

Postcards from Iraq

Do they know my prayer?

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As an infantryman in Quan Tri Province of Vietnam in 1968, I really don't remember saying the lines "if I die before I wake" in a prayer, but here, 40 years later that line has special meaning... especially after having said it night after night here in Baghdad. The wars were so different yet so real.

My fear then was somber, but now I realize it. I look at the young men who man the checkpoints and walk the streets in the "Red" Zone. Their fear must be much greater than mine ever was. I am sure they really don't want to be here anymore than I wanted to be in Vietnam, yet they are here and what they do is priceless. They are my heroes.

In spite of all the bad press about the cost of construction here in Iraq, the men and women of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are doing wonderful things for the Iraqi communities. The smiles and the expressed thanks from the ordinary people about the projects that the Corps supervises are wonderful. It is hard to imagine what their lives are like living without the fortifications and protection we as Coalition Forces enjoy.

Do they know my prayer? Will peace ever prevail?

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