



## Israel must choose between civil war or regional war : Senior Lebanese Analyst

### Description

In a recent appearance on a political talk show, senior Lebanese political analyst Nasser Qandil said that Israel is currently going through a sensitive and dangerous period of its history, in which it must choose between “civil war or regional war”.

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**Editorial Comment from The Saker Blog for updated information only:** Since this interview took place, and just this past weekend, there are changes in the Israeli government. Despite these changes, the comments from senior Lebanese political analyst Nasser Qandil hold true to the situation in the main, and the change in the Israeli government does not negate Mr. Qandil's commentary. In short, these changes are: Right-wing nationalist Naftali Bennett has been sworn in as prime minister, leading a coalition “government of change” that was approved with a razor-thin one-vote majority and in a power-sharing deal with the centrist Yesh Atid under the leadership of Yair Lapid. Mr. Netanyahu will remain head of the right-wing Likud party and will become the leader of the opposition.

### Transcript:

*Nasser Qandil, Editor-in-chief of the Lebanese newspaper Al-Binaa:*

I personally do not believe that Netanyahu is capable of taking any major action at this stage. The main test (of Israel's power) was the (recent) Sword of al-Quds (battle). I mean, we would not have never seen a ceasefire if the steadfastness of the (Israeli) occupation entity – in terms of its army, institutions, and society – was strong enough during the battle to bear the burden and the weight of Netanyahu's decisions.

We have to look back at the image of what happened before the ceasefire: the missiles raining down on the cities of the (Israeli) occupation entity. This has never happened before in the history (of the

Israeli entity). They were heavy missiles with explosive heads capable of bringing down buildings. Now you have this new scene. The missile fire (on Israel) continued, and (Israel) could not stop it. Before the ceasefire, (Palestinian resistance forces) had no land access (to outside world), no air force, nor an Iron Dome. Therefore, (Israel) accepting a cease-fire is its acceptance of helplessness, it is a request for US protection.

I believe, according to my personal assessment and readings, that with the ceasefire and its aftermath, since that day, the era of the independence of the (Israeli) occupation entity has ended. The (Israeli) occupation entity has fallen under an American mandate. Even in terms of (forming) the new (Israeli) government, how was this government born? Its (forming) was not even on the table. The government was suddenly born. The US today goes into details. Since (the US) holds the future of the (Israeli) entity in its hands, (it follows this policy:) “I protect you and I fund your (government), therefore, I control your politics.”

*Host:*

Forgive me for interrupting, but what I meant by the ‘developments on the ground’ is that today Benjamin Netanyahu and the extreme right are talking with insistence about holding, for example, the Flag March on its original date. This may call for action at the grass-roots level. Therefore, the (Palestinian) resistance may take action. We are not confirming anything; we are (just) studying scenarios. However, due to these developments on the ground, the situation might deteriorate.

*Qandil:*

Let us first rule out the military scenarios, meaning sabotage, security operations, military action, targeting (individuals and locations) and igniting a war. This is beyond (the Israeli entity’s) power because it lacks internal harmony; an entity in which the US is a partner, whether at the intelligence level, or in terms of the Chief of Staff, or the Ministry of Defense. I mean, (the Israeli entity) cannot make its decision on its own.

Regarding the situation on the ground, well, the (original) date of the march was on Thursday, but now (the march) has been postponed to Tuesday by a decision from Netanyahu and his team to avoid taking any risks. (Next) Tuesday, they are talking about 500 (participants) and 500 flags. We know that this march is usually attended by at least 50,000 people every year. Therefore, Netanyahu and his team are now discussing ways to both deprive the (Palestinian) resistance from the opportunity to talk about its success in canceling the march altogether, and not crossing the red line drawn by the US.

Netanyahu explains the (current political) equation by saying: “you (Israelis) are going to either clash with Gaza, Hamas, and the (Palestinian) resistance forces, or experience Israeli bloodshed”, meaning that (Israeli) settlers and demonstrators will come out and clash with the police. I believe that Netanyahu’s assessment is correct. The future of the (Israeli) entity will look like one of two options: either a comprehensive war that begins with any action that would trigger conflict, or the other option, which is a Jewish-Jewish civil war because it is impossible to restrain the (Israeli) settlers.

It is possible that the march goes by with minimal provocations by avoiding sensitive areas and deploying the police and the army. However, since the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin (former Prime Minister of Israel), the only vital force that has a meaningful political activity in the occupation entity is the (Israeli) settlers and extremists. The rest are empty structures. Thus, if they (settlers and

extremists) took the initiative out of their certainty that the political establishment has become impotent, we will hear about confrontations and clashes every day.

On the one hand, protecting the (Israeli) entity will require that a part of the army, the police and security forces face the (Israeli extremists). On the other hand, if (Israel) lets (the extremists) loose, this will trigger regional wars. The (Israeli) entity today is going through a delicate, dangerous and sensitive period of its life as it faces a stark choice: either civil war, or regional war.

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