

ON IRAQI DOM

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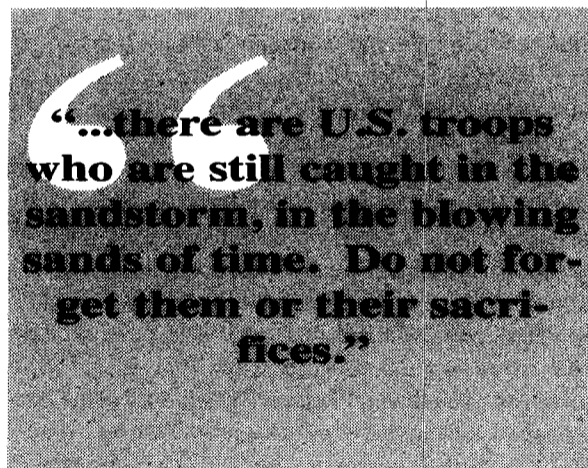


photos by Marko Primorac

ABOVE: "Motivated" Lcpl. Moore and "Angry" Lcpl. Ames keeping order during propane distribution. BELOW: A curious Iraqi family poses for pictures while we pass by on one of our many daytime patrols. Hordes of children followed us wherever we went, and stared at us for hours on end when we were on post. We paid child "mercenaries" with candy bars to disperse the crowds.



ABOVE: "The Driftwood," 1st Platoon's home. The Driftwood is the name of a gentleman's club in Jacksonville, N.C.; the Iraq "Driftwood" had no dancers.



by the Baath party led by Saddam Hussein, through a variety of methods such as liquidation, imprisonment, poisoning water and food supplies and cutting off water supplies, including damming the canals in the Shiite regions.

Day in and day out we followed our orders diligently, completing all tasks, and overcoming any and all obstacles obstructing the completion of our mission. We were representing our families, our friends, and our country; we were carrying out our mission as U.S. Marines. During our free time we lifted our make-shift concrete weights, ran, wrote letters, read letters from home, told tall tales about alleged personal exploits, smoked, joked, discussed politics, philosophy and current events, read books, and most importantly, we played cards.

Days passed, the sun scorched, the sand blinded, the sweat dripped, and we continued to do our jobs on raids, on patrol, and on post. Eventually, after being in the Middle East for approximately four and a half months, we received our orders to return to the U.S. At this point, the days seemed to drag on even longer than before—which we thought impossible prior to the good news. The anticipation was great, and within a short time we were home with our families, being reborn as civilians.

The sands of time passed soon enough, and now our Iraqi experience is just collective memories and rolls upon rolls of film; but there are U.S. troops who are still caught in the sandstorm, in the blowing sands of time. Do not forget them or their sacrifices.