

On 18 April 1988, the U.S. Navy launched Operation Praying Mantis against Iranian targets in the Arabian Gulf in retaliation for USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG-58) mining four days earlier, which blew an immense hole in the ship's hull. Ten Sailors from *Samuel B. Roberts* sustained severe injuries. Four were seriously burned. Commander Paul X. Rinn was hurt as well. The ship should have sunk, but thanks to an extraordinary damage control effort by all hands of an extremely well-trained crew, *Samuel B. Roberts* was kept afloat.

The U.S. response was fierce. Operation Praying Mantis was the largest of five major U.S. Navy surface actions since World War II. It was the first, and so far only, time the U.S. Navy has exchanged surface-to-surface missile fire with an enemy, and it resulted in the largest warship sunk by the U.S. Navy since WWII. In the one-day operation, the U.S. Navy destroyed two Iranian surveillance platforms, sank two of their ships, and severely damaged another.