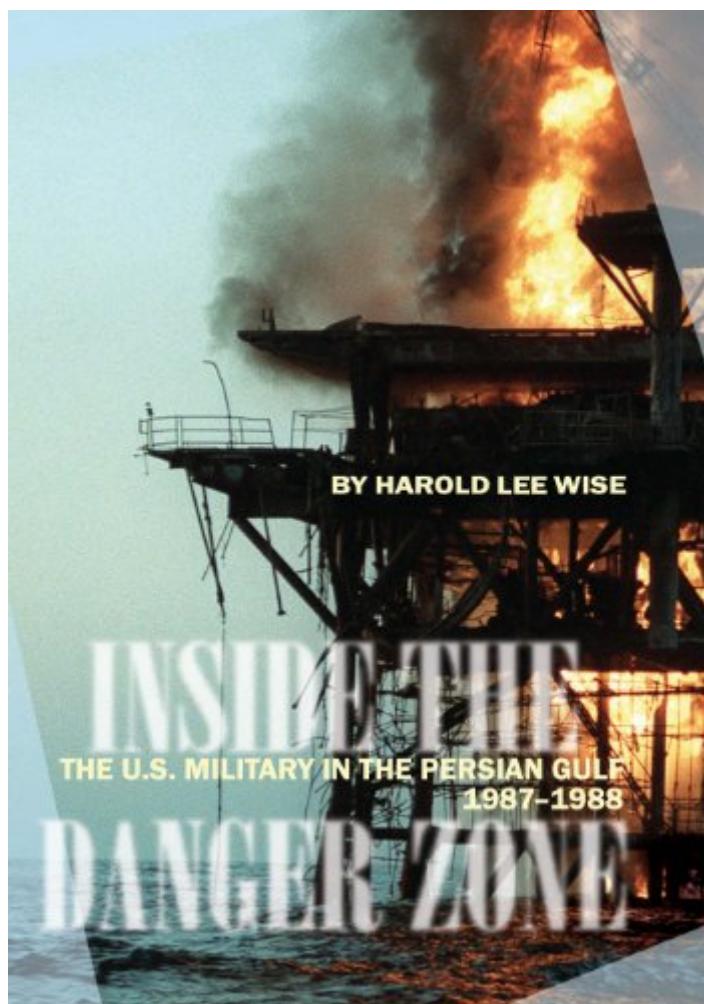


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Inside The Danger Zone: The U.S. Military In The Persian Gulf, 1987-1988



Synopsis

From the Iraqi attack on the USS Stark to Iranian mine fields to Revolutionary Guard gunboats, the 1987-88 Persian Gulf was a place of shadowy danger for U.S. Navy ships assigned to protect oil tankers during the Iran-Iraq War. A low-profile escort mission quickly became an international test of wills between the United States and Iran. The conflict escalated to involve secret missions and special operations until finally the United States and Iran engaged in open combat, most notably during Operation Praying Mantis in April 1988, the world's largest sea-air battle since World War II. It was the largest deployment of American forces between the Vietnam War and Desert Storm and one with dramatic implications for subsequent events. Yet, the story remained mostly untold and misunderstood for almost two decades. Inside the Danger Zone is the first book ever published to focus on this period, a fourteen-month span that saw an unprecedented series of American military action in this volatile region. Based on declassified documents and extensive interviews with veterans and government officials, many of which spoke out for the first time, Inside the Danger Zone is a fast moving narrative history that tells the story of this quasi-war with Iran from the White House to the front lines.

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Customer Reviews

I loved the book! I was on the USS Merrill during Operation Praying Mantis, I was young and only knew the partial stories behind the USS Stark and USS Samuel B Roberts. It was good to finally read the entire story and timeline of events. I do remember the morning of the Sassan bombardment like yesterday. I was in combat sitting at the SLQ-32 and another EW was on the upper deck manning the chaff station said that the oil platform was firing at us but the rounds were falling short. At this point the Merrill had not fired, I can't say if the other ships had or had not at this time, the book stated we fired first. Once we did fire we took that gun out with one well placed round. I also remember the commodores staff calling each ship on the radio and asking for how many rounds from each weapon they had on board. When they asked us for how many rounds of CIWS and we told them we didn't have one there was a long pause. I am sure they were thinking what are you doing in the gulf without CIWS. The Merrill had been the test platform for the Tomahawk and had yet to go into the yards to be fitted with CIWS.

I was safe aboard the USS Enterprise in the Gulf of Oman during OPM. My most vivid memory was pulling into Seattle Washington for fleet week, pick up Tigers and finally head home to Alameda. My most vivid recollection was seeing the USS Wainwright and USS McCormick (Sorry if it's misspelled.) tied up and meeting the actual crewmen in a bar. They didn't talk much about almost sharing the same fate as the Stark. In hindsight almost 30 years later I am certain their thoughts have fomented. I think they were awarded a Combat Action. If you served on the Wainwright I would love to hear your story. Please share.

Harold Wise's account is based on in-depth historical research reinforced by interviews with many of us who were there as participants. At the time, some of the moving parts Wise reveals in this book made little sense to us. He brilliantly brings all those seemingly unrelated parts together, connecting the dots into a coherent historical account that reads like a novel. I urge you to read this book and find out what we did over there prior to the first Gulf War. You won't be disappointed. CDR Paul Evancoe(SEAL), USN (Ret)

If you are looking for a discussion of U.S. foreign policy in the Persian Gulf from 1986-1990 this is a

very good book to have on the shelf. While technically a discussion of US-Iranian relations, this touches upon many issues that still resonate with all the Gulf nations to this day. Wise definitely did his homework and, almost as important, tells you where to find his documentation. Unlike many historical books, Wise does not try to cram every detail of what he found on every issue, but weaves them into the larger storyline. Highly recommended, especially if a person is interested in modern damage control and/or weapons effects on naval vessels.

With exception to one recount, everything inside is spot on accurate. I was stationed on board the USS Coronado AGF-11 in 1988 and remember all of this very fondly. Harold Lee Wise clearly took careful steps in acquiring the stories and information behind this period, especially those coming from Adm. Bersen, Adm. Less and even Gen. Crist. Great job from one who was there!

Someone who was involved in the hostilities with Iran during the 1987-88 period recommended this book to me, and I'm very glad he did. This well researched fairly handled story of the tensions, mistakes and victories of the largely unknown skirmishes between Iran and the United States during the Iraq-Iran War stands out as an early indicator of some of the problems we face yet today. It also serves as a warning that gutting our military, as has occurred during supposedly peaceful times, and as was done with our minesweepers and response teams after the Vietnam War, can come back to haunt us, as we are seeing again in the Iraq War today. Some peace dividend, huh? Thank God for the brave SEALS and Commanders who used creative ingenuity and sheer guts and skill to outfit and place an oil service barge named Hercules where it would do the most good - striking out of the darkness at the minelayers Iran had denied existed. This is not a pretty story; mistakes at the command level, errors at the presidential level. Ships sunk, Sailors dying. A commercial jet accidentally shot down in flames. But this is a story which must be told. It showcases the fear of young soldiers and sailors in harm's way for the first time, the raw kids trained but inexperienced, who see firsthand the hatred of people they don't know. Then there's the grizzled pro, the hardened hero who understands duty, the guy who expects to earn his Hazardous Duty Pay and doesn't ask for reward -- just completion of mission. **INSIDE THE DANGER ZONE** provides a useful and informative backdrop for the Persian Gulf conflicts of today. Harold Lee Wise has done an outstanding job preparing **INSIDE THE DANGER ZONE**. Hopefully, this country learned some lessons and will not repeat its mistakes.

I served on board the USS KIDD during the time frame this book was written in. This book validates

for me the personal experience. It is very accurate, engaging, and as fair a representation of situation as I think is possible. I'm grateful to the author for undertaking this work which is important not only to me personally but to all who would seek to understand the Tanker Wars.

Excellent reading! Fits very well with what is going on currently with the present day Presidential administration.

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