

Colonel Sharif's Emirate

Thursday, 28 February 2008

COLONEL SHARIF'S EMIRATE. In the Middle East, Colonel Sharif and his fanatical "Guardians of Paradise" led a revolution against the Emirate's ruler, the Emir, after hundreds of years of rule by the royalty. It was soon discovered in the early 1980's that Cobra had been helping to fund Sharif's rebellion. The revolution was started in the name of freedom, but after taking control, Sharif turned out much worse than the Emir ever was. The United States considered Sharif's group an unstable element, and when he took control of the nation, officials were worried, especially when it was suspected that Sharif was sponsoring several terrorist groups. The G.I. Joe team was sent in to retrieve a tape that contained information that would hurt Sharif, and Scarlett, Snake-Eyes and Rock 'n' Roll were nearly killed in an attack by the Guardians of Paradise, personally led by Sharif. The tape was retrieved and it was delivered to the state department by Stalker.

Over the next few years evidence of Sharif's corruption piled up and a group known as Royalists started to rebel against Sharif, hoping to return the Emir to power. Fighting erupted and intermittent warfare continued. As war escalated, Sharif needed pilots for his newly acquired air force, and hired any experienced pilots without background checks. One such pilot was Deke, a mercenary pilot who had flown in Vietnam before becoming a prisoner of war. After returning home, no one would let him fly again. Deke was contacted by undercover members of the G.I. Joe team (Stalker, Leatherneck, Crankcase and Slip-Stream) whom Deke gave classified information about surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites to the Joes. Their mission was to steal a new Russian fighter that Sharif had at his air force base. As the Joes were ready to start the operation, fighting was erupting in the nation's capital city. The Joes had to destroy the SAM sites to allow a U.S. Air Force bombing run cover the Joes' escape with the plane. The mission would have failed if Deke hadn't decided to be loyal to America once again. He destroyed the last SAM site with a last-ditch kamikaze dive, allowing the Joes to complete their mission.

Only months later, two Joes, Dusty and Mainframe were sent in to advise a group of Royalists in their fight against Sharif. After a battle that destroyed one of Sharif's supply convoys that was traveling through the desert, the Joes were given a guide through the desert. The young boy, named Rashid, led the Joes to an oil storage facility where they found a Cobra Terror-Drome hidden in a hollow oil tank, confirming that Cobra was still supporting Colonel Sharif. Mainframe was able to access the Terror-Drome computers, but the Joes were forced to retreat when Sharif's forces found them and attacked. Luckily the Joes escaped unharmed.

America has had little contact with the region recently, but several years after the Terror-Drome attack, Sharif was spotted buying arms from Cobra on Cobra Island. The battle in the Emirate continues, as the long civil war goes on. (GI 1, 58; SM 3)