

By Way of Deception Study Guide

By Way of Deception by Victor Ostrovsky

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Contents

[By Way of Deception Study Guide..... 1](#)

[Contents..... 2](#)

[Plot Summary..... 3](#)

[Prologue and Chapter 1..... 4](#)

[Chapters 2-3..... 6](#)

[Chapters 4-5..... 7](#)

[Ragged Dick, Chapters 13-16..... 8](#)

[Part 2, Chapters 5-7, pgs. 194-236..... 9](#)

[Book One, Chapters 34-38..... 10](#)

[Chapter 9..... 11](#)

[Chapter 10..... 13](#)

[Chapter 11..... 14](#)

[Chapter 12..... 15](#)

[Chapter 13..... 16](#)

[Chapter 14..... 17](#)

[Chapter 15..... 18](#)

[Chapter 16..... 19](#)

[Chapter 17 & Epilogue..... 20](#)

[Characters..... 21](#)

[Objects/Places..... 24](#)

[Themes..... 26](#)

[Style..... 28](#)

[Quotes..... 30](#)

[Topics for Discussion..... 32](#)



Plot Summary

By Way of Deception by Victor Ostrovsky is a fascinating book about the author's years in the Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service. He only worked for the Mossad for a period of four years, but he completed the three year training program and spent one year as a katsas. He was proud to be a part of the Mossad for the period he worked for them but then there was a botched operation in which his warnings were ignored. He was set up as a scapegoat and forced to resign. In addition, he was assigned front-line military duties the day after he resigned. This would have cost him his life. He fled from Israel and he and his wife and two daughters eventually settled in Ottawa, Canada.

Ostrovsky writes a very interesting book. The Prologue begins with a discussion of Operation Sphinx and Israeli operation that began with the recruiting of Iraqi scientist Butrus Eben Halim in August 1978 and ended with the bombing and destruction of the Iraqi nuclear complex at Tamuze on June 7, 1981. This Prologue introduces the reader to the Mossad and its tactics. It is very thorough and rather ruthless. This is the first of the Mossad operation that Ostrovsky discusses.

Ostrovsky presents his history and how he lived in both Canada and Israel. He served in the Israeli army, returned to Canada for five years and then returned to Israel in May 1977. He was called in to a meeting and knew that he was being considered for a job with the Mossad. After going through all of the tests and interviews, he was told that the job involved his being out of the country and away from his family, so he refused the job. He finished his service with the navy and later learned that the job he refused was with the Mossad's assassination unit.

In October 1982, he was contacted again. This time he joined the Mossad. There are three chapters that deal with his three years of training. This includes what was covered in the training and a discussion of the various people involved. This ends with the botched operation and his resignation.

The last half of the book describes various Mossad operations that Ostrovsky learned about during his brief four year career with the organization. These stories include how the Mossad foiled the planned Strella missile attack on Golda Meir and how they foiled Carlos and Arafat and caused problems in America during the peace negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis. He also explains how the Israelis obtained an Exocet missile in exchange for providing training for the Chilean secret police. He also tells the stories of how agents were recruited in Syria and Libya.

Ostrovsky wrote the book because he thinks the Mossad has too much power with no one to control it. They do what they want and Ostrovsky feels that this is corrupting the Israeli government and society. The book is relatively quick and easy reading and the reader will find the book well worth the time.



Prologue and Chapter 1

Prologue and Chapter 1 Summary and Analysis

Halim is an Iraqi living in Paris who is working on a secret project building a nuclear reactor for Iraq. Every day he notices a blonde at his bus stop that is picked up by a red Ferrari. One day when Halim's bus is late, the woman boards a bus. When the Ferrari appears, Halim tells the driver that the woman is gone and the driver offers him a ride. Halim accepts and the Mossad has made a prize catch.

The end of Operation Sphinx occurs on June 7, 1981, when Israel fighters destroy the Iraqi nuclear complex at Tamuze. Israel had feared the nuclear plant would be used to develop nuclear weapons.

Halim was recruited by the Israelis because they needed a source inside the plant at Sarcelles, France. Both Halim and his wife Samira were intensely investigated by the Mossad and their apartment was bugged.

The man driving the red Ferrari is Ran S., alias Jack Donovan. He began to regularly pick up Halim. After each meeting, Ran returns to a safe house to write his reports about the meeting. He has to file both operational and informational reports.

When Samira leaves for Iraq, Halim calls Donovan and they go out together. Donovan invites Halim on a business trip and Halim receives one thousand dollars for his help. Donovan has another business deal involving tubes for shipping radioactive material and tells Halim that he is looking for a scientist. Halim says he is a scientist and not a student and offers his services.

Halim flies to Amsterdam and meets Donovan there. He is introduced to an Israeli nuclear scientist named Goldstein, and Halim talks freely about his job. They ask Halim if he could obtain the plans of the Sarcelles plant since they are trying to sell nuclear plants to third world countries. Halim agrees. He receives eight thousand dollars for his consult on the tubes and Donovan leaves for London.

Halim supplies all of the information that the "Germans" want. He then becomes frightened and calls Donovan. Donovan tells him that it is a CIA project and he will do what he can for Halim.

Based on the information obtained from Halim, the Israelis sabotaged the reactor components before they were shipped to Iraq. An Egyptian nuclear scientist who is helping develop an atomic bomb for Iraq is assassinated, as is the hooker who entertained him.

Chapter one is about Victor Ostrovsky and how he becomes a Mossad agent. He had been born in Canada and moved back and forth between Canada and Israel several

times. He served in both the Israeli army and navy before being recruited by the Mossad. He explains the recruitment process and the various tests he had to pass.



Chapters 2-3

Chapters 2-3 Summary and Analysis

In February 1984, Victor works as a clerk at the Mossad until he and fifteen other cadets are taken to the Academy. His class is known as Cadet 16, they are told by the director of the Mossad Academy, Aharon Sherf. The next speaker is Eiten, who is in charge of internal security. He tells them that the Mossad is referred to as the office. He tells the group to say they work in defense and then discusses other security issues.

The next man is the instructor of the course named Orin Riff. His assistant is Ran S. For the next two or three months, they would study security and NAKA, which is a uniform writing system. He begins with NAKA and the format for communications. Their first week also includes instruction in security, or APAM.

The training day is structured into five blocks of time devoted to NAKA, APAM, general military and Cover. They learn about military equipment and how to handle cover stories. They learn how to follow people and how to blend in with the crowd and how to determine if they are being followed. They are taken out on practice drills.

In chapter three, the cadets go through a series of real-life application drills called boutiques. Amy Yaar, who is head of the Far East and Africa department, lectures them on arms sales. He tells them about Israeli activities in Sri Lanka. Another lecture is on PAHA, which is hostile sabotage activities, which basically means the PLO. They have a computer which tracks the PLO people so the Mossad always knows where they are.

The cadets receive their weapon, a .22 caliber Beretta, at the beginning of the second month. They have a weapons training course. After this they learn about documentation and different kinds of identity papers and passports and when they are used.

The training also included a study of Islam and then a study of bodlim, who are the messengers between safe houses and embassies. They next learn about drops and dead letter boxes.

The first section of the training program ends in June, 1984.



Chapters 4-5

Chapters 4-5 Summary and Analysis

Victor is friends with Heim and Michael in his class. They live in the same area and commute to classes together. They learn about the importance of information gathering and liaison. Zave Alan lectures on liaison with the CIA and other entities. Liaison results in a personal relationship. Jumbo is information that is volunteered. Ran S. lectures on the use of sayanim, who are non-Israeli Jews who perform functions in other countries. They represent a pool of people who quietly perform various functions. He also teaches a class on white agents who are recruits that don't know they are working for Israel. Arab recruits are known as black agents. They learn a technique called Maulter, involving the unplanned use of a car.

The cadets learn how to handle the finances for recruits and how to develop a secure route. Recruitment is another area they study. Arab recruits are called oters. They also learn about the Mossad's packaged shell companies that could be put into use at any time.

In chapter five, it is March 1984 and the cadets are now rookies. They are divided into three groups and given assignments at safe houses in Tel Aviv. They have to devise their own security cover stories and make their assigned contacts. Victor is assigned to make contact with a man named Mike Harari. He has to find out who and where Harari is, and finds he is a Panama diplomat. Victor makes contact with him, even though their meeting doesn't go well. The other part of his assignment is to find the identity of a man named Mikey, which he does by posing as a film producer.



Ragged Dick, Chapters 13-16

Ragged Dick, Chapters 13-16 Summary and Analysis

In April 1984, Victor and his group are still in training. They are not yet katsas. They group will spend a year rotating through the different department. The Komemiute is the department that deals with combatants or spies in Arab countries who work under deep cover. Many of them are assassins and operate businesses in other countries, which are used as covers when they go to a target country. Most of these businesses are in Canada. The combatants work on four year contracts and are recruited from the Israeli population.

After a computer course, Victor works in research at the Saudi Arabian desk. He is researching an oil pipeline that the Saudis are building that the Israelis want to tap into. After this assignment, Victor is transferred to liaison and works in the section dealing with the Far East and Africa. Much of this involves facilitating contracts for the different Mossad companies, many involving weapons sales or providing training. Victor finds that the Israelis are training both sides in the Sri Lankan war at the same time. Victor has to make sure that both groups are not in the same place at the same time.

Victor's next assignment is to the Tsomet, where he basically approves Danish visa applications. This is part of the Benelux desk functions. They find that the head of the Syrian air force is going to Europe to buy expensive furniture. The Israelis manage to handle the sale, which includes an expensive Belgium table full of broadcasting and listening equipment. The Israelis are never able to obtain anything from the table.



Part 2, Chapters 5-7, pgs. 194-236

Part 2, Chapters 5-7, pgs. 194-236 Summary and Analysis

In October 1984, Victor and his group are about to begin the operation intelligence officer's course. There have been changes in personnel at the academy. Their studies at this time include a course in international business so they would understand how a company functions. The group is also taught how to eliminate bad agents. They are also learning how to handle different covers as well as learning various commando tactics.

Victor also reveals that the Mossad doesn't believe the official version of the Kennedy assassination. They believe that the Mafia was trying to enter the oil business and targeted Connally. The Mossad claims that Oswald was a dupe.

Dan Drory lectures the group on the use of weapons. He talks about an agent named Amikan. He could not wear a yarmulke in his work so he shaves a bald spot on his head and uses a hair piece as yarmulke. Drory talks about their assignment to assassinate two PLO people in Athens and how they did it.

The group's studies also include a study of all of the police forces and how to interpenetrate a police department's computer. They also study international communications with emphasis on the Mediterranean cable at Palermo, which the Israelis were linked into.

The group is now two weeks from the end of their training.



Book One, Chapters 34-38

Book One, Chapters 34-38 Summary and Analysis

Victor and his group are now in their last two weeks of training. One of his classmates, Jerry S., invites him over for drinks, saying he has something that he wants to show to Victor. Jerry had followed Itsik's girlfriend, became acquainted with her and then photographed her and himself in a physical act. After showing the video to Victor, Jerry made a pass at him. Victor punches him in the stomach and leaves. He then reports the incident to Itsik, who tells him to forget the incident. Victor says he wants a copy-to-file to protect himself.

The group begins their last exercise. Victor is assigned to a safe house in Tel Aviv with a group that includes Jerry. They are to photograph documents from the trunk of a car parked at the Grand Beach Hotel and then return the documents to the car's trunk. Jerry will keep the contact busy while Victor will get the attaché case to and from the car. Itsik complains that Victor was known in that hotel from earlier work.

Victor's second assignment is to make contact with a British diplomat who is suspected of being in intelligence. Victor uses his move making cover, saying he is looking for the grave of a man named McPhee. The diplomat meets with him. His other assignments involve making contact with different people. Other exercises involve breaking into police headquarters to take files. When Victor questions this practice, Oren Riff tells him to do his job and to shut up.

The group finishes their courses in November 1985 and become katsas after three years of training. Victor, along with Yosy and Heim, are assigned to the Israel station.

Victor is sent to Cypress on assignment. The assignment is to stop arms shipments to the PLO. They tip off the police in Belgium and the men are arrested. Victor is told to stay in the hotel in Cypress for a second assignment of transmitting a beeper signaling that several important PLO representatives have departed from Libya. The Israelis will force the plane to land in Israel. Victor learns from a man in the lobby that the PLO plans to deceive the Israelis and that the PLO leaders will not be on the plane. Victor passes on this information but Itsik tells him to carry on as planned. The men are not on the plane when it lands in Israel. Victor is on a PT boat and is blamed for the situation.

The Mossad wants Victor to quit and the head, Nahum Admony, won't talk to him. Victor knows he was set up and quit in March 1986. The next day his army reserve file is transferred, indicating that he will be assigned to liaison with the Southern Lebanese army. This is basically a death warrant.

Victor leaves Israel. His wife and two daughters follow and they settle in Ottawa.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary and Analysis

This chapter begins the sections on various Mossad operations and information that Ostrovsky collected while employed by the Mossad.

In November 1971, four Black September terrorists assassinated Jordanian Premier Wasfi Tell in Cairo. More assassinations followed, including the seizing of airplanes and the killing of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics. The Israelis reacted by bombing guerrilla bases in Syria and Lebanon. Death warrants are signed for thirty-five Black September terrorists on orders from Golda Meir.

The assassinations begin in different parts of the world. About two dozen Black September terrorists are killed and Yassar Arafat vows revenge. Both the Israelis and the terrorists exchange letter bombs.

In January 1973, Golda Meir makes plans to visit the Vatican. The plans are quickly revealed by Arab contacts within the Vatican. The Black September makes plans to assassinate Meir.

The London station receives a call from a man named Akbar. He is a Palestinian student who has functioned as a Black Arab in the past. His PLO contacts tell him that they have an Israeli target. He meets with a katsas in Paris and tells him that the operation involves smuggling technical equipment into Italy. Two katsas, one of whom is Itsik, drive Akbar to the airport for his flight to Rome. Another PLO member sees them with Akbar and reports it to the PLO.

Ali Hassan Salameh, known as Abu Hassan, plans to use Soviet made Strella missiles to blow up the plane of Golda Meir as it lands in Rome. They will bring the missiles from the PLO training camps in Yugoslavia and will use a PLO yacht to carry them across the Adriatic. Salameh hires some Germans to pilot the boat posing as tourists. The three Germans are killed when the missiles arrive in Italy.

Abu Yusuf decides to use Akbar to feed disinformation to the Israelis. As a diversion, Black September attacks the Israeli embassy in Bangkok on December 28, 1972. They release their hostages in exchange for safe passage out of the country, according to their plan. The Israelis believe that this is the attack Akbar had warned them about.

When Akbar returns to Rome with an attaché case full of documents, he is picked up by the katsas. When they open the attaché case, it explodes, killing all but the driver.

Some Mossad, like Shai Kauly, question the situation. Why is material smuggled into Italy if the attack is in Bangkok? Why is Akbar killed unless they knew he was working for the Israelis? When surveillance reveals a call to Rome with an order to move the

fourteen cakes, the address is found and the Mossad finds a piece of paper from a Stella missile in it. This is two days before Meir's arrival.

The Rome station does not notify the local authorities. The Mossad people find the terrorists and let the Italian authorities arrest them.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary and Analysis

Two Strella missiles are unaccounted for after the Rome arrests. The plot is not publicly revealed at the request of the Italians. Because of their concentration on the PLO and Black September, the outbreak of the Yon Kippur War catches the Israelis by surprise. The story the Israelis concocted for the public is that the missiles came from Libya. The terrorists are released in a few months and fly to Libya. But Salameh knows he is a Mossad target now.

Black September replaces Salameh with Mohammed Boudia. He aimed for coordination of all terrorist groups. Moukharbel functions as the liaison between Paris and Beirut. Oren Riff goes to London to try to recruit Moukharbel. The man is interested because he wants the double cover for his own protection.

Moukharbel gives the Israelis the addresses of all of Boudia's mistresses, whose apartments function as safe houses. They also learn that he is involved in an operation with Ilyich Ramirez Sanchez, who is known as Carlos. The Mossad places a pressure bomb in Bourdia's car, which kills him. Moukharbel tells the Mossad that Carlos is now running the European operation for Black September with Moukharbel as liaison man.

Salameh has his people feed false information to the Mossad about his whereabouts, and this eventually leads them to Lillehammer, where the Mossad kills an innocent waiter that looks like Salameh.

The two missing Strella missiles are at a safe house in Rome and Moukharbel supplies this information to the Mossad. The Italians arrest five terrorists at the apartment. They are all released.

On December 20, 1973, Carlos attacks a Paris bookstore with a grenade. The Mossad gives the French the address of his Paris weapons store house and the French raid it, but Carlos has already left France. On January 24, a London bank is bombed. On August 3, Carlos helps Action Directe set off three car bombs in Paris. There is also an attack on a plane at Orly. At another planned attack, they are waited for and hold hostages at gunpoint and then disappear.

Oren Riff rents an apartment overlooking the apartment Carlos has in Paris. Moukharbel is meeting Carlos there and the French police are informed. Moukharbel appears with the police. Carlos kills him and two of the three police officers.

When Open headquarters in Vienna is attacked on December 21, 1975, Carlos is thought to have been involved, and this is true of many other terrorist acts in the following decade.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary and Analysis

On September 21, 1976, Orlando Letelier, a former Chilean official, and his research aide are killed when a car bomb is remotely detonated. Even though many people blame the CIA, it is DINA, or the Chilean secret police that are responsible. They use Mossad know-how in the hit. The plot is orchestrated by DINA chief Contreras, who Chile refuses to turn over to the Americans.

Every year, there is a meeting of all intelligence groups in Israel. Their performance is discussed and goals and supplies for the coming year are determined. In 1975, navy intelligence wants an Exocet missile for testing. Many countries won't sell weapons to Israel because they know that the Israelis will copy them.

Chile has approached the Israelis for secret police training. Contreras enters into initial discussions with the Israelis. This kind of training usually lasts from three weeks to six months and is done at Kfar Sirkin, a base that is east of Tel Aviv. This is a very lucrative business for the Israelis and is often followed by weapons sales. Amir handles the negotiations for the Israelis, and Contreras buys the whole package. When asked, he says that he could also supply the head of an Exocet missile.

When Chile refuses to supply the missile head, Contreras says he can obtain one privately for one million dollars. They make the deal. When the missile is given to the Israelis in Chile, they can't leave with it. Contreras wants to talk to Admony, who has to fly over from Tel Aviv. Contreras is a security force trained that can eliminate enemies overseas, just like the Mossad does. The Mossad arranges for the retired Harari to undertake the task. The Israelis receive their Exocet, which they do extensive testing on.

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary and Analysis

Magid grew up in Syria and Egypt during the 1950s and loved chess. In the summer of 1985, he goes to Copenhagen hoping to open a business as a private merchant banker. He meets a man in the hotel lobby who is playing chess. The man says he is a Canadian entrepreneur named Mark. He is actually a katsas named Yehuda Gil from Brussels and his job is to make the initial contact with Magid. They want his brother Jadid who is an official with the Syrian military.

The Mossad handles visa applications for Denmark. A Mossad agent monitors all Arabic and Palestinian messages at the headquarters of Danish intelligence. Every three years, the Danes attend a seminar in Israel on terrorist activities and counterterrorism.

On June 13, 1985, a katsas named Ami is checking information for Danish visas on the Mossad computer in Tel Aviv. One of the names on the list is Magid. A little research reveals that he is the brother of the man in the Syrian military. This is a lead for a possible recruitment. Yehuda Gil is sent to Copenhagen within hours.

Magid needs an apartment and Mark helps him find one, which the Mossad bugged. They find that Magid and his brother are involved in some shady deals like shipping pornographic material from Denmark and selling it in Syria.

Mark says that he is trying to set up a business deal for his Canadian company, which gives investment advice. Because of this, they need information on different countries and they are willing to pay for the information. Magid has his brother, Jadid, come to Copenhagen, meets Mark, and works out the agreement.

Jadid delivered good information for five months but then came under suspicion by the Syrians for his involvement in drugs and pornography. He avoids arrest and the Israelis set him up with a new identity in Denmark since he could not return to Syria. The Israelis had been tipped off by Haled, another recruit, that Jadid would be arrested.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary and Analysis

Yassar Arafat denounces terrorist acts by the PLO outside of Israeli borders. His strength lay in the West Bank and Gaza. He isn't popular with Muslim fundamentalists, which is why he has problems with the Black June Organization headed by Sabri Ali Benuno, who is known as Abu Nidal.

The Black June Organization had attempted to assassinate the Israeli ambassador to London, Shlomo Argov and Israel uses this as an excuse for war against Lebanon.

Arafat, at this time, is trying to buy weapons in Europe that he didn't want shipped to the Palestinian Liberation Army since he is having problems with his leader, Khadra. He has a special security force known as Force 17.

Durala Kasim, is Arafat's driver and a member of Force 17. He is also on the Mossad payroll.

There are many power struggles within the Palestinian movement and Arafat feels he requires more personal security. He wants weapons that will not have to be delivered to Khadra and he is meeting with different arms representatives trying to arrange the deal.

On June 1, the Mossad kills Naim Khader, the PLO representative in Belgium. This increases Arafat's nervousness and intensifies his need for arms.

The Mossad is trying to convince the CIA that Arafat is planning a war to justify the takeover of Southern Lebanon, even though they knew he wasn't.

The Mossad decides to fill Arafat's weapons order hoping to bring on a big sting operation. Arafat's people plan to sell drugs to pay for the arms. They also have arrangements for an interim loan in case they need it.

The weapons are stored in a Hamburg warehouse under a layer of raisins. After showing the container to Arafat's man, the Mossad switches locks on the warehouse doors, intending to ship Arafat a container full of raisins. But Arafat's man, Aloon, insists on remaining with the container once it is paid for. There is another warehouse in Vienna with stored weapons, and the Mossad also intends to switch those containers. The container switches are made and the people involved are arrested and the Mossad makes between fifteen and twenty million dollars on the deal.

Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary and Analysis

The Mossad claims that it does not officially operate in the United States. The question becomes prominent when the Pollards are arrested when they try to seek asylum at the Israeli embassy in Washington in November 1985. Pollard had been passing classified information to the Israelis and to a South American military attaché. When the Americans demanded an explanation, the Israelis formally apologized.

Ostrovsky says that the Mossad has a secret unit for spying in the United States and this unit is separate from the main organization. The group is known as AI and their primary objective is the Arab countries. The Mossad has a liaison station officially in Washington and nothing else. Unofficially, they have AI and their people report directly to Tel Aviv.

Before the Camp David Peace Accords in September 1978, there are years of negotiations both before and after. The Israelis oppose the establishment of an independent Palestinian state headed by Arafat sitting on their border and are in conflict with the United States. Therefore, AI is active in trying to keep the PLO from gaining American support.

AI had bugged the apartment of Arabs and other officials in Washington and New York. They are particularly suspicious of United National Ambassador Andrew Young, who they feel is sympathetic to the Palestinians. They have a taped transcript of an unofficial meeting Young had participated in with the PLO and eventually force his resignation. A few days later, the Mossad changes all of its safe houses.

The forced resignation of Young angered many Black leaders and groups who announced support for the PLO.

Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary and Analysis

The newly constructed tourist resort seventy-five miles north of Port Sudan apparently went bankrupt. During the night in January 1985, all of the staff vanished, leaving behind food and the money for a refund to the guests. What the guests didn't know is that the resort was a Mossad front and part of Operation Moses, which concerned the rescue of Ethiopian Jews and moving them to Israel. Most of them passed through the tourist resort.

The Falashas had left Israel with the Queen of Sheba. They were Jews and covered by the Law of Return, which automatically grants Israeli citizenship to Jews who move to Israel. Israel supplied weapons to Ethiopia for use in its civil war in exchange for the release of the Falasha. The Falasha were flooding into refugee camps in the Sudan to escape drought, famine and war in 1984. Their removal of the Falashas was a secret operation until January 1985 when a United States aircraft flew five hundred Falasha from Khartoum to Israel. Now the Arabs know about the operation and this ends it.

Planning for the operation began in spring 1984. The Mossad has a department called the Tsafiririm, whose purpose is to help Jews wherever they are threatened in the world. They establish frames or defense groups around the world that help provide services and security. They decided to use the cover of a resort. Yehuda Gil obtains the necessary permits and Israelis are brought in to do the construction and other work. The Mossad brings in whatever equipment they need.

The Mossad finds a hole in the radar which allows them to fly in undetected. They construct landing strips in the desert. The resort opens in March 1984 and is very successful, often booked to capacity. They successfully move the Falashas until they receive the orders to fold the operation.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary and Analysis

The Mossad finds it difficult to recruit Libyans. By 1985, Israel has livable relations with most of the Mediterranean Arab countries with the exception of Libya. The Israelis monitor Libya through its Mediterranean Patrols. The Mossad decide they need more information on the activities in Tripoli harbor and decide to recruit someone who could provide information on the locations of various ships.

The Mossad finally have someone just call the harbor and ask who would have the kind of information they wanted, posing as an insurance investigator. The insurance investigator says they need someone to look after their interests and that they would pay him for his services. The man offers his services as long as they are only interested in civilian ships. This is done through a Mossad front in Paris. The Mossad now has the agent in place in Tripoli harbor and they ask him to become an agent for the insurance company.

The agent provides information regularly for several months and is invited to France. There they decide that he will provide them with information on all ships in the harbor. The Mossad doesn't want to endanger him so they decide not to use him for other things.

When Abu Nidel's ship in Tripoli is loaded with weapons, the Israelis know about it from their agent. Israel commando teams plant explosives on the ships and sink them. The insurance agent's recruit continued to provide information to the Israelis. After eighteen months, he disappears.



Chapter 17 & Epilogue

Chapter 17 & Epilogue Summary and Analysis

In September 1982, there is a massacre at Sabra and Shatila, two Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut. Eight hundred Palestinians are killed.

The Mossad makes contact with Bashir Gemayel, the head of the Christian Phalangist party in Lebanon in the late 1970s. The Christians and Muslims are fighting in Lebanon. Gemayel turns to Israel for help, and when he needs weapons in 1978, the Israelis sell the weapons to him. In 1979, Gemayel allows the Israelis to establish a navy radar station in Junigah. The Syrians support the Muslims but do not want to engage the Israelis over the radar station.

The Israelis want to expel the PLO from Southern Lebanon and pressure is mounting on Begin to attack. The Israeli cabinet okays an invasion of Lebanon on June 6, 1982. The invasion begins and after ten weeks, the PLO departs from Beirut.

On September 14, 1982, Gemayel is killed in a bomb blast at his headquarters. The operation has been orchestrated by Syrian intelligence.

The refugee camp massacre is performed by Lebanese intelligence chief Elias Hobeika with the permission of the Israelis. After the slaughter, American, French and Italian peacekeeping forces arrive.

The Muslims receive information about a truck being outfitted for a mission involving bombs. Tel Aviv informs the Americans that there might be an operation against them. The information is very vague, even though the Mossad has detailed information about the Mercedes truck. On October 23, 1983, the truck explodes at the U.S. Marine compound, killing 241 Marines. Another truck explodes at the French paratrooper's headquarters, killing fifty-eight men.

Ostrovsky claims that the location of many kidnap victims is known to but not revealed by the Mossad. The Americans have to file a formal request for information. The Mossad remains uncooperative. This eventually leads to the Iran Contra scandal as certain sources sell weapons in exchange for information about and the release of hostages.

The Epilogue describes the beginning of the intifada and what it is costing both sides in terms of human life and money. On November 15, 1988, the Palestinian National Council declares the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Ostrovsky blames the megalomania of the Mossad for the breakdown in morality and humanity. The organization is too powerful and thinks that it can do whatever it wants, and this attitude is spreading through Israeli government and society.



Characters

Butrus Eben Halim

Butrus Eben Halim is an Iraqi who lives in the Villejuif section of Paris with his wife Samira. They have no children and do not have a happy marriage. He travels to work by bus, following a circular route as he has been told to by Iraqi security. The only two constants in his route are the bus stop in Villejuif and the Gare Saint-Lazare Metro station, from which he takes the train to Sarcelles. Sarcelles is located north of Paris and is the site of a top secret project. The French are building a nuclear reactor for Iraq and Halim is a scientist assigned to the project.

Halim notices that every day a red Ferrari stops to pick up a blond woman who is waiting at the bus stop. One day, the Ferrari doesn't show and the woman boards a bus. When the Ferrari appears, Halim tells the driver that the woman boarded the bus. The driver finds that Halim is going in the same direction as he is and offers him a ride. Halim accepts. The man introduces himself as Jack Donovan, an international businessman who is English. The man is actually Ran S. of the Mossad, but Halim does not know this. He tells Donovan that he is a student.

Donovan begins driving Halim to the station more frequently and when Samira goes to Iraq, Donovan takes Halim out for an expensive dinner and asks him to help with some of his business deals, for which he will be paid. When Donovan needs help with tubes to hold radioactive material during shipping, Halim says that he is a scientist. Donovan introduces two "Germans", who are actually Israeli, and Halim talks freely about his work. Halim eventually supplies them with the plans for the Sarcelles plant to use as a model for plants they said they plan to sell to third world countries. Based on the information provided by Halim, the Israelis were able to sabotage the reactor parts before they were shipped. This was part of Operations Sphinx which ended with the Israeli bombing of the Tamuze nuclear complex in Iraq on June 7, 1981.

Victor Ostrovsky

Victor Ostrovsky was a member of the Israeli navy. He was a captain in charge of the weapons system testing branch in Tel Aviv. He had been born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada on November 28, 1949. His father had been a RCAF pilot in World War II and then volunteered for the Israeli War of Independence. His parents separated but his mother, an Israeli, was active in the Hagana, the Israeli resistance. Victor and his mother moved to Canada and then returned to Israel to Holon, a city near Tel Aviv.

When his mother returned to Canada, thirteen-year-old Victor remained in Holon with his grandparents. He was raised as a Zionist and joined the army just before his eighteenth birthday. When his army term ended in November 1971, he was the youngest officer in the Israeli army. He went to Edmonton and spent five years working



at various jobs. When he returned to Israel in May 1977, he joined the navy. In April 1979, he was summoned to a meeting at the Shalishut base where a man said he fits their criteria and that there was a better way in which he could serve his country. He began a series of meetings and tests. When he was told that the job will keep him out of the country most of the time, he refused it, not wanting to be separated from his wife, Bella, for long. He left the navy in 1981 and opened a graphic arts business. In October 1982, he was contacted by the Mossad and began the long testing and recruitment process. He passed all of the tests and was accepted into the Mossad. After a setup, Victor left the Mossad in March 1986. He, Bella and their two daughters eventually settled in Ottawa, Canada.

Oren Riff

Oren Riff was a veteran Mossad operative and one of Ostrovsky's instructors at the academy. He tried to set up Carlos in Paris and is now targeted by Him. He was also responsible for the recruitment of Moukbarbel. Riff warned Victor several times not to question the tactics of the Mossad and to keep his mouth shut.

Itsik E.

Itsik E. was a Mossad operative and instructor at the Mossad academy. He was a veteran of different Mossad operations and became an enemy of Victor's. He ignored Victor's information about the PLO leaders in Libya which resulted in an international incident for Israel. He helped set up Victor.

Mike Harari

Mike Harari was a Panamanian diplomat who Victor had to contact during training. He was the head of the Metseda and had the wrong man assassinated in Lillehammer and helped train secret police for different countries.

Yehuda Gil

Yehuda Gil was a Mossad agent and instructor of Victor's group at the Mossad academy. He was instrumental in developing the resort, a Mossad front, used for the transfer of Ethiopian Jews to Israel.

Shai Kauly

Shai Kauly was a Mossad operative and one of Victor's instructors. He was instrumental in preventing the assassination of Golda Meir in Rome.



Bella Ostrovsky

Bella Ostrovsky was the wife of Victor and the mother of his two daughters. When he left Israel quickly after leaving the Mossad, she and their two daughters flew to Montreal. They settled in Ottawa.

Ran S.

Ran S. was a Mossad operative. He played the role of Jack Donovan in Operation Sphinx and was one of Ostrovsky's instructors at the Mossad academy.

Nahum Admony

Nahum Admony was head of the Mossad during the time when Victor worked there. When Victor was set up, he refused to see him.



Objects/Places

Sarcelles

Sarcelles, located north of Paris, is the site where the French built a nuclear reactor for Iraq.

Tel Aviv

Tel Aviv is the capital of Israel located on the central Mediterranean coast.

Mossad Academy

Mossad Academy is located outside Tel Aviv on the road to Haifa.

Ottawa

Ottawa is the capital of Canada and the place where the Ostrovskys settled.

Cypress

Cypress is an island in the Mediterranean where Victor was sent on assignment.

Belgium

Belgium is a Western European country where Victor was sent to help stop PLO arms dealers.

Lillehammer

Lillehammer is a small town in Norway about ninety-five miles north of Oslo.

Chile

Chile is a country located in southwestern South America that sent people to Israel for training as security police.

Germany

Germany is a country in Western Europe where the Mossad sabotaged arms shipments to Arafat.

Washington, DC

Washington, DC is the capital of the United States where the Mossad has a special unit known as AI.



Themes

Power

One of the most dominant themes of the book is the power of the Mossad and this is Ostrovsky's reason for writing the book. According to the author, the Mossad basically does anything it wants whenever it wants. The head of the agency reports to the prime Minister, but there is no way the Prime Minister can control its activities, and this is the point that Ostrovsky wants to make. When the Mossad is asked to provide information to the Americans about kidnapped victims in Beirut, they are as uncooperative as they can be, refusing to provide the Americans with information that might have led to the rescue of the victims. They warned the Americans that there might be some form of action against them in Beirut, but didn't give them the information about the Mercedes truck that eventually bombed the American barracks, killing more than two hundred Marines. Ostrovsky believes that it is the unlimited power of the Mossad and its activities in various parts of the world that have led to so much violence in the Middle East. He mentions the intifada and all of the fatalities and arrests that it has resulted in. According to Ostrovsky, the goals of the Mossad are not always consistent with the announced goals of the Israeli government. He believes that the Mossad has too much power that it abuses and that this has led to a breakdown in the moral order and it is this attitude and abuse that is corrupting the Israeli government and society. Ostrovsky feels that the only way to control the power of the Mossad and stop its abuses is to make the information public. This is why he wrote the book.

Ethics

Ethics, or lack of, is another theme of the book. The Mossad, like most intelligence agencies, is a powerful and ruthless organization. They have their own assassination division known as the combatants, and use them to exterminate enemies of Israel. (The reader should remember that their enemies are just as ruthless, not hesitating to kill anyone who gets in their way). When Victor was in Cypress waiting to transmit the signal that the PLO leaders had departed from Libya, he learns from a contact that he made that the PLO men will not be on the plane. They plan to trick the Israelis. When he passes this information on to Itsik, he is reprimanded for making the contact without authorization. His information is ignored and he is told to follow his original orders, which he does. The result is an international incident for the Israelis, who forced the plane to land in Israel, finding it full of minor government officials instead of PLO leaders. Whether or not Itsik told the truth to Admony or not isn't known, nor is anything else that occurred at Mossad headquarters at this time. Victor was being held incommunicado on a PT boat for two days and couldn't defend himself. Nobody would talk to him at the Mossad. He was the scapegoat for the botched operation. He was basically told if he tried to talk to Admony, it would be considered a personal attack and he would be killed. He was forced to resign and his army file carried a request that he



serve as liaison in Southern Lebanon, which would have cost him his life if he hadn't fled. He was not treated ethically.

Secrecy

Secrecy is another theme of the book, and it is not a surprising theme. Every intelligence agency has a need for secrecy. Lives depend on it. The Mossad doesn't want their agents identified because it can blow an operation. This is the point made to Victor during one of his training exercise when he used the same hotel twice. It is possible that someone could have recognized him and that would have ended the operation. The Mossad was always interested in protecting their sources. Because of this, they didn't tell the Americans about the Mercedes truck that was outfitted with bombs for a suicide mission. They warned them vaguely that they might be a target but didn't provide any of the details that they had. The result was more than two hundred Marines killed in the suicide attack. French soldiers were killed in a separate attack for the same reason. The Mossad also had information about kidnapping victims in Beirut. They knew who was involved and the various locations where the victims were being held. They refused to provide it to the Americans. When the Mossad did provide some information about Buckley, the CIA asked to confirm it with the Mossad agents. The Mossad refused, even though Ostrovsky says there were ways the Americans could have talked to the agents without the identity being revealed. If the Mossad hadn't been so secretive, the lives of Buckley and other kidnap victims might have been saved. In spite of this, secrecy is a big part of intelligence work.



Style

Perspective

The perspective of the book is that of the author, Victor Ostrovsky. The book is written in both third and first person point of view, with the narrator being the author. This allows the author to provide the reader with the necessary background and detail information that is required for the reader to understand the material that is being discussed. The use of the third person point of view overcomes the shortcomings of the first person point of view in which the reader is only privy to knowledge of events that occur in the presence of the storyteller. This approach would not have worked for this book because Ostrovsky learned a lot about Mossad operations in his four years with the organization. He was not a part of these operations but he is able to discuss them in the book through the use of the third person. This would not be possible if the book were written in the first person point of view and the reader would lose a lot of valuable information.

Victor Ostrovsky is well qualified to write a book of this kind. The book is the story of his four years with the Mossad and the kind of life he led. He discusses what he went through during the three years of training and then what happened in the botched operation that he was made the scapegoat for. Nobody is better qualified to tell this story than the author who lived through it. The second half of the book describes the various Mossad operations based on information the author learned while employed by the Mossad.

Tone

The tone of the book must be classified as subjective. The author is factual and to the point with the stories he tells about his years with the Mossad, his training and the stories about the various Mossad operations, but he presents his own views about the Mossad. There is nothing wrong with this since this is his reason for writing the book. He thinks that the Mossad has unlimited power which allows it to do whatever it wants. There are basically no controls on its power and its abuses, and the author thinks that this has led to a breakdown in the moral order and to corruption in the Israeli government and in society. Ostrovsky believes that the only way to stop this is to expose it, and this is what he does in the book. In spite of this, he does not try to force his views on the reader. He presents the facts of the different situation in which he found himself, and on the different Mossad operations, and basically allows the reader to form his own opinions. Even though he states his own views, he only does this in a few places in the book. He doesn't insult the intelligence of the reader by constantly trying to force his views on the readers. He states his purpose in the Preface and refers to it at several places in the book. The reader has to respect the author for his approach and in allowing the reader to reach his/her own conclusions. Whether the reader agrees with the author or not, the book will make the reader think.

Structure

By Way of Deception by Victor Ostrovsky is a well structured book that is written for quick and easy reading but is packed full of information. The body of the book consists of a Prologue, four parts with seventeen chapters and an Epilogue. The short titles of each of the chapters relates to the subject matter of each chapter.

The presentation of the book is very good. The Prologue introduces the reader to the Mossad and what it does and how it does it by a discussion of Operation Sphinx from the way they recruited their contact, Halim, until the air raid on the Iraqi nuclear complex at Tamuze four years later. Ostrovsky explains the thoroughness of the Mossad and their attention to detail. The next two parts, consisting of eight chapters, explain his recruitment by the Mossad and his three years of training. The eighth chapter tells of his being used as a scapegoat for a botched operation and the facts of his resignation and his leaving the country. The last part of the book tells of various Mossad operations based on the four years Ostrovsky worked there.



Quotes

"The Mossad's biggest concern is always in communications. Because they know what they can do, they figure other countries can do it, too."

Prologue, p. 11

"You know there is this immense need for security and you know there is an organization called the Mossad. It doesn't officially exist in Israel, yet everyone knows about it."

Chap. 2, p. 51

"That's how you recruit. You take somebody and get him gradually to do something illegal or immoral. You push him down the hill. But if he's on a pedestal, he's not going to help you. You can't use him."

Chap. 4, p. 98

"The Mossad regarded all these contracts as initial contact with various places that someday would bring diplomatic relations, so money was no object. And the businessmen, of course, were looking at it from a profit point of view. They were all getting their healthy percentages."

Chap. 6, p. 132

"The idea now, they said, was to teach us the essence of intelligence. Until now, we had studied behavior and information-gathering at a lower level. Now we had to get down to the nuts and bolts of gathering."

Chap. 7, p. 138

"I'm not sure my entire problem was only talking. They would have used me as a scapegoat and left me, anyway. It's one of those things."

Chap. 8, p. 173

"In Beirut, Black September leader Abu Yusuf had been immediately informed that Akbar was a mole within the organization. But rather than kill him right away and perhaps jeopardize the whole operation, Yusuf decided he'd use this knowledge to throw the Israelis off the track."

Chap. 9, pp. 186-87

"Carlos wanted the missiles to be used against an Israeli plane. But he would not become personally involved in an operation that reacquired intricate planning. That was his rule - and part of the reason he was never caught. He would plan an operation, see that it was carried out, but would not participate."

Chap. 10, p. 207

"I want a force that can help me eliminate our enemies, wherever they are. Like you do with the PLO. Not all our enemies are in Chile. We want to be able to hit people who are a direct threat to us. There are terrorist groups out there threatening us, just as groups



are threatening you. We want to be able to eliminate them."
Chap. 11, p. 227

"Mark, in reality, was Yehuda Gil, one of a pool of katsas stationed in Brussels and assigned to make initial contact with Magid. Not that it was Magid they wanted. It was his brother Jadid, a ministerial-level official with the Syrian military whom they hoped to recruit."
Chap. 12, p. 231

"For the Mossad, this wasn't all bad. The one thing they didn't want to happen was to see peace breaking out all over. So, there was a lot of activity designed to prevent serious negotiations - yet another example of how dangerous it is to have such an organization with no one to answer to."
Chap. 12, p. 246

"Spying on the United States stands in total contradiction to our policy. Such activity, to the extent that it did take place, was wrong, and the government of Israel apologizes."
Chap. 14, p. 268

"After this meeting, Admony called in David Arbel, then head of Tsafririm, which means 'morning breeze,' the department whose sold purpose is to save Jews wherever they are threatened. Arbel, as we've seen, had made a name for himself, of sorts, in the Lillehammer debacle."
Chap. 15, p. 291

"At a meeting involving Mossad's PLO research department and the head of the Tsomet branch dealing with France, the United Kingdom and Belgium, it was decided to try to recruit a harbor-traffic controller, or someone else working in the harbormaster's office in Tripoli who would have access to more specific information on the names and whereabouts of ships. Through the Mossad knew the names of the PLO ships, they did not know where they were at any given time."
Chap. 16, p. 303

"The intifada and resultant breakdown of moral order and humanity are a direct result of the kind of megalomania that characterizes the operation of the Mossad. That's where it all begins. This feeling that you can do anything you want to whomever you want for as long as you want because you have the power."
Epilogue, p. 335



Topics for Discussion

What was Operation Sphinx and why was it important? What was the role of Halim?

Ostrovsky comments that paranoia is part of the job of working for the Mossad. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

How did Victor make enemies in the Mossad? What situation led to his resigning in March 1986?

Why did Victor Ostrovsky flee Israel? What would have happened if he didn't leave Israel?

Why does Ostrovsky consider the Mossad to be so dangerous? Do you agree with his views?

Select one of the Mossad operations that Ostrovsky describes in the book and discuss its aspects. Was it necessary? Ethical?

Is Ostrovsky honest in his presentation of the Mossad or is he bitter because of his treatment by Israel? Do you think his criticisms are legitimate?