

Intelligence Warfare: Targeting Tehran to Stop a Nuclear Iran

Featuring Yonah Jeremy Bob, Eyal Hulata, and Jonathan Schanzer
Moderated by Enia Krivine
Introductory remarks by David Adesnik

ADESNIK: Welcome and thank you for joining us for today's event hosted by the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

It's Tuesday, October 24th, and today's panel will discuss Israel's intelligence operations, including its 20-year clandestine battle to prevent the Islamic Republic of Iran from achieving nuclear capabilities. The panel will also examine difficult questions regarding the state of Israeli intelligence today as highlighted by the horrific attacks of October 7.

I'm David Adesnik, the director of research at FDD and a senior fellow. We're pleased to have you here, some in person, many tuning in live for this conversation. Let me jump straight into today's introductions.

First, we are honored to be joined by Yonah Jeremy Bob. Yonah is the *Jerusalem Post* intelligence analyst and literary editor. He's the co-author with Ilan Evyatar of the new book from Simon & Schuster, "*Target Tehran: How Israel Is Using Sabotage, Cyberwarfare, Assassination — and Secret Diplomacy — to Stop a Nuclear Iran and Create a New Middle East*".

Yonah is well-connected to all of the top Israeli ministries from his former posts in the IDF, the Foreign Ministry and the Justice Ministry. Yonah has recently been on the ground in Israel on both the southern and northern fronts, meeting with top political and military decision-makers.

I've read Yonah's new book cover-to-cover, and it was sometimes hard to remember that this was nonfiction because the book tends to be as engrossing as a spy thriller at quite a few points, and the exploits of the Mossad are best described as simply unreal. While it's nearly impossible not to be impressed with the work of Israeli operatives, the book also does not shy away from asking hard questions about whether espionage is sufficient to achieve national objectives.

Also joining us is Eyal Hulata, a senior international fellow here at FDD and the first foreign visiting fellow at FDD headquarters. I can tell you he's a pleasure to work with.

From July, 2021 to January, 2023, Eyal served as Israel's national security advisor and head of Israel's National Security Council, serving under Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Prime Minister Yair Lapid. Eyal coordinated the national effort on Iran, negotiation of the Maritime Border Agreement with Lebanon, and co-led the bilateral Strategic Consultation Group with his American counterpart, Jake Sullivan. He served for more than 20 years in Israeli national security roles, and for his achievements, Eyal has been awarded the prestigious Israeli Defense Award.

Next, my colleague, Jonathan Schanzer, senior vice president for research. Jonathan previously worked as a terrorism finance analyst at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, where he played an integral role in the designation of numerous terrorist financiers.

Jonathan has written hundreds of articles on the Middle East and four books, including most recently "*Gaza Conflict 2021*", the first book published on the previous clash between Israel and Hamas, so we'll sign him up for a book on the current war and expect delivery in around three months.

(LAUGHTER)

ADESNIK: He regularly testifies before Congress and serves as a frequent analyst in the media. Finally, he is a Philadelphia sports fan, but please don't hold that against him.

(LAUGHTER)

ADESNIK: Today's conversation will be moderated by Enia Krivine, senior director of FDD's Israel Program and national security network. Her previous roles include nearly seven years at AIPAC [American Israel Public Affairs Committee], working on several political campaign, and at the Israel Allies Foundation. She began her career in D.C. over a decade ago as a Middle East fellow at the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

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Finally, if you enjoy reading the multiple flash briefs that FDD publishes every day about the crisis in the Middle East, then Enia should be on the top of your thank you list, since she is the quarterback that has guided that effort from its inception.

Before we dive in, a few last words about FDD. For more than 20 years, FDD has operated as a fiercely independent, nonpartisan research institute focused exclusively on national security and foreign policy. As a point of pride and principle, we do not accept foreign government funding.

Since the attacks on Israel on October 7, FDD experts have produced more than 600 broadcast, print and radio appearances and original research publications. To stay up-to-date on our real-time analysis, I encourage you to regularly check our website, FDD.org, and follow us on the platform now known as X, formerly Twitter, @FDD.

With that, Enia, over to you.

KRIVINE: Thank you so much, David, and thanks, everyone, for being here in person and those joining online.

So what I'd like to do is start with just giving Yonah a couple minutes to talk about the premise of his book and why you decided to write this book now.

BOB: Sure. From here or over there or...?

KRIVINE: From here, I think, is fine, yeah.

BOB: Sure. Great. OK. Thank you again, everybody, for coming, and anybody who's following virtually, and to FDD for holding the event.

There's four main points I'd like to highlight, and we have questions later if people want to get into them a little bit more. But the first thing is this book is really unique, in terms of exposing recent Mossad operations. Your typical book about the Mossad, the CIA, is things that happened 50 years ago, 25 years ago.

It takes time to declassify these things, and there was a strategic decision made by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Mossad Director at the time, Yossi Cohen, in 2018 to declassify and expose to the whole world the 2018 operation to steal or permanently borrow, however you want to put it, Iran's nuclear secrets from under the nose of its security services in 2018.

That started a momentum, enabled myself to make some deep penetrations and get all kinds of exclusive material that normally wouldn't be — you wouldn't be able to get about a series of other things which have been attributed to Israel.

I'm still an Israeli journalist. I have to say, so according to foreign sources, when, you know, the Natanz Nuclear Facility in July 2020 happened to blow up, or the April 2021 Natanz Nuclear Facility happened to blow up, or the Karaj Nuclear Facility in June 2021 happened to blow up, and we could go on and on, and you can read about it in the book, but it is unprecedented.

We have, you know, operations as recent as the beginning of 2023, 2022, and about 70 percent of the book is in the last three to five years, so that's unprecedented. It's substantive and forward-looking, all right? We talk about October 2025, when even if the US and Iran and the other powers go back into some sort of nuclear deal, whatever it might be — JCPOA [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action] 1, 2.0 — whatever it is, in October 2025, restrictions come off on the centrifuges. Not that long after that, the snapback, the ability to snap back global sanctions also comes off.

So there is a built-in structural crisis whether there's a deal or not. We're going to have to deal with that, and Israel might feel that it might need to take action at that time.

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In terms of history, this is the first book introducing Yossi Cohen and the current Mossad Chief, David Barnea, to the wider public. Yes, there have been some short news articles about them, but in terms of really getting in depth of who they are, what motivates them, what their major operations that they have been involved in or according to foreign sources [air quotes] they've been involved in, you know, introduces those characters.

And then the last thing, and I think the thing which – which got Simon & Schuster to really want this book, is connecting it with the Abraham Accords. Everybody thinks of the Mossad as they assassinate people, they, you know, spy on people, but the idea that they develop peace behind the scenes is not something that people know as well.

And the fact is that the Abraham Accords — and there have been a million books about – written about them — at the end of the day, you know, it was, you know, [Amb.] Ron Dermer for the US, [Amb. Yousef Al] Otaiba for the UAE, and Jared Kushner and Avi Berkowitz, you know, from the United States, some other people that were doing, like, the final negotiations. But everybody says the groundwork that the Mossad laid was — you know, got them to that point.

If you go back to 2017, the first time two top Israeli officials come out and say “we are sharing intelligence with the Saudis” in public, that's shortly after Yossi Cohen has a visit to MBS [Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud], the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, and top officials in Saudi Arabia – we can finally say some of this publicly. The Israeli censors started to let us say that Yossi Cohen had meetings in Saudi Arabia as of the middle of 2022. When I started writing the book, we couldn't say that. I was able to change some of the wording.

Anyways – so that completely changed the Middle East, right? That put Iran on the defensive diplomatically, and I'm going to go out there and argue regardless of whether the current conflict delays normalization with the Saudis, I don't think in the long-term that's going to change.

I think that the Abraham Accords are deep with the UAE, with Bahrain, with Morocco, and it may delay expanding them. It may also not. We have to see how long the war goes, how many people get killed, but that is a major piece of the book, is how the Mossad was a tremendous contributor to developing peace and normalization in the Middle East.

KRIVINE: Thank you so much. For the record, this event was planned before the events of October 7th. So since its inception, it has evolved a little bit, and we definitely couldn't do this today without talking about what happened a couple of weeks ago in Israel.

So to that end, Jon, you've been researching the topic of Iranian involvement in Middle East proxies for decades. Do you believe that Iran had a direct hand in the events of October 7th?

SCHANZER: I do. I think it's hard to deny. You know, I think there's different ways of looking at it. The first is that Iran has invested over the course of decades now in the development of Hamas, as well as Hezbollah, and we're seeing both of those groups attack Israel right now.

The northern front is still, I'd say, lukewarm. It's – hasn't gone fully hot yet, but we have seen, I think, 31 Hezbollah fighters killed, four Israeli soldiers killed, and there's an ongoing battle there.

But, you know, without question, Hamas would not have had the capabilities that we saw on display, whether it was the paragliders, the frogmen, or any of the other capabilities that they demonstrated on that day, wouldn't have happened without Iranian training, and certainly wouldn't happen without the Iranian cash. There, we're talking about somewhere in the vicinity of \$100 million to \$200 million a year that Tehran provides that proxy, \$800 million or so, give or take, to Hezbollah. So the financial trails are there.

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I think the big question is what Israel can produce that can demonstrate beyond a shadow of a doubt that Iran had a direct hand. We've heard stories, reports unconfirmed until now of IRGC [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps] cells that are based in Gaza and might have been providing some direction – needing, you know, to see those substantiated – reports of a possible cyber-attack that blinded the IDF before Hamas went in. That would, again, be an indication most likely of Iran. Hamas is not known to have those sorts of capabilities.

And then, you know, just the specific training of some of the operatives that went in. At some point, I think the Israelis will be able to say where these people had trained before and where they got this from.

You know, maybe one other thing to note is there is something that we already know that exists. It's based in Lebanon. It's called the "nerve center". The nerve center is led by the IRGC. It includes Hamas, it includes Hezbollah, it includes the Islamic Jihad.

The goal of this nerve center, which was first exposed in 2021, was to make sure that Iran could actually coordinate the activities of all of its proxies to, you know, begin to close in on Israel, to be able to carry out multiple attacks at the same time in a coordinated fashion. That is what we are watching right now. It looks as if the nerve center is activated. It looks as if it's working the way that it was planned.

The real — I think the hiccup in all of this, in terms of the evidence that is — should be produced, that I hope will be produced, is there is, I think, a reticence on the part of the United States to acknowledge that Iran has been involved in this from the beginning.

This is not a partisan swipe. This is just we know what the policy has been. The policy has been about engaging with the Iranians, providing sanctions relief in the hope of bringing about a more moderate position, as it relates to the Iranian nuclear program.

I think that policy needs a significant review here in this country, and I do think that when the facts come to light about Iran's involvement, that may be one of the tipping points for such a review.

KRIVINE: Thank you. And Yonah, you've studied Iranian subterfuge and, perhaps, one of the leading experts at this point with your book. Do you see Iranian fingerprints on what happened?

BOB: Yeah, I'm — so I'm going to agree with a lot of the nuances that Jon just said. The Israeli officials that I have spoken to have said to date that it's not that a specific order was given, do this specific operation on October 7th, but Iran was there on October 6th and Iran was there on October 8th, all right?

And so what I mean by that — October 6th, as Jon said, they've been funding this, they've been training this, they've been increasing Hamas' capabilities for years — and I — he was a lawyer before he was a journalist.

But for the fact that Iran had given them all of these capabilities and training and funding and logistics, they could not have come close to pulling that operation off. That's why I say they were there on October 6th. They were there on October 8th because Hezbollah has been not small involved but majorly involved.

We haven't seen a full war, a full open front yet, and I hope there won't be, but we're talking about sometimes dozens of rockets, anti-tank missiles, systematic attempts to blind Israeli surveillance on the border. That, officials said, a specific order was given by Iran to Hezbollah to do it, to crank things up.

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So again, whether there was a specific order that was given on October 7th, what I have been told up until now is no, but the fact that it couldn't have happened without Iran and the entire structure of this conflict – because Israel is having to worry so much about Hezbollah, some officials have said to me that one of the major reasons they've delayed the ground invasion is they were worried that they'll go into Gaza and suddenly that's the point when Hezbollah will strike. And so they needed to wait longer not just to get the reserves ready to invade the south but to get the reserves up to the north to prevent Hezbollah from being able to do that.

KRIVINE: Thank you.

Eyal, given what our colleagues have just said, you served as the National Security Advisor, the head of the – essentially the National Security Council in Israel, for both Prime Ministers Bennett and Lapid. And I think it was Bennett that coined the term “the Octopus Doctrine,” whereas instead of going after Iran's tentacles in the region, being its proxy militias, instead targeting the head of the octopus in Tehran.

Do you think that there'll be that doctrine – the Octopus Doctrine will be engaged in this round of fighting?

HULATA: So first of all, the – what's important about this doctrine is that it is a process rather than an event.

To get back on something you wrote to me the other day, Iran has been the core of instability in the region and the source of almost all of the security threats Israel is posing for the last at least two decades.

And this risk is evolving because Iran capabilities are growing. Their ability to build proxy organizations, to fund them, to train them, and to arm them are increasing for a lot of reasons. And their, you know, self-belief that they can get away with it is unfortunately, also, increasing, I think, specifically in the more recent timeframe.

So for Israel, this has been a struggle that started way back and will definitely continue in the future. It had various shapes and forms. There were times where we were focused more on the Iranian nuclear program and able to do things to it. But then, as the threat widens, our need to do more on other fronts increases as well.

So when Israel finds itself fighting Iranian shipments of equipment, this is also a part of this more elaborated campaign that we hold against the Iranians.

At the end, this entire apparatus is aimed to two things. The first is to buy time and to delay Iranian capabilities of doing what they want to do, short of using military force. And the second one we're really good at what we're doing is to derail their strategy and make them focus on other issues.

There were several instances where we were able to do this. I think that during the previous government, the things that were done, we saw, I think, good indications of them kind of closing in. 2022 was not a very good year for the Iranian [regime] as a whole, with a host of things that happened, but unfortunately, 2023 seems to be a very good year, unfortunately, for them.

So when we're more active, we're able of achieving effective outcomes, and unfortunately, when we're less active, you can see the signs of it.

So to your questions, I'm confident that this has to reengage and we will have to use all of the sets of tools that we have in the tool – in the Israeli toolbox against this threat, and we should see more of that coming.

KRIVINE: Thank you. As our colleague David Adesnik said when he introduced this panel, in your book, you have stories of mind-bending Mossad operations against Iran, and you – its – demonstrates this incredible intelligence apparatus in Israel.

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Given the intelligence apparatus – and Eyal, this is also a question for you perhaps after Yonah, given your background in some very sensitive positions in Israel – given this incredible intelligence apparatus that can pull off these feats beyond belief thousands of miles from their shores, how did Hamas blindside them in the way they did?

BOB: Yeah. So there's, you know, the tactical questions, which is a whole separate – but this is strategic failures. And so basically what you have is arrogance and groupthink. Israel is tremendously powerful, the technology is tremendously powerful, all of the intelligence agencies, where you have the Mossad doing external, you have the Shin Bet doing domestic internal security. They also, by the way, are responsible for Gaza, the West Bank, and some of the surrounding border areas. And IDF military intelligence that does pieces of everything and it's also the largest.

And I can tell you, we had tremendous, impressive briefings from people in the intelligence services very recently, and they just had no idea that Hamas would do something like this.

Now, in fairness, Hamas lured them to sleep. There have been several rounds since the last time that Hamas was in a conflict, was 2021, and there have been several rounds, including in May of this year, where it was just between Israel and Islamic Jihad. And over and over again, Hamas stayed out of the fighting and they just let Islamic Jihad fight.

And so it looked – if you want to draw a reasonable conclusion, if somebody stays out of fighting, they are deterred. They probably took a temporary hit domestically in Gaza by being afraid to fight Israel, while Islamic Jihad was the — were the heroes.

So in fairness, besides I think some of the, you know, arrogance of how powerful we are and how weak they are – and that can happen to anybody and it happened to us, it happened to Israeli intelligence – on top of that, the record did look like Hamas was actually deterred.

And I think one lesson that I certainly took from this, and I hope the Israeli intelligence will take from this, is you don't just plan for the most likely outcome. If you're talking about national security for a whole country, you have to consider what is 10 percent likely, what is 20 percent likely?

And I hope also that there will be a different attitude to border security. Yes, all the new technology and sensors can help you trace certain things, but sometimes you can't replace boots on the ground. The fact is that if there had been thousands of more soldiers on the Gaza border on October 7th, what happened wouldn't have happened. Would they have had some success? Yes. But would they have been able to get to 22 villages and kill 1,300 people? Absolutely not.

You can only rely on technology so much, you need boots on the ground. And I hope, you know, again, we learn a little bit of humility. And no matter how successful Israeli intelligence could be, however many times against Iran and lots of other places, you need to respect the adversary, whoever they are.

KRIVINE: Eyal, you want to add to that, or Jonathan?

HULATA: I'll just say that, you know, you started by saying that, you know – to be fair to the intelligence establishment, I worked for the intelligence establishment. I think this is the most problematic failure, that they were able to trick our collection, our analysis, our conclusion, and our strategic understanding. That's the core of the problem. I think there is no excuse to that.

I would – I've said it in Israeli media and I'm saying it here – I don't think that there's anyone who was involved with affairs with Gaza that shouldn't ask himself how and where are we also part of this of this massive failure?

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It is imminent that – you know, I think nowhere during all of the years since Hamas took over Gaza, there was no thinking that, you know, Hamas is pragmatic in the way that we can deal with them directly. Israel did not deal with Hamas directly for this reason specifically. It was very, very imminent that their terror organization, their ideology is to kill as many Jews as possible if we give them the opportunity.

The problem is that somewhere along this line, they shifted from gaining what they could from this absurd asymmetric relationship with Israel to going more strategically into doing this. By doing so, they favored their own ideology over their own people. This is a conceptual thinking that, including myself at the time I was National Security Advisor, we believed couldn't happen. And that is a mistake.

Now, of course it is true that we have to prepare also for the things that we do not think are likely and reasonable. And the problem is that I think the IDF thought they did, that they had it covered by way of defense, and this has also failed.

So there – I think there are two – of course, there are interlinks between the intelligence failure and the operational failures, but there are two different ones stemming from different sets of presumptions, and a lot to be learned in the future.

I think it's also important to say that, you know, as absurd as it may sound, this does not contradict what Israel is capable of doing when we are focused and sharp, because when we are, you know, utilizing all of our resources to achieve something that's very complicated and unthinkable outcomes, we can do this, because the capacity and the capabilities are always there.

It's always more difficult to be on the defense than on the offense, but again, I'm not saying this is an excuse – this is the core of the failure that our establishment has gone through. And there is a lot of reform and fixing to be done.

KRIVINE: Jon, speaking of books, you've written three great books that have focused on Hamas. What – given – you know, given that – this misunderstanding in the Israeli national security establishment where they thought Hamas could moderate, what does it say about Israel's neighbor to the north, Hezbollah? And is there the same misconception going on there?

SCHANZER: Well, I think if there was one, and I don't think there was, that's out the window now. I would say that right now, the Israeli security establishment is focused, as everybody is, on destroying Hamas.

I think they're far more concerned about their neighbor to the north, given that Hezbollah is believed to be as powerful as a mid-sized European army. It's got 150,000 rockets, it's got PGMs [precision-guided munitions], it's got soldiers that have trained alongside, you know, Russia and Iran. It's a very different kind of threat.

And so there are no illusions right now about what could happen. And I would say that there is still very much a chance – I don't know how to put a number on it – of a regional war, a multi-front war, which is, of course, not anything that Israel wants to deal with.

Now, I've heard assessments that Hezbollah really doesn't want this. If they really did, they would have gone in on the first day or the second day, on October 7th, or October 8th, or October 9th. That does not preclude them from still possibly joining the fray now.

What they are trying to do – just I think to put this into context, what the Israelis are getting ready to do is to remove one of Iran's pieces off the chessboard. It's not a very powerful piece, or at least historically it's not been assessed to have been one, it's a tactical threat. But it's going to be removed.

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And it looks like the United States and the UK and France and others have bought into this and they are supportive of Israel doing whatever it can to dismantle the Hamas organization, to really uproot it from Gaza. It doesn't mean that it'll be gone 100 percent, but it will be severely, severely weakened, if not destroyed.

And Hezbollah is right now wondering whether it can stop it. And Iran is wondering the same thing, that whether it – you know, by rattling their sabers and threatening a multi-front war, whether that will deter Israel, whether it will deter the United States, which has deployed assets to the region.

So really, what we're looking at right now is an Israel that is reeling from the intelligence failures that Eyal has described. It is ready to do whatever is needed in Gaza. But of course we don't know what kinds of surprises may wait there. And then there is the specter of this regional war. So it's really a delicate moment, I think, for Israel.

I do think that it's important to note that, yes, there is strength. There is not a lot of depth, though. And so the Israelis need to be very smart about their next steps because, from all indications, this is going to be something that will be with us for quite a while.

I don't expect this episode to end with just whatever happens in Gaza. There will be a continuation of this, parts two, maybe three, maybe more.

KRIVINE: Thank you. Eyal, anything you want to add on that, as far as Hezbollah?

HULATA: No, I think the understanding of Hezbollah gives a good sense of how Iran was able, over the years, to build this ring of fire, of threats around us, to be operated when they want them to operate.

Of course, they have their own calculus. [Hassan] Nasrallah does not always do what Iran has ordered him over the years because of his own domestic issues. Lebanon is a mess, mainly because of Hezbollah and the attributions of their actions within Lebanon, but it doesn't mean that they won't play the role for that specific task.

What we need to, I think, remember is that, from an Iranian perspective, playing all of the tools at the same time does not necessarily serve their strategy. I think it is clear also for the Iranians that even if they deploy all of the proxies together, this does not pose an existential threat on Israel.

What the Iranians are trying to do is to erode social cohesion, sense of security, and capabilities of Israel over time. And to do that, it doesn't serve the purpose to activate everything it wants. So — and again, I'm putting this as an analysis.

As Jon said before, this does not preclude a scenario when Hezbollah will join. This can happen. But I would imagine that if the Iranians understand, and they – surely they do, that this does not end when this round of war with Gaza finishes, it will make sense to keep some of the ammunition, so to speak, for later rounds. And Israel will need to act accordingly and not only prepare but also be more, I think, effective in derailing their game plan.

KRIVINE: And Yonah, do you believe that it was or is Iran's intention that this particular episode erupts into a regional war? Is that your take?

BOB: So again, I don't know that this specific, you know, date was an order given from Iran. The indications I have from top officials, both political and intelligence, so far are not, but that something like this would happen, absolutely.

We got a classified briefing towards the beginning of 2023, myself and a small number of other reporters, that Iran was going to be far more aggressive in 2023 in every area, with Hamas, in the West Bank, in Hezbollah. So this was absolutely along the way.

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And as — I do expect an Israeli ground invasion, and I do expect the invasion to be something much more serious than what Israel did in 2014, because in 2014, that was, like, the biggest war so far with Hamas, but most of the Israeli Army only went within about 2 kilometers of Gaza, didn't really go deeply into the cities. So we're going to see more this time.

But, with all of this pause, there do seem to be indications that, for a variety of concerns, whether it's about Hezbollah, whether it's about the hostages, whether it's about humanitarian concerns and pressure from the United States, that Israel may end up doing less than whatever it thought about two weeks ago. People are talking about, you know, whether Israel might do some sort of northern Gaza security zone.

So, you know, might they do something bigger but not enough to really completely uproot Hamas and try to do a security zone? Well, that's sort of what happened in Lebanon in 1982, and the security zone eventually didn't work out.

So I think we are going to see some sort of paradigm shift, but the idea that, you know, violence and danger between Gaza and Israel is going to be resolved by the current conflict, that, I think, is doubtful without, you know, again, some much larger, even larger than what we're seeing, resolution of both military and diplomatic, you know, tools to get something that can actually last.

I think, you know, there's going to be a conflict even after this. There's probably going to be guerrilla warfare even after Israel beats [air quotes] Hamas. So this isn't just going away.

KRIVINE: OK. You mentioned the pause. So Israel has been — it called up 300,000 reservists in the fastest call-up in Israel's — fastest and biggest call-up in Israel's history. They are placed around the country. Many of them are in the south, but they're waiting.

Eyal, if you were national security advisor to Prime Minister Netanyahu today, what would you be advising him, as far as this waiting period and whether it is to Israel's advantage or disadvantage?

HULATA: So first of all, you know, the fundamental advice is that the government of Israel should be very clear about what its goals are in this situation that was clearly, you know, put upon us as — as a surprise.

But the government needs to make a decision about how they want this war to end. And given the fact that the government has said that and the War Cabinet declared that, when this ends, Hamas will not be ruler of Gaza, then the operational plans should go hand-in-hand and in parallel to achieve this end.

I think that achieving this end only by what Israel has been doing so far, over almost three weeks, is very difficult. I mean, they — Hamas are capable of hiding very, very well and protecting their — their — core of the apparatus from air bombardment. They've done this in the past, and I think that they're also doing this today.

So if the government really intends to do that, they will need to deploy more capabilities. I'm not saying how they should look like and if this should be a full-range ground invasion or shouldn't. Of course, the military needs to be very wary of the traps that are — is waiting for them as well. And we need to outsmart our adversaries and not go in blunt force into it. That's not the proper way for Israel to deploy. But, clearly, this needs to happen.

I — you know, at the moment, it seems like there are other considerations for the government. I would assume that the communication between the administration and our government has something to do with it, be it the hostages or American worry that this can deteriorate into a global or regional conflict that will implicate American forces as well, which are the things that have been out in the press, both in the US and in Israel.

So all of this will have an effect on the calculus and the decision-making process, but this does not preclude the government from making a decision, what they want to do. I think it will be very difficult to hold all of the reservists waiting for long. This has an effect on our economy, this has an effect on the morale of the military.

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And if there is a change of the way the government intends to deploy its forces — that has happened before, you know, this can happen again. We don't have to go according to the plan we did before. Hamas is not going anywhere.

And I think that the damage is done and this can be cut and sliced and dealt with in the future, but they will need to make a decision. Usually, the worst thing that happens is that no decision is made, and this also unfortunately has happened before for Israel, and if no decision is made, then we will be unfortunately losing most of the potential gains here.

So this is what worries me more. When I look now at what's happening back home and I see the — what might be signals of hesitant of decision-making, not hesitant of action, I'm a bit worried. But having said that, I'm here. I don't sit there. I'm not National Security Advisor. I don't hear everything. I don't know of the considerations. I hope I'm wrong. And it's always better to be surprised for the good than surprised at the bad.

KRIVINE: And Jon, you could call it — as you know, you could look at it and say this is a disastrous pause that's been — some are saying that's been imposed on Israel by outside forces, or you could say wow, this is incredible restraint, that despite this — these massacres and the atrocities and the brutality, Israel is holding the line.

What — what's your take on why Israel's doing it and what the implications are?

SCHANZER: So obviously I don't have all that information either, and if Eyal doesn't have it, I definitely don't have it, but what I think I can say with some certainty is that Israel initially wanted to just go in and destroy. And that was the initial reaction after 1,400 people were slaughtered in cold blood, and I think it's quite natural.

I think that some of the discussions with the US and perhaps others have forced Israel to just sort of stop and take a deep breath, and the leadership needs to assess what threats may lie on other borders, what challenges may lie across the line when Israel goes into Gaza. There are dangers, there are challenges. It requires strategy, it requires thought, it requires materiel, it requires weaponry. These are all things that cannot be done on the fly or on the cheap.

And so — and we're beginning to hear actually that some of the leadership in Israel, some former leaders, whereas maybe initially they said "we have no choice, we have to go into Gaza right now," finally, people are saying "OK, you know what? We can wait another few days. We could accommodate the US."

It doesn't mean they're not going in, it just means they can spend a little bit more time to study the terrain, to get more intelligence. There is a huge battle that is going to take place beneath the ground in Gaza that Israel may not be fully prepared for because they haven't mapped out all of this terrain, they haven't fought in it before. This is not going to be an easy battle. And so I don't see any harm in waiting for a few more days.

There is, I think, some concern that the US is restraining Israel and there — thereby maybe diminishing the fear that Israel can spark in the minds of its enemies. There's also a fear — I would say we should have it — that maybe the US is not inspiring fear in the hearts of Iran or Hezbollah, even with the assets that it's put in the region. That's the downside to all of this.

But I have to say I believe that Israel will be able to go into Gaza when the time is right, after the aerial bombardments that are happening now and that will continue long after Israel goes in with whatever size force it does, and you will begin to watch the dismantling of a terrorist group in ways that will be reminiscent of the ISIS defeat as well.

There still is an ISIS but that ISIS is a shell of what it once was, and I think that will be the outcome here and the Iranian axis will be weaker as a result of a miscalculation on October 7th. What happens from there is where it gets interesting though.

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KRIVINE: Thank you. And I want to get to that too, but before we move on, you said yourself Iran is believed to be funding Hamas to the tune of \$100 to \$200 million a year. So presumably, after this war, that will be over and they will not be receiving those funds anymore.

Who steps in — that the funds and the training and the equipment, the equipping, as Eyal talked about — so who steps in to that vacuum?

SCHANZER: You mean in terms of terror groups that might receive the — that funding?

KRIVINE: So I was actually thinking of — on the other side is who steps in to be the patron of the Gazans when the Iran cash flow stops?

SCHANZER: Yeah, I mean, look, you — we — there are a couple of players right now that are patrons of Hamas that should be paying, I think, a far steeper price than they have so far. I'm speaking here of the Qataris and the Turks.

These are the two sort of next level patrons of Hamas. They claim to be true champions of the people of Palestine, as — as they would describe it, and I think they've actually helped lead up to this moment, they've led to the disaster that is unfolding.

They should be on the hook for the reconstruction of Gaza, both of those countries. They should pay for the whole thing to be rebuilt better than it was before, but — and this is a conversation that Eyal and I and others have had — there also needs to be a guarantee of the de-militarization of Gaza moving forward, that it cannot be allowed to be a safe haven for terrorist groups, that there needs to be a complete rethinking of the paradigm.

And yeah, those two countries, a handful of others — I'd add Kuwait, Algeria, Malaysia — they should all foot the bill for this. They should be paying for the reconstruction because they paid for Hamas to be operative for the last 20 years.

HULATA: I want to add to that — and I know — I mean, since the topic of this — of this event has to deal with the way Israel deploys a wide range of tools when we're dealing with an adversary, I think this is a good example of how we should expect not only the Israeli apparatus but also the international apparatus to perform.

Israel does not have to do what the other side is expecting it to do, and to rush in — into traps that they've created for us. And Israel was able in the past, when we were at our best, to find solutions to strategic problems with not — without going in full military confrontation. Sometimes it's very far from us and sometimes it's very close to us.

And I think this will be one of those examples because whether or not we're able to militarily get rid of Hamas in Gaza is something that we will need to wait and see, but for sure when this ends, what will happen and what must be in consensus of the international community — we've given all of the support that we're getting from the US and the EU and all of the other countries — is to choke this organization to death, not militarily but by all the other means.

You know, a piece I wrote in Israel and they — posted also in English, I think just yesterday, the Western world know exactly well how they can utilize all of their financial, legal, and other kind of soft power tools when they want to focus on the adversary, and Hamas is a very small one. And I'm certain that we will see more of that happening.

When you ask who will step in to fund Hamas? Well, no one should step in to fund Hamas. Not only should no one step in to fund Hamas, all of those who have been funding them before should be accounted for and give — you know, pay the toll and price for what they have done in having contributed to the capability of Hamas, at least. I think some of them is more than that and completely involved directly in this most horrific thing we've seen in the history of Israel in so many decades.

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So this is something that we should expect as well. And this is what I meant before when I said that we need to use all of our toolbox. This is also something that the Americans can do quite effectively. This does not involve using military force. This does not put risks of getting into a regional conflict that can, you know, put American direct personnel at risk. This is what we need to do when we need to tackle something. And we haven't done this very effectively, unfortunately, with Hamas. And I should expect that we will in the future.

KRIVINE: So Jon, what are some of the tools that Americans have to try and cut off the funding, not just to organization – not just to Hamas but to the other 19 terror groups that Iran backs on Israel's borders?

SCHANZER: Well look, it's a good question. And what I can tell you is that, you know, first of all, we have the Treasury Department, which can impose sanctions and can track assets. Unfortunately, I think Hamas and a lot of these other groups have been off the radar of Treasury and some of the other agencies. The thinking was that, you know, this was not a threat to international security, this is just a threat to Israel, and so why does it bother us?

And I can tell you that I've had at least one conversation in recent years where a member of the intelligence community just said, look, you know, these guys can actually provide us information on ISIS or al-Qaeda and other threats, so we're going to try to work with them. And they enabled some of these networks to just continue to operate.

That needs to stop now. That is, I think, step one, and I think we are seeing a mobilization of the U.S. bureaucracy. I think that's important. But then I think comes the more challenging question, after you start chasing, you know, \$1 million here, \$1 million there to cut off funds. And there'll be money tree – money changing houses in places like Turkey and Lebanon and Qatar that need to be shut down. But it's actually the headquarters that Hamas maintains in these countries that needs to be shut down. This cannot be allowed to continue.

So there is a question of what do you about Turkey, a NATO ally that has a headquarters for Hamas fundraisers and people involved in military operations that – I mean, we should be – I mean, A) they should be stripped of their NATO status. I don't know how one does that. It's – there's no handbook for it. But there should be sanctions against the country. I think it's – meets the criteria without question of state sponsor of terror.

There has been no price to pay and I think there should be. The same with the Qataris. Right now, unbelievably, the United States is asking the Qataris to lead this diplomatic channel to try to get the hostages released. They are patrons of Hamas. They are a headquarters for Hamas. There is a reason why they have access.

But when you see these guys welcoming the Foreign Minister of Iran as a brother and then start to conduct these negotiations, there should be a sign that something is wrong. Similarly, Malaysia should pay a price. They've been a place where Hamas has trained and learned how to engage in certain cyber tactics and military tactics. Unbelievable that they've not been held to account. And then Kuwait is a jurisdiction of massive illicit finance. They should be held to account.

There's – there are a lot of heads that should roll after this. There is a question right now of American will, not just about whether it will sufficiently scare the Iranians or Hezbollah out of this conflict, but I think there's a question also about the will of the US to hold our allies to account for what they've done.

And the fact that we allowed them, our allies, to do this in the first place reflects poorly on our values. We have an opportunity now to turn that around.

KRIVINE: Thank you. Yonah, you mentioned the Abraham Accords and how it's changed the Middle East, and it was sort of a tectonic shift. I've heard analysis that one of Hamas's main intentions for igniting this war now was to scuttle the Abraham Accords.

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Do you think that they will be successful? And what's the feeling in the – on the ground in Israel? You just flew in from Israel for this event, so you have the freshest perspective there. What's the feeling on the ground in Israel as far as how they're perceiving their regional partners?

BOB: They will not be successful in scuttling the Abraham Accords. The Abraham Accords are part of trends that have been going on for decades. Again, if you take a look at the book, while we talk a lot about the Yossi Cohen era, we also talk about the Naftali Bennett, Eyal Hulata era, and the Tamir Pardo era before Yossi Cohen and the Meir Dagan era before Tamir Pardo, there is a long history of the Abraham Accords countries wanting to normalize with Israel.

And as momentous as this war is and is – there's going to be friction – and I even checked in when Iran signed a deal with the Saudis in March, the book wasn't done yet, we –most of the book was done in late 2022, but we had like an 'oh my god' moment, "do we have to change everything because Iran, just cut a deal with the Saudis?" and I checked with, I'll just say, the highest sources I could check with and everybody – even though 90 percent of the media was saying "that's it the Abraham Accords are dead," I was told they're absolutely not dead. And yes, everybody is move – you know, still wants it to happen and they were right.

And I – again, I don't – I've checked with the same sources recently and nobody wants to say anything about the Saudis right now. But I think that it's still possible with the Saudis. I think whatever has happened is going to continue – UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan. Who knows about Sudan? Who knows if it's even a country anymore? But those other three and I think a number of other countries will eventually be on the way.

And the other thing I'll say is absolutely it would be a perk, a plus for Iran and Hamas to damage, slow down the Abraham Accords. But I was told very clearly by intelligence sources this operation was planned two years ago, at least a year ago. They started in 2021, so it was before the Saudi thing, you know, was jumping. So that was, you know, maybe a perk or plus but I don't think it was like the primary goal.

The primary goal was to scare Israel. And they thought Israel could be beaten back and they thought Israel's become very – no offense to, you know, Westerners, Europeans — but weaker and less willing to fight. And with all – everything that was going on with the fight over the judicial overhaul, the judicial reforms, they thought everybody was distracted, they did not expect and they didn't realize that Israel still has a unbelievably steely determination to fight back, you know, if you messed with Israel. And they're finding that out right now and they're going to find out even more once the ground invasion starts.

KRIVINE: Thank you. So what – I think we have time for one more moderator question, and then we'll move to the audience. So please prepare your questions.

Eyal, what is — you were very closely involved in the – some of the normalization movement. What do you take — what's your take, given everything, especially with Saudi Arabia?

HULATA: So I think that when we look at Iran as a mastermind behind all of those threats coming on Israel, clearly for them, normalization between Israel and the region is a strategic failure.

We know how they viewed the Abraham Accords and their attempts to try to delay it. They've publicly said that normalization between Israel and Saudi Arabia is something that shouldn't happen. And I'm not surprised by the opportunity that was taken here.

Clearly, Hamas felt an opportunity by what they perceived as Israeli weakness, and unfortunately, in – in some of the aspects it was true because we weren't prepared the way I'm sure we were — could have been prepared if we were more focused on –security issues.

But I do think that there is something there about the timing at this point, when they feel that if they wait for a few more months, it might be after there is a signing with the Saudis, and this will change, kind of reshape the strategic balance in the Middle East.

Having said all of that, I think that it is a strategic decision made by the Gulf countries, the moderate Sunni countries in the region, to normalize a relationship with Israel because they understand, and rightly so, that their ability to prosper in the future resides by camping with us in the Western world and not camping with the Iranians and whomever is standing behind them.

And I think that this hasn't fundamentally changed. I don't expect this to change. You know, this may be delayed for awhile now, first and foremost, because nobody can have the appetite to conduct the — what is needed to be negotiated to finish this.

It's not like everything was solved with the normalization with Saudi Arabia, to say the least. There were issues there as well that needed to be done. Nobody can really deal with this right now. And also, you know, when there's so much fighting around, it's — it's very difficult to — to take some of those symbolic decisions that the Saudis need to make in such high hostility, but it will cool down and Israel will be able to express its force and to exert the toll on their adversaries and to restore some sense of security in Israel.

This is not putting Israel on its knees strategically. This is a very agonizing time for Israel, and the Israeli society has experienced, I think, the most devastating and, you know, heartbreaking event that we ever viewed I think since 1948.

But we're a strong nation, we're a strong people, and we'll get over it. And when we do, we'll be able to restore the more strategic trends that we're talking about before. I think it's very imminent, and ultimately, the just cause must win. And there is good and evil in this story, and we clearly reside on the side of the right and of the good, and this will prevail.

KRIVINE: On that optimistic note, I would like to turn it to the audience. So if there are any questions, please raise your hand and Erin will come around with a microphone. I'm sorry. We have a microphone coming, so if you would just wait one second? Thank you.

QUESTION: Thank you very much, Jeremy, for coming here from a very difficult situation. I would like to know, if possible, with names, what you think of the competency of those who are making decisions right now in Israel. And I don't know, is this off the record or not?

KRIVINE: Very much on the record.

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: OK. Thank you very much.

BOB: Yes. So thanks for the question. I do have to be careful with this because I'm still writing daily for the *Jerusalem Post*, and although I try not to, you know, endorse a specific party, I look at policies and talk about the policies.

I will say that it is being talked about constantly in Israel the fact that the chief of the Israeli Military has said "I take responsibility for the failure," the chief of the Shin Bet Internal Intelligence has said "I take responsibility for the failure," the head of Israeli military intelligence has said "I take responsibility for the failure." A little bit belatedly but eventually the Defense Minister Yoav Gallant has said "I take responsibility for the failure."

There's one person, who's the prime minister, has not yet said this. There's a whole debate, you know, what would it mean if he said it, what if — I think, you know, this is a major issue for Israelis. Well, how is that going to play out politically? Can Benjamin Netanyahu survive once the war's over? Some of that depends how the war plays out. A lot of it depends on within the Likud and his allies in the coalition.

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At the end of the day, governments in Israel only fall if the people who are in the government want them to fall. The voters matter, too, but the voters only get to vote if there's an election. So if I was betting money, most people are saying that he will not eventually be able to stay in government, but he has proven a lot of people wrong before, so I – I'm not going to bet money either way on that.

QUESTION: Thank you to the panelists. My question is around something you both have been talking about this whole time. We've talked about the massive failure of the Israeli intelligence. Can Israel be confident in the current intelligence that they have in order to authorize a ground invasion or be confident that that will be carried out successfully, based on the past few weeks of failed intelligence?

HULATA: I'll say that I think clearly one of the reasons that we did not see an instinctive response immediately after what has happened surely has a lot to do with the need to reassess what we know, because if we've been surprised so strongly by them on the offensive, I'm sure that the entire establishment realize that they have also prepared surprises for us defensively once we move in. And I'm – you know, I don't need to be there to know because I know the people and I know how the — all these processes work.

There is something about the way intelligence works generally and specifically in these kind of circumstances. We pick up the gaps very, very, fast. You know, sometimes it's very troubling if we're able to keep — to pick all of those pieces together so fast, why didn't we do this days before and only days after. Well, you know, this is the nature of intelligence failures unfortunately.

And I don't know the details, but I know the people and I know the machine and I know the apparatus and the capabilities. I'm sure that they were able to find what is necessary to plan accordingly, and we will see when – once this plays out.

SCHANZER: I'll just — I'll add one thing. I think there is no doubt that there are surprises, and you don't know what surprises are because they're surprises, right?

The one way that I think Israel can mitigate some of this, right, if you mobilize 100,000 people and you throw them all into Gaza at the same time, you can get hit with much bigger surprises with a bigger force. What I think we're hearing right now is the likelihood of more agile force deployment in different ways to probe, to understand, what's there on the other side before maybe larger maneuvers can take place.

And as we understand it, there are already some very small ground maneuvers taking place in Gaza. And so I suspect they're mapping what's going on. And so there's the intelligence that's being gleaned on the ground and then there's the intelligence system that Eyal knows better than most.

BOB: So I just wanted to say, yes, I think Israel can improve. If I take the metaphor of March Madness, for anybody who's a basketball fan, so you have one game where some small team from a small town, nobody who's making the NBA can beat some amazing team where all the players are going to the NBA, they can beat them in one game, but if they play 10 games, the really good team would still win eight or nine times, and that's what's going to play out here, that no matter what, the fact is — no matter how badly Israeli intelligence failed, Israeli intelligence has awesome powers.

If — there's an article that I wrote earlier, I think about half a year ago, about Israel's intelligence target bank that I had an opportunity to visit. The capabilities that they can map out not just block-by-block, but porch-by-porch within Gaza is awesome.

And so does Hamas have surprises? Absolutely. Are there going to be traps? Are there going to be ambushes? Absolutely. But if Israel has the will to go in and mostly clean house, it — it's going to win despite the depth of the intelligence failure.

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And Eyal said earlier, offense and defense. It is much easier to use your capabilities when you have asymmetric capabilities, when you're on offense than when you're on defense.

QUESTION: Given what's going on in Israel today — or let me begin by saying that it's interesting to me that no one has mentioned Israel's nuclear power. But given what's going on in the Middle East today and given Iran's immense effort to destroy Israel and its stated desire to destroy Israel and its financing of so many deplorable groups to fight against Israel, might it not be time for Israel to give thought to using its nuclear power against Iran?

KRIVINE: So who wants to take that one?

(LAUGHTER)

SCHANZER: Yeah, that — that's — I don't think that's likely to happen anytime soon. I think that is supposed to be the ultimate weapon in the event of kind of a point of no return.

This is not there, not by a long shot. I think Israel finds itself right now looking down the barrel of a number of different fronts, all of which are tactical or strategic challenges, not existential, and you have to make that differentiation.

When Israel looks around, a nuclear Iran is existential. Hezbollah is a strategic threat, and Hamas, well, it's probably — I mean, we all used to think of it as a tactical threat. I'd be curious to hear what Eyal thinks now. But these are not the kinds of threats that would prompt the use of a weapon like that.

I do think, though, that we are likely to see different weapons used by Israel in the coming conflicts. I say that plural because I don't believe that what happens in Gaza will stay in Gaza. I believe that there will be follow-on conflicts that Israel likely starts on its own initiative moving forward, and I think there'll be a different set of tools and a different set of rules that Israel abides by in the coming wars, and it will look different.

But again, I think that Israel's ultimate military strength, that nuclear capability, is one that it keeps holstered, and I think for good reason. We're not — we're nowhere near the point where that's necessary.

KRIVINE: I think — do you have a question? One second.

QUESTION: Thank you very much for your terrific presentations. My first question is this — some of us saw the movie, "Golda", and I'm old enough to remember the Yom Kippur War. Three weeks after the beginning of the war, which at that time was the worst strategic surprise and intelligence failure that Israel suffered, the Third Egyptian Army was surrounded, there was no Egyptian troops between Suez and Cairo, and Damascus was in the range of Israeli field artillery, meaning at 32 clicks from the front line.

What exactly Israel is waiting for now to incur such a damage that Israel starts a painful process of restoring its deterrence capability? Because yes, there's a place for probing, there's a place for surgical strikes, but unless Israeli deterrence capability throughout the Middle East is install — is re-installed, those countries, those great powers like China and Russia that look at Israel as an American asset and support Iran and Hamas explicitly in their public statements, will continue to encourage Iran to push.

And as you mentioned, Hezbollah didn't even really start. I mean, it's tragic, what they're doing. My relatives are deployed in the north, right? But we ain't seen nothing yet unless we — unless Israel is restoring its deterrence vis-a-vis Hezbollah, vis-a-vis Iran, and throughout the region.

And just one little extra thing — I'm writing an article about the great power constellation, and I'm taking stock of assets. And U.S. assets, American assets, and Gulf states' assets are towering over Iranian and Russian assets in the region, and China doesn't have any. So without a focus and commitment and strategy, this will continue. With a focus and strategy, it will not.

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HULATA: I think what's — you know, you use Cairo and Damascus as an analogy from a time where Israel's conflict were completely different than what we face today. And I think that — I think this is a global issue, but I will speak on , you know, on the Israeli side.

The damage that Israel has inflicted on Lebanon in the Second Lebanese War exceeded dramatically the damage that were inflicted on Damascus or Cairo at the end of the Yom Kippur War. But this does not stop an organization like Hezbollah from acting because these are terror organizations. They're not militaries of a country, and that's a whole different story.

And I think the question of how do we go about thinking of deterrence, in the context of terror organization, is something that quite clearly Israel hasn't squared yet. And I will dare say that if Israel hasn't squared it yet, neither did anybody else, because we are more active and more embedded in this than anyone else. And ...

SCHANZER: Can I just say, Eyal, I don't think that you can use the word "deterrence" right now.

HULATA: No, I —you know, I used this in different terms during the week. Those organizations do not act like countries. In fact, when we make a mistake and think that they might think like responsible governments who take care of their citizens, the way Israel hope that Hamas might be tend to, we make strategic mistakes that lead to such failures like we've just seen.

So the tools that we're trained militarily and others to use against countries with militaries don't work that way. We need to fix that. We need to find a way how to do this. One of the ways to deal with this is to go after Iran, which is the source of all of this, which at times Israel has done better.

On the question of Hamas, I think that, you know, we can continue to just say that we should be able to do whatever we need to defend our people and inflict as much damage on the other side, but in reality, the Western national world will, at the end, tie our hands behind our back and deprive us from the ability to do this.

Israel needs to be smarter and more capable in its ability to do so in this point in time. And actually, I think that the leverage that we're given by the backing of the international community right now is way wider than we had before.

So, you know, it's more complicated than the — let's just put a threat on the capital of the other side. Hamas does not have capital. And this idea of extremism will not die just because we kill several dozens of its operatives or hundred of its operatives.

QUESTION: ... capital is Gaza.

HULATA: Well, way more complicated than that.

BOB: ... I mean, one of the issues is Israel definitely does not want to reoccupy Gaza. However big the ground invasion is — and I think it's going to be big and I personally want it to be big — they don't want to stay. Everybody has made that clear. That's on the record.

So the question is what's going to happen afterwards? No matter how many Hamas terrorists you kill, is the Palestinian Authority going to take over when Hamas toppled them not that long ago? Is the UN going to take over when they — you know, most — the best peacekeeping force ever after the 2006 Lebanon War, UNIFIL [United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon] was finally going to stop Hezbollah from re-arming, and Hezbollah is up to, you could say, 150,000, two — someone said 200,000 rockets and mortars. So there's nobody out — is the United — would the United States take over in nation-building after its nation-building successes in Iraq and Afghanistan?

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So it is not at all clear, and I can tell you, from the Israeli government and military officials that I've spoken to, I don't believe they've decided what the plan is afterwards. I think they are going to go in, and some of it is going to be figure it out afterwards. And it is not at all clear, no matter how big the invasion is, again, that it's going to just be resolved.

I'll come back to the Abraham Accords — I think that's part of the biggest answer. Force — we need to — whether it's restoring deterrence, whatever it is, you need to kill a certain number of Hamas right now to get them out of the picture, reduce them. But after that, you also need something from the Abraham Accords to be saying — sending a message to the region, you know, Israel can exist here, we can get something out of it.

And that counter-force, along with the military force together, hopefully, at some point, makes Israel more safe.

KRIVINE: So with that, we have run out of time. I wanted to say thank you to everyone for being here today, for those who joined online. And please, if you want to follow our coverage of this issue, you can check out the Israel Program at [FDD.org](https://www.fdd.org). We also have a special link on the site just for coverage of the conflict.

Thank you very much for being here.

(APPLAUSE)