

Postcards from Iraq

Helping Iraqis take charge

MAJ David W. Noble

*Officer in Charge Victory Resident and Public Works Office, Baghdad
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

I volunteered to come to Iraq with the perception that I was going to help rebuild this colorful nation. What I quickly discovered was that this country, with all the positive and negative effects occurring as a result of continuous combat and war, is actually rebuilding me over time.

Coming into Baghdad, my main concerns were about my personal safety, the safety of my co-workers, and the completion of all assigned missions. What I had not envisioned was the “X-Factor” in the people of Iraq, who also want to be part of the master plan. My initial perception that we were doing everything here by ourselves quickly dissolved after having met various local construction companies, Iraqi government employees, and private sector entrepreneurs.

The people of Iraq are taking bold steps to master their own destiny, developing the big picture, and prioritizing the needs for taking care of their own. With this realization, I feel that I have rebuilt myself into an individual who is a servant of many people, and not just the United States. My interaction with the people and the leaders of Iraq, as well as some of the other nations across the world that have come together in this focal point of need, makes me realize something. I am making a difference over here — whether in training, construction, education, business practices, diplomatic relations, security, or general atmosphere — when working with the people of Iraq.



MAJ David Noble checks the new control panel of an electrical substation.



MAJ David Noble briefs COL Robert Vasta and BG Jeffrey Dorko at one of the many projects on Victory Base Complex, Baghdad.