



The War of the Camps, the War of the Hostages

June 19, 1985. In Beirut, TWA flight 847 stands desolate on the empty tarmac, a huge hulk of white metal shimmering in the heat, a picture off the cover of some bungled tourism brochure. Some 40 Americans are unwilling guests in the southern shantytowns known as the “suburbs” of Beirut. More than a hundred other passengers have been released. One, a young US Navy underwater construction expert, was beaten and executed. The two original hijackers are now said to be adherents of the Hizb Ullah (Party of God).

To continue reading this article, please login or [subscribe](#).

How to cite this article:

Joe Stork "The War of the Camps, the War of the Hostages," *Middle East Report* 133 (June 1985). Most of the hostages were liberated by the Japanese in February of 1945, although Rupert was there for an extra couple of days while the Japanese tried to plot an escape from incoming Allied forces. Rupert was in the camp when the Allies arrived. Tanks rolled up and the Japanese garrison used the hostages as leverage. Rupert and his friend Nick had to sleep under the beds, now occupied by soldiers trying to escape machine gun fire from the American tanks below. He cites the war's brutality as the major offender in his memory of being a hostage, not the brutality of the camp itself. Having now written a book about his three years as an internee, Wilkinson is sharing his experience, strength, and hope for a better world with anyone who seeks to read about his life.

The Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP) was established in 1971 to educate the public about contemporary Middle East affairs. A registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, MERIP publishes a quarterly print magazine, *Middle East Report*, as well as online materials.

Independent and progressive in orientation, MERIP provides critical, alternative reporting and analysis, focusing on political economy, popular struggles and the role of US and international powers in the region.

Your support sustains our work.

Subscribe

To Middle East Report magazine



© Middle East Research and Information Project

Most of the hostages were liberated by the Japanese in February of 1945, although Rupert was there for an extra couple of days while the Japanese tried to plot an escape from incoming Allied forces. Rupert was in the camp when the Allies arrived. Tanks rolled up and the Japanese garrison used the hostages as leverage. Rupert and his friend Nick had to sleep under the beds, now occupied by soldiers trying to escape machine gun fire from the American tanks below. He cites the war's brutality as the major offender in his memory of being a hostage, not the brutality of the camp itself. Having now written a book about his three years as an internee, Wilkinson is sharing his experience, strength, and hope for a better world with anyone who seeks to read about his life.