



The Samson Option

Seymour M. Hersh

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s/t: Israel's Nuclear Arsenal & American Foreign Policy

An investigation into Israel's nuclear capabilities discloses information about the country's rush toward nuclear status, its collaboration with South Africa and Iran, and its espionage activities. Reprint. *NYT*

The Samson Option Details

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????? ???? says

good book

Clif says

Written in 1991, The Samson Option is Seymour Hersh's account of Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons.

As you'd expect of a documentary, the book is filled with fascinating facts that are little known by the public.

The primary result of reading this book is a keen awareness of how American administrations have been almost uniformly unheeding to Israel's progress toward membership (though denied) in the nuclear club.

Because Israel is such a tiny country and America is so huge, the advantages for Israel in the espionage business have been great. It's almost impossible for America to deliberately penetrate Israel's secret projects, since Israel is almost like a big family where everyone knows everyone else, while Israel has continually penetrated U.S. secret projects with relative ease because of the huge American bureaucracies that compete with each other and seldom pass on information to each other. In fact, the United States has learned details about what Israel has been doing most often from good fortune - someone starts talking, such as Mordecai Vanunu.

Time and again, when American intelligence gets the facts on what Israel is doing - particularly when it is acting counter to U.S. policy - nothing happens. This is because of the fear in America's intelligence services of saying something that the top people don't want to hear, because it would be political death to have to act on it.

There are loads of information in this book to back up what those in power know: that there are many very wealthy and politically active supporters of Israel in America that cannot be crossed. The story of Abe Feinberg is a perfect illustration of one such individual.

What I found most fascinating was the story of Jonathan Pollard. As you may know, there has been a constant effort by Israel to get him released from life in U.S. prison. In fact, just in the past week it's been suggested that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu might ask for Pollard's release in exchange for a restriction on new settlements in the occupied territories.

For Pollard to be released would be an outrage. Hersh tells us Pollard turned over to the Israelis over 500,000 pages of top secret U.S. intelligence material and also the codes that allowed the Israelis to listen in on communications between the U.S. and its ambassador in Israel. His activities were known to those heading the Israeli government and they ordered his operation to continue. Most astounding is that Israeli PM Yitzhak Shamir, in an attempt to woo the USSR away from the Arabs, then turned much of the stolen U.S. intelligence over to the USSR, allowing the Russians to plug the sources that were providing the information to the U.S.

And this is a country that the U.S. unconditionally supports, repeatedly defends in the United Nations and

provides with over \$3 billion annually!

The book confirmed the obvious. Israel is a foreign country and should be treated like a foreign country. They look out for their interests and we should look out for ours. For the last 40 years the tiny state on the other side of the world has been taking the U.S. to the cleaners.

Good book, a million fascinating facts, eye-opening.

Alicia Fox says

This is a 1991 book by a leading journalist (Seymour Hersh) about how the U.S. turned a blind eye to Israel building nuclear weapons. If you think the deep state is more powerful than moneyed interests, think again--the deep state (that is, the U.S. bureaucracy which keeps chugging along regardless of which political party holds the most power) is run by moneyed interests. Your tax dollars at work!

Also, a big LOL at Israel freaking out over Iran possibly getting nuclear weapons. Pots and kettles!

This reads more as a history of the events than as current events, meaning that this book has aged well and is still a good read.

Mohamed Tarik El foul says

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Kerriwyn says

This book was very dry, quite boring and seemed somewhat anti-Semitic if you ask me. That being said, I am 32 years old and didn't know that it was ever a secret for Israel to become a nuclear power. It was sorta interesting to see how the politics were conducted behind-the-scenes. Man, I hate politics! I really think it's all one big conspiracy. Anyway, now I know somewhat about Isreal and their determination to not be wiped off the face of the earth. I love me the Jews so, hey, good on ya's!

Darrell says

Seymour Hersh is an excellent journalist and is in the top 1% of investigative journalists. This book was an easy read where the narrative flowed smoothly and kept my attention. The subject was one which I was greatly interested in and Hersh did not disappoint. He delivered fact after fact backed up by his sources. The bar for 5 stars is set very high for me so I am rating this 4 stars...a really great read!

Pelaut says

Seymour Hersh at his best! Brilliant!

Nick Black says

really solid journalism, and certainly the best book on Israel's nuclear program, but about as dry as they come.

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Bassam Ahmed says

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Jennifer Abdo says

Hersh is always blowing the lid off of secrets. I found this riveting. It explains Israel's nuclear secrets and position and how we looked the other way (and continue). The story of how they became a nuclear power is incredible and telling. After reading you will ask if we really want to be "friends" or if they are actually reciprocating our friendly relationship.

Khaled says

a good book full of a lot of information ,but sometimes i feel it is not in order

Mohamed IBrahim says

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