

June 10, 1981
Letter from Israeli General Rafael Eitan to South African Minister Magnus Malan on Israeli Airstrike on Iraqi Nuclear Reactor

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Summary:

Chief of Staff of Israel Defense Forces, General Rafael Eitan writes to South African Minister of Defence Magnus Malan shortly after Israel's 1981 strike on Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor. In this candid letter, Eitan states that Israel's "iron determination" would not "allow these crazy Arabs to possess nuclear weapons," adding that "anyone who tries to say that the nuclear reactor in Iraq was only for research purposes is wicked, cynical and oil, not human blood, flows in his veins."

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ISRAEL DEFENCE FORCES
DEFENCE INTELLIGENCE
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General Magnus Malan
Minister of Defence
Republic of South Africa

J.A.L. STEINMANN
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Dear General Malan,

Well, we did the deed with iron determination not to allow these crazy Arabs to possess nuclear weapons. Anyone who tries to say that the nuclear reactor in Iraq was only for research purposes is wicked, cynical and - oil, not human blood, flows in his veins.

We are not perturbed by all the "righteous souls" that all the crocodiles in South African rivers could not provide with enough tears to wipe out their hypocrisy.

The operation was carried out by 8 F-16 aircraft each carrying two regular 1000 kg. bombs. All sixteen bombs hit their target; the reactor was completely destroyed. If such an operation could be awarded 100 points, we scored all the 100 and no less.

There will definitely rise an outcry in the World, but the alternative to our existence could have been worse sevenfold. I am certain that you understand us very well.

Please accept kind regards and many thanks from Miriam and myself.

We are looking forward to our next meeting, hoping that it will be realized despite these dramatic events.

Warm Regards,

Rafael Eitan Lt. Gen.
Chief of General Staff
IDF