

Ben-Gurion's Spy

The Story of the Political Scandal that Shaped Modern Israel

by Shabtai Teveth

New York: Columbia University Press, 1996. 310 pp. \$25

Reviewed by Amos Perlmutter

The American University

Middle East Quarterly

March 1997



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The leading biographer of David Ben-Gurion and one of Israel's outstanding journalists, Teveth has written a four-volume biography on Ben-Gurion and another two on key policy issues (attitudes toward the Palestinians and the Holocaust) of his long political life. Teveth's new book is a remarkable spy story as well as a penetrating political analysis. He writes with great verve and creates a sense of drama and excitement appropriate to this failed spy story.

The book reveals two intelligence fiascos committed by a Ben-Gurion favorite, Colonel Benyamin Givly. The first was a kangaroo court that in 1948 executed Meir Tobiansky, a Haganah leader wrongly suspected of collaborating with the British; Givly was responsible for the execution of Tobiansky. Ben-Gurion then promoted Givly to become head of IDF intelligence despite his doubts about this execution.

In the second case, Givly had a central role in the Lavon Affair of 1953, when the Israeli's (to create friction between the Egyptian government of Gamal Abdel Nasser and the United States) blew up an American library in Cairo to make it seem like an act of Egyptian terrorism. This act of supreme folly compromised the entire Israeli spy network in Egypt, then was covered up. It reemerged in 1961, when a conspirator revealed that Givly had falsified documents to implicate then-Defense Minister Pinhas Lavon.

Ben-Gurion had sponsored the brilliant, aggressive, and chicanerous Lavon, but refused him political exoneration when Lavon was implicated in the Egyptian operation. The Lavon Affair was the beginning of the end of the era of socialist Zionist political supremacy that had begun in 1935. Ironically, while Ben-Gurion masterfully created a modern state, he failed to play politics. It takes a giant to err gigantically.

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Researchers at Israel's Ben Gurion University have created a piece of proof-of-concept code they call "Speake(a)r," designed to demonstrate how determined hackers could find a way to surreptitiously hijack a computer to record audio even when the device's microphones have been entirely removed or disabled. The experimental malware instead repurposes the speakers in earbuds or headphones to use them as microphones, converting the vibrations in air into electromagnetic signals to clearly capture audio from across a room. "People don't think about this privacy vulner Article excerpt. Ben-Gurion's Spy: The Story of the Political Scandal that Shaped Modern Israel, by Shabtai Teveth. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996. xxx + 274 pages. Teveth recounts the initial phase of the Mishap and discusses the question of who gave the order for the bombing that ended with the forced resignation of Lavon, the removal of Givly, and Ben-Gurion's return as minister of defense in Moshe Sharett's cabinet. Teveth continues with Lavon's and Givly's attempts to clear their names, that led to the second phase-"The Lavon Affair." Peer-reviewed publications on Questia are publications containing articles which were subject to evaluation for accuracy and substance by professional peers of the article's author(s). Publication: The Middle East Journal. Ben-Gurion was convinced that Israel needed nuclear weapons to insure its survival , while Kennedy was dead-set against it. This inability to reach an agreement caused obvious problems. And, in Ben-Gurion's eyes, John F. Kennedy was an enemy of the Jewish people and his beloved state of Israel ." He continues, "The 'nuclear option' was not only at the very core of Ben-Gurion's personal world view, but the very foundation of Israel's national security policy." The "Reader from Chicago" who wrote the review of Final Judgment posted here is really off the beam and I suspect he (or she) is deliberately distorting what Piper's book does say in order to try to discourage people from reading it.

Ben-Gurion's Spy book. Read reviews from world's largest community for readers. In the early 1950s, a group of ill-trained Israeli agents staged a series... Goodreads helps you keep track of books you want to read. Start by marking Ben-Gurion's Spy: The Story of the Political Scandal That Shaped Modern Israel as Want to Read: Want to Read saving... While Lavon and Ben-Gurion are ultimately responsible for the controversial acts of sabotage in Egypt, they seem too far up the chain of command to be considered active conspirators in these events. Teveth thinks otherwise and also insists that "there is enough evidence to prove that without the Lavon Affair, Menahem Begin's Likud Party would not have come to power." But, as he admits, Labor's decline is widely linked to unpreparedness for the Yom Kippur War. Ben-gurion's spy. The story of the political scandal that shaped modern israel. by Shabtai Teveth § RELEASE DATE: June 13, 1996. An overlong recounting of a long-past Israeli political scandal. Ben-Gurion's Spy explores the political implications of the Lavon affair, demonstrating how the episode helped to usher in Menahem Begin's Likud - whose doctrine claims the whole of Palestine - and to initiate a radical shift in defense policy from restraint to violent, sometimes reckless, retribution. Unlike similar incidents like Iran-Contra or the Dreyfus affair, the Israeli analogue saw no judicial inquiry or public hearings, nor any published documents. Teveth fills in the vital information, employing classified documents including minutes of secret cabinet and military tribunal Last time I was in Israel (2009), I was stopped briefly at the border in Ben Gurion Airport when the agent found a Pakistan visa in my passport. I was also stopped again when returning from Palestinian-controlled territory because I had no Israeli stamp in my passport (Israel no longer stamps passports, but at the time they did unless you requested them not to). None of those stamps were in my current passport, but I assume Israeli officials had access to my travel history. Finally, my work history. I've worked for the U.S. federal government, served in the U.S. military, and carried a high-level security clearance. On the one hand, you'd think that would work in my favor, but I can see why that would also arouse suspicion in the convoluted world of espionage, even between allies. CONCLUSION. The author, who is something less than halfway through a multivolume biography of Israel's founding prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, has taken a break from that mammoth effort to write this volume. It describes the Lavon affair, a disastrous Israeli covert operation in Egypt in the early 1950s intended to induce Britain to remain in the Suez Canal zone and the United States to adopt a position of hostility toward Egyptian nationalists. The Israeli agents were uncovered, and the ensuing scandal not only toppled Defense Minister Pinchas Lavon, but tore apart the Labor Party and eventually