

Transcript

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We turned out to our colleague, Mariam Adams. Are they who's going to bring Yvonne into our?

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As if it were.

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Hello everyone, it's very nice to be here. Thank you so much. I'm for organising such an amazing workshop. I already look forward to hearing more and more disclosures.

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As a Eugene mentioned, yes, I'm going to talk more about Iran and I think what I'd like to say dovetails rather nicely with what.

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Saying about the geopolitical meaning of the resistance.

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As a title might tell of you, I'm to present the idea that Iran is not really.

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Part of.

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Resistance in the axis of resistance there is an axis, sure. And there is resistance happening within it. But whether Iran is intentionally intentionally behind the.

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Is another question exactly along the same lines as Islam the same?

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Syria for the past 45 plus years since they won your revolution, the Islamic Republic has had that harshest anti Israeli propaganda that you can find anywhere on Earth. It has been even more radical than.

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Almost all of the Palestinian resistance organisations within Palestine, even Hamas, has recognised, and I think 7067 for noticing there are David Charter, like PLO went to.

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None.

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Of negotiations and also in the 1990s, Iran never supported the two state solution and never stopped short of anything but quote UN quote annihilation of Israel.

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But then after the 7th attacks and with the genocidal campaign going on in Gaza, and with the direct attacks on Iran itself.

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Now.

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The propaganda would.

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Lead the logical mind to think that Iran would take more active role in this conflict. Now is the chance. If not now, when?

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But we see it kind of the opposite happening, that as the Israeli threat to Iran itself is becoming more tangible, Iran's discourse is actually ever so slowly becoming like more moderate.

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Of course, there were two misunderstandings. Israel, which were definitely an escalation from what had happened before the all the indirect encounters that the two countries had, but both were very carefully calculated and.

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The purpose was more saving face than inflicting damage and they were like largely ineffective. Depending on whose reports we.

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East, of course.

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It and it is. I'm not going to claim that there will be no like further estimation. Who knows what will happen, but what we have seen already and it's established is that.

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After the direct hits on Iran, the discourse has become a bit more pragmatic. For instance, before Iran's October 1st attack, the second missile.

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Campaign Iran's supreme leader modified the commonplace threat against Israel by emphasising pragmatism in patients in responding to Israel, he said. We will neither procrastinate nor act hastily, he said.

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Won't be rushed if it.

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We will fascinate and.

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Will regret.

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None.

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And there are other examples of this. The discourse has continued to be more pragmatic than it historically has been.

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So what does Iran want out of this propaganda, if not annihilation of Israel?

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I think that the effective and full scale confrontation with Israel has never been on the policy table. I think a lot of ours agree with that.

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But I believe.

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The Iranian anti Israeli propaganda has been on practically radical exactly because of that, because Palestine has never been an even moral or strategic concern really like on the top of the priorities for Iran and Iran.

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Not feel the.

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To either device or net support to the.

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Regarding the Israel Palestine conflict at large not.

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Sort of seven.

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What's up?

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Be defeating Israel altogether or reaching a peace agreement.

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And the.

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Is that it is not deserted. The conflict to set.

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At all.

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I think maintaining a survivable level of entity with Israel is in fact what Iranian Government is after, and this survivable enmity serves 2 purposes. 1 is the domestic audience.

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It's the.

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Propel the Islamic Republics Islamic and anti imperialist identity by denouncing Israel and the.

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Have.

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Actually more.

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Emphatically, and in this capacity, it is directed to the either the flourishing stratum of heartliners among the politicians or the shrinking, but still alive, the support of the constituency that they still have in Iran.

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And it's also serving to signal to regional allies, especially Hamas and Hezbollah and the Houthis, that Iran has not Waverings has figuresly towards Israel, even as they was nested. These allies are witnessing their owns shrinking material supports in the.

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Years, but secondly, more importantly, I think the anti Israeli propaganda coupled with a similarly strong anti American propaganda has provided Iran the political justification for spreading its influence in the Middle East. So behind the incendiary discourse that.

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Portrays portrays Israel as the number one enemy Iran has been a rational actor, admittedly an unconventional 1, within an unconventional ideological goal trying to secure its interests while avoiding major conflicts.

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So if you compare Iran to other Middle Eastern states that both US alliance, which is Israel and Saudi Arabia, Iran is a militarily, politically, financially weaker state. So to expand its influence in the region.

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As the weaker state, it has resorted to indirect unconventional routes.

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The support for militias in the region region is in this way justified on the surface, as resistance against Israel and American forces, of course.

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And I'm not saying that they do not operate as such. I will address this later. But what is neglected when we consider these Iran proxies as unruly and in most cases, terrorist armed forces alone is the fact these.

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Are also highly influential.

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Political entities in their respective countries, formerly or informally.

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The logical spreading influence in this way unfolds as follows. On the one hand, Iran needs to counter forces of normalisation, whether with America or with Israel, as otherwise it would be completely isolated by its radical foreign policy. That is part of its result that so we accept that Iran cannot be a fully pragmatic, like rational.

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There is a reason for the Islamist Republic to be Islamic Republic and the foreign policy is a major part of that. But within those crimes, Iran needs to like open, just like lines of survival. So there's a countering of forces.

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Normalisation on the one hand, which is observable through its support for Hezbollah and Hamas in Khalistan and Ahabi in Iraq and through the PAKISIS in Yemen, but on the

other hand, it needs to keep their political nature. Confrontations with the world to a minimum.

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And keep them indirect enough to preserve the economic lifeline. Occasional negotiations with the US, the attempts to make amends with the Saudis, which were disrupted by the October 7th attack.

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Or my.

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Like.

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Keeping an arrow line open.

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So the intention behind Iran support for the proxies, in other words, is not to annihilate Israel. They have never been. And if the imbalance of power between the global north and global S continues to be this way, it will never be an existential threat to Israel. And I agree with mashon that.

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The unfortunate recent events is evidence of that.

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When it comes to their service to Iran, these groups, I think, should rather be seen as mainly political allies.

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To engage in occasional mutual reactions.

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This again, I have to emphasise, is not to say.

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This.

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'S existence and conduct is determined by.

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'S.

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Quite the opposite and that they are not actually working towards resistance for the Palestinian cause.

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Hezbollah, Hamas and who sees, have turned out that operations that can be seen as genuine support for Palestinian cause, whether effective.

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Is another question. Rather, my goal has been to demonstrate that Iran as the only state actor, whether or not we count Syria as the only or one of the two state actors in the access of resistance, does not necessarily share this genuine concern.

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That for.

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And is rather using these groups for other purposes and relatability. It is important to note that not all military action from Iran proxies. I always believe in quotation markets because they are not.

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Iran.

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Right or intact synchronised with?

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Again, common wisdom among global N politicians from strongly by the Israeli narrative is that these militias are an Iran empire across the Middle East, a good variety of armed forces with unshakable loyalty to their master.

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And a stable political relationship with it and this picture can be challenged in many ways.

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That's my argument about that mismatch between Iran's words and actions.

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First and foremost is that not all of these proxies have similarly close relations to Iran. This audience knows this very well. I'm not going to spend too much time on it. For instance, since Bola has spent the closest to Iran in terms of its structure, it has been built on the model of the IRGC.

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It has been supported from the very beginning by Iranian forces. They as evidence of how close it is to the Iranian hard line.

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Idea. Basically we have to keep in mind that at the time in 1982, there were other Lebanese group that was being supported with other by other Iranian factions who actually were thinking about exporting the revolution and liberating.

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Palestine, like Amid was supported by a group that was marginalised in Iran later and Hezbollah was created to counter those forces. So that is how like Tikki Iran has been in fostering Hezbollah.

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But you know, I mean the, uh, the group that became the mainstream hardliner later.

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So of course, like the other.

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Allied militias do not have the similar like similarly close ties with Iran.

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And another way this like idea of the Iran Empire and the Octopus head or what not can be challenged, is that the relationship between Iran and these militias has never been stable. What has?

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Yes, it's been the most stable, although it has had ups and downs as well, but most significantly as again I'm sure you know is Iran's like rabbit tumultuous history behind us, especially during the Syrian civil war.

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The two class they they stood on opposite sides of the conflict and they like patched things up a little bit afterwards. But this basically overshadows the relationship since then.

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The fact.

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Iran was not in the loop about the October seven attack and was taken.

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A surprise?

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Was quite annoyed by it. There is another piece of evidence that they do not work insane.

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Not only did the attack increase the threat of escalation between Iran and Israel, but the top is also unfortunate because again, Iran was trying to.

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Like build better.

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With the Saudis, there is the argument that it hasn't been.

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That.

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The drain and it's like to be picked up again. But yeah, Iran was quite surprised by that. And when this happened, of course it is within the Iranian propaganda to just, like, go on full force behind.

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The attack and behind the like show solidarity and so on. And somewhere in December of 2023, a spokesperson of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards came out and said, yeah, the operation was actually in part retaliation for the US assassination of the.

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Iranian general bus on Sunday morning, 2020.

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And but Hamas spokesope called him out right away and denied such intentions altogether, as they said, don't mix up stuff. We're doing our own thing.

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And thirdly, and perhaps more importantly, is that even when allegiances are solid, these militias still have a life of.

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Own.

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The Iraqi shabby might be the private example. They are so.

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So, like embedded within Iraq to domestic politics now that are just like actively Iran is not on their mind when they are doing their daily business day after day.

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And I don't think Eno is still here, but Rudolph asked her questions about hashtag Iran. If you have them, she has an amazing work on this.

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I also have to just clarify that I am I am fully aware that Iran has been providing and supporting for these groups over the years, and it weren't for Iran as well as like. It's like occasional exchange of fire since October 7th and before with Israel would not have been possible.

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That that Lebanon's invasion by Israel is another story, or that who sees delaying Amazon shipments would not have been possible without Iran's.

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What I'm saying is that Iran did not necessarily build up these groups as military operatives and as resistance operatives for the Palestinians because it was more of a geopolitical move to just, like, expand and so on.

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And.

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So I will as it is.

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A relative issue that might seem quite irrelevant at first, but it is tied to the same misconception about Iran's unwavering support. The Iranian states unwavering support for the Israel.

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And that is many average Iranians. Surprisingly outspoken support for these.

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All right, since September 7th.

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Over.

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Sorry, say that again.

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Yeah.

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Thank you.

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It's it strikes me that a lot of non Iranians don't know about this because it's a big uh thing in Iran and you, you're in your own bubble and think everyone knows. But yeah, Iranian average Iranian citizens and by average I mean if they're not like into social sciences and humanities or political activist, which is.

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Like a lot.

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Population at Best, show apathy toward the death and destruction that has been happening.

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But at worst, and that's a like a smaller fraction, but still pretty significant, they celebrated.

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They are like they can't even utter the words, but they love Netanyahu and.

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It's just insane. It's bizarre. Yeah.

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To us.

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The reason is that for 45 plus years, how many years is it now since. Yeah.

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Shopping to be honest.

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Yeah, yeah, yeah. So they they have been suffering, but economic hardships. Isolation is foreign policy, lifestyle policing, human rights abuses, violent depressions of any

attempt to protest, and an unfortunate manifestation of the Iranians attempts to dissociate themselves from the state.

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Like an Islamophobic hatred of the Palestinian cause. And they are like seeing this, like, manifested all of a sudden and just getting excited about it. It is misguided. It is misinformed. It is being fed in by Iranian diaspora Tees and activists.

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Which are like very like trumpets, far right themselves.

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Out.

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But it is an unfortunate like byproduct of the Iranian Government and mistreating its own population. So yes, the only Member State member of the Axis of resistance, I will end with this. The Iranian Government is not only the least engaged, but it's also the least popular.

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Within its own finishing.

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Yeah.

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Well.

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In double compliments, one for being within time, but two, but finishing with such an unexpected punch.

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Yeah, I genuinely didn't see that particular line of analysis coming, but it adds a whole wrinkle to our discussions about resistance, sort of American or Israeli hegemony. Very good.

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No.