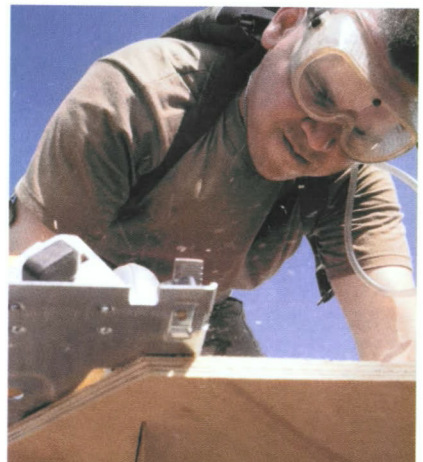
Photo by: Cpl Matthew J. Apprendi
GySgt Ronald N. Brady waves to one of his MPs standing post. Brady is a second generation Marine whose son, Jeffery, served in Kuwait.

2003. The command logistics element was responsible for ensuring that Camp Lemonier was capable of sustaining the transition ashore of the Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa command from the USS *Mount Whitney* (CLCC/JCC-20). The work of the command logistics element expanded Camp Lemonier facilities, enabling the site to support nearly 2,000 troops. The element's daily duties included logistical, communication, medical, and civil affairs support for the camp and outlying villages as well as base security.

The command logistics element spearheaded civil affairs projects in several villages throughout Djibouti. These projects included the remodeling of medical clinics and schools and the construction of food storage facilities and irrigation systems. On several occasions, the command logistics element delivered wood and food to village inhabitants while building strong working relationships with the host nation of Djibouti by hiring more than 800 local workers for construction projects and assistance in camp operations. In addition, it established an effective relationship with the French and Djiboutian military, strengthening security measures for the base. Company A, 1st Battalion, 24th Marines, provided security for Camp Lemonier, strengthening the base by building bunkers and upgrading and adding posts, while also serving as the quick reaction force. Company A, 1st Battalion, 24th Marines, served as the guard force until replaced in August 2003 by Task Force Rawhide from the 4th MEB (AT). The command logistics element established a strong foundation that enabled the Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa, Headquarters to come ashore and maintain the coalition presence in the mission of finding and destroying terrorist cells in the region.



LCpl Donald Burkholder helps build a new food storage facility in Djibouti at the request of Hachim Ali Said, director of the local school.
Photo by: Cpl Matthew J. Apprendi

Operation Iraqi Freedom

The Reserve Contribution

Marine reserves augmented each element of I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The elements of a Marine air-ground task force consist of a command element, ground combat element, aviation combat element, and a combat service support element. Numerous Marine reserves served as individual augmentees on various staff levels throughout I MEF while Marine reserve units con-

An Iraqi artillary position destroyed by the Marines in the march toward Baghdad

tributed essential combat power to the ground, air, and logistics elements during the entire campaign.

As I MEF consolidated its position in Kuwait and prepared for Operation Iraq Freedom, its headquarters staff served as the command element, the 1st Marine Division served as the ground combat element, the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing served as the aviation combat element, and the 1st Force Service Support Group (1st FSSG) served as the combat service support element. Providing additional firepower to the ground combat element, the 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade (2d MEB), the 15th MEU, the 24th MEU, and the United Kingdom's 1st Armored Division bolstered the capabilities of I MEF. Serving as theater level support for Marine forces in the area of operations, the Marine Logistics Command was established by the 2d Force Service Support Group (2d FSSG) in Kuwait.

U.S. Army LtGen Richard S. Sanchez, Commanding General, V Corps, speakes at a ceremony where I MEF transfers authority for five provinces in Southern Iraq to the Polish-led Multinational Division at Camp Babylon, Iraq, on 3 September 2003.

Prior to the start of combat operations, the 1st Marine Division organized its subordinate commands into three maneuver elements. These elements were identified as Regimental Combat Team 1 (RCT-1), based upon the organization of the 1st Marines; Regimental Combat Team 5 (RCT-5), based upon the organization of the 5th Marines; and Regimental Combat Team 7 (RCT-7), based upon the organization of the 7th Marines. Each regimental combat team was task organized, incorporating tanks, light armor reconnaissance vehicles, amphibious assault vehicles, and combat engineer equipment. Providing indirect fire support for the three regimental combat teams was the 1st Marine Division's artillery regiment, the 11th Marines.

LtGen Dennis M. McCarthy, Commanding General, Marine Forces Reserve, speaks to Marines during Operation Iraq Freedom.

The 2d MEB, named Task Force Tarawa,* organized the 2d Marines into Regimental Combat Team 2 (RCT-2) and the United Kingdom organized its armored division into three maneuver brigades: 7th Armored Brigade, 16th Air Assault Brigade, and 3d Commando Brigade. Marine reserves served a major role in each of the regimental combat teams and provided an important liaison role to the United Kingdom's 1st Armored Division.

Ground Operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom

When combat operations started on 20 March 2003, RCT-5 moved across the border with Iraq and defeated Iraqi forces around the South Rumaylah oilfields. This action prevented the destruction of the oilfields and blocked any westward retreat of Iraqi units in the area. Simultaneously, RCT-7 crossed the border seizing the gas oil separation plant intact at Az Zubayer (also referred to as the "Crown Jewel" by the 1st Marine Division planners) and destroying the Iraqi mechanized force around Basrah. Regimental Combat Team 1 and Task Force Tarawa moved to the west of RCT-5 with RCT-1 attacking toward Jalibah and Task Force Tarawa moving in the vicinity of An Nasiriyah in preparation for a relief in place with the U.S Army's 3d Infantry Division.

As coalition forces moved rapidly toward Baghdad, Marine reserve units served extensively in ground opera-

* Tarawa was a famous World War II battle fought by the Marines of the 2d Marine Division in November 1943. The 2d Marines is one of three infantry regiments in the 2d Marine Division.

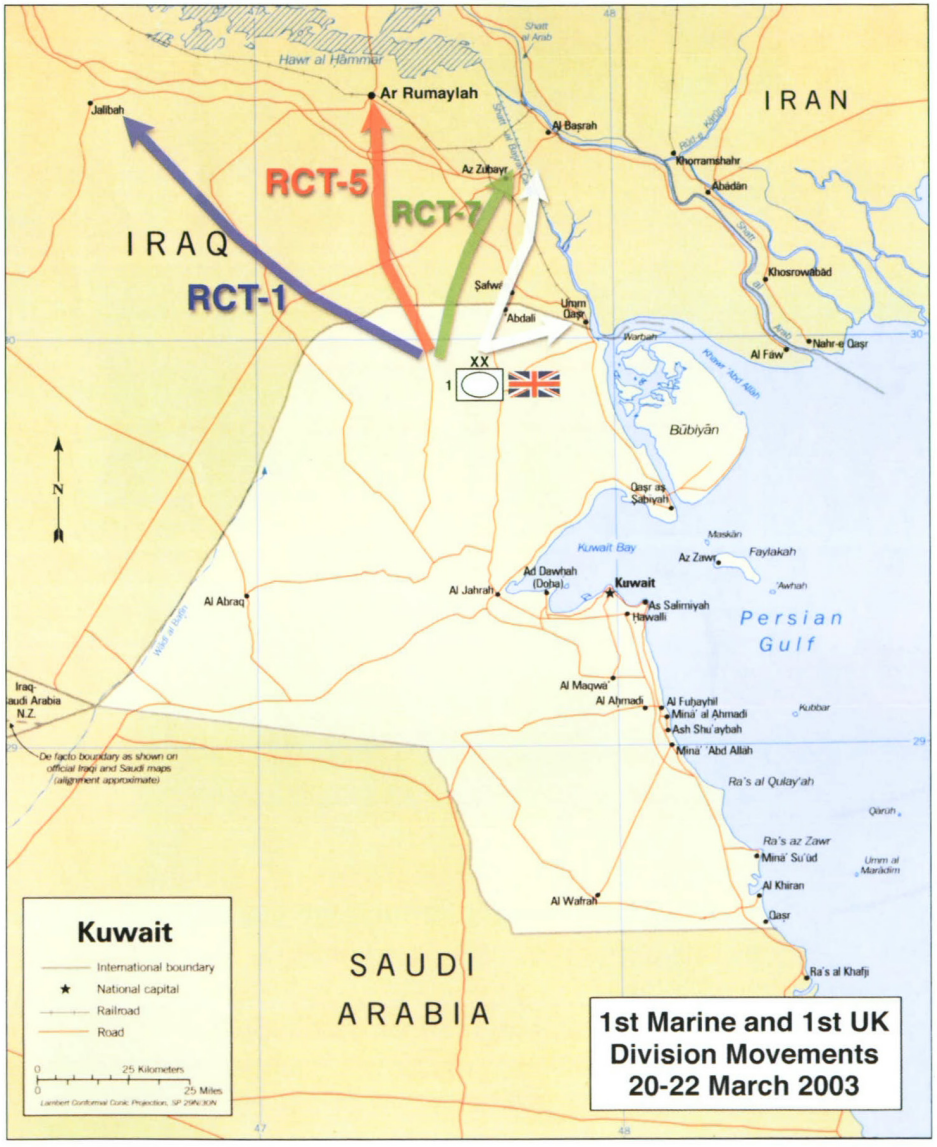


Photo by: Sgt Rob Henderson

Cpl Kurt C. Ozolins, operator, Truck Company, Headquarters Battalion, 4th Marine Division, makes sure the preoperational checks were conducted correctly before sending the truck on a run.

tions. The experience of these units is presented in the following order: Headquarters Battalion, 4th Marine Division; 4th Force Reconnaissance Company; Company B and the TOW/Scout Platoon*, 8th Tank Battalion; Company D and the TOW/Scout Platoon, 4th Tank Battalion; 4th Light Armor Reconnaissance Battalion; Company A, 8th Tank Battalion; Companies C and D, 4th Reconnaissance Battalion; 4th Amphibious Assault Battalion; a detachment from 4th Combat Engineer Battalion; 2d Battalion, 23d Marines; 2d Battalion, 25th Marines; 1st Battalion, 24th Marines; 3d Battalion, 23d Marines; Marine Forces Reserve intelligence section; 3d and 4th Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company; and 3d and 4th Civil Affairs Groups.

Headquarters Battalion, 4th Marine Division

Headquarters Battalion, New Orleans, Louisiana, was activated on 29 January 2003 in preparation for Operation Iraqi Freedom and arrived in Kuwait within a month. The battalion's Military Police Company, from Twin Cities, Minnesota, Truck Company, from

* The TOW missile system is primarily used as an antitank weapon and is generally mounted on a vehicle. The TOW acronym stands for tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided missile.

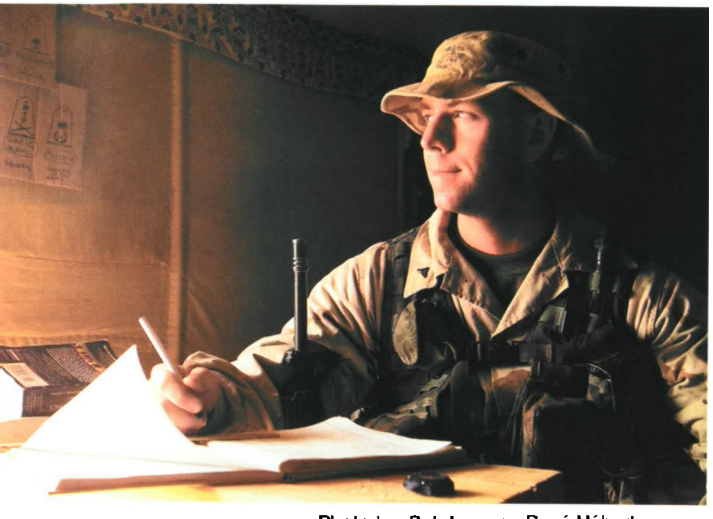


Photo by: Sgt Jacques-René Hébert
Reserve LCpl Eric Hornquist, Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 4th Marine Division, takes a break at Camp Matilda, Kuwait, to write a letter home to his family.

Photo by: SSgt. Robert Carlson
Marines with the 4th Force Reconnaissance Company at Marine Corps Base Hawaii search their surroundings during training at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows in preparation for deployment to Operation Iraq Freedom.

Ebensburg, Pennsylvania, and Communications Company, from Cincinnati, Ohio, served extensively throughout the 1st Marine Division and I MEF. The Marines of Headquarters Battalion supported RCT-1, RCT-5, RCT-7, 11th Marines, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 2d and 3d Assault Amphibian Vehicle Battalions, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, and squadrons within the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing throughout the entire ground war.

4th Force Reconnaissance Company

The Marines from the 4th Force Reconnaissance Company, with detachments from Reno, Nevada, and Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, were activated in January 2003 and served with the 1st Force Reconnaissance Company. The detachments were organized into the 9th (Reno) and 10th (Kaneohe) Platoons within the 1st Force Reconnaissance Company. The platoons conducted a broad variety of operations ranging from traditional reconnaissance and surveillance to convoy security and raids. The 9th and 10th platoons were extensively involved in operations led by 4th Light Armor Reconnaissance, Headquarters called Task Force

Marines from 1st Force Reconnaissance Company and 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion patrol the banks of the Tigris River during a raid in Rhashid, Iraq, August 2003.

Scorpion in July-August 2003. Many of these missions included raids on suspected terrorist training camps, hideouts for Baath party officials,* and surface-to-air missile sites. Both platoons also conducted counter surveillance, counter ambush, and area denial operations in the vicinity of Forward Operating Base Dogwood. By the beginning of September, both platoons detached from Task Force Scorpion and began the preparations for returning to the United States.

SSgt Michael D. Fay, combat artist, illustrates the 4th Force Reconnaissance Company and the layout of Camp Babylon, May 2003.

* Baath Party members were supporters of the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq.