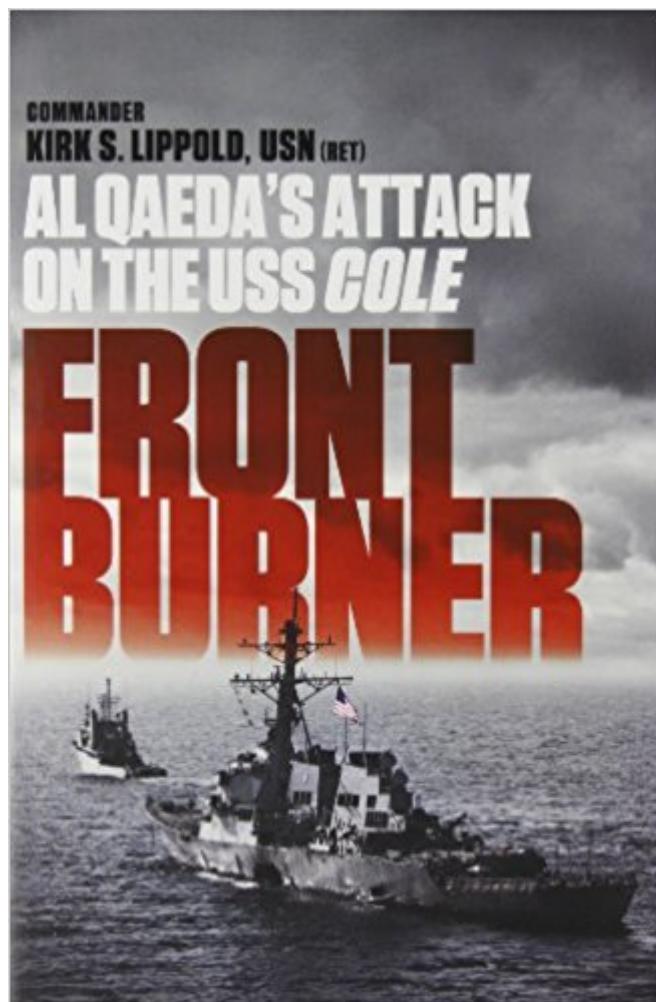


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# Front Burner: Al Qaeda's Attack On The USS Cole



## Synopsis

On October 12, 2000, eleven months before the 9/11 attacks, the USS Cole docked in the port of Aden in Yemen for a routine fueling stop. At 1118, on a hot, sunny morning, the 8,400-ton destroyer was rocked by an enormous explosion. The ship's commander, Kirk Lippold, felt the ship violently thrust up and to the right, as everything not bolted down seemed to float in midair. Tiles tumbled from the ceiling, and the ship was plunged into darkness, beginning to sink. In a matter of moments Lippold knew that the Cole had been attacked. What he didn't know was how much the world was changing around him. The bombing of the Cole was al Qaeda's first direct assault against the United States and expanded their brazen and deadly string of terrorist attacks throughout the Middle East. In this gripping first-person narrative, Lippold reveals the details of this harrowing experience leading his crew of valiant sailors through the attack and its aftermath. Seventeen sailors died in the explosion and thirty-seven were wounded—but thanks to the valor of the crew in the perilous days that followed, the ship was saved. Yet even with al Qaeda's intentions made clear in an unmistakable act of war, the United States government delayed retaliating. Bureaucrats and politicians sought to shift and pin blame as they ignored the danger signaled by the attack, shirking responsibility until the event was ultimately overshadowed by 9/11. Front Burner captures a critical moment in America's battle against al Qaeda, telling a vital story that has—until now—been lost in the fog of the war on terror.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

William J. Perry, 19th Secretary of Defense "Front Burner is a personal story of loss, and pain - but it is also a story of courage, determination, respect, honor, and integrity that each and every man and woman on the USS Cole demonstrated that day, on September 11, 2001 and indeed today. This book and the story of the men and women that it recounts is an inspiration." Kirkus Reviews "Lippold delivers a personal, opinionated account of the last outrage before 9/11 which should have galvanized our leaders but didn't." Norfolk Virginian-Pilot "Compelling and poignant" [Lippold] ends his main narrative on a high note, writing, "The crew of USS Cole saved their ship and their shipmates. All of them are my heroes." Reading this book or passing the somber Cole memorial at Norfolk Naval Station, one can feel only that they are our heroes as well." Huntington News "Front Burner" is an important work of military history and stands as an essential recounting of a critical moment in America's battle against Al Qaeda." A History Net "An earnestly told tale of bravery and determination. It provides gripping detail about the Cole attack" "much of it not previously revealed" "as well as its grisly aftermath" It opens a pre-9/11 window into the government's failure to share intelligence with those most in need of it. Lippold saves his most generous words for his crew's magnificent performance in casualty assistance and damage control during the days following the attack, when the flooding of two of the ship's engine rooms threatened to sink it. His pride in the crew's performance is palpable."

Commander Kirk Lippold was the commanding officer of the USS Cole during Al Qaeda's attack in October 2000. Lippold's personal awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, and Combat Action Ribbon, among others. He retired from the Navy in 2007 and remains active in current events and national security affairs. He lives in Carson City, Nevada.

THIS IS A MUST READ BOOK! Both for historical reasons and for insights into gross failures on the part of the Intelligence community, 'Big' Navy, DOD and the Administrations of Clinton and Bush. This book does not read like a thriller or like a superbly crafted novel from Clancy or the like. It reads like a warrior wrote it, trying to tell the story of not only what he went through, but what Officers, Chiefs and Enlisted who served as his crew went through. It reads like what it is - a real view of what the man went through, and what he saw his crew went through. Kirk's narrative comes across genuine and real. He doesn't seem like a monolithic hero carved of granite. He comes across as

what he is - a GOOD CO who got put into a bad situation and brought his crew through. And THAT, ultimately is what this book is about - a recording of what his crew did and a memorial to what they went through and what they did. I am in a unique position to comment on Front Burner. At the time of the Cole murders (the attack in Yemen) I was assigned as the Strike and Surface Warfare assistant at Commander Destroyer Squadron TWO TWO - the Cole's Immediate Superior In Command (ISIC). I knew and know Kirk Lippold and I was not only privy to many of the events described in the book, I knew and know several of the crew of the Cole. Part of our duty as ISIC was to arrange, facilitate, oversee and certify the training and inspections she and the rest of COMDESRON TWO TWO's 8 ships went through during the workups and preparations for deploying. As a result I had dealt with Kirk and a number of the people mentioned in Front Burner. We (slowly) found out some of what was mentioned, but I've even learned some things about the attack that I did not know. I cannot do this book, or that crew of the COLE justice. You must read it. This was the first salvo in the 'long war' and their story NEEDS not only to be told, it MUST BE HEARD!

As a crew member on board during that fateful day, I and many others have waited a long time to have this story told. CDR Lippold did an amazing job with this. It was an honor to serve with him. If you are interested in the truth of what happened in yemen, definatly read this book.

I was excited when I saw this book at Barnes and Noble. When it became available on Kindle, I immediately bought it and began to read it. Unfortunately, I was disappointed with it. The story of the USS Cole is one of those events that was tragic when it occurred, but somehow was lost in the shadows of another tragic event. 9/11 unfortunately overshadowed the bombing of the Cole, even though both attacks were connected to one another. I was hoping to get more of the Geopolitical backgrounds to the attack. Maybe that's just me. The book is well researched in regards to the events of the attack and the subsequent responses by Captain Lippold and the crew. Lippold does a fantastic job narrating in real time what happened, his thoughts, and the reactions of the crew. For me as a reader who loves Naval History, I thought this book might give you better insight to the a ship class that is largely unknown to the world. Where I began to lose interest in the story is how the author puts too much details to the rooms, how he accessed certain areas of the ship. Since I have never been on an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, and unfamiliar with certain terms, I got lost and bored to where he was relative to the ship. I also thought that the Captain could've been a littler more gracious on his thoughts and judgments on the General Franks. There are other portions of the narrative where we get too much into what the captain was thinking (or over thinking) such as:

the choice of music they played as the Cole was tugged out of the harbor, his inner-conflict to whether to stay with the ship, and others. Otherwise, I enjoyed reading the book but in my opinion missed the mark on what would've been a story that is on the same level as *No Higher Honor* by Penniston, or *The Big E* by Stafford.

I recently had the pleasure of attending a conference where Mr. Lippold was the speaker. I cannot even begin to tell you how this man and what he has done for this country have changed my perspective on how I see the world as a whole, and the elements of effective leadership, as the sole means for a successful and unified goal. He never gave up, nor did he ever let his team. Being from a military family, I am very much aware of how the forces work to serve our country, our people and in life, period. Thank you so much, Kirk Lippold for laying it all out there on the table and for being in the right place, at the right time, to see this through and your ship/crew home. I seriously pray the White House brings you into a position to continue sharing your insight for the rest of your days and look forward to sharing your story with my brothers and my grandson (I purchased these books to be signed by you and given to them as Christmas gifts this year).

This book was extremely well written. I am coming from an interesting perspective in reading this book. I am the spouse of one of the ship's crew at the time of the attack. I believe Commander Lippold did an amazing job of sharing the stories of the ship and its crew as well as his personal thoughts and feelings as the events occurred. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in military history, history in general and also to many of us who look for books that provide a human connection. Lippold shares the stories of his crew and their struggles in a way I think many thought would never happen. History only survives if someone shares the stories; thank you for sharing the stories. *Front Burner: Al Qaeda's Attack on the USS Cole*

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