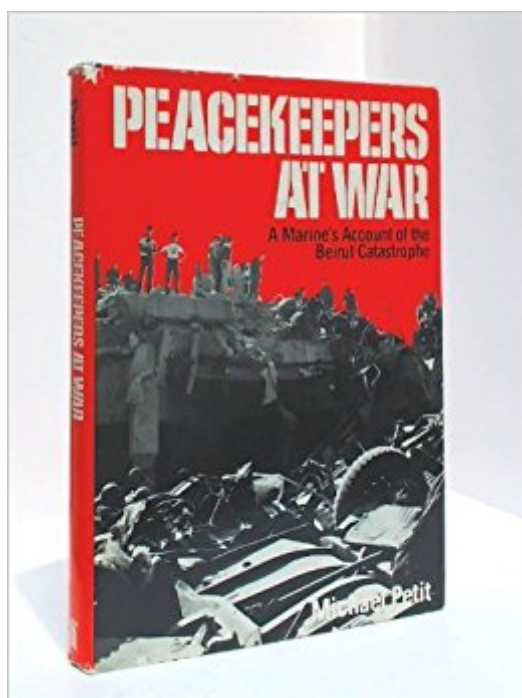


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Peacekeepers At War: A Marine's Account Of The Beirut Catastrophe



Synopsis

Dust jacket notes: "Peacekeepers at War is a powerful and heartrending eyewitness account that reveals, as no official history of news story can, the frustration of members of a multinational force sent into a foreign country to 'keep the peace' during a civil war. Incredibly, despite their combined military might, the 'rules of engagement' make them powerless to defend themselves or to prevent the devastation caused by one fanatic. With great narrative power and humor, Petit portrays a group of Marines the reader will never forget, young men who joined the Corps to serve their country, to find adventure, and to see action. Instead, their patriotic fervor is undermined daily, at first by their numbing routine, and then, as their situation worsens, by their mounting fear of death. Based on his firsthand experience as a man on the line, Petit vividly recreates the day-to-day events leading up to the bombing and its aftermath, putting the attack into the context of the West's military presence in Lebanon. He examines the official record, the Marines' relationship with the press, and Congress' inquiry into what it called an 'incident' - what the author calls the most devastating moment in his life. Ultimately, having lost hundreds of comrades, many friends, Petit re-evaluates his own motivation for becoming a Marine. In recounting - and questioning - the political and military decision that sent young soldiers into the greatest military disaster since Vietnam, Peacekeepers at War raises issues of concern to all nations."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

According to Petit, he enlisted in the Marine Corps at age 25 to prove himself a true male. He was sent to Beirut in early 1983 with an amphibious unit to join the multinational peacekeeping force, in

place since the previous year. He and other members of his unit quickly concluded that their task was futile: the warring Christian and Muslim elements in Lebanon did not seek compromise; they wanted only to fight each other and did not consider that their country might collapse as a result. The Marines stayed in place at the Beirut airport, the targets of bullets, until on Oct. 23, 1983, a car bomb exploded at their headquarters, killing 241 men. Petit's conclusion is that there was no purpose, no "meaningful and enduring reason" for their sacrifice, and that the U.S. commitment of forces to Lebanon was a major error. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Petit, Marine Corps corporal (retired), survived the devastating bombing at tack on the Marine base in Beirut on 23 October 1983. *Peacekeepers* is his ac count of what he saw in that peacekeep ing effort as part of the 24th Marine Am phibious Unit (MAU), assigned the responsibility of representing the Unit ed States as part of the Multinational Peacekeeping Forces. For the most part, this is a tale of being a Marine in the mid-1980s: people called upon to be ac tors in global politics which are under standable only to the cognoscenti. His recounting of the bombing, its frantic aftermath, and the moods of the survi vors is real and moving. Recommended for large collections in this area. David P. Snider, Casa Grande P.L., Ariz. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Good first hand account of one of where America was heading and the troubles we would soon face. The "Rules of Engagement" prevented the Marines from chambering a round and they had to get permission to do so before they could defend themselves. I, unlike the Author, hold the commander responsible for not having a proper defense and allowing such stupid rules.

This is a great account of a sad and pretty much forgotten time in our history. Cpl. Petit did an awesome job describing his time at Beirut and the day to day grind. A definite must read for everybody. Semper Fidelis from a former Marine.

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