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GLOBE PHOTO/ANNE BARNARD

Lieutenant Eric Gregory (left) and Task Force 2-2 studied bricks placed to represent Fallujah's buildings.

Inside Fallujah's war

Empathy, destruction mark a week with US troops

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FALLUJAH, Iraq — Captain Paul Fowler sat on the curb next to a deserted gas station. Behind him, smoke rose over Fallujah. His company of tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles had roamed the eastern third of the city for 13 days, shooting holes in every building that might pose a threat, leaving behind a landscape of half-

collapsed houses and factories singed with soot.

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"I really hate that it had to be destroyed. But that was the only way to root these guys out," said Fowler, 33, the son of a Baptist preacher in North Carolina. "The only way to root them out is to destroy everything in your

path."

Two days later, Fowler's soldiers and the rest of Task Force 2-2, a reinforced battalion of the Army's First Infantry Division, were rolling back to their bases in cities to the east and north after lending the Marines their muscle to invade Fallujah. The job of heavy armor was largely done, and it was time for civil affairs troops to put the city back together.

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