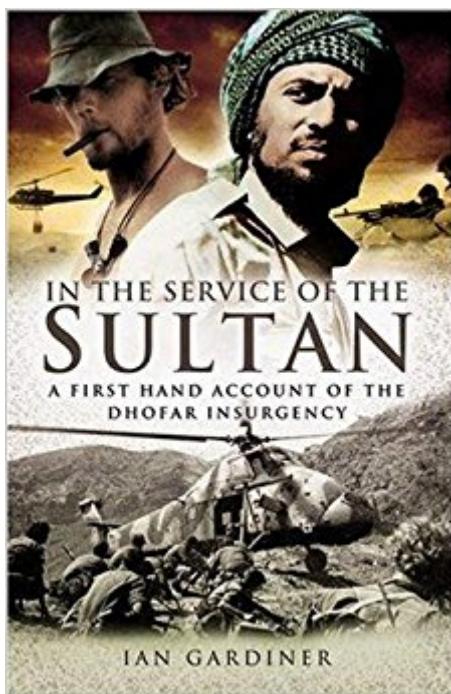


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In The Service Of The Sultan: A First-hand Account Of The Dhofar Insurgency



Synopsis

While the Americans were fighting in Vietnam, a struggle of even greater strategic significance was taking place in the Middle East: the Sultanate of Oman guards the entrance to the Arabian Gulf, and thus controls the movement of oil from that region. In the 1960s and 70s, the Communists tried to seize this artery and, had they succeeded, the consequences for the West and for the Middle East would have been disastrous - and yet, few people have ever heard of this geo-political drama at the height of the Cold War. In the Service of the Sultan tells, first-hand, the largely unknown story of a small number of British officers who led Muslim soldiers in this hard-fought anti-insurgency war which has shaped today's Gulf. After outlining the historical, geographical and political background, the book describes military action in a stark and mountainous environment, including operations with irregular forces and the SAS as well as action in the air and at sea. The book gives a gripping, moving, funny account of all these and paints a powerful and illuminating picture of the realities of war. It will appeal to all who are interested in the Cold War and relationships between the Western and the Arab worlds. Politics, history, irregular warfare, religion, international affairs: all are ingredients in this absorbing, informative read. In the light of the current insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is also timely to be reminded how a rare victory was won over Communist guerrillas.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ian Gardiner is a historian and author.

Very interesting because there are simply not many books which deal with the history of modern Oman so intimately.

Very useful first-hand account at tactical level of the Oman insurgency. It provides considerable details on how the Omanis and their British supporters conducted operations in the Dhofar, with a number of lessons applicable elsewhere. As with most such memoirs, there certainly are parts of the book that are more akin to "there I was", but overall it is a very good resource for students of counterinsurgency.

An easy read about one of the most important "small wars" of the 20th Century. Mr. Gardiner's narrative is self-effacing, humble, and inspiring. The story's action is centered on the famous "Hornbeam Line". Gardiner's description of the environment, the people, and the combatants on both sides is compelling to the point where one has to wonder why we don't know more about this strategically significant conflict. This was a resounding and hard-fought victory against a well equipped and trained Communist threat. If you want to read about how to lose a war, read any book about the American experience in Vietnam. If you want to gain insight on the trials and struggles on the path to achieving a victory in modern war, "In The Service of the Sultan" is a must-read.

Want a great story! The war in Oman finally gets the attention deserved. What happened there impacts how the world has developed since.

Interesting insights into one of the most consequential conflicts of the 20th century that you never heard about. Good narrative and details. Could benefit from some line editing and formatting polish.

A well written book by Ian Gardiner about a little known, and barely studied example of a successful counter-insurgency campaign against communist insurgents in the Dhofar region of Oman in the 1970s. Gardiner shares his first-hand accounts of what he experienced working with the Omani government, with the Dhofari people and the fighting against the communist insurgents in some of the most inhospitable terrain on the planet. From blistering heat, to monsoon-like rains, the British, Omanis and other forces fought against a communist-lead insurgency. Working both politically and militarily against the insurgents, the Dhofar campaign is a study in how to conduct a successful COIN effort. Gardiner's writing is both descriptive and easy to read. His writing style keeps the reader captivated, easily bringing you through his accounts of the insurgency and the efforts against

it. Although you cannot lay the template for success directly over current counterinsurgency operations but the lessons learned, the political/military approaches and the timeless lessons of working with the host nation (Oman) remain valuable for today's fight.

Whole book talked about my country (Oman), and it's revealed things wasn't know about it, the war started before I born.Thanks for all the hero soldiers who involved in that war and make oman better to live after

Well written and well thought-out, humble in its proclamations and self-aware of its own story. A tribute to those who fought and those who died on the jebel, on both sides.

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