

Flight 139 And The Raid On Entebbe Airport - The Most Audacious Hostage Rescue

On June 27, 1976, Air France Flight 139 departed from Tel Aviv with its final destination being Paris. With 248 passengers and 12 crew members on board, the flight seemed like a routine journey until it was unexpectedly hijacked by members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - External Operations (PFLP-EO) and the German Revolutionary Cells.

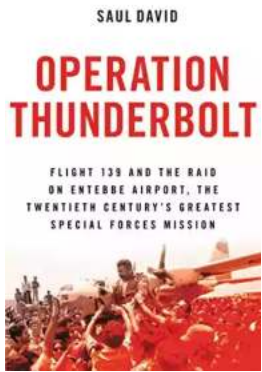
The hijackers quickly took control, diverting the plane to Entebbe Airport in Uganda, East Africa. The situation took a turn for the worse as the passengers and crew found themselves held hostage, facing an uncertain fate. However, what unfolded over the next few days would go down in history as one of the most audacious and successful hostage rescue operations ever carried out - the Raid on Entebbe Airport.

The Hijacking and the Agonizing Wait

As Flight 139 landed at Entebbe Airport, the hijackers forced the plane to park at a remote area of the runway. They separated Israeli and Jewish passengers from the rest and threatened to execute them if their demands were not met. Their demands included the release of Palestinian prisoners held in Israel and several other countries.

Operation Thunderbolt: Flight 139 and the Raid on Entebbe Airport, the Most Audacious Hostage Rescue Mission in History by Saul David(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5



For the next week, the passengers and crew endured a tense and harrowing captivity. They were subjected to physical and psychological abuse, while the Israeli government, under Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, faced a difficult decision. Negotiations took place, but it became clear that the hijackers had no intention of compromising.

Operation Thunderbolt - The Rescue Plan Takes Shape

With time running out and the hostages' lives at stake, the Israeli government decided to take action. They initiated a daring rescue plan known as "Operation Thunderbolt" or "Operation Entebbe." A team of highly trained commandos, led by Lieutenant Colonel Yonatan Netanyahu, was assembled for the mission.

The plan involved flying undetected to Entebbe, approximately 2,500 miles away from Israel, in C-130 Hercules transport aircraft. The commandos would then storm the airport, neutralize the hijackers, and free the hostages. The logistics were daunting, and meticulous planning was crucial to ensure the success of the mission.

The Raid on Entebbe Airport - A Triumph Against All Odds

In the early hours of July 4, 1976, Operation Thunderbolt was put into motion. Four Israeli fighter jets provided cover as the transport aircraft approached Entebbe Airport. The commandos swiftly made their way to the terminal building, surprising the hijackers and overwhelming them in a fierce firefight.

In a stunning display of bravery and professionalism, the Israeli commandos managed to rescue over 100 hostages, with only one fatality - Lieutenant Colonel Yonatan Netanyahu. The successful operation was a testament to their exceptional training and unwavering determination.

The Aftermath and Global Impact

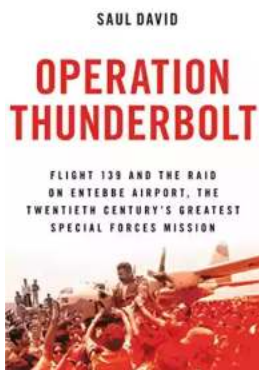
The Raid on Entebbe Airport had a profound impact on global perceptions of terrorism and hostage situations. It showcased Israel's capability to protect its citizens and highlighted the resolve of the Israeli Defense Forces. The operation also led to increased cooperation between nations in combating terrorism, as governments recognized the need for collective action.

Individuals involved in the rescue, both the commandos and the hostages, were hailed as heroes. The daring mission remains a cornerstone of military strategy and hostage rescue planning. It serves as a reminder of the lengths to which nations are willing to go to protect their citizens and uphold the principles of freedom and justice.

The Legacy of Flight 139 and the Raid on Entebbe Airport

The story of Flight 139 and the Raid on Entebbe Airport is one that will forever be etched in history. It symbolizes the triumph of courage over fear, of unity over division. It serves as a reminder that even in the darkest of times, humanity has the capacity for extraordinary heroism.

As we reflect on the audacious hostage rescue, let us remember the lives impacted and the sacrifices made. Let us honor the memory of those who lost their lives and celebrate the courage of those who fought for freedom on that fateful day in Entebbe, Uganda.



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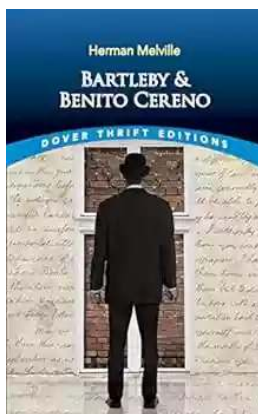
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The definitive account of one of the greatest Special Forces missions ever, the Raid of Entebbe, by acclaimed military historian Saul David.

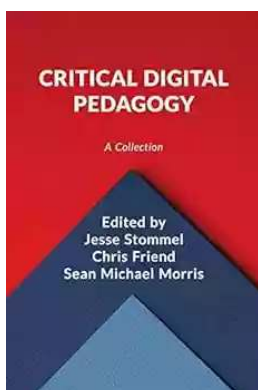
On June 27, 1976, an Air France flight from Tel Aviv to Paris was hijacked by a group of Arab and German terrorists who demanded the release of 53 terrorists. The plane was forced to divert to Entebbe, in Uganda -- ruled by the murderous despot Idi Amin, who had no interest in intervening.

Days later, Israeli commandos disguised as Ugandan soldiers assaulted the airport terminal, killed all the terrorists, and rescued all the hostages but three who were killed in the crossfire. The assault force suffered just one fatality: its commander, Yoni Netanyahu (brother of Israel's Prime Minister.) Three of the country's greatest leaders -- Ehud Barak, Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin -- planned and pulled off one of the most astonishing military operations in history.



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