



THE NEXT CHAPTER

34th Red Bull Infantry Division Deployment Ceremony Remarks — September 20, 2018

MG Ben Corell



Good afternoon everyone. Thank you for being here with us today to help us honor our deploying Soldiers and our families. For the many of us who have deployed previously, we fully recognize that the support received by our Soldiers as we deploy to do our nation's work and the support for our families from our neighbors and networks here in our nation's heartland is unprecedented. We are truly grateful for all of your support as we begin this journey. I know we will need your continued support while we execute this mission, and as we return back home to our families next year and begin to transition back into our normal routines as citizen-Soldiers.

While we are here today to pay tribute and say farewell to our deploying Soldiers, I also want to thank and recognize all of our family members.

I know that one of the most difficult sacrifices during a deployment is carried on the shoulders of our families. The concern that looms for all of us who will soon be leaving is ensuring that our families are well taken care of and supported while we are gone. My responsibility is to ensure our Soldiers are fully focused on the mission we have been asked to perform over the coming months. I ask for all of you that remain at home to look out for each other and help each other out when and wherever you can.

As we go forward, our Soldiers will be surrounded everyday by hundreds of service members in the same situation. While we will miss our homes and families, we will stand strong together and look out for each other as we execute our mission.

Our families on the other hand, are spread throughout the region and often don't have close contact with others going through this experience of a family member serving away from home.

It is our families that quietly fill the void that exists when a family member has been called away to serve. A father, a mother, a brother or sister, a son or daughter. Someone who has an important role every day at home. Our Family Readiness Groups, our “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Program” and other supporting organizations are full of capable people who are experienced and ready to help. Don’t be afraid to reach out to them — they can be a solid lifeline if you find yourself needing some help.

We could not do this without the sacrifice and support from our families. Know that I am grateful for what you all do to allow us to continue to serve. You all are absolutely the heartbeat of the Red Bull division.

In honor of our families, please stand with me and help me thank them for their critical role in supporting the needs of our nation and our Soldiers. Thank you.

I am grateful for the tremendous community support we enjoy here in the Midwest. We thank our civilian employers. We know you share in the burden as well, by missing part of your team when we are away. We thank our elected officials and other community leaders for being here with us today. On behalf of our Soldiers, I thank you all for the unwavering support you’ve demonstrated over the years and continue to show us today. Thank you all for being here today to help send us off and for your continued support.

Today, we start a new chapter in the history of the 34th Infantry Division. An organization that represents a proud record of service, sacrifice, and accomplishment. A reputation earned by those who came before us throughout our nation’s history.

This division carries with us the proud legacy of those who have gone before us: the 1st Minnesota Infantry who repelled Pickett’s Charge at Gettysburg; service in WWI; the first U.S. division to enter Europe during WWII; subsequently leading the landings into North Africa that facilitated the defeat of the German Africa Corps; attacking into southern Italy and fighting through tough terrain, brutal weather conditions, and ultimately defeating a determined enemy in the Italian Campaign; the division that spent more consecutive days in combat than any other allied division in WWII, solidifying the legacy of the Red Bull Division.

In more recent years, our Red Bull Soldiers have helped maintain peace in places like Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Sinai Peninsula. We have served our communities and our state during disasters and when major national events were held here in Minnesota. Our Red Bull Soldiers have fought our nation’s enemies in Iraq and Afghanistan. In doing so we have lost friends — our brothers and sisters who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our nation wearing the Red Bull insignia.

Today, we stand prepared for the next chapter in our division's legacy, deploying back to the Middle East and assuming responsibility for our mission. We return to the Middle East almost a decade after this division headquarters spent a year in Iraq. This chapter in our history will see the Red Bulls responsible for mission command of Operation Spartan Shield, a mission designed to build partner capacity in the Middle East — building regional self-reliance and increased security.

Increased stability and peace in the Middle East is a vision we can all embrace. While we will be located primarily in Kuwait, our area of operations will include 13 countries through four time zones. This area is populated by over 550 million people and contains 22 ethnic groups speaking 18 languages. The footprint of the division's responsibility will include more than 9,000 U.S. Soldiers and five subordinate brigades.

We are well suited for this mission. We are an experienced, well-prepared, highly capable organization of Citizen-Soldiers.

Our ranks contain school teachers, engineers, police officers, doctors, lawyers, college professors, mechanics, accountants and dozens of other professions.


We represent the very best from our communities and our state. The work ethic and can-do attitude this nation was founded upon is in our DNA. We are well trained and have the equipment we need to perform our mission. We are focused, we are ready.

Soldiers of the Red Bull division, I'm proud to lead you, and even prouder to serve with you. I am privileged to be a part of this great organization. We will do the work that our nation has asked us to do.

Within our formation, we have Soldiers that join us from 11 different states. Each of you have different backgrounds, experience, and diversities. You are all Red Bull Soldiers. Together, we will do our job, we will take care of each other, we will work to leave our deployment experience as better people and a better organization as a result of our time away from home, and we will come back home together when our work is done.

I thank you all for being here with us today. Thank you for your thoughts, your prayers, and your active support of our Red Bull family. We could not do this without you. I look forward to that future moment that we will see all of you again as we return next year after completing our mission.

Attack! Attack! Attack!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Corell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.