

Books for Christmas

Our annual list of holiday gift suggestions from distinguished readers and writers

DANIEL PIPES

Books on Middle Eastern and Islamic topics have enjoyed a special prominence this past year, thanks to the war on terror, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the expected military campaign against Iraq. Here is one book recommendation in each of these subject areas:

Steven Emerson was the investigative reporter who was the first person to realize that the United States faces a serious internal threat from militant Islam; he warned the country with his 1994 PBS documentary, *Jihad in America*; this year, he provided an important update in book form with *American Jihad: The Terrorists Living among Us*.

Michael Oren's *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* is the finest book ever on this turning point in the region's history. Oren tells his story in a spare, direct, and gripping way, replete with punchy quotations. The book benefits from sources in six languages and is the first account to rely on recently opened state archives, which provide his account with the previously unknown inside story, including a number of scoops.

Khidhir Hamza's book (co-authored with Jeff Stein), *Saddam's Bombmaker: The Terrifying Inside Story of the Iraqi Nuclear and Biological Weapons Agenda*, came out in 2000 but it remains the outstanding account of life at the top in totalitarian Iraq and the threat Saddam Hussein poses. (Iraq is "undoubtedly on the precipice of nuclear power," Hamza recently said, and he will have "between three to five nuclear weapons by 2005.")

Daniel Pipes is director of the Middle East Forum in Philadelphia and author most recently of Militant Islam Reaches America.