



The Politics of Miscalculation in the Middle East (Indiana Series in Arab and Islamic Studies)

Richard B. Parker

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Why do international crises seem to occur so often in the Middle East? Former U.S. diplomat Richard B. Parker presents three detailed studies of policy failures that he believes were precipitated by miscalculations on the part of diplomats and of government and military leaders in one or more Middle Eastern countries, the United States, and the former USSR. They are the Soviet-Egyptian miscalculation leading to the June 1967 war between Israel and the Arab states, the U.S.-Israeli miscalculation leading to Soviet military intervention in Egypt in 1970, and the U.S.-Israeli miscalculation leading to the disastrous Lebanese-Israeli peace agreement of May 17, 1983.

Parker's many-sided, often gripping account of the way in which these crises unfolded illustrates how the same events can be viewed very differently by the observers and actors involved, and how political decisions can precipitate reactions that are often very different from those anticipated. Although the book highlights the unavoidably uncertain and contingent element in all diplomatic activity, it also shows that careful attention to history, to past performance, and to prevailing mindsets in the countries involved can be invaluable aids in diplomatic crisis management. The many sources assembled and the careful weighing of their accuracy and reliability, along with the combined perspective of the practitioner and the scholar, make this book an important resource for diplomats, policymakers, and students of diplomacy.

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