

8th and I Marines:

I've got a little poser for you. My nephew and niece have asked me what is so special about the Marine Corps. I honestly tried to ask if school had given them any information and I was dealt with a devastating blow. The "Liberal" school teachers here in NEVER-NEVER-KENNEDYLAND hate Marines and anyone who doesn't agree with their agenda.

I live in Ted Kennedy Land, (MA), where Marines are considered " egotistical pests who are only good to keep riff-raff and the flies off of Martha's Vinyard " (Kennedy talk to friends (reported from house staff) 1988). I was once asked by my son as to what I would go to the mat for. My response was quick in that I surprised him. I simply stated that there are no greater heroes, and men that I respect and have a bond, than I served with in VietNam.

I then explained that at 8th & I that I was a over-the-hill Marine that they put in as an back-up Announcer, Admin Chief, NCOIC for Firing Squad details or anything that I couldn't screw up too much, business relations at the mini-pox (I had attained a business degree and the PX Officer was in awash with problemos . . . and since I was older than everyone, less the 1stSgt, so I was asked by (then) Capt. James Jones to help find out if there were problems that command should focus upon. Everything was clean thank GOD, and now I return to screwing-up things that were less so intense!

I think that now, when I look back at things that I have a difficult putting things in proper prospective. For example: I spent almost two years in Viet Nam. But, I've blocked out most of that and have focused upon 8th & I. Why? Simply because, at that time, you had to be a Viet to be stationed at CGC. Even though all of us were NCOs and had various distinctions, we acted as ONE distinct unit that could look pretty and kick ass (Sorry!) But that's the way it was. I would trust anyone of my CGC Marines with my life in a second.

Marines who have never had the opportunity to serve at the Barracks, cannot fathom the pride in which we have always tried to let folks know how much we honor and respect our past as well as hold each Marine in every far away place dear to us. That's the way we are...we are Marines!

As we age, our memory of all the bad times fade and we look lovingly upon those times that we were in a different place and time. The ONLY constant is that we care for each other and there is no other fraternity than can boast the same.

Please pray for our families, our fallen and our unaccounted. Regardless of ones religion, GOD will listen to those who are earnest and care enough to ask for help in protecting our troops.

Chet Russo

1972-74