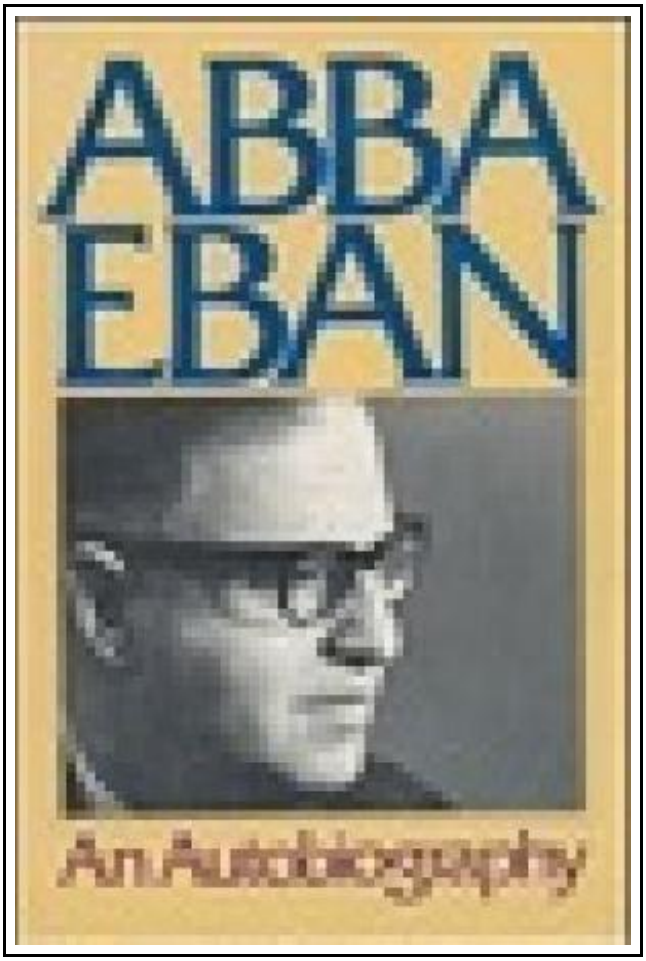
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ABBA EBAN: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1978. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. Dust Jacket Condition: New. First Edition. An unread copy. Former Israeli Foreign Minister Eban's engrossing autobiography tells us a great deal about both the author and his political activities on behalf of Israel in the world arena - though on certain subjects it is judiciously silent. Impeccably written, it closely intertwines three accounts. One is the personal story of South Africa-born, London-raised Eban, excelling in academic pursuits right through Cambridge where he developed his debating skills while scoring the remarkable feat of a Triple First (in Classics and Oriental Languages). An early and ardent Zionist, Eban served during the war with the British Army in Egypt and Palestine, turned down a Labor Party offer to run for Parliament, lobbied in New York for an independent Israel and, in due course, took his seat as the youngest Ambassador to the United Nations. Just over a decade later he became a permanent fixture of Israeli cabinets. The second theme is necessarily a diplomatic history of Israel. Constantly though correctly reminding us that much of Israel's early struggle for survival occurred in New York, at the UN, under his masterful aegis, Eban's narrative is peppered with choice vignettes, anecdotes, and descriptions of such public figures as Lord Halifax ("a man of principle, but one of his principles was expediency") and Ben-Gurion ("lonely, introspective, uninterested in outward forms, impatient of small talk"). Eban also provides the first full account of the (rejected) offer of the Israeli Presidency to Albert Einstein, and an extremely detailed discussion of the circumstances, considerations, and cabinet predispositions prior to Israel's 1967 strike at Egypt. This contitutes the book's third major focus, for it is inescapably also a vigorous defense of Eban's stewardship of Israel's foreign policy (and claim to his...

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