiritual figure to command respect and exercise influence are greater than many think.

Whatever you think about the actual policy positions on which Pope Leo XIV and President Donald Trump disagree, the latter would have done well to ignore the former's rather pointed criticisms. But expecting this president to hold his fire whenever he is publicly attacked is futile. As a result, what followed was a news cycle in which Trump was widely portrayed as an insensitive bully while the first American-born pope basked in the world's approbation of his moral preachings.

The exchange, like every pointless kerfuffle resulting from a Trump comment or social-media post, will soon be forgotten. But to dismiss both Trump's hyperbole and the pearl-clutching he inspires among his many critics and detractors is not to say that the underlying issues involved in this dispute aren't important. They are vitally so to our future and deserve a full discussion, even if the back-and-forth between the two men that followed the serious issue of war created more heat than light.

At the heart of this debate are some key questions. One is the right of nations to defend their sovereignty and to decide who may or may not cross their borders, as opposed to those who essentially advocate for no such restrictions. The other is whether there is such a thing as a just war, and what strategies and tactics may be pursued in the conduct of such conflicts.

Presidents and popes have very different responsibilities. A president is tasked with defending the specific interests of the United States and its people. The pope's job is to enunciate moral positions. In an ideal world, those two stances ought to largely overlap. But we don't live in such a place, and leaders are often required to make choices that involve the lesser of two evils, rather than a stark choice between good and evil. It is that fact, and not the perceived gap in moral character between this particular pope and the president, which creates disagreements such as the one that just played out in public view.

Pope Leo's advocacy for illegal immigrants dates back to his time serving as a bishop and cardinal in his native city of Chicago. That position is based on humanitarian concerns for the plight of migrants and opposition to the idea of human suffering. It is directly opposed to Trump's belief in secure borders and the conviction that illegals should be deported. His stance is in accord with the view of many, if not most, Americans who voted him back into office in 2024. And while this discrepancy is characterized as heartless by those who agree with the pope, it is a defense of the interests and rights of working-class citizens who were harmed by the open borders policies of the Biden administration.

But the immediate cause for conflict between Washington and the Vatican was the war with Iran.

As one would expect from any spiritual leader, the pope is always going to say he's against all wars as a matter of principle. The Vatican's position is one that seems to deliberately ignore the causes of fighting between countries or populations, as well as arguments in favor of pursuing it. As he and his immediate predecessor, Pope

Francis, did with respect to the post-Oct. 7 war Israel fought against Hamas terrorists in Gaza, Pope Leo takes no sides in the conflict between the Islamist regime in Iran, and the United States and Israel. He wanted an immediate ceasefire with Hamas then and

wants the same now with Iran, calling for an "end to the thunderous sound of bombs."

But in the week before the April 7 ceasefire, he went further, saying that "God does not bless any conflict." And in a statement that seemed to be directly aimed at Trump, he blasted what he called "the idolatry of self" when critiquing what he called the president's "boasts" about U.S. military strikes and his hyperbolic threat to destroy "a whole civilization" if Tehran's theocratic tyrants did not give in.

The pope had already gone on record opposing military action on Iran. During the 12-war that Israel and the United States fought in June 2025, the following was posted on the pope's X account: "War does not solve problems; on the contrary, it amplifies them and inflicts deep wounds on the history of peoples, which take generations to heal. No armed victory can compensate for the pain of mothers, the fear of children, or stolen futures. May diplomacy silence the weapons! May nations chart their futures with works of peace, not with violence and bloodstained conflicts!"

In response to all this, Trump responded as he usually does, taking it personally and not holding back criticisms of his antagonist, saying the pope was "terrible," "too liberal," "weak," "catered to the radical left" and took positions that amounted to support for Iran getting a nuclear weapon. He then compounded that by posting a ludicrous image of himself looking like Jesus that, uncharacteristically, he chose to delete in response to an overwhelming chorus of denunciations of something that was in terrible taste, as well as deeply foolish.

By saying that he "wasn't afraid" of Trump, the pontiff may have been engaged in playing a rhetorical trick of his own, since the president never threatened him. But if someone was scoring the debate between the two, even the president's biggest fans would have to acknowledge that the pope won.

Still, that's not the same thing as the pontiff actually being in the right on the underlying issue.

It is all well and good for Pope Leo to say he's against all suffering, but in point of fact, he's wrong about wars not solving anything. They may cause incalculable pain and are truly horrible. But wars have solved some problems. To take but one example from history in which the Vatican's professed neutrality about conflicts didn't cover it in glory, the defeat of Germany and its allies in the Second World War was the only way to defeat Nazism and end the Holocaust.

Not to put too fine a point on it, if a second Holocaust—the goal of Iran's Islamist regime, as well as its Hamas and Hezbollah allies in Gaza and Lebanon, with respect to the state of Israel and its population—is to be avoided, it's going to require more than papal sermons on the evil of wars.

And that is the focal point of the debate about the current Iran conflict, just as it was in the war against Hamas.

Calling for a permanent ceasefire may put a temporary end to the suffering caused by the conflict. And blasting warlike rhetoric from the combatants always makes those denouncing them seem morally superior. But if it means allowing Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah in their strongholds to rebuild and rearm—and to allow Tehran to resume its nuclear project, missile building and spreading terrorism around the globe—it is neither merciful nor just. Appeals to end the fighting while leaving jihadists in power—and capable of continuing their war on the West and non-Islamist civilization—are as inappropriate as they would have been for a ceasefire before the unconditional surrender of the Nazis in 1945.

The responsibility of Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is to prevent the mullahs in Tehran from persisting in their

genocidal plotting and weapons building, which led directly to the horrors of Oct. 7. To merely denounce what happened on Oct. 7, as the pope did, is fine. But to oppose efforts to ensure that the murderers would be stopped from making good on their pledges to repeat those crimes over and over again, as he insinuated, isn't an example of a higher morality. Treating murderers and those whose task it is to stop them as morally equivalent—and that's what the pope and many other world leaders, especially in Western Europe, have done with respect to Hamas and Iran—is wrong, even if the motivation for such statements is rooted in an entirely laudable abhorrence of suffering.

Wars are awful and should be avoided if possible. But the battle against the Islamist terrorists running Iran, and their Hamas and Hezbollah minions whose Oct. 7 atrocities were just a trailer for what they wish to do to all Israelis, is a just one. It is also impossible to separate the preaching against such just wars from the global surge of antisemitism that has spread since Oct. 7.

To his credit, the pope has consistently opposed Jew-hatred and bigotry. In that respect, he is standing on the foundation built by his righteous predecessors, Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II. They worked tirelessly to end the long tradition in which the church tolerated or encouraged antisemitism. During the papacy of Pope Paul VI, the publication of *Nostra Aetate*, the 1965 Catholic declaration on the relationship of the Church with non-Christian religions, rejected the deicide myth and established a new norm. The assumption that Catholics hated Jews became a relic of the past. That was followed up by the open philo-semitism of John Paul II and the historic decision of the Vatican to recognize Israel in 1993. That put the unhappy history of relations between the papacy and the Jews firmly behind them.

Sadly, in recent years, the church has often acted as if it is afraid to risk the lives of Christian minorities in the Muslim world if it means doing the right thing with respect to Israel. It has opposed the efforts of the Jewish state and its American ally to defeat those who wish to destroy Israel. And it has essentially validated blood libels about Israel committing "genocide" in Gaza with harsh and unfair criticism of its morally justifiable military efforts. In doing so, the Vatican is letting down its Jewish friends and allies. While no one should criticize a pope for opposing wars in principle, it is also not unreasonable to ask the Church leader to take a more active role in opposing the antisemitism that is spreading, especially among some on the far right who claim to be Catholics.

And as much as it's easy to bash Trump for his bombastic statements, he deserves credit rather than criticism for being willing to take responsibility for stopping Iran in a way that none of his presidential predecessors or European counterparts had the courage to do.

Moreover, while Pope Leo deserves and ought to get a lot more deference than he does from the president, his recent willingness to be more vocal in denouncing the leader of the free world is equally mistaken. Catholics and non-Catholics alike want popes to avoid politics but to also to speak up against immoral actions, as, alas, some of his predecessors failed to do when Jewish lives were at stake. But taking sides against an effort whose purpose is to save both Jewish and Western lives from Iranian terrorists isn't in keeping with the highest standards to which all people of faith aspire. However tempting it might be, the last thing the pope should be doing is indulging in virtue-signaling against the president, which gives the world the impression that he is acting as the chaplain of the anti-Trump "resistance."

The Vatican should acknowledge that it has as much invested in the fight to preserve Western civilization against its Islamist and Marxist foes as Washington and Jerusalem. Preaching about the evils of war is one thing. It is quite another to place themselves in opposition to a war against immoral actors, such as those in Tehran and Gaza. Contempt for Trump and an unwillingness to accept that anti-Zionism is indistinguishable from antisemitism should not be allowed to undo the work of those who sought to bring Jews and Catholics together in the last century. There is too much at stake in the existential conflict against Islamism and in defense of a common Judeo-Christian heritage for people of faith to be divided about this struggle. (JNS Apr 14)

Diaspora Jewish Resilience Will Define our Future

By Adam Milstein

The American Jewish community built its institutions for a different era. They were designed in the decades following the Holocaust, when Jewish life in the United States was secure, socially integrated, economically advancing, and largely insulated from public hostility and anti-Jewish violence.

The priority was growth and prosperity: assimilating into the broader culture, contributing to society, and expanding Jewish establishments such as schools, synagogues, community centers, and cultural life. We invested heavily in Jewish continuity, education, and Holocaust remembrance, believing that hatred of Jews could be contained through awareness and public campaigns.

But we built for a world that no longer exists. Thinking it can never get as bad as in past generations, we said "Never Again," and invested heavily in explaining and condemning Jew-hatred, yet far less in building the capacity to withstand it. That gap is now impossible to ignore.

In recent years, Jew-hatred came out of the shadows, becoming a persistent, adaptive force expressed through violence, dehumanization, and persecution. It persists across the alt and isolationist right, the progressive left, and Islamist movements, the latter two forming the Islamo-leftist alliance that converges into mainstream hostility toward Jews, the Jewish state, and the United States of America.

For years, many dismissed concerns about this growing alliance and the hatred of Jews that unites it. The warning signs were visible in academia, mainstream media, social media, politics, and international institutions. But too often, the response was rooted in the belief that education and awareness would be sufficient. It wasn't.

Today those dynamics are entrenched. On university campuses and in K-12 education, anti-Jewish ideologies are embedded in curricula, normalized in student culture, and reinforced by faculty and leadership. Jewish students are isolated, marginalized, and in some cases violently attacked. Beyond campuses, Jewish businesses are targeted, individuals are attacked on the streets for speaking Hebrew, and hatred of Jews is normalized at scale across digital platforms.

And yet our communal response remains reactive. We issue statements, call for justice, track incidents, correct misinformation, and plead for empathy. These efforts matter, but they are insufficient and yield diminishing results. They rest on the assumption that if we argue well enough, we can reverse the trend. But violent Jew-hatred is not a debate to be won. It is a reality to be prepared for and fought.

To understand why this reactive posture persists, we must be honest about a deeper historical pattern. For nearly 2,000 years, diaspora Jews did not fight persecution. They appealed against it. From the courts of medieval Europe to the pogroms of Eastern Europe to the institutions of the modern West, the default Jewish response was to seek mercy: to petition rulers, appeal to the conscience of majorities, and ask for protection rather than build the power to secure it. This was not weakness. It was the rational response of a people without sovereignty or a state. But that era is over. We have a Jewish state. We have a proven model of Jewish strength. And yet too many in the diaspora still reach for the old tools, the petitions, the statements, the pleas, when the moment demands something entirely different.

In contrast, Israeli Jews have learned through lived experience to operate with a different mindset. They understand that threats are inevitable, that survival depends on preparation, and that others will not protect them. They take responsibility and secure their own future.

Jews in the diaspora, meanwhile, live with a false sense of security. When attacked, rather than being prepared, they ask others for help, hoping that warning non-Jews that hatred of Jews starts with the Jews but never ends with them will convince others to join the fight. It has not worked and it will not be enough. The naive hope that governments and institutions will provide protection creates a dangerous gap between perception and reality, a fragile sense of safety that recent years have repeatedly shattered.

This must change.

If we are serious about securing Jewish life in the diaspora for decades ahead, we must learn from our brothers and sisters in Israel and move from a reactive to a proactive posture across six areas.

First, we must build a strategic partnership with Israel. Israel is not merely a symbol of Jewish pride or a refuge of last resort. It is the world's most advanced model of Jewish survival, with unmatched expertise in security, intelligence, crisis communication, and community resilience. The diaspora has largely treated Israel as a cause to defend rather than a resource to draw from. That must change. We should be actively learning from Israel's security culture, civil defense frameworks, and hard-won experience countering both physical and ideological threats, and integrating them into our own institutions. We are one people. It is time we began defending ourselves as such.

Second, we must redefine security. Jewish communities need serious investment in physical and digital protection, including trained personnel, intelligence capabilities, and self-defense training. Preparedness is part of Israel's culture. It must become part of diaspora Jewish culture.

Third, we must build real crisis infrastructure. Every Jewish institution, and every individual facing harassment, should have access to coordinated networks providing legal, communications, and security support in real time. This must include AI-enabled tools to counter the growing battlefield of information warfare. An AI-powered global Jewish response network should be a communal priority.

Fourth, we must strengthen economic resilience. As Jews increasingly face discrimination in hiring, business, and professional advancement, we must ensure that no one stands alone. That means building job pipelines, funding networks, and community partnerships that allow us to support our own in times of need.

Fifth, we must rethink Jewish education. Our schools, camps, and youth programs must evolve. Alongside identity and tradition, we must teach resilience, confidence, and awareness. Our children must graduate not only knowing who they are but fully prepared for the challenges they will face.

Finally, we must move from proud Jews to strong Jews. Pride is essential, but it is not enough. As Israel has demonstrated time and time again, strength means preparedness, self-reliance, and collective responsibility. It means building a community that is vibrant and durable no matter what the size of the challenge.

We are redefining our identity once again, navigating between past assumptions and future realities.

The future of Jewish life will not be secured by those who make the best arguments.

It will be secured by those who are prepared to defend it, build it, and lead it. (Jerusalem Post Apr 16)

The Information War Over Iran: Why Facts are Losing to False Narratives By Yuval David

Much of the current discourse surrounding the war between the United States, Israel and the Islamic Republic of Iran reflects a persistent analytical failure: the conflation of Islamic regime messaging with battlefield reality.

That failure is not simply a matter of disagreement. It reflects a deeper misunderstanding of how modern conflicts operate—particularly when one of the central actors is a theocratic authoritarian regime that treats information as an extension of warfare.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has declared victory. At the same time, it has threatened escalation, disputed ceasefire conditions, and warned of broader regional and economic consequences. Islamic regime officials have described continued negotiations as “unreasonable,” even as hostilities persist and maritime access remains contested, and they continue to attack Israel, U.S. interests, Gulf states and Arab neighbors, while directing their international terror proxies.

The United States and Israel, by contrast, are describing a campaign defined by measurable outcomes. U.S. officials have emphasized that operations degraded Iran's missile systems, naval capabilities and broader military infrastructure, forcing Tehran into a ceasefire position under sustained pressure. Reporting on those claims, including statements from defense leadership, indicates that

Washington views the campaign as a decisive shift in the balance of power.

Israel has aligned with that assessment while clarifying that the ceasefire does not extend to Hezbollah or other Iranian-backed forces. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu affirmed Israel's support for the U.S.-brokered agreement while explicitly stating that operations against Iranian proxies would continue.

Both narratives now circulate simultaneously. And in limited respects, both contain elements of truth.

U.S. and Israeli operations have materially degraded Iran's conventional military capacity. At the same time, Iran retains key strategic levers: regime continuity, influence over proxy networks and the ability to exert pressure on global chokepoints—most notably, the Strait of Hormuz.

That distinction is essential.

What is being described as a ceasefire is, in operational terms, a fragile and contested pause. Hostilities have continued in parallel theaters, and the terms of the agreement remain disputed. Both Washington and Tehran are operating under different interpretations of what the ceasefire requires, while Israel continues to be attacked by Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas, and Israeli strikes on Hezbollah targets persist.

The instability surrounding the Strait of Hormuz further underscores the point. The waterway—through which roughly one-fifth of the world's oil supply flows—remains partially restricted, with shipping activity slowed and global markets reacting accordingly. U.S. officials have pushed for its full reopening, while Iran continues to assert control and leverage over maritime access.

This is not a stable peace. It is a pressured equilibrium.

At the same time, developments inside Iran reveal a stark contrast between external messaging and internal reality. Civilian reporting describes a climate of danger and uncertainty, with increased militia presence, checkpoints in urban areas and widespread concern about repression, as well as economic instability. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps continues to hunt for and kill Iranian dissidents and protesters. These internal conditions stand in tension with the regime's outward claims of strength.

That contrast is not incidental. It is characteristic of how authoritarian systems operate. Regimes that rely on ideological legitimacy do not concede weakness. They project resilience, especially in moments of strategic pressure.

The challenge, however, is no longer limited to what Iran is saying. It is how that messaging is being received.

A growing portion of Western discourse reflects what can only be described as an analytical asymmetry: rigorous scrutiny is applied to U.S. and Israeli actions, while Iranian claims are often treated as an alternative perspective rather than as state-directed messaging. Mainstream media in the United States is divided along political lines, with coverage of the war often shaped by ideological perspectives. Social media is a sea of information, fueled by propaganda, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories—with many of these campaigns sponsored by the Islamic Republic and their Islamist proxies themselves.

In this polarized environment, distortions have emerged from across the ideological spectrum. Certain left-leaning outlets and commentators portray the conflict primarily through the lens of opposition to the Trump administration, framing a strategic confrontation as reckless escalation. At the same time, far-right conspiracy theorists have spread isolationist narratives and disinformation that undermine American interests and echo adversarial propaganda.

Though originating from opposing political extremes, both interpretations misrepresent the stakes of the conflict and obscure the strategic realities confronting the United States and its allies. This asymmetry is amplified by the modern information environment.

In online and social-media ecosystems, narratives originating from Iranian state messaging—and from networks aligned with it—are frequently consumed with less skepticism than reporting from democratic governments and established institutions. The result is a reversal of traditional credibility standards.

Sources operating within closed, state-controlled systems, where

dissent is suppressed and information is curated, are often perceived as more “authentic.” Meanwhile, sources from open societies, where transparency, verification and internal debate are built into the system, are increasingly dismissed as unreliable or politically compromised.

This inversion does not reflect stronger evidence. It reflects the growing effectiveness of disinformation.

The question is not whether all governments have bias, and whether their information systems allow for correction, accountability and verification. This distinction also clarifies which sources merit trust. Democratic nations such as the United States and Israel operate within transparent systems subject to public scrutiny, independent media and institutional accountability.

Authoritarian regimes such as the Islamic Republic of Iran do not. Their state-controlled narratives are designed to preserve power rather than inform the public. Treating these sources as morally or evidentiary equivalents does not reflect balance; it reflects a failure of analytical judgment.

In that environment, the objective is not simply persuasion. It is destabilization.

When audiences begin to treat all narratives as equally credible, the distinction between verified reporting and strategic messaging collapses. And when that distinction collapses, the information battlefield begins to favor those most willing to manipulate it.

Understanding this war, therefore, requires more than following headlines. It requires evaluating which claims align with observable conditions.

U.S. and Israeli positions—focused on degrading Iran’s military capabilities and limiting its ability to project power—are consistent with reported operational outcomes. Iranian statements, by contrast, remain structured around regime preservation and ideological continuity, often independent of battlefield realities.

This does not eliminate the need for scrutiny of U.S. or Israeli policy. But it does require acknowledging that not all narratives carry equal evidentiary weight. It also requires placing the current conflict within its broader strategic context.

Iran’s regional posture is the result of decades of investment in asymmetric warfare—developing missile programs, expanding naval reach and building proxy networks across the region. What is unfolding now is not a sudden escalation, but a delayed confrontation with that system.

In practical terms, the conflict cannot be considered resolved while the IRGC continues to function as an operational arm of state-sponsored terror. Any outcome that leaves this structure intact is not resolution but delay. Lasting stability will remain elusive so long as the Islamic Republic sustains its apparatus of regional aggression and ideological extremism. A durable peace will ultimately require the dismantling of the IRGC’s operational capabilities and the end of the regime that enables them.

A clear analysis must also distinguish between the Iranian regime and the Iranian people. Opposition to the Islamic Republic has been a persistent feature of Iranian society, despite sustained repression. Iranians and Persians—inside the country and across the diaspora—have demonstrated repeated resistance to the system that governs them. They are not represented by the regime’s ideology or its messaging.

Finally, any serious assessment of the conflict must account for those directly engaged in it. American and Israeli service members continue to operate in complex and high-risk environments, carrying out missions tied to broader strategic objectives. Their role is often framed politically, but its significance is structural. They are part of the deterrence architecture that underpins regional and global stability.

The current conflict spans military, economic and informational domains, each reinforcing the others.

But one conclusion is already clear. In a war where narrative is used as a strategic tool, understanding depends on the ability to distinguish between messaging and measurable reality.

That is not a matter of perspective. It is a matter of consequence, because misreading this conflict does not simply distort understanding. It shapes policy, public opinion and the willingness to confront or ignore the conditions that made this war inevitable. (JNS Apr 14)

Hezbollah the Obstacle as Israel and Lebanon Speak in Washington By Fiamma Nirenstein

Never before have Israel and Lebanon conducted face-to-face talks at such a high diplomatic level, with the flags of the two countries—still formally at war—placed side by side. But since Tuesday in Washington, senior officials from both governments have begun discussions, joined by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Lebanese Ambassador Nada Hamadeh and Israeli Ambassador Yechiel Leiter—an opportunity, at last, for an exchange of ideas and a measure of hope.

Both the Lebanese and Israeli governments appear willing to speak seriously, even at such a difficult moment. Yet looming in the background is Hezbollah, which has already declared it will never disarm—the central issue of the dialogue.

The question is decisive and nearly impossible to resolve, yet it could also offer a possible pathway toward easing tensions in the broader war between the United States and Iran. Lebanon could become a strategic currency in negotiations over the Strait of Hormuz and potentially help extend the current ceasefire. In such a scenario, U.S. President Donald Trump could press more forcefully on the issue of enriched uranium, without which there will be no real exit from the conflict.

Meanwhile, clashes on the ground continue. An IDF soldier was killed and three others were wounded on Tuesday in a difficult theater of war, as Israeli strikes in Lebanon targeted Hezbollah’s armed presence in Southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley.

Hezbollah has launched attacks twice during the current war: first after Oct. 7, firing some 12,000 rockets in coordination with Hamas. That attack failed strategically but forced the evacuation of northern Israel. Many communities remain largely empty, with only a few residents remaining under constant bombardment, while Israeli forces operate in Bint Jbeil, a Hezbollah stronghold.

A November 2024 agreement with the Lebanese government envisioned the disarmament and withdrawal of Hezbollah forces. That did not occur, and recent attacks have underscored the government’s limited ability to impose its authority. The United States is now urging restraint, while parts of Europe place responsibility on Israel.

Beirut has remained relatively calm for three days, yet fighting continues in southern Lebanon. Israeli television screens—even during Yom Hashoah commemorations, which focused on Holocaust survivors—continued to display updated lists of areas where civilians were instructed to seek shelter.

Any agreement that would allow Israeli forces to withdraw will require guarantees that currently collide with reality: the Lebanese government does not exercise full control over all armed forces operating on its territory.

Lebanon continues to suffer from deep internal fractures and from a history of external domination—first Syrian, then Iranian—that weakened the state and impoverished its population.

Hezbollah cannot realistically expect to maintain both its weapons and territorial control indefinitely, as doing so would ensure the continuation of conflict with Israel, which has repeatedly sought to neutralize the organization but has also found itself drawn back into repeated confrontations.

In northern Israel, the suffering of displaced residents continues, with many forced to leave their homes or spend nights in bomb shelters. Lebanon, too, faces internal strain, including the displacement of Shi’ite populations, while other religious and ethnic communities increasingly express frustration with Hezbollah’s role in prolonging the conflict.

While the Lebanese government is searching for a path that avoids internal confrontation, Israel is unlikely to accept compromises that allow an armed force committed to its destruction to remain in place.

Lebanon today represents more than its geographic borders. It is a significant strategic card in the broader war now underway—the strongest Iranian proxy, engaged in conflict largely to defend the Islamic Republic even before defending itself. (JNS Apr 15)