Israel’s Wartime Budget

TRANSCRIPT

Discussion……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………2

• Noach Hacker, Minister of Economic Affairs, Israel

• Michael Doran, Senior Fellow and Director, Center for Peace and Security in the Middle East

Disclaimer: This transcript is based off of a recorded video conference and breaks in the stream may have resulted in mistranscriptions in the text.

A video of the event is available: https://www.hudson.org/events/israels-wartime-budget

About Hudson Institute: Founded in 1961 by strategist Herman Kahn, Hudson Institute challenges conventional thinking and helps manage strategic transitions to the future through interdisciplinary studies in defense, international relations, economics, health care, technology, culture, and law.

Hudson seeks to guide public policy makers and global leaders in government and business through a vigorous program of publications, conferences, policy briefings, and recommendations.
Mike Doran:

Hi, good afternoon. I'm Mike Duran, I'm the director of the Center for Peace and Security in the Middle East, and we are honored today to be joined by Noach Hacker. He's the Minister for Economic Affairs in the embassy here, in the Israeli embassy here in Washington, and he's come to talk to us about the economic constraints of Israel in time of war.

We're extremely pleased to have him here. The Hudson Institute is shocked and horrified by what we saw on October 7th, when hordes of terrorists from Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad stormed out of Gaza and raped, murdered, and terrorized civilians in Israel and started this horrendous war. We want to do everything we can to support our ally, because we strongly believe that this is not just Israel's war against Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, it's the United States' war against Iran. Thank you very much, and without further ado, I'll pass it to you, Minister Hacker.

Noach Hacker:

Thank you.

Mike Doran:

Thank you.

Noach Hacker:

Thank you very much for having me here today. But before I talk about the main issue that I'm here for, the strength of the Israeli economy, it's mandatory that I say some words on the horrific attack of October 7th. I stand before you today, just more than two and a half weeks after we witnessed the most horrific attack on the Jewish people since the Holocaust. All of us are filled with feelings of sorrow, anger, but most of all, we are fired by the unwavering determination and crystal clear resolve. This is a time of war. The Jewish people find themselves, once again, fighting for our very existence. The impact of these events has echoed, not only within Israel, but also across the globe, deeply affecting the hearts of minds of people everywhere. It is with great importance that we remember the events that unfolded just a few days ago.

On October 7th, during the Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah, Hamas, a terrorist group driven by the genocidal racism against the Jewish people, whose goal is to eliminate Israel as stated publicly in Hamas Charter, unleashed a brutal assault on innocent civilians. These assaults began with heavy missile fire, reigning down upon Israeli cities, targeting innocent families in their homes as they slept on holiday morning. It escalated further with a ground invasion as thousands of armed terrorists infiltrated 30 residential communities and 12 army bases, employing the most extreme terrorist tactics. Hamas has shown the world that its place is with the worst of terrorist. Hamas is worse than ISIS.

There could be no justification for these horrific acts. As Jewish people, these images are attached into our collective memory, serving as a stark reminder of some of the most challenging time our people have faced. I will say it again, not since the Holocaust have we seen so many Jewish people killed in a single day. This is not merely another terrorist attack, this is a threat unfolding practically in our own backyard. The Israeli people, the Jewish nation,
we are at war, and we cannot accept anything less than a clear victory. The Jewish people cannot afford to lose.

The message that must come from this war is clear. To all those who desire to destroy us, led by Iran. The message that must come from this war is that, the people of Israel, the Jewish nation, cannot be defeated. The civilized and moral world will always prevail over the barbaric one. The first week of fighting was dedicated to remove the bloodthirsty terrorist threat from our communities. As we entered our homes, the magnitude of the atrocities became painfully clear, destruction, massacre and plunder. Over 1,400 murdered, slaughtered, over 4,000 wounded, over 200 kidnapped. Men, women, young people, children and babies burned alive. Holocaust survivors, kidnapped and murdered, and entire families forcibly taken from their homes with their small children. Entire family slaughtered.

As time has passed, our intelligence services reveals that the acts of horrors carried out by Hamas were carefully premeditated. On the war front, our primary objective now is to maintain our operational momentum, and relentlessly strike at Hamas until the government and military capabilities of this terrorist organization are completely eliminated. IDF forces carried out limited raids in Gaza Strip last night as part of preparations of the next phases of the war.

While the state of Israel is committed to making the efforts to mitigate harm to civilians, we must recognize the inexcusable method of Hamas, which prevents his own citizens from distancing themselves from harm, and shamefully exploits them as human shields. The recent hospital bombing by Islamic Jihad is another testament of the lies and total lack of basic moral values of this terrorist organization.

As we hear recordings from the horrible attack, while the Jewish nation prides itself of the number of civilians we save, the Hamas terrorist call their families on their victims’ cell phones to take pride in how many innocent lives they murdered. In Northern Israel, we confront further threats from entities operating with a direction in support of Iran. They have chosen this moment to launch attacks against our nation, intensifying the potential for a prolonged regional conflict. While Israel did not seek this escalation, it is crucial to understand that, should Hezbollah miscalculate and challenge us, our response will be lethal and resolute.

But in face of these horrors, the Jewish spirit rises. All of Israel is one family. The spirit of Israel to volunteer, to unite, the determination to overcome any challenge emerges once more. Within the stories of horror, stories of heroism also come to light. The bravery of Israeli men and women who left their homes on a holiday without a call from the military authorities, but solely because they heard their brothers and sisters were in danger. In these difficult times, we are united. In these difficult times, we shared the common goal and understanding that we have no other choice but to stand strong. The people of Israel will prevail.

In times like this, it is essential to acknowledge the strength of Israel. Despite the recent challenges, Israel remains a global leader in innovation and technology, and a firm and strong economic partner. Our nation's resilience, our creativity have always been remarkable. Today, I'd like to shed some light on the exceptional strength of the Israeli economy, which stand as a testament to our nation's unwavering determination. The Israeli economy has reached unprecedented levels of strength and stability, especially in face of adversity. It is important to recognize that our diversified economy is founded on solid and robust pillars. These pillars are reinforced by substantial data that unequivocally demonstrates our economic powers.
Our economy diversification has been instrumental in safeguarding us during challenging times. It is a reflection of our adaptability and ability to thrive in various circumstances. Israel economy enters this war very strong. In recent years, Israel enjoyed a budget surplus with a budget deficit projected for this year at about 1.5%. The ratio of public debt to GDP is comfortably below 60%, and Israel holds substantial foreign exchange reserves, about $200 billion, close to 40% of our GDP, as the central bank stated are plenty, in order to support the Israeli economy.

This year, Israel's economy's growth was amongst the highest of the developed world, following years of impressive performance. This robust indicators are some of the most resilience we've ever had, entering into such conflict. There is no doubt that this war will have a fiscal implications. However, I mentioned Israel's economy is based on a healthy and strong economic foundations. When we consider the economic policies put in place to address the evolving fiscal demands in Israel, it's crucial to recognize our government's commitment to responsible fiscal management. Our former's priority when confronted with shifting financial requests is not to hastily increase the deficit or accumulate additional debt. Instead, our initial response has been to harness existing resources efficiently, releasing them from the current budget, all with the purpose of financing the cost associated with the ongoing conflict.

This approach underscores our dedication to wise financial planning and efficient use of available resources. By carefully relocating funds within the existing budget, we strive to minimize the financial burden on our nation's and its citizens. It is our endeavor to ensure that we can meet the demands of the situation while maintaining the long-term financial stability and wellbeing of our country. While war will have impact on the economy, its current impacts primarily include increased budget expenses, decreased government revenues, and labor shortages in specific fields, specific industries. To bolster the economy, emergency government plans have already been set in motion. These include ensuring continuation lines of credit, postponing tax payments, expediting payments to suppliers, and offering grants to businesses to maintain the regular operations.

It's crucial to emphasize that despite the challenges and difficult images, Israel's economies continue to function fully. Airports, seaports, export and import activities, and daily work routine persist. Furthermore, Israel has progressively shifted towards exporting services, surpassing the exports of goods in 2021. Many Israeli businesses, especially those in the high-tech sector, are accustomed to remote work, and continue to collaborate with clients around the world. In fact, a recent article in a known U.S. Newspaper showcased that a startup founder who, even in military service, is continuing discussions with his team and advisors around the world.

Looking ahead, historical data unequivocally demonstrate Israel economic resilience. Despite significant security and economic events in the past, Israel emerged victorious, often exceeding expectation. To illustrate, during the 2006 second Lebanon war, Israel economy recorded our remarkable growth rate of 5.6%. The fiscal cause of the war, on the expensive side, of about 1% of GDP, was balanced completely in the following budget. And the debt to GDP ratio resumes its decline.

Even in the face of global pandemic, Israel's economy weathered the storm better than most, with only one and a half percent negative growth in 2020, followed by a strong 17% growth in the following two years. Israel financial and banking systems remain one of the most stable globally, as evident by its resilience during past crisis. Transactions continue to take place, impeccably. Israel is a beacon of economic power in the Middle East, holding its position as the world primary innovation hub. The most leading global corporations across various industries
have chosen to invest in Israel's people. Investing in Israel was profitable before October 7th, and will continue to be even more so in the days to come.

In Israel, we have become accustomed to facing challenges head on. It's part of our national spirit to believe that, within every crisis, there is an opportunity waiting to be discovered. During these difficult times, extraordinary individuals are stepping up with brilliant ideas, demonstrating the strong spirit of our people. We already witnessed an incredible effort across entire Israeli technological sector, with companies developing cutting edge solutions to address both immediate and long-term needs. These innovative solutions range from connecting military personnel, supporting advocacy effort, and the Israeli cyber companies. Some of the best in the world are vigorously working to protect our assets and networks.

Within this crisis, we also find the opportunity to strengthen the economic ties between Israel and our global friends. By doing so, we send a powerful message to the world that terrorism will not prevail. The economic resilience of nations facing these barbaric threats will only grow stronger. In the face of terrorism, it's Israel innovation that will emerge victorious. It's our resourcefulness that will triumph. And it's our economic strength that will prevail.

Within this crisis, we also find the opportunity to unite. The U.S. support of Israel, at this time, is another sign of our strong partnership. The full strength of the alliance has recently been revealed in the interception of missiles that Iran's proxies fired from Yemen by the U.S. destroyer stationed in the Red Sea. The extraordinary support we received from other friendly nations has been truly unprecedented. We must recognize that the support might twain as they pass, and the memory of the horrors of Simchat Torah, fades.

Let it be known that the state of Israel and the people of Israel will never forget. We will continue to fight until victory is achieved, for there is simply no alternative. Make no mistakes. Israel is strong and powerful, but we are stronger and more powerful together. When we say and truly believe that Hamas is worse than ISIS, the only acceptable course of action is to eliminate this threat from our backyard.

This is a war between good and evil. This terrorist must be confronted. It is our duty to act and achieve a clear and decisive victory. Your unwavering support will make us stronger and more powerful in this moral and rightful challenge. This is a time for us to come together. Do not underestimate the resilience of Israel. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to address you today and share our nation's economics resilience and strength.

In the wake of the terrible events of October 7th, we are presented with a unique opportunity. Let us come together, turning the horrific tragedy into a force of positive change. The very essence of our response can serve as a testament to the enduring strength of the moral world. By joining forces, we can transform this tragedy into a force of good, showing the world that morality and unity prevail over darkness and terror. Let us stand together and affirm that the moral world emerges from every conflict, not weakened, but stronger and more powerful. Thank you.

**Mike Doran:**

Okay, thank you. I have some really bad... First of all, I have to apologize to you, because I said you were the economic minister, but you're the finance minister. Is that right?
Noach Hacker:

It's the same.

Mike Doran:

Yeah. Okay, good. If you saw my bank account, you would realize that I know nothing about finance or economics, which is the bad news for you. I have to apologize that I'm going to ask you the questions that are on my mind, most of which don't have much to do with economics and finance. But we'll get back to economics and finance in the end.

Let's start with the thing that is most on my mind, if you don't mind. But you mentioned it, which is the role of Iran here. How are you understanding the relationship between Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah, and so forth?

Noach Hacker:

As I said, I'm the economic minister, but I'll try to give as much information as I can. First of all, on the economic side, what we know is those Hamas terrorists coming into and slaughtering our people, our women, our children, those were all funded by Iran. Iran funds 93%, I think, from the military budget of Hamas.

Mike Doran:

About how much is that in...

Noach Hacker:

I don't have the exact number for you, and I'm not sure I can say what I do know. But of course, without those funds, it will be a different situation. And we need to understand that. For many years, we believed different things about Hamas, but I think what happened on October 7th teaches us that this terrorist organization, that says what he wants to do is to murder and slaughter Israelis and Jews, and we should believe him and treat him the same. And when you see Iran threatening, funding these organizations and trying, as I said, by using its proxies around the region to escalate this conflict and bring it into a regional conflict, I think it tells the world also something about Iranians and its objectives.

Mike Doran:

Absolutely.

Noach Hacker:

And I think that's something Israel knows for a long time, but I think that's something that, now, everybody must recognize.
Let me ask you about the technique of Hamas using human shields to... I mean, it's almost a human sacrifice to guard their military facilities. We all know now that Shifa Hospital sits on top of the command and control facilities of Hamas. This is a war crime. We all understand this. But it's also a very effective propaganda activity, and one of the things that this conflict has revealed to all of us is the number of people and powerful states and entities out there who want to blame Israel for civilian casualties. And we're not going to admit that Hamas is carrying out this tactic. How can we fight against this?

Noach Hacker:

There's only one answer. I don't know if it's a good answer. But the only way we're going to fight it is with the truth. And I think we saw it in the Jihad bombing of the hospital in Gaza. Israel, until we knew the truth, we didn't respond. We wanted to check, and make sure, and have the proof that this was Islamic Jihad bombing. And only then, we came out, and I think that's the only way to fight those lies, to bring the knowledge to the world, just like happened a couple of hours ago with the IDF, showing the knowledge we have on the Hamas method using the hospital infrastructure, just like the knowledge we have of Hamas taking water pipes that was brought into Gaza, in order to create the flow of water to civilians, taking them and making them into rockets.

Mike Doran:

You're going to have to give us more information about this because I'm not entirely-

Noach Hacker:

I'll send you the pictures.

Mike Doran:

No, no, but you have to explain for the viewers. I'm not entirely familiar with the story you're talking about.

Noach Hacker:

Part of the water infrastructure are pipes. Those pipes come into Gaza with the objective of being deployed around regular infrastructure, in regular cities. And we have pictures showing Hamas taking the water pipes and turning them into rockets, cutting them, and creating rockets out of those water pipes. It's the same with fuel. We have recordings of them speaking about using the fuel that is there for their hospitals, into their own needs. I think that was also published by the IDF just a couple of hours ago.

So, we see the methods of Hamas we're different. We're trying to mitigate these hard to civilians. And they're trying to do the opposite. Even though they're not allowing people to go farther than the places the army indicated that it's going to attack... Think of it. We're telling them where we're going to attack, so they'll find a way to go other places, and Hamas is not letting them go. So, I think that's the whole story.
And again, these are all evidence for the world to see. This is a terror organization of the worst kind. He is funded by Iran. This is the objective, not other things. So, I think all of this data that we're bringing into the conversation or letting everyone know, those are things that maybe the intelligence community knew.

But now, everybody knows, so you can't just say something else or imagine a different reality. When you see the data, you have to address it, and you have to understand what you're doing. And if you're trying to bring Iran and try to... How do you say... Legitimize this behavior, I think, today, it will be more difficult. And I think we're starting to see it, even in places we haven't seen it before.

Mike Doran:

My own view, and you don't have to respond to this. But my own view is, as I suggested when I introduce you is that, this is not just an attack on Israel, this is an attack on the American security system by Iran. The goal is to send a message to everybody else in the region that if the United States will not come to the support of Israel, then it's not going to come to the support of you. The Iranian foreign minister has been in every capital of every country that has normalized with Israel or is normalizing with Israel, to send that message directly, and we should be listening to it because it's directed at us, not just at you. You don't have to say that-

Noach Hacker:

I'll just say one thing about that. I'm sure you saw it, but there's a picture online which caught my eye and was very powerful to me. And that picture shows, on one side, the celebrations in Gaza, celebrations in Gaza after this terrible, terrible massacre. And on the other side, you see another celebration in Gaza, and that is just after the 9-11 attacks. And I think if people think it's only Israel, they should start believing what their eyes are seeing. This is not a war between Palestinians and Israelis, this is a war between good and evil.

Mike Doran:

And to further make your point, the Iranians aren't hiding their hand, they're attacking Americans, as we speak. So, it ought to be obvious to everyone, but it can never be said too many times.

Okay. Look, let me ask you some of the difficult questions that are on everybody's mind. What can you tell us about, how did this happen? I mean, this is a multi-domain failure, but particularly an intelligence failure. Can you give us any sense of-

Noach Hacker:

I'll tell you something about that, and I'm not sure you're going to be happy with the answer, but that the answer-

Mike Doran:

Is it our fault?
Noach Hacker:

First of all, we are still very close, very close to the attacks and are very focused on the current objective to win the war in a decisive win. So, that's our focus. We're obviously making the necessary investigations in order to make sure that everything works as it should. But that's on the operational side, not on the public side.

On the public side, I'm sure and confident that we'll be... And I think it was said by everyone in the system, from the IDF and the political leadership, that we're going to check everything and investigate everything, and we'll have answers for every questions. You have to understand any question you have, Israelis multiply it by a thousand. It was a very hard thing for us, but now we're very focused. But after that, of course, we're going to get to the questions, and they're harder than the intelligence. It's not only the intelligence, that's part of it, but there are very difficult questions.

Mike Doran:

All right. Let me ask you another question that is a little bit outside of the finance ministry's responsibilities, and that's antisemitism. I'm not Jewish, but for some reason I'm always surrounded by Jews. My children tend to believe that Israel's a huge country because everybody they know is Jewish. So, I'm a little bit more sensitive to antisemitism than your average guy, but... I'm shocked. I'm totally shocked by what I'm saying. I'm shocked by it on the left, I'm shocked by it on the right. I'm shocked by the number of people I see in the world who are... Clearly, you saw the professor at Cornell, I'm sure, who said, when he saw what happened on October 7th, he was exhilarated. Those were his words. I didn't realize that I was walking with so many ghouls surrounding me. I'd be interested in hearing anything that you have to say about that, either as an official or just as somebody who's wearing a kippah.

Noach Hacker:

I'll split it just the way you ask the questions. I'll say the official side and then the personal side.

The official side is that, we're very concerned, and we bring that up at the highest levels between Israel and the American administration. We see it as a very big issue. I can tell you, this past two and a half weeks, I've been talking to Jewish communities around the US, and they're all very concerned. There's not one community that didn't have this conversation with me.

Mike Doran:

No, I don't think people are aware. But I was talking to a friend of mine, who's Jewish, because I have all these Jewish friends, and... Who was it? Ismail Haniyeh announced a day of rage a few weeks ago, shortly after the attack. And every Jewish school in America shut down on the day of rage. Every Jewish school. So, you've got Jewish kids at home, fears they might be attacked. I don't know that people wanted to talk about this that much publicly, but that's very concerning when, in the United States, you can't go to school because a terrorist in the Middle East announces a day of rage.

Noach Hacker:
As I said, we're very concerned. I can tell you that my kids, they go to a Jewish school in Maryland, and others were closed. But that one, specifically, was open. But we're very concerned. And I think, now, it's my personal opinion that there's a reason why Hamas videoed the attacks. When you do a crime, you try to hide afterwards, right? You don't want everybody to see-

Mike Doran:

No, they find it exhilarating.

Noach Hacker:

I think what they try to do is create a fear, not only within Israel, but within the entire Jewish community, and the entire Western world even. And that fear shouldn't win. I think Jewish people in Israel should be proud, in America, should be proud, and I think the people who needs to address it and make sure that Jewish people are safe, are working on it. And we're also, every chance we get, at the highest levels, trying to bring that up, but it's also... We have the Jewish community here working on the matter, but of course the state of Israel, it's the Jewish nation, Jewish state, we're trying to do what we can. But it's very troubling, very troubling. It's the things you heard about on what happened-

Mike Doran:

1930s.

Noach Hacker:

... 80, 90 years ago. These are the things. The sites of October 7th and the antisemitism that we're experiencing. People may be thought it was over, but just as we now understand that Hamas is Hamas and not another thing, and Iran is Iran and not another thing, we should understand the problem with antisemitism and address it just as it is, not as we hope it would be. And I think this event will create a very big change in a lot of things by showing the world exactly the truth and not some kind of optimistic view of things.

Mike Doran:

But here, again, my view is that, it begins with the Jews, but it doesn't end with the Jews. A gun that can be turned one way can be turned the other way. Once they realize, these people who are trying to flex their muscles all around the world, once they realize that they can do it on this issue, they're going to do it on other issues. And we, the United States, we're not safe from this. The kind of surprise that struck you, can strike us. I don't think we learned the lessons after 9-11 of what's possible. I don't think our imaginations are dark enough to think about the things that could be coming at us. I don't know if you have a reaction to that.

Noach Hacker:

I don't have a reaction, I'll just tell you that, in Israel, we experienced October 7th after experiencing the Yom Kippur War, which is also a big surprise, which shows us that human
nature is to try to imagine things in a better way than they truly are. And I hope that what happened to us on October 7th won't repeat itself in the future.

Mike Doran:

Okay. Let's talk a little bit about your northern front, because Hezbollah is up there, they've heated up the border. The message, as I read it is, "If you go in on the ground in Gaza, they're going to heat it up even further on behalf of their dark overlords in Tehran." Is that how you're reading it?

Noach Hacker:

As you said, it's not Hezbollah deciding, it's Iran orchestrating this event, and people need to understand it. And I can tell you, I was in charge of the Israeli defense budget for many years in the Ministry of Finance, and IDF and the Israeli power is not built only to address Hamas. We are very strong and we know how to deal with every threat, and I think the Lebanon people knows it. And I'm not sure if they want deescalation as much as Iran, Hezbollah wanted, because they understand what it will mean when Israel will be forced to act because of them starting a war with us.

Mike Doran:

Because they, just like Hamas, hide their military facilities behind-

Noach Hacker:

The same methods-

Mike Doran:

... apartment buildings and hospitals and schools?

Noach Hacker:

It's the same methods. You see the same methods. After what happened on October 7th, we're not allowed to believe, otherwise. We're not allowed. The days of imagining the best, are over. We need to see the reality. And it's the same methods, the same tactics, the same founder, the same decision-making process, right? I think the US that published here a couple of days ago, that the terrorist of Hezbollah were trained in Iran, it's the same method, the same training. We need to understand what we're dealing with, and Israel is very strong. And as I said in my words before, if they make the mistakes of miscalculating the situation and thinking that we're not going to react in some way, I can tell you, our response will be very decisive.

Mike Doran:

I'll tell you, I disagree with you on one point, which we discussed about before. You say that Israel's ready for everything. From a military point of view, I believe that to be true, but I don't think you, or we, the United States, have developed an answer to this very effective propaganda campaign to depict the war, as a war of the IDF versus Palestinian children, or the IDF versus
Lebanese children. It's incredibly effective. You mentioned the hospital in Gaza, because I follow the propaganda war pretty closely. I follow the propaganda that comes out of the IRGC and associated channels, and they were on top of that, like that, within seconds, literally seconds. All around the world, the story was, Israel hit the hospital, 500 civilians were killed.

Now, you and I know that when a bomb drops on a hospital, you don't know how many people died until days, weeks afterwards. First of all, it didn't drop on the hospital, it dropped in the parking lot. Secondly, they hadn't even started counting, but that story went around, and we had heads of state, people with very significant reputations, Western media organizations broadcasting that information. And I have lots of friends abroad and even some in this country who are not sure or are sure that it was Israel that bombed the hospital and 500 people died, or people who are not sure. I would guess, half the people who know in the world, at least. Half the people in the world who know about that event, believe that Israel did it. They believe the falsehood.

I don't ask you to solve this. I don't have an answer, either, but it's a huge problem because it has a political impact. We have people out in our streets who are chanting this now in the American streets.

Noach Hacker:

Let me just separate the question a little bit, okay? Because social media, there's fake news everywhere, and I don't have a solution for that. But I'm talking about, let's say, more organized-

Mike Doran:

Reputable media organizations?

Noach Hacker:

... news broadcasters that you would think... Even heads of state, of course. You would think... I'm not talking heads of state that, even if you show them, say, it's Israel because their agenda is anti-Israel, but you think that news broadcast will wait to see the truth, right?

Mike Doran:

They won't.

Noach Hacker:

Or even if they didn't wait and made the mistakes after presented with the truth, we'll probably issue it out and say, "Well, we made a big mistake and how could we do it? We didn't check. We're a news broadcaster. We didn't check." Even that, in some places, you don't see. So, I think, maybe, as you said, something's coming out. That is not the truth or fake news, but something in people's hearts that maybe raises their feelings against Israel, and they're trying to use what they have against us.

But we're the Israeli people and we're not going to stray from the truth. We're going to tell the truth. We're going to check it, and then we're going to issue it out. I know it doesn't do the best
things in social media error, but we’re committed that everything we issue out will be checked and be the truth. I think that's the most important thing. We knew we had a opinion about what really happened just after it happened. We know whether we're bombing or not, but we wanted to have the truth because we knew people won't believe us. And then, even when you have the truth, people still-

**Mike Doran:**

That's the thing that bothers me. I don't have an answer for it, but it's something that has to occupy us.

Well, I think we've gone over time, so let's bring this to an end. But before I do, let me just ask, is there anything that you want to talk about that we didn't touch on?

**Noach Hacker:**

No, I think we're okay. I think the message that must come out of this is that, not only is Israel strong coming into this conflict, but we need to make sure that we come out of it even stronger. Those who did this to us are trying to make us weaker, not only Israel, make the entire moral world weaker. And we should show them together that we'll come out stronger and they'll be defeated. I think that's the message that should come out, not only in words, also in actions.

**Mike Doran:**

I agree with you, totally. I wish you all the luck in smashing them. Thank you.

**Noach Hacker:**

Thank you.