Ep. 20: Why the West must fight Muslim Brotherhood influence

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In this episode of Mideast Horizons, Lahav Harkov speaks with Haras Rafiq, Vice President of the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, about ISGAP's new report on the Muslim Brotherhood's strategic expansion into the West. Rafiq traces the Brotherhood's evolution from Hassan al-Banna to Yusuf al-Qaradawi and outlines Tamkeen, its long-term doctrine for gaining institutional influence in liberal democracies. He explains how the movement pursues political entry, narrative control, and the reshaping of Muslim communities, and further discusses how groups such as CAIR emerged from this ecosystem. He warns that antisemitism framed as anti-Zionism has become a key recruitment tool and that Islamist ideas have spread in part because Western societies hesitate to confront them.

Rafiq highlights Qatar's central role as the Brotherhood's remaining state patron, from Al Jazeera's dual-track messaging to extensive funding of U.S. universities and describes how ISGAP investigations have begun exposing these soft-power networks. He addresses President Trump's directive to explore designating Brotherhood chapters as foreign terrorist organizations and discusses methods for effectively pushing back against Islamist influence.

In the introductory segment, Lahav maps the history of the Muslim Brotherhood in Israel, tracing its early influence under the Grand Mufti, the emergence of Hamas from its Gaza branch, and the later split between the Northern Branch and the Southern Branch (Ra'am) inside Israel. She explains how the Southern Branch positioned itself as a pragmatic political actor while the Northern Branch was banned for its ties to Hamas and discusses the recent uproar over Islamic Movement charities accused of funneling funds to Hamas-linked entities.

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