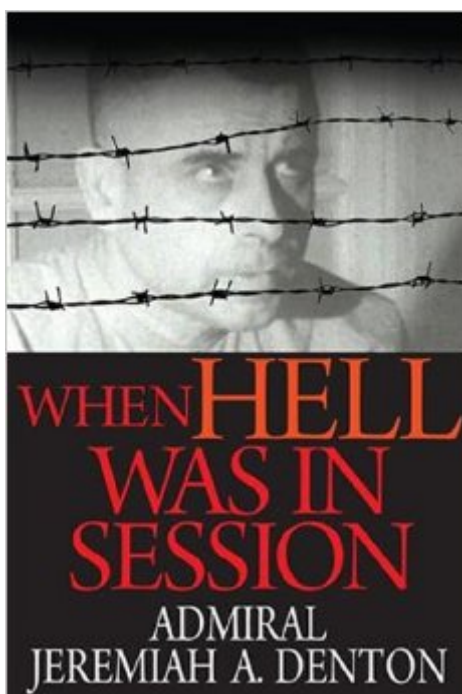


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# When Hell Was In Session



## Synopsis

In *When Hell Was in Session*, Jeremiah Denton, the senior American officer to serve as a Vietnam POW, tells the amazing story of the almost eight years he survived as a POW in North Vietnam. In 1966, he appeared on a television interview from prison and blinked the word torture in Morse Code, confirming for the world that atrocities were taking place in the Hanoi Hilton. And while in prison, he acted as the senior officer and looked after the morale of his troops at great risk to himself. After his release in 1973, Denton was promoted to rear admiral and in 1980 won election to the United States Senate where he worked with President Reagan to fight communism in Latin America. This new and updated edition of this classic book provides new insights into Denton's years in the Senate where he was a key leader in promoting the Reagan Revolution.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Beautifully written, touching, disturbing, encouraging, spiritually enlightening, and tremendously upsetting, this account of a true American Hero's 7 1/2 years of imprisonment in Vietnam will exhaust every human emotion that the reader possesses. I read this book from cover to cover without stopping to breathe. I was shocked by every page. I never allowed myself to believe that human beings could treat each other the way that Admiral Denton was treated by the North Vietnamese. I have the utmost of respect for him, considering the pain that he lived with, not only during his imprisonment, but during the writing of this book as well. A lesser man would make all effort to block these years from his memory, but Jeremiah Denton relived the horror everyday that he spent writing this book. He did this for me, you, and all Americans so that we might begin to fully

understand, not only how he was treated and how his faith in God, his family, and his country got him through this ordeal, but the necessity of this badly misunderstood war as well. This is a "must-read" book for any American who hasn't taken the time to stop and thank a Veteran for our freedom. Without the courage and loyalty of men like Denton, our country would not be the wonderful place that it is. I thank God everyday for these men who risked their lives for people like me, whom they don't even know. What greater hero is there?

About five years ago, I picked up Denton's book with intentions of quickly skimming through it- I was hoping to grasp enough of it to write a report on it for my high school history class. But after reading just the first chapter of it, I knew that there was no way I could just skim through it. Denton's experience is rivoting- absolutely gripping and heartwrenching that at times I read through it with eyes blinded by tears. I could not put it down. Upon completion, I was left with a feeling of overwhelming pride and passion for my country, and with a sense of awe and admiration for our Vietnam POWs. Jeremiah Denton is a courageous man and an extraordinary role model- even in dire circumstances he stood by his country with so much love and determination that even in the face of death, he did not falter. I have read his book many times (since that first time five years ago), and every time I read it, I find something new- some glimmer of hope in the terror that held him captive for so many years. Denton's book is truly a masterpiece- a song of freedom and a narrative of patriotism so strong that it challenges the hearts and minds of it's readers to remember that we live in a such a blessed country- the land of the free.

In July of 1965, Naval aviator Jeremiah A. Denton was shot down over North Vietnamese territory and taken as a prisoner of war. When Hell was in Session details the harrowing experiences faced by Denton and many other United States prisoners of war in Hanoi. During his seven and a half years in captivity, quite a bit of that time spent in solitary confinement, he was subject to horrific tortures and treatment that the average person could only experience in their very worst nightmares. It is readily apparent that Denton was a very brave and honorable man with an iron will when he resisted his jailors at every turn. Furthermore, it is a testament to his courage and character that he chose to relive those horrifying years in his mind to be able to write this book with so much detail. Even though this book is only 182 pages, its contents are probably one of the best eye-witness accounts you will read of an American held in Hanoi's infamous Hanoi Hilton prison complex. I've read quite a few books on U.S. captives in Hanoi and this one is at the top. Highly recommended to anyone who is interested in this subject material.

Here is yet another first rate tale of an American P.O.W. in North Vietnam. The prisoner is Navy pilot Jeremiah Denton, who was based on the carrier "Independence". His A6 aircraft was shot down in July of 1965. Denton spent the following 8+ years in captivity until the general release in the Spring of 1973. The title refers to the torture "sessions" Denton and his colleagues suffered at the hands of their captors. This reviewer has read several P.O.W. accounts. While all are similar in that they demonstrate great bravery and perseverance in brutal situations, each is also unique: WHWS focuses on the military command structures that existed in prison despite rigorous Vietnamese efforts to stymie them. The senior military commanders/prisoners like Admiral Stockdale, Colonel Robinson Risner and others obviously possessed a tremendous pride and strove to imbue that pride in all P.O.Ws. Denton pulls few punches. It startled this observer to learn that not all prisoners always agreed with the "program" and not all P.O.W.s were the best of buddies behind the walls. The author stresses the ubiquitous "tap code" that allowed communication within the prison walls. There is even an introductory chart to tapping! Denton glosses over his 4(!) years in solitary and concentrates on the other 4 years he was free to "mingle" with his fellow Americans. There is a noticeable lack of venom and bitterness toward the North Vietnamese in the text. The reader may suspect that Denton has come to terms with his years in the Hanoi Hilton and other garden spots of the North. WHWS is rated 5 stars with only 2 minor demerits: One is the absence of ANY maps. Most war books gloss over maps but surely the publisher could have inserted one! The other weakness is the appallingly small type in my paperback edition. Those interested in Admiral/Senator Denton's story may wish to verify before purchase how the many available editions of WHWS handle these issues.

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