



The Secret War with Iran: The 30-Year Clandestine Struggle Against the World's Most Dangerous Terrorist Power

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In the years since 9/11, the U.S. war on terror has focused on al-Qaeda, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Coverage of Iran has been devoted almost exclusively to its nuclear ambitions. Yet, as Ronen Bergman's groundbreaking reporting in this vital investigative history reveals, for thirty years, Iran has been the world's leading sponsor of global terror and stands as the most formidable sponsor of terror in the world today. Bergman, one of Israel's top investigative reporters, gained unprecedented access to extra-ordinary sources from top to bottom in the Mossad and intelligence agencies around the world. Based on over ten years of research and more than three hundred exclusive interviews with key intelligence figures, he reveals that Iranian terrorist masterminds have crisscrossed the globe, conducting bombings and assassinations with impunity -- even renting apartments and planning bombing attacks in New York City. Iran's proxy, Hizballah, has virtually taken over southern Lebanon and threatens Israel with high-powered weaponry supplied by Iran. Iran and Hizballah worked closely with al-Qaeda and other Sunni terrorist groups in developing their terrorist operations, and Iranian commandos trained Iraqi insurgents in the crafts of suicide bombing and the building of the roadside bombs that have killed so many U.S. troops in Iraq.

In response, and largely beneath the public's radar, a vast clandestine war has been fought with Iran and Hizballah on one side and the CIA, Israel's Mossad, and their European counterparts on the other. The full story of that secret war, told for the first time here, will fundamentally change the debate about U.S. national security priorities.

A new axis of evil is emerging from Iran and spreading around the world, and Ronen Bergman shows that the CIA and Mossad have so far been unable to thwart it. "The Secret War with Iran" is riveting and urgent.

The Secret War with Iran: The 30-Year Clandestine Struggle Against the World's Most Dangerous Terrorist Power Details

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From Reader Review The Secret War with Iran: The 30-Year Clandestine Struggle Against the World's Most Dangerous Terrorist Power for online ebook

Peter Galamaga says

This book is quite thorough and informative. However, it is also depressing. What a mess. There are no heroes in this story.

Max Balestra says

Ronen Bergman follows the never-ending secret war of the islamic republic against the West, as well as its internal opposition, since the Komehini's revolution of 1979.

All those who think Iran is an overblown menace, or worse, that think that the islamic republic is inherently peaceful, "misunderstood", and turning aggressive only when provoked, should read this book and get a dose of sane reality.

I'm rating it four stars only because I'm not compleately sure about some of the sources the author relies on. But I suppose that is unavoidable in a book such as this.

Janet says

Generally I'm not drawn to reading a book like this, but, I'm glad I did. The author is an Israeli journalist. I remember most all of the 30-years-worth of news-reported events he's talking about, which tells me that I do follow our sad world affairs more than I realize. I'm not feeling a lot better informed for having read the book, but it's not the author's fault. He presented accessible information.

Josh Liller says

Informative recap of events involving the United States, Israel, Iran, Hezbollah, Syria, and lesser involved factions and nations from the Iranian Revolution through the Second Lebanon War.

The author is Israeli but he doesn't seem biased and seems quite willing to be critical of his country's decisions.

Al Queda is touched on but there are no shockers within. Iran's support of them has been more than nothing but pretty minor and they basically cut ties after 9/11, although Iran's leaders remain sympathetic to their cause.

The overall theme of the book seems to be that since the Iranian Revolution, Iran has fought a Cold War with Israel through proxies, primarily Hezbollah but more recently with the growing involvement with Syria and Hamas (thanks to changes in leadership). Israeli's famous intelligence has done impressive things but suffers from some of the same shortcomings as the United States' does (such as failure to share information properly between different intelligent departments). Israeli's attempts to neutralize openly dangerous opposing leaders - especially in militant Palestinian groups - through assassinations just triggers suicide bombings, rocket attacks, and kidnappings in retaliation. As time goes by, the guerrilla forces opposing Israel are becoming smarter and more effective while Israel's forces are failing to keep up with the changing times (a problem also suffered by the US).

Despite the extensive amount of information offered and being of about average length (not quite 400 pages), I found myself becoming repeatedly bogged down in reading this book and putting it aside temporarily for other books that were more digestible and that felt less repetitive (though the problem seemed to me to be that the events become repetitious, not so much that the author was repeating himself).

Joe says

Interesting book but almost too much detail. I am amazed how poorly the intelligence community kept up with what is happening in Iran. The worst part is that Iran had everything the Bush administration accused Iraq of having. We went to war in the wrong country, oh well just missed it by one letter.

Sudesh Katugampola says

Very interesting read

Kamil Salamah says

OUTSANDING

Thomas Stevenson says

This is an older, at the time of my reading, account of Iranian-Israeli relations but it also has implications for the US which is an untitled participant. With the Iran nuclear deal freshly signed, this backward look helps to explain why the pact is so contentious - even if those contending it probably aren't aware of the material in this fact filled book. Bergman knows the players and so how found them and convinced them to present their stories. What he presents is fascinating. What I would like to know is how things have changed since The Secret War with Iran was written.

Michael says

Bought the book without really knowing what to expect. I was hoping for more insight into the Iranian regime, but the story really focuses on the role of intelligence services. When I saw it was written by an Israeli journalist, I was afraid it would be biased. Well I can't say it is, it is collection of facts, but there is definitely a point of view. For example, a Hezbollah attack on a military target is a "terrorist act", while a Mossad bombing is not qualified in the same way (though the author does not defend it). Likewise, between the lines you surely can feel what the opinions of the author are. It is just semantic but referring to Iranians or Israelis rather than the Iranian regime or Israeli regime is probably also an unfortunate generalization. Nevertheless it is really worth reading, and a true eye opener. On one side, it sheds light on the decisive role of western intelligence organizations and their "undemocratic" actions. Despite the rumors and reputation of Mossad, I wasn't aware of the extend of their deeds. On the other side, for anyone who would still doubt (and I did) the intentions of the Iranian regime especially since Khamenei took over, this gives an interesting perspective.

So surely worth reading, but I would recommend to also read some other books with different points of view (Maziar Bahari's "Then they came for me" for an inside view of Iran, or "Pity the Nation" for the story of the Lebanon wars and the role of Israel, etc..).

David says

I've just started this book, but a better understanding of Iran and the middle east is urgent, so from what I have read to date I think our political leaders as well as the general population should read it.

Marvey says

omg Khoemini and the Shah and Israel selling weapons to Iran and George Bush's covert deals with Iran via Nicaragua, and all this was happening worlds away while I was growing up and when are we ever supposed to learn about this stuff . . .never got up to that point in high school history or any courses in college

Kirk Bower says

Excellent. very well documented.

Umair Mir says

Indeed a very good read , especially the description about the counterfeit currency and the clandestine Iranian Nuclear development and its wide spread ramifications... Ronen Bergman has been very objective in his analysis, sometimes even critical about the lack of coordination between the different Israelis intelligence agencies..His account on the emergence of Hizbullah is remarkable..All in all, a ripper...

Joe Chernicoff says

Investigative journalism is usually worthwhile reading, and *The Secret War with Iran* is no exception. Ronen Bergman's book, published in 2009, is, or can be, a difficult one to read in that, as he writes, there was no intention to write only about failures in Israeli and American intelligence, but unfortunately there were many important ones about which there had to be exposure. And, I would hope, that exposure will have, or will, in the future, serve as a preemptive warning re: such future failures. The book also includes the many successes, of course, and, in total, is an important historical report on Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah, Syria, and the war against the West and by the West against Iran and its proxies in the Middle East.

It seems, however, that today, warnings from Bergman's work, is being ignored by our current administration. Only time will tell.

One other point I would like to make. I rated this book 5 stars, as I have with a number of others I have read. I give that rating based upon the value of those non-fiction works - when they make you think, when they are relevant, then the 5 stars is appropriate; this book without question meets that criteria.

Thomas says

There are interesting aspects to this book, but too many of its anecdotes and "case studies" seem thinly documented. There might be some cases where its claims would be easier to investigate if I spoke Hebrew or Arabic, but I don't, so... bummer. As with some (but far from all) other books I've read about Israeli intelligence operations, it seems to over-emphasize the importance, intelligence and nobility of Israeli agents and bitch about those agents from other countries, particularly the U.S. I have no reason to believe any specific claims are false, but that tendency gives the whole thing a patina of bullshit. Not because the U.S. is so great (it's obvious our intelligence services have exhibited many failings to say the least) but because it's always suspect when a book gets this repetitive. The "moral of the story" seemed to be the same over and over and over again in a series of largely disconnected anecdotes. I do NOT blame this in any way on Bergman being Israeli; there have been numerous works by Israeli journalists and scholars that felt extremely objective and contained what felt like top-notch scholarship. However, such writers don't seem to gravitate toward writing about the intelligence community in any country, or worldwide. The same thing, to some degree, is true about books on the U.S. intelligence community, where U.S. case officers are portrayed heroically and Europeans are cheese-scarfing incompetent snobs.

Short version: Some of this stuff felt like garbage, and I felt like I was wasting my time reading it. It isn't even remotely in the same "bullshit territory" as *"By Way of Deception,"* which reads like a half-drunk lunatic's slurry rant. There's enough material and research original to this book that it is definitely worth a read for anyone interested in the intelligence landscape in the Middle East and particularly in the Levant as it pertains to Iran. But take it all with a grain of salt.

Morteza Paidar says

good

Diane says

This book, written by an investigative journalist, tells the story of 30 years of Iranian schemes against the West, mainly supporting terrorist groups that attack the West. The book presents a lot of new information while avoiding conspiracy theories for which there is little evidence. The author focuses on Iran's attacks against Israel, with a more limited focus on the United States and other Western countries.

Brock Rhodes says

Propaganda. Funny, I don't recall ever stumbling onto the word "Haliburton." Interesting that the book is filled with anecdotes characterizing Arab or Persian agents as drug dealers, gamblers, whore mongers, or traitors which are noticeably absent in the characterizations of American and Israeli agents. I guess that helps make sense why so many "miracles" occur to save the most honorable but sometimes mistaken Israel. This book is garbage. It seems to be written from the perspective of an overgrown infant, cranky, worshipful, and not yet formed morally. Barf... barf... barf.

Zohar - ManOfLaBook.com says

This book could almost be subtitled "everything you ever wanted to know about Iran but were afraid to ask". Ronen Bergman, an Israeli journalist, uncovers secret documents, dirty deals and manipulations across decades which have gotten us to the point of where we are today.

Unlike other commentators who haven't read the book and are quick to judge about the "right wing slant", I have read the book completely and even though I don't agree with some of the analysis I think the history is fascinating and that by itself is worth the price of admission.

The text I read, which is in the original Hebrew, reads like a clandestine novel and is hard to put down. I thought the book's bias was to the right of center, however my right wing friends thought it was too far to the left. So I guess the author did a good job.

The book starts with a page-turner relationship between Iran and Israel, before and after the Khomeini revolution. This sets the stage for things to come as well as gives the reader a basic understanding of current events as well as the animosity Iran feels towards Israel for supporting the Shah.

Continuing with a journey that spans generations and continents Mr. Bergman takes the reader to lawless South American towns and into secret intelligence meetings as well as dirty dealings among contractors. So dirty in fact that I felt like taking a shower after reading several passages.

Offering the readers strategic analysis and several anecdotes along the history lesson (whose history it remains to be seen), Mr. Bergman also analyzes the Iranian political system including the current administration, as well as the Iranian nuclear efforts and the country's role in arming and training Hezbollah

The only downfall of the book, admitted by the author, is the inability to cover some issues completely due

to either censorship or lack of documentation of paperwork.

If you get the impression from previous posters that this book is a love letter to Israel, you will be sorely disappointed. The author takes a stab at Israeli intelligence almost every other page, the brutal literary blows shatter the image of the "all knowing" Mossad and exposes the inner fighting, lies and the grim price paid by the Israeli people for those shenanigans.

Harmeet says

pros: well researched over a long span, interesting, well written, mostly balanced.

cons: no solutions offered to improve things, research sources limited to one side, moved faster than expected over some major events
