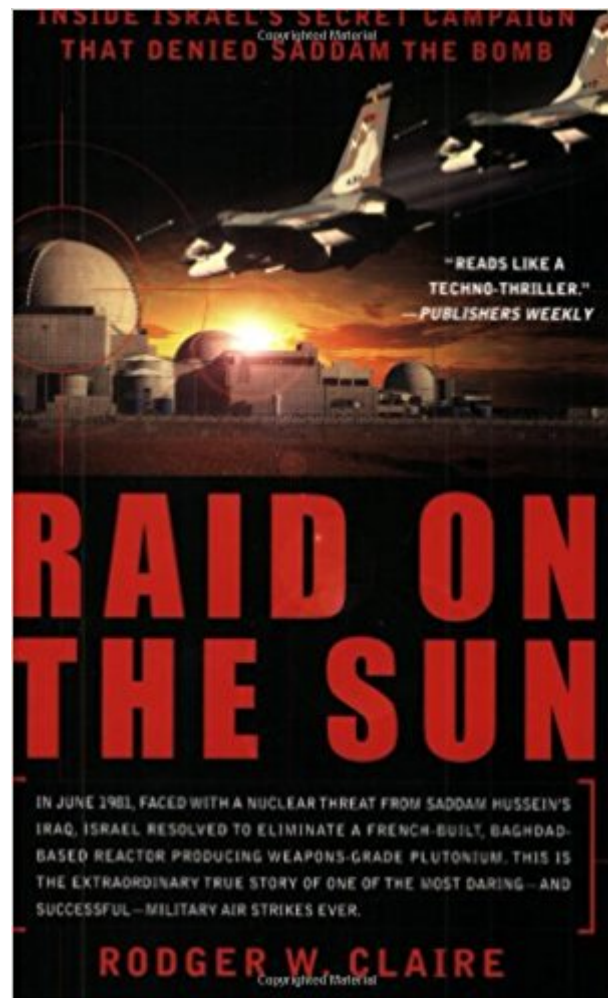




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# Raid On The Sun: Inside Israel's Secret Campaign That Denied Saddam The Bomb



## Synopsis

The first authorized inside account of one of the most daring and successful military operations in recent history. From the earliest days of his dictatorship, Saddam Hussein had vowed to destroy Israel. So when France sold Iraq a top-of-the-line nuclear reactor in 1975, the Israelis were justifiably concerned—especially when they discovered that Iraqi scientists had already formulated a secret program to extract weapons-grade plutonium from the reactor, a first critical step in creating an atomic bomb. The reactor formed the heart of a huge nuclear plant situated twelve miles from Baghdad, 1,100 kilometers from Tel Aviv. By 1981, the reactor was on the verge of becoming “hot” and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin knew he would have to confront its deadly potential. He turned to Israeli Air Force commander General David Ivry to secretly plan a daring surgical strike on the reactor—a never-before-contemplated mission that would prove to be one of the most remarkable military operations of all time. Written with the full and exclusive cooperation of the Israeli Air Force high command, General Ivry (ret.), and all of the eight mission pilots (including Ilan Ramon, who became Israel’s first astronaut and perished tragically in the shuttle Columbia disaster), *Raid on the Sun* tells the extraordinary story of how Israel plotted the unthinkable: defying its U.S. and European allies to eliminate Iraq’s nuclear threat. In the tradition of *Black Hawk Down*, journalist Rodger Claire re-creates a gripping tale of personal sacrifice and survival, of young pilots who trained in the United States on the then-new, radically sophisticated F-16 fighter bombers, then faced a nearly insurmountable challenge: how to fly the 1,000-plus-kilometer mission to Baghdad and back on one tank of fuel. He recounts Israeli intelligence’s incredible “black ops” to sabotage construction on the French reactor and eliminate Iraqi nuclear scientists, and he gives the reader a pilot’s-eye view of the action on June 7, 1981, when the planes roared off a runway on the Sinai Peninsula for the first successful destruction of a nuclear reactor in history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This gripping account of Operation Babylon, the Israelis' 1981 raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak, is the first to draw on planners' and pilots' own memories. The raid was planned to follow a long campaign of espionage, sabotage and outright assassination by the Mossad, which had failed to prevent the French-built reactor from being about ready to produce weapons-grade plutonium in the summer of 1981. Then the Israeli air force, taking its new F-16s on their first combat mission and one far beyond their designed performance, struck, obliterating the reactor with no losses, few misses and only one civilian casualty. Tactics, technology and weapons are all presented in a clear manner that does not slow the pace. L.A.-based journalist Claire's group portrait of the eight superlatively skilled and trained pilots includes Zeev Raz, the squadron leader and now a general; the ace, Iftach Spector, who missed his target because he suffered a blackout induced by the flu; and Ilan Ramon, who became Israel's first astronaut and was lost on the Columbia. The final result reads like a techno-thriller that is difficult to put down once the mission gets airborne. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From interviews the Israeli government allowed the author to conduct with the pilots who destroyed Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981, journalist Claire dramatically reconstructs the origin and execution of the attack. Structurally splicing scenes of the pilots' preparations on the day of the attack with flashbacks to the espionage and intelligence activity that preceded it, Claire relates how carefully the Israelis watched the French sale and shipment of the reactor during the 1970s. Sabotage, most likely by the Israelis, failed to stop the project--obviously intended to produce plutonium for a nuclear bomb, not electricity, as Saddam Hussein proclaimed. Vowing never to allow a second Holocaust, Menachem Begin ordered the raid. The operation-- which is the heart of Claire's account-- faced an obstacle when it was determined that the distance to the target exceeded the range of the F-16 warplane. When that problem is ultimately solved, Claire proceeds to render the actual flight and attack in true pulse-pounding detail. An intense read that will carry military-affairs readers from cover to cover. Gilbert Taylor Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

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A good, quick read about a truly amazing feat, perhaps only eclipsed by the Tokyo raid. I do however feel that given the special access the author had to the pilots and real declassified information on the raid....the book could have been much better for adult reading. I was really looking forward to reading this book, but I came away feeling like it was written for preteens. Like something you would find at your kids elementary school book fair. I enjoyed it, but was kind of disappointed also. I just felt with such an amazing, groundbreaking, and risky mission ...it could have been much better. There are also some technical errors as others have pointed out, that considering the story revolved around the F16, the author should have not made.

Years before Tom Clancy, there was the historic, real life "Operation Opera" raid on Iraq in June 1981... Rodger Claire has produced the best telling yet - by far - from a manuscript that was nearly lost, along with himself, on Sept. 11, 2001 in the American Airlines flight 77 attack on the Pentagon. He gets a few minor tech details wrong, but overall likely the most detailed account we will ever get... regional history, mission origin and planning, culminating with a tense minute by minute "in the cockpit" experience of only the third nuclear mission in history, carried out with astonishing accuracy...a great read !!

Previous posts regarding inaccuracies must be taken in context- There are only a couple of these errors, and none detract from the narrative. Yes, Jane's could have told us that the SA-6 isn't a heat-seeking missile, but hey... My biggest beef with the book is that it glosses over most of the topics it addresses- I was most curious about just how they formatted their training (not to mention kept from telegraphing their intentions to all their friendly neighbors in the region!), but all we really read is that the pilots learned it's hard to fly low for extended periods of time! Other issue in the Kindle format is that you get the epilogue at the start of the book and the prologue at the end. An OK "adventure story", but that's about it...

This was recommended by a pastor on the radio ... who said it was a "guy's book." WELL, I'm a gal, and I loved this -- it was well written and though I lived through this time frame, I didn't have any idea of the "details" until this book. It was a great, thrilling, informational read. I'd recommend it to anyone looking for true life "action," whether they are male or female.

GREAT book on one of the premier military operations of our time. Kept secret, it involved extraordinary preparation and training, as well as outstanding airmanship. A true story of heroism and wisdom hardly seen any more these days. It has probably been translated into Farsi, and for that reason the next iteration (Fordo?) will be much tougher. But very impressive book about a very impressive operation.

Book was well written. Having access to most of the pilots made it all that more thrilling. Reading No Margin for Error by Ehud Yonay afterwards was great as well. Many of the pilots of this mission also are discussed in Yonay's book.

Raid on the Sun is a very clearly written book explaining the planning and execution of the Israeli raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1980. It is a book that reads quickly and is hard to put down. Today, many ask, whether Israel will neutralize the Iranian nuclear capabilities? While dispersion of Iran's capabilities are much wider than was Iraq's, Israel has many more resources and alternatives. However, the planning explained in the book is the least the Israeli's must do to undertake such an endeavor.

Daring raids deep into enemy territory is nothing new for Israel. A great read to know the Lord's hand remains with his chosen people.

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