



Escalation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict: operation “Home and Garden”

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Importance. The escalation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which acquired particular attention after the outbreak of war between Israel and the HAMAS movement at the end of 2023, is examined. The purpose of the study is to identify the features of the Jennine invasion as a prerequisite for the conflict development towards large-scale escalation between Palestine and Israel.

Research Methods. The research is based on the objectivity, historicism and a systematic approach principles. Along with general scientific methods, such as analysis and comparison, historical-comparative, retrospective, synchronous methods are used, without which it would be impossible to study the events that took place simultaneously in both parts of the Palestinian arena (in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank).

Result and Discussion. It is noted that the operation “Home and Garden”, as well as the events around it, clearly demonstrated the significant capabilities that West Bank radicals currently possess in the armed struggle against the Israelis, such as the ability to produce war weapons in large quantities on their own. The radicals have limited resources for military preparations, so the ability to manufacture means of armed struggle is necessary to effectively confront the Israelis. In addition, missile weapons can only be an addition to other, more necessary, means of armed struggle. Nowadays, the priority for operating in the West Bank radicals is the underground infrastructure deployment that can provide them with additional opportunity to maneuver forces and means during the confrontation with Israeli security forces.

Conclusion. It is noted that the operation “Home and Garden” is of particular importance due to the forces and means involved in its implementation and its results; it should be considered the main episode of the campaign in the Jenin area. The actions of the Israeli security forces weakened the radicals position, which subsequently simplified the maintenance of armed confrontation in the West Bank of Jordan at a level acceptable to Tel Aviv, while significant Israeli forces were involved in the fight against the radicals of the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah, and the possibility maneuvering of these forces and means was limited due to the synchronicity of the armed confrontation in the Palestinian and Lebanese directions.

Keywords: the State of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, Naftali Bennett, Yair Lapid, West Bank, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Gaza Strip

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Эскалация палестино-израильского конфликта: операция «Дом и сад»

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Актуальность. Рассмотрена эскалация палестино-израильского конфликта, которая приобрела особый интерес после начала войны между Израилем и движением ХАМАС в конце 2023 г. Целью исследования является выявление особенностей проведения вторжения в Дженин, как предпосылки развития конфликта в сторону крупномасштабной эскалации между Палестинской национальной администрацией и Израилем.

Методы исследования. Исследование основано на принципах объективности, историзма и системного подхода. Наряду с общенаучными методами, такими, как анализ и сравнение, используются историко-сравнительный, ретроспективный, синхронный методы, без которых было бы затруднено изучение событий, происходивших одновременно в обеих частях палестинской арены (в Секторе Газа и на Западном берегу реки Иордан).

Результаты исследования. Отмечено, что операция «Дом и сад», а также события вокруг нее наглядно продемонстрировали значительные возможности, которыми на сегодняшний день обладают радикалы Западного берега в рамках вооруженной борьбы против израильтян, в том числе такие, как способность в большом количестве изготавливать собственными силами средства вооруженной борьбы. Радикалы располагают ограниченными ресурсами для военных приготовлений, поэтому способность изготавливать средства вооруженной борьбы необходима для эффективного противостояния израильтянам. Кроме того, ракетное вооружение может являться лишь дополнением к другим, более необходимым, средствам вооруженной борьбы. Сейчас для действующих на Западном берегу реки Иордан радикалов приоритетом является развертывание подземной инфраструктуры, этому способствует то, что подземные объекты могут предоставить им дополнительную возможность маневрирования силами и средствами в ходе противостояния с силами безопасности Израиля.

Выводы. Отмечено, что операция «Дом и сад» имеет особое значение из-за задействованных для ее проведения сил и средств и своих результатов, её следует считать главным эпизодом кампании в районе Дженина. Действия сил безопасности Израиля ослабили позиции радикалов, что в дальнейшем упростило поддержание вооруженного противостояния на Западном берегу Иордана на приемлемом для Тель-Авива уровне в то время, когда значительные силы израильской стороны были задействованы в борьбе с радикалами Сектора Газа и «Хезболлой», а возможность маневрирования этими силами и средствами была

ограничена из-за синхронности вооруженного противоборства на палестинском и ливанском направлениях.

Ключевые слова: Государство Израиль, Биньямин Нетаньяху, Нафтали Беннет, Яир Лапид, Западный берег реки Иордан, палестино-израильский конфликт, Сектор Газа

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IMPORTANCE

In 2023, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict reached a new level, as well as the struggle between the State of Israel and the Lebanese organization Hezbollah (the "Party of Allah"). An important factor in this was that the escalation of the conflict between Tel Aviv and Hezbollah was linked to events in the Palestinian arena, namely, the outbreak of war between Israel and the HAMAS movement in October 2023. It should be noted that by this time an unstable, extremely dangerous situation had developed in the Middle East [1, p. 422], in the context of which this confrontation should be considered. Accordingly, the aim of the work is to study the dynamics of the HAMAS-Israel conflict in the context of operation "Home and Garden", as the largest IDF military operation since 2014, before the start of operation "Iron Swords" on October 7, 2023. The invasion of Jenin is considered in this case as a prerequisite for the conflict between HAMAS and Israel in October 2023.

One of the main features of what happened should be considered the disproportionality of the scale of the armed confrontation in the northern and southern directions, despite the fact that, militarily, by the beginning of these events, Hezbollah was far superior to HAMAS, not to mention its allied Palestinian groups. Due to the limited

scale of the fighting involving Hezbollah, the northern, Lebanese-Syrian direction became secondary, while the main events in which HAMAS and other Palestinian organizations took part unfolded in the southern direction. This direction, represented by the Gaza Strip, together with the east – West Bank of the Jordan River, forms for Tel Aviv a single Palestinian direction of the confrontation that unfolded in the fall of 2023. In this regard, it should be noted that during the events mentioned, the HAMAS movement was fighting against Israel in both directions at once – both the Palestinian and the Lebanese-Syrian, operating with its main forces in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, the outcome of the clash with the Israel Defense Forces (AOI or IDF) in the southern Gaza Strip was of crucial importance to HAMAS.

In addition to the above, it is necessary to add that the Yemeni Houthis, who attempted attacks against Israel, became a significant actor in the unfolding confrontation. The conflict between the Israelis and Hezbollah is outside the scope of this article, as it is a topic for a separate study.

During it, it is necessary not only to consider current events, but also to address the exchange of blows between the IDF and Hezbollah during the Second Lebanon War in 2006, as well as the military buildup of this Lebanese organization in subsequent

years and the retaliatory steps of the Israeli side. This is required to identify the factors that caused, due to the interconnection of the northern and southern directions, the dynamics of the armed confrontation between Israel and Hezbollah, as well as between Israel and the Palestinian radicals. Among other things, the Northern Shield operation conducted by the Israelis in 2018–2019 is of great importance, which reduced Hezbollah's ability to strike at the Israeli rear, which made a significant contribution to increasing its resilience [2, p. 887].

Note that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict reached a new level in 2023 in several stages, the criteria for which are the scale and main location of the armed confrontation, which was, respectively, one of the parts of the Palestinian arena – the Gaza Strip or the West Bank of the Jordan River. At the same time, the scale of the armed confrontation in Gaza was directly dependent on which organization at a particular stage was the main opponent of the Israelis in this part of the Palestinian arena, since the organizations operating against Israel had different military capabilities. Such an organization was HAMAS or the Islamic Jihad, which by the beginning of the war in October 2023 remained the most militarily powerful opponents for Tel Aviv in the Palestinian arena.

The first stage is associated with increased pressure from Israel on the radicals of the West Bank after the return of Benjamin Netanyahu to the post of Prime Minister, which was reflected in the conduct of a number of local operations. The most important event of this time is the large-scale Israeli operation against radicals in Jenin "Home and Garden" in July 2023. It was mainly Tel Aviv's reliance on the limited scope of the security forces that determined the dynamics of the armed conflict in the West Bank at this stage. The main location

of the armed confrontation in the Palestinian arena during the events of the first stage is, respectively, the West Bank of the Jordan River.

In addition, in May 2023, the Israelis conducted a large-scale operation "Shield and Arrow" against the Islamic Jihad organization in the Gaza Strip. It was the Islamic Jihad that was Israel's main opponent in Gaza during the first phase, which, among other things, limited the scope of the armed confrontation, since this organization was militarily much inferior to HAMAS. The latter was clearly demonstrated by the events of 2023.

The second stage is related to the war that began in October 2023, which was marked by Tel Aviv's large-scale operation "Iron Swords". Due to the incident, the main location of the armed confrontation in the Palestinian arena at this time is the Gaza Strip, in whose territory HAMAS itself is becoming the main opponent of the Israelis. At the same time, one of the features of the exchange of blows in Gaza between Israel and the radicals was its dynamics, namely, the consistent increase in pressure from the IDF on its opponent.

The most important event of the second phase was the IDF ground operation in the Gaza Strip, as it was crucial for defeating the anti-Israeli forces operating in the area. To achieve this goal, the most important task was to combat the network of underground communications of the radicals, since the latter, during the unfolding confrontation, based their actions on its use, which led to the corresponding scale of such measures on the Israeli side. For example, as of November 22, 2023, about 400 tunnel shafts were identified and destroyed in the Sector¹. Therefore, the war that began in

¹ Footage of Yahalom Unit: Approx. 400 Terror Tunnel Shafts Have Been Identified and Destroyed in Gaza //

October 2023 fully demonstrated the capabilities that Israel currently possesses to combat the underground infrastructure of the enemy, which must be taken into account, among other things, when studying the conflict between it and the Lebanese organization Hezbollah.

It is important to note that in the course of this fight against underground structures in the Gaza Strip, the Israelis could only partially rely on their experience (in particular, on the specific experience of many years of fighting tunnels near the border with the Strip, which took place in conditions fundamentally different from those that took place in the depths of the Palestinian enclave) which further complicated their implementation of such measures. This was due to the scale of their actions – the IDF had never carried out such massive destruction of underground facilities of the Gaza radicals before, especially as part of a ground operation in conditions of dense buildings, the presence of which made it very difficult to carry out these actions. Therefore, the experience gained during Operation Iron Swords was of great importance for Israel in terms of further building up its capabilities to combat the enemy's underground infrastructure, including similar Hezbollah facilities.

The events of the second stage in the West Bank of Jordan turned out to be “in the shadow” of what was happening on the southern and northern borders of Israel. The simultaneous exchange of blows with the Gaza radicals in the south and Hezbollah in the north required the Israeli side to attract large forces and resources. This situation

limited Tel Aviv's ability to fight against West Bank radicals, especially in terms of large-scale operations. However, the Israelis have retained the ability, if necessary, to significantly increase pressure on the radicals operating in the West Bank. This was partly due to the weakness of the latter as an opponent for the IDF compared to the combat units of the Palestinian groups operating in Gaza, and even more so the combat units of the Lebanese Hezbollah. As a result, the confrontation in the West Bank during the events of the second phase became an important component of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

This article examines the events of the first stage that took place in the West Bank of the Jordan River – operation “Home and Garden”, as well as the events surrounding it, due to the following.

To begin with, the events of the first stage in both parts of the Palestinian arena – be it the Gaza Strip or the West Bank – immediately found themselves “in the shadow” of the large-scale armed confrontation that unfolded in October 2023. However, the events of the first stage have not yet been sufficiently studied, despite the fact that their study is necessary to understand what happened in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict zone during the next, second, stage.

Studying the events of the first stage that took place in the West Bank of the Jordan River is also important in terms of predicting the further development of the conflict in this part of the Palestinian arena. This is due, among other things, to the fact that operation “Home and Garden”, as well as the events surrounding it, have clearly demonstrated the capabilities that the radicals of the West Bank currently possess in the framework of the armed struggle against the Israelis.

The Israel Defense Forces. November 22, 2023. URL: <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-press-releases-regarding-the-hamas-israel-war/footage-of-yahalom-unit-approx-400-terror-tunnel-shafts-have-been-identified-and-destroyed-in-gaza/> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

In addition, an appeal to the events of the first stage that took place in the West Bank of Jordan (since at that time this territory was the main location of the armed confrontation in the Palestinian arena) is of great importance for studying the transformation of Israel's security policy in the period after the return to the post of Prime Minister of the country B. Netanyahu.

The events of the first phase in the Gaza Strip, as well as the events of the second phase in the West Bank, should be considered directly in the context of the war between Israel and the HAMAS organization.

Studying the events of the first stage in the Palestinian enclave is necessary, in particular, to identify the methods and means of struggle that the parties to the conflict possessed at the beginning of a large-scale clash. To do this, we should also refer to other events in recent years in the Gaza Strip, including operations carried out by the Israeli side – the large-scale Operation "Dawn" and the large-scale Operation "Guardian of the Walls", which were carried out in 2022 and 2021, respectively. Among them, Operation Guardian of the Walls is of particular importance, due to the scale of the fighting that took place during it with the participation of HAMAS.

Since October 2023, the confrontation in the West Bank has been developing in the context of the war between Israel and the HAMAS movement. Thus, the events of the second stage in this part of the Palestinian arena are characterized by an intensification of the actions of the Israeli security forces against this organization. For example, in almost a month since the start of the war, more than 800 suspected HAMAS operatives have been detained in the West Bank².

² Daily Recap: Hamas – Israel War November 6th, 2023 – Day 31 // The Israel Defense Forces. November 6, 2023. URL: <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/idf-recaps>

These actions complemented the strikes carried out against HAMAS during the large-scale armed confrontation in Gaza, which further weakened its position.

It was the outcome of the war in the Gaza Strip that directly affected the further development of the conflict in the West Bank, which was caused by the interconnection of the two parts of the Palestinian arena. While the outcome of the Gaza war decided the fate of HAMAS, the above-mentioned steps by the Israeli side in the West Bank were important for the future of this organization. Moreover, such actions could occur if the guidelines were adopted. Israel's decision to do so, and preparations for the defeat of HAMAS in the West Bank. Moreover, the implementation of this conflict scenario by Tel Aviv in the event of the success of the Israeli operation in Gaza would mean the defeat of the HAMAS movement in the Palestinian arena as a whole.

It should also be noted that the implementation of such an option of armed confrontation was facilitated by the weakness of HAMAS' positions in the West Bank, largely due to the long-term active actions of the Israeli security forces against this organization in this part of the Palestinian arena. The same can be said in many ways about the Islamic Jihad organization, given the fact that by the beginning of the war in the Gaza Strip in October 2023, Israel had already been able to inflict painful blows on it. So, during Operation "Shield and Arrow", 6 high-ranking operatives of this organization were eliminated³.

[daily-summaries-of-the-hamas-israel-war/daily-recap-hamas-israel-war-november-6th-2023-day-31/](https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/operation-shield-and-arrow/summary-of-operation-shield-and-arrow/) (accessed: 02.02.2024).

³ Summary of Operation Shield and Arrow // The Israel Defense Forces. May 14, 2023. URL: <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/operation-shield-and-arrow/summary-of-operation-shield-and-arrow/> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

RESEARSH METHODS

The research is based on the principles of a systematic approach, historicism and objectivity. When studying the escalation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in 2023 and developing its periodization, historical research methods were used: historical-comparative, synchronous and retrospective. The use of these methods is due to the fact that the focus was on events that took place at the same time in both parts of the Palestinian arena (in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank), the course of which was influenced by factors both common to both parts and inherent only to one of them. In this context, general scientific methods such as analysis and comparison were also used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The background for the events under consideration was the political changes in the State of Israel, namely, the return to the post of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. This was preceded by the limited time (less than two years) work of the government led by Naftali Bennett and Yair Lapid, who previously held various positions in the governments headed by Benjamin Netanyahu, or were in opposition to them. So, N. Bennett served as Minister of Defense and formulated approaches to ensuring Israel's security [3, p. 94]. It was planned that for the first two years of the government's work, N. Bennett would be Prime Minister, who would then be replaced by Ya. Lapid [4, p. 81]. However, these plans were never implemented. It was during the tenure of the Bennett–Lapid Government that events took place that were important for the development of the conflict in the West Bank.

We are talking about the actions of the Israeli security forces against radicals in this part of the Palestinian arena in 2022, namely Operation Breakwater. During this operation, aimed at preventing attacks and detaining those involved in terrorist activities, the IDF has strengthened its counter-terrorism operations based on intelligence⁴. During it, almost daily raids were carried out aimed at detaining militants and seizing weapons⁵.

Operation "Breakwater", in view of the tasks it solved, the forces and means involved in its conduct, as well as its scale and duration, can be considered as a continuation of the actions of the Israeli security forces in the West Bank that preceded it. At the same time, against the background of the frequency of attacks by West Bank radicals that occurred during this operation, the question arises as to whether its format corresponds to the challenges faced by the Israelis [5, pp. 1032-1033].

In the context of the above events, it is worth quoting the words of Ya. Lapid, who in September 2022, in connection with a visit to the headquarters of the SHABAK counterintelligence service in the northern part of the West Bank, stated that the Israeli side has to deal with a complex reality in which, along with strength and determination, steps are required to maintain daily life⁶. In addition, a month later, he noted that the goal of the Israeli side is to strongly and continu-

⁴ One Year Since Operation Break the Wave // The Israel Defense Forces. March 31, 2023. URL: <https://www.idf.il/en/articles/2023/one-year-since-operation-break-the-wave/> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

⁵ Khdour Nasser. Surging Violence: Hamas Attempts to Reshape the West Bank's Political Landscape // The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. April 5, 2023. URL: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/surging-violence-hamas-attempts-reshape-west-banks-political-landscape> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

⁶ PM Yair Lapid Visits ISA Samaria District HQ // Prime Minister's Office. September 15, 2022. URL: https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/event_gss150922 (accessed: 02.02.2024).

ously attack terrorists, singling out Jenin and Nablus among the locations of such actions⁷.

In view of the latter, it is necessary to point out that at the beginning of 2023, 6 armed groups were operating in the areas of these cities at once⁸, which, along with other factors, made them one of the main centers of the struggle between radicals and Israeli security forces in the West Bank after B. Netanyahu returned to the post of Prime Minister of the country. One example of such a confrontation is the Israeli operation in Nablus on February 22, 2023, when about 100 people were injured on the Palestinian side⁹. The Tula-Karema region was also an important center of the struggle.

In turn, among these centers of confrontation, the Jenin area is of the greatest importance in the context of the events of 2023, where in July the Israelis conducted operation "Home and Garden", in which Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Galant noted the participation of two brigades¹⁰. This operation is of particular importance due to its results. In addition, the Israeli side's active actions against the radicals in the Jenin area were carried out after operation "Home and Garden". In this regard, it is necessary to

highlight the one that took place in December 2023. The operation, which, according to IDF spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari, was a complex brigade operation¹¹.

The results of operation "Home and Garden" make it possible to put it on a par with another large-scale operation by the Israeli side, namely the operation "Return, Brothers" carried out in June 2014 in the West Bank of the Jordan River. Based on the results of the last one, it was stated that the "Gaza scenario" in the field of military preparations could be repeated in the West Bank. It was about the likely appearance of developed infrastructures among the radicals operating in this part of the Palestinian arena – both underground infrastructure and missile production infrastructure [6, p. 133]. The same can be said about operation "Home and Garden", especially considering that in 2023 the Israelis faced rocket attacks in the Jenin area¹². But what is especially important is that referring to the results of this operation allows us to identify the local, regional, and specific features of the possible implementation of the mentioned scenario.

To begin with, operation "Home and Garden" has demonstrated the ability of the radicals of the West Bank to manufacture large quantities of their own means of armed struggle. So, speaking about this operation, B. Netanyahu singled out the destruction of laboratories intended for the manufacture of such facilities on an almost industrial

⁷ PM Lapid's remarks at the Movement for Quality Government event // Prime Minister's Office. October 25, 2022. URL: <https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/spoke-quality251022> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

⁸ Ben Menachem Yoni. Palestinian Terror Groups Challenge PA Forces // Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. January 4, 2023. URL: <https://jcpa.org/palestinian-terror-groups-challenge-pa-forces/> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

⁹ Al-Omari Ghaith. To Prevent the PA from Unraveling, Address Internal Reform // The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. PolicyWatch 3708. February 28, 2023. URL: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/prevent-pa-unraveling-address-internal-reform> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

¹⁰ Defense Minister MK Gallant on operation in Jenin: Terrorism will not have a place where it can hide // The Knesset. July 5, 2023. URL: <https://main.knesset.gov.il/en/news/pressreleases/pages/press5723w.aspx> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

¹¹ Press Briefing by IDF Spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari December 14th, 20:15 // The Israel Defense Forces. December 14, 2023. URL: <https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/hamas-israel-war-23/briefings-by-idf-spokesperson-rear-admiral-daniel-hagari/december-briefings/press-briefing-by-idf-spokesperson-rear-admiral-daniel-hagari-december-14th-20-15/> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

¹² Rubin Uzi. Will the Rocket Threat from Jenin Match the Threat from Gaza? // The Jerusalem Institute for Strategy and Security. September 3, 2023. URL: <https://jiss.org.il/en/rubin-will-the-rocket-threat-from-jenin-match-the-threat-from-gaza/> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

scale¹³. In total, 6 facilities for the manufacture of explosives and explosive devices were eliminated during operation "Home and Garden". Several hundred ready-to-use explosive devices were also seized, with a much smaller number of small arms seized¹⁴.

Among the above data, the ratio of the number of seized explosive devices and small arms is noteworthy. And it is by no means accidental, since the prevalence of various means of armed struggle among the radicals is related to the peculiarities of the confrontation in the West Bank of Jordan.

The radicals of the West Bank are now and in the foreseeable future will be forced to fight against Israel in conditions where the latter's security forces are constantly operating in the Palestinian territories, and among other things, enter the settlements located there. Therefore, they require and will continue to require means of armed struggle that make it possible to effectively confront the Israelis during this confrontation. However, they continue to have limited resources for military preparations, and face active opposition from the Israeli security forces.

In this situation, it is extremely important for the radicals operating in the West Bank to create their own funds, armed warfare, which must have a simple design so that they can be manufactured and used in large quantities. This requirement is largely due to the scale of the confrontation currently taking place in the West Bank, as well as

its possible expansion, especially in light of the war in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, explosive devices are one of the most important tools of the armed struggle for the radicals of the West Bank today and in the foreseeable future. But what is especially important is that the massive use of more advanced (compared to those currently in use) explosive devices will allow the radicals operating in the West Bank to significantly compensate for both the shortage of small arms (for example, assault rifles) and the lack of hand-held anti-tank grenade launchers (RPGs) and anti-tank missile systems (ATGMs). In this regard, it should be noted that the radicals of the West Bank have improved the explosive devices they use against Israelis by 2023¹⁵.

Thus, it can be stated that today and in the foreseeable future, for the radicals of the West Bank, missile weapons can only be an addition to other, more necessary means, armed struggle. Based on this, it should be assumed that in the event of a possible implementation of the "Gaza scenario" in the field of military preparations in the West Bank, the deployment of underground infrastructure will be a priority for the radicals operating there, and the deployment of missile production infrastructure will take a back seat. This prioritization is facilitated by the fact that underground facilities can provide them with an additional opportunity to maneuver their forces and assets during a confrontation with Israeli security forces.

Taking into account the above, a significant circumstance is that underground structures are now being used to a limited extent by radicals in the West Bank of the Jordan River, as demonstrated by operation

¹³ PM Netanyahu's Remarks following a Joint Security Assessment on the Operation in Jenin // Prime Minister's Office. July 3, 2023. URL: <https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/event-assessment030723> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

¹⁴ *Dekel Udi, Kurz Anat.* The Operation in Jenin: Time for a Complementary Move // The Institute for National Security Studies. INSS Insight No. 1744. July 16, 2023. URL: <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/home-and-garden/> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

¹⁵ *Yaari Ehud.* The Danger of Violent Escalation in the West Bank // The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. PolicyWatch 3752. June 23, 2023. URL: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/danger-violent-escalation-west-bank> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

"Home and Garden", during which 6 underground mines were identified¹⁶.

For the possible implementation of the "Gaza scenario" in the field of military preparations in the West Bank, it is important that the Israelis have recently expanded the range of fighting techniques and means they use in this part of the Palestinian arena due to occasional airstrikes. The airstrikes were carried out, in particular, during operation "Home and Garden"¹⁷. This increased the effectiveness of the Israeli side's actions, as the air strikes complemented the actions of the ground forces, which today play a major role in the fight against the radicals of the West Bank.

Among other things, the airstrikes have increased the effectiveness of the fight against a dangerous enemy for Israelis – mobile militant groups capable of quickly changing their location. In such a situation, one of the most effective countermeasures on the part of the radicals may be the deployment of underground infrastructure in the West Bank of the Jordan River, and, first of all, in the territory of the main centers of confrontation with the Israeli security forces. Therefore, for the radicals of the West Bank, the importance of the experience gained by the radicals of Gaza during the confrontation with the Israelis has increased even more, especially the experience of deploying underground communications. However, this raises the question of to what extent this experience can be applied in the West Bank, given the local, regional, and

specific nature of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Due to its importance, this issue should be considered in a separate study.

CONCLUSION

The results of the actions carried out by Israel in 2023 in the West Bank of the Jordan River, including operation "Home and Garden", are important in the context of subsequent events, namely, a large-scale armed confrontation.

These actions by the Israeli security forces weakened the position of the West Bank radicals in the conflict with Tel Aviv, which further simplified the latter's solution to an important task caused by the development of events in the Palestinian and Lebanese arenas, namely – maintaining the armed confrontation in the West Bank at an acceptable level at a time when the large forces and means of the Israeli side were involved in the fight against the radicals of the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah, and the possibility of maneuvering these forces and means was limited due to the synchronicity of the armed confrontation in the Palestinian and Lebanese directions.

In connection with this significant circumstance, in 2023, before the outbreak of the war in Gaza, the Israelis in the West Bank, apart from operation "Home and Garden", did not implement another operation/other operations of a similar or larger scale. Such actions by the Israeli security forces, among other things aimed at eliminating the infrastructure of the radicals (especially in the northern part of the West Bank, where operation "Home and Garden" has already been carried out), would make it even easier for Tel Aviv to solve the task outlined above. If the mentioned conflict scenario were implemented, operation "Home and Garden" would become one of

¹⁶ 48 hrs of Operating to Weaken Terrorism in the Jenin Camp // The Israel Defense Forces. July 5, 2023. URL: <https://www.idf.il/en/articles/hafatzot/07-2023/48-hrs-of-operating-to-weaken-terrorism-in-the-jenin-camp/> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

¹⁷ Dostri Omer. "House and Garden" – analysis and conclusions of the Israeli military activity in Jenin // Israel Defense and Security Forum. July 18, 2023. URL: <https://idsf.org.il/en/opinion-en/house-and-garden/> (accessed: 02.02.2024).

the stages of a large-scale campaign by the Israelis against the radicals of the West Bank.

In addition, the implementation by Tel Aviv of this option of armed confrontation would simplify the Israeli security forces' struggle against the radicals operating in the West Bank, which was waged during the war in the Palestinian enclave, and one of the main locations of which was the Jenin area. Taking into account the latter, as well

as operation "Home and Garden" and the events that preceded it, we can generally speak of a limited and prolonged campaign by the Israelis in the area, carried out in tandem with their operations against radicals in other locations in the West Bank. Based on this, operation "Home and Garden", in view of the forces and means involved in its implementation, as well as the results achieved during it, should be considered the main epicenter of the campaign in the Jenin area.

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