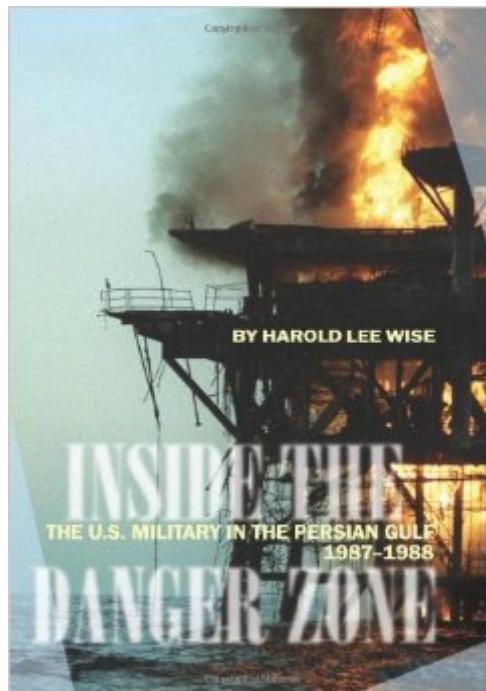


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# Inside The Danger Zone: The U.S. Military In The Persian Gulf, 1987-1988



## 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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was there. I am former U.S. Navy Petty Officer Mark Haynes, and was aboard the USS Fox during the summer of 1987. After the attack on the USS Stark, the USS Acadia was dispatched to the Persian Gulf to begin repairs on the ship. The Acadia needed an armed escort, and that's how my ship, the Fox, found its way into the gulf. It was a very tense time for the sailors in the Persian Gulf,

and a scary time for me, as it was my first deployment. I wrote a book about my own experiences aboard the Fox during that time, called *Liberty Call - USS Fox (CG-33)*. Although that work was never published, the author of *Inside the Danger Zone* found it online and contacted me for permission to quote my work in his. I gladly gave him permission. Harold drew from a large number of personal accounts such as mine, and has written an all encompassing book about this important part of US Naval history. Harold's work is a page-turner. Based to a large extent on first-hand accounts from sailors and officers who were there, this book offers what the news stories of the time could not - an inside look at the actions and emotions of the military personnel that were in the heart of the conflict. *Inside the Danger Zone* is not just history, it is drama. Highly recommended.

As one who was there and in the middle of all of this, I can tell you that Harold Wise has done his homework. A great book, dutifully researched. He talked to the right guys in the interviews. Paul Evanoe and Chuck Angelo were and are the real deal. Highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to know some of the earlier history of our ongoing War with Islamic fascists.

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.

Count me as another participant in Operation Earnest Will who strongly recommends this book. I served aboard the USS Hawes (FFG-53) as an electronic warfare operator in the summer and fall of 1987, between the Stark and Samuel B. Roberts attacks, and during the Iran Ajr capture and destruction. Despite the fact that my ship merits only a single mention, I found this book to be factually accurate and very, very well written. I've been waiting for this book for 20 years, and it was worth the wait. The only thing this book lacks is something that likely would only be verifiable by a select few that further mitigates the actions of the USS Vincennes' tragic engagement and destruction of the Iranian Airbus in 1988. I know from personal experience (via electronic intelligence) that the Iranians flew F-14 and F-4 jets out of Bandar Abbas in the radar shadow of civilian airliners. They no doubt sought to mask the presence of these military flights, but that subterfuge was undermined by the fact that these aircraft invariably used their radars, and the radar used on the F-14 was unique to the point that it could not possibly be misidentified as anything other than the AN/AWG-9 radar used on the F-14. Other than that, Mr. Wise does a fine job of describing this and all other events. Frankly, I'm grateful that Mr. Wise's description of events refreshed many forgotten memories I had of my participation in the Gulf in 1987. His fine account corrected many things I misremembered of that time, and put the importance of my ship's participation in a proper (i.e., objective) context.

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.

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