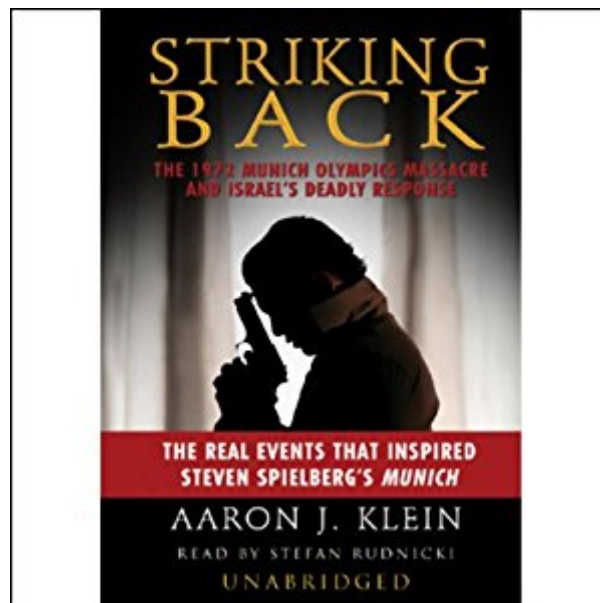




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# Striking Back: The 1972 Munich Olympics Massacre And Israel's Deadly Response



## Synopsis

The first full account, based on access to key players who have never before spoken, of the Munich Massacre and the Israeli response— a lethal, top secret, thirty-year-long antiterrorism campaign to track down the killers. 1972. The Munich Olympics. Palestinian members of the Black September group murder eleven Israeli athletes. Nine hundred million people watch the crisis unfold on television, witnessing a tragedy that inaugurates the modern age of terror and remains a scar on the collective conscience of the world. Back in Israel, Prime Minister Golda Meir vows to track down those responsible and, in Menachem Begin's words, "run these criminals and murderers off the face of the earth." A secret Mossad unit, code named Caesarea, is mobilized, a list of targets drawn up. Thus begins the Israeli response— a mission that unfolds not over months but over decades. The Mossad has never spoken about this operation. No one has known the real story. Until now. Award-winning journalist Aaron Klein's incisive and riveting account tells for the first time the full story of Munich and the Israeli counterterrorism operation it spawned. With unprecedented access to Mossad agents and an unparalleled knowledge of Israeli intelligence, Klein peels back the layers of myth and misinformation that have permeated previous books, films, and magazine articles about the "shadow war" against Black September and other terrorist groups. Spycraft, secret diplomacy, and fierce detective work abound in a story with more drama than any fictional thriller. Burning questions are at last answered, including who was killed and who was not, how it was done, which targets were hit and which were missed. Truths are revealed: the degree to which the Mossad targeted nonaffiliated Black September terrorists for assassination, the length and full scope of the operation (far greater than previously suspected), retributive acts against Israel, and much more. Finally, Klein shows that the Israeli response to Munich was not simply about revenge, as is popularly believed. By illuminating the tactical and strategic purposes of the Israeli operation, *Striking Back* allows us to draw profoundly relevant lessons from one of the most important counterterrorism campaigns in history. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 7 hours and 39 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Blackstone Audio, Inc.

Audible.com Release Date: January 20, 2006

Language: English

ASIN: B000EAT1V0

Best Sellers Rank: #148 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors > Miscellaneous > Olympic Games](#)  
#160 in [Books > Audible Audiobooks > History > Middle East](#) #441 in [Books > Audible Audiobooks > Politics & Current Events > Freedom & Security](#)

## Customer Reviews

I was always under the impression that Israel and the Mossad killed all the perpetrators of the Munich Olympics massacre- they didn't; I was surprised to read about how perps were picked for assassination and the levels of verification, oversight and study that went into eliminating every terrorist on the list. I have more respect for Israel after reading this book as their assassination efforts put a huge dent into terrorists and terrorism. This was an interesting and enlightening read. For example, I never knew how bad the West German government and Bavarian officials blew the prisoner exchange and the fact that West Germany and Bavaria were so poorly prepared for terrorists and terrorism.

we all watched it ... we were all horrified by the Munich games massacre. we saw it all unfold and could see the flaws in the German/Bavarian governments' mishandling of the event. i must insert here however, that, the event did produce, a later event in Germany by spurring that government to establish an excellent hostage crisis response unit and other countries established similar units based on the German model. while many governments may have thought about establishing specialty response units that particular type of police response was at the very least in its infancy. no one had SWAT teams as such established, hostage responses were not standardized in any jurisdiction. this book does not dwell on the Munich event except to present the event succinctly but it does present both sides of the resulting conflict. if you read any book about this tragedy and how it radically changed police response to hostage situations, high profile or not, this is the one to read as you will learn the underlying tensions and reasons for the entire situation. while watching this tragedy unfold, we all knew that the outcome was not going to be the happy ending that a book of fiction would serve up, we knew this was too serious and too intense to end well and clearly saw the flaws in the response to the crisis. we remarked at the time ... why are the television news crews showing this in real time? don't they understand that while it was a huge news event, they were providing exactly the information needed by the perpetrators and it was easy to see that nothing the police

were going to try was going to be kept secret from the men who committed this heinousness. so ... we now have trained hostage negotiators, and rapid highly trained police response teams specifically trained for these situations. how long we will have them given congressional constipation regarding all federal funding is one of the questions we can only hope is well thought out and well handled. this can and has happened elsewhere, even here in the USA, albeit not on such a grand stage, it is happening in other countries on a regular basis (ie, terroristic kidnappings in certain southern border towns). unfortunately, not all nations learned a lesson from this event and we can only hope that the US government insists on retaining these specialized police units as well as other rapid response teams specialized for other crimes.all in all, the book is quite balanced and reads much like a novel which should make it an easy if unpleasant read for some, but it is an important book for anyone interested in not only the world horror of such an event, but also in various nations' response within their own policing or military agencies.

This excellent book is by an Israeli journalist who was able to get remarkable access to Mossad. One might think this would result in a one-sided presentation, but Klein has done an excellent job of being extremely objective and analyzing the twin motivations of revenge and deterrence that underlay the strike-back assassinations after Munich. The only point on which he isn't objective (and with good reason) is in his unreserved condemnation of the action, inaction, negligence, and callousness (not to mention stupidity) of the German officials during the 21 hours or so of the hostage crisis. The book is worth reading for his thorough account of that one day in September.Klein's analysis of the Mossad reaction is unsparing, especially in the disaster and tragedy at Lilliehammer, when Mossad agents killed an innocent man whom they should have realized was not Ali Hassan Salameh ("The Red Prince"). Six Mossad operatives were actual imprisoned in Norway for this crime, and the fact that "Munich" never makes mention of this incident is sufficient refutation to those who ridiculously claim that Spielberg and Tony Kushner were insufficiently sympathetic to Israel. While he wrote the book in Hebrew, Klein makes it clear this is not an apologia for Mossad. He sternly questions the rightness of the process in which Palestinian terrorists were identified and "prosecuted" in "show trials" before Israeli Prime Ministers who issued death sentences. People identified as "architects" of Munich often had little if any direct connection to the tragedy. He also carefully analyses the deterrence claim. While Black September terror largely faded after the strike-back assassinations, this appears to have had much to do with the PLO's attempt for legitimacy (Arafat addressing the U.S. in 1974, etc.) and reluctance to incur the wrath of potentially friendly European governments by continuing to execute terror strikes in their

countries. Klein also explodes the myth of Mossad invincibility, pointing out with great irony that two of the actual Munich terrorists are still alive, and neither of the actual planners of the mission (Abu Daoud and Abu Ehyad) died at Mossad's hands. Abu Daoud is, in fact, still alive, and Abu Ehyad was assassinated by an extremist Abu Nidal follower because Abu Ehyad had become "soft" on the destruction of Israel. Don't confuse this book with the movie "Munich," however. "Munich" is based on a different book, George Jonas's "Vengeance," based on the recollections of a Mossad agent. There have been some criticisms and questions of "Avner"'s story in "Vengeance." Klein's account, however, shows that the initial 3 assassinations and the Spring of Youth assassinations in Beirut were generally very accurately portrayed in "Munich." I see "Munich" as more of a philosophical question about the human cost of the eye-for-an-eye approach, and the ultimate futility of translating ideology into direct and violent action, especially when it means undertaking violent action that is dangerously similar to the type of action undertaken by your enemy. Klein's book is more of a thoughtful policy analysis of what Mossad did, and whether it was effective. While Klein claims that moral judgments are far beyond the scope of his book, they are an inevitable consequence of evaluating the remarkable research that he has compiled.

I vividly remember the '72 Olympics and the massacre. Once again, what you learned from the TV news isn't even half the story. Well written. The book covers both the triumphs and the blunders made along the way both before and after the massacre. Munich, trying to erase its Nazi image, really tried to "stay out of the whole affair" . That made it very difficult for the Israelis to find out the who and what behind the event. Very absorbing read. Highly recommend it.

Very interesting finding out all the different levels on intelligence groups in Israel and what the purpose of each one is. Fascinating read. Didn't want to put it down. Would definitely recommend this book!

I thought this was a good book as bout how the cc country of Israel decided it had enough with terrorists and no other country's helping them out in putting away bad guys. The Arthur writes about France in the 60 & 70's how they're just a bunch of cowards and not much has changed since then. I just think if the whole world saw what these terrorist were doing back then and would have done something maybe it wouldn't be as bad as it is now.

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