



The Freedom Post

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Defense Secretary Rumsfeld Makes Welcomed Stop in Mosul Story by Sgt. John Franzen

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld visited Mosul during his trip to Iraq Feb. 11. Rumsfeld visited with a wounded Soldier, gave out awards to Coalition troops, and visited local Iraqi leaders while in Mosul.

Rumsfeld's first stop on his visit was to the military hospital at Mosul Air Field. He visited with members of the 228th Combat Support Hospital and a recently wounded Soldier. Sgt. Sean Ferguson of the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment got a visit from Rumsfeld one day after he was shot in the hand.

When asked by Rumsfeld what he could do for him, Sgt. Ferguson replied he wanted to make sure he could stay in Iraq and return to duty with his squad upon recovery. Sgt. Ferguson received his second Purple Heart for wounds sustained during his tour in Iraq.

Following his visit at the hospital Rumsfeld handed out the Army Commendation Medal to Iraqi, U.S., and Albanian troops for their meritorious service during the Iraqi elections. Rumsfeld congratulated each of the troops personally. Afterwards he addressed the audience of Coalition troops and spoke about the importance of freedom to the Iraqis.

"Some experts watching (Iraq) came to the conclusion that the people of this country didn't want freedom or weren't ready for freedom or couldn't handle freedom. I personally believe that people do want to be free, that every man and woman aspires to be free," Rumsfeld said. He added that during the elections (the terrorists) threats were overwhelmingly rejected by millions."

Rumsfeld also highlighted the need for Iraqi Security Forces to continue to take the lead on security measures in their country so that they can maintain their newly found freedom.

"It is the Iraqis, over time that will have to defeat the insurgency. It's their responsibility," Rumsfeld said.

Rumsfeld's final stop was to the Joint Coordination Center in Mosul. There he met with local Iraqi leaders and discussed the success of the election as well as the upcoming challenges the local government faces.

Although Rumsfeld's time in Mosul only lasted a few hours, both Iraqi leaders and U.S. troops described his visit as a huge boost for morale.

"This meeting is very important to my country

and my family," said Lt. Col. Amed Yaseen Al-Zheir XO 24th Battalion, 6th Brigade Iraqi Army, "really it was a good day."

"I think it was a big morale booster, not only for the American troops, but for both the Iraqi and Albanian troops," said Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Pring, Task Force Freedom Command Sgt. Maj. "It's obviously a boost in my morale to have a senior leader come over and visit the Soldiers. What's good for the Soldiers is good for Sgt. Maj. Pring."



Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld addresses troops at a ceremony honoring Iraqi, U.S., and Algerian troops for their service during the Iraqi elections. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. John Franzen)



Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld visits with Sgt. Sean Ferguson, now a two-time Purple Heart recipient, at the military hospital in Mosul. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. John Franzen)

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

To Kill an American:

A while back, there was a report that someone in Pakistan had published in a newspaper an offer of a reward to anyone who killed an American, any American.

So an Australian dentist wrote the following to let everyone know what an American is,... so they would know when they found one. (Good on ya, mate!!!!)

An American is English, or French, or Italian, Irish, German, Spanish, Polish, Russian or Greek.

An American may also be Canadian, Mexican, African, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Australian, Iranian, Asian, or Arab, or Pakistani, or Afghan.

An American may also be a Cherokee, Osage, Blackfoot, Navaho, Apache, Seminole or one of the many other tribes known as Native Americans.

An American is Christian, or he could be Jewish, or Buddhist, or Muslim.

In fact, there are more Muslims in America than in Afghanistan. The only difference is that in America they are free to worship as each of them chooses.

An American is also free to believe in no religion. For that he will answer only to God, not to the government, or to armed thugs claiming to speak for the government and for God.

An American lives in the most prosperous land in the history of the world.

The root of that prosperity can be found in the Declaration of Independence, which recognizes the God given right of each person to the pursuit of happiness.

An American is generous. Americans have helped out just about every other nation in the world in their time of need.

When Afghanistan was overrun by the Soviet army 20 years ago, Americans came with arms and supplies to enable the people to win back their country!

As of the morning of September 11, Americans had given more than any other nation to the poor in Afghanistan.

Americans welcome the best, the best products, the best books, the best music, the best food, the best athletes. But they also welcome the least.

The national symbol of America, the Statue of Liberty, welcomes your tired and your poor, the wretched refuse of your teeming shores. the homeless, tempest tossed. These in fact are the people who built America.

Some of them were working in the Twin Towers the morning of September 11, 2001 earning a better life for their families. I've been told that the World Trade Center victims were from at least 30 other countries, cultures, and first languages, including those that aided and abetted the terrorists.

So you can try to kill an American if you must.

Hitler did.

So did General Tojo, and Stalin, and Mao Tse-Tung, and every bloodthirsty tyrant in the history of the world.

But, in doing so you would just be killing yourself. Because Americans are not a particular people for a particular place. They are the embodiment of the human spirit of freedom. Everyone who holds to that spirit, everywhere, is an American.

Author Unknown

Words for the Week:

"If it was God's will to bruise His own Son, why should it not be His will to bruise you?" - Oswald Chambers

Negligence Kills Soldiers and Diminishes Combat Readiness

neg-li-gence\ *n* 1 a: the quality or state of being negligent b: failure to exercise the care that a prudent person usually exercises

Negligence kills a Soldier on an average of every 32 hours. Personnel and equipment losses adversely affect the combat readiness of our Army. The loss of even one member of the Army Team—Soldier, civilian or supporting contractor is unacceptable. When a Soldier dies because of an accident, particularly when it could be prevented, it's a tragedy.

The Warrior Ethos is simple. It's embedded in our Soldiers Creed and it's four really simple lines. The first one is, "I will always place the mission first." The second one is, "I'll never accept defeat." The third is, "I'll never quit." The fourth is, "I'll never leave a fallen comrade behind." These four lines embody what it is to be a warrior Soldier and add the kind of focus that is absolutely essential for us to be a successful Army at war. Even in combat operations, safety goes hand in hand with the Warrior Ethos theme.

The current fast-paced operational tempo plays a role in the accident rate. Long periods during combat operations can lead to complacency. Negligence often happens because of the following reasons: ineffective supervision, inattentiveness, insufficient training, indiscipline, and negligence. In almost every case Soldiers didn't follow established procedures. Soldiers must follow procedures established in policies, regulations, and operating manuals.

We need the discipline of first-line leaders along with the oversight of senior leaders to halt these needless, tragic deaths. Sergeants have a responsibility for enforcing the standards, for making sure Soldiers aren't taking short cuts or taking things for granted. The more we focus on it and the more we talk about it, even with the pace of operations, we can reduce the rate. We will always place the mission first, but being safe enables our Army to preserve combat power and enhance combat readiness.

-Major Jeffrey Levanger
Task Force Safety Officer



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Engineers Make Way for Safer Convoys

Story by Sgt. Rick Way



A loud thud and a bump and it was over, no time for fear, no time to react or prepare. An improvised explosive device (IED) detonated a few feet from the 73rd Combat Engineers as they travelled through the city of Mosul.

Members of the 73rd Combat Engineers 1st Platoon see the lions share of IEDs. Staff Sgt. Jesse Grandinette remains calm as he radios to check on the status of the vehicle to the rear of his vehicle while he and his crew were “sweeping for IEDs”.

On this day, Grandinette’s crew had a few guest passengers along for the ride; Sgt. 1st Class Lance Milsted, a Broadcast Journalist and myself, Sgt. Richard Way, Print Journalist, members of the 366 MPAD. No doubt that our first ride with the engineers was a memorable one. We got more of a story than we bargained for. Our tour guides were those brave Soldiers that search for what the rest of us seek to avoid, IEDs.

Grandinette’s crew and the rest of the 73rd Engineers are a convoy’s best friend in Iraq. Early each morning, the members of the 73rd Engineers, gather around their strykers for a mission briefing, and to learn of the events of the previous day. After a quick but thorough discussion, they head out for another dangerous mission.

First platoon Sergeant, Staff Sgt. Grandinette’s concern for his fellow soldiers is apparent, “If we don’t find them, and they blow up on us, at least they didn’t blow up on someone else.”

Some of Grandinette’s platoon members express their concern for the innocent civilians and other coalition forces that travel the same routes the IEDs are planted. Throughout the day, the platoons of the 73rd engineers sweep the roads of the Mosul area for IEDs.

On occasion, the IED finds them before they find it. “While the ride could be compared to that of a wild bull, the security of our vehicle makes up for the rough ride,” said 1st Lt David Patrick Coughman, Jr. of the 73rd who has been in Iraq for about four months. He does route clearance, bridge estimates and more. “I’m doing everything an engineer can possibly do, it’s awesome experience”

Other duties for the 73rd include responding to a report of an IED anytime, day or night. Everyone in the 73rd agreed that their training prepared them well for this mission.

While making a sweep for IEDs, Milsted noticed a pop can that had been placed in an unusual position next to the road. This common sight may not alarm the average person, Staff Sgt. Vincent Sandoval, a Medic and crew-member in the the 73rd, explained that this particular can had been there for a few weeks. This American Soldier, in Iraq, knew how long a piece of trash had been laying alongside the road.

Maintenance of the vehicles, equipment and weapons is another priority of the 73rd. Grandinette said that while preventive maintenance can be a tedious task, the thought of equipment failure is unacceptable. In this environment, a tragedy can be the result of poor maintenance.

While the members of the 73rd Engineers, 25th infantry division, have a dangerous job, their resolve is firm and they leave nothing to chance when it comes to protecting the lives of all of those who travel the roads of Iraq. In the evenings you may stop by the “Sapper Lounge” and see the boys sitting around a bon fire in a well-contained pit, speaking of home, family, loved ones, good times and a few not-so-good-times.



Previous Page: Searching an old IED site is not uncommon for the crew of the Buffalo.

Left: Following an IED explosion, SSG Grandinette radios the vehicle to the rear of his vehicle to check on it's occupants.

Sometimes you have to get a little closer...

SSG Grandinette checks out a concrete block while everyone inside the vehicle holds their breath.



Staff Sgt. Grandinette unwinds and stares at the Sapper Lounge fire as he and his colleagues discuss the the happenings of the day.



Let it snow....

Let it snow...

Let it snow.

Above: Task Force Freedom Soldiers take a moment to pose outside the Palace for an unusual picture.

Right: Spc. David Nunn pauses to enjoy the rare snowfall outside Task Force Freedom Headquarters on Wednesday, February 9, 2005.
(pictures by Sgt. John Franzen)



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Dr. T's Medical Matters

We have all heard about it from the war movies, the “thousand yard stare”, the Soldier being “shell shocked”. Today we call this condition, battle fatigue. This medical condition has been clearly documented since the Civil War. Historically, treatment was to move the Soldier out of harms way, evacuate him to a rear hospital or even, at times, return him to his home and relieve him from military duties. Some of these Soldiers would then develop long term mental health problems as a result of this treatment. We have learned much about battle fatigue since the Civil War. In WWII, the “three hots and a cot” treatment was initiated, giving the Soldier temporary relief from the stressors of combat, returning them to their unit as soon as possible. We learned more from the Israeli Army’s principle of treating the battle fatigued Soldier as close to his unit as possible. From the Israeli experience, we learned that the further the Soldier was evacuated to the rear, the greater was the chance of long term mental health problems developing.

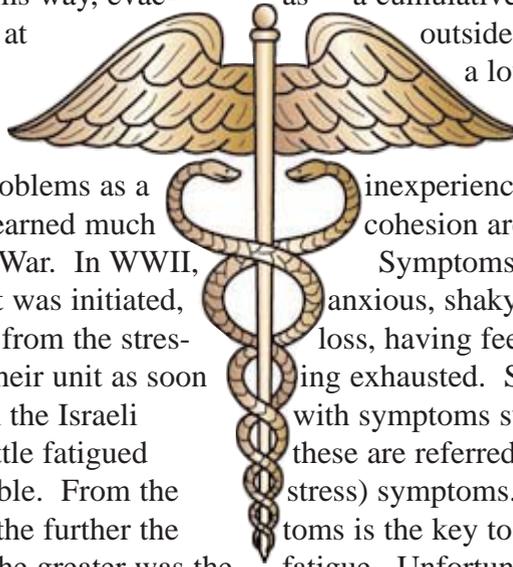
In this issue of Dr. T’s Medical Matters, we will address the signs and symptoms of battle fatigue, in the next edition; we will discuss the treatment and services available to our Soldiers within their units and the medical system.

Battle fatigue stems from a combination of both physical and mental stressors in the combat zone

that can produce symptoms in any Soldier. These symptoms can temporarily interfere with the Soldier’s ability to perform his/her job. Stressors on the battle field can be real or perceived. These stressors can be what the Soldier witnesses as a one time exposure, or as a cumulative exposure. Concerns about matters outside the combat zone, like concerns for a loved one or financial concerns, may also be a source of stress. We know that poor physical fitness, inexperience, family problems and poor unit cohesion are all risk factors for battle fatigue.

Symptoms of battle fatigue can include feeling anxious, shaky, depressed, experiencing memory loss, having feelings of inadequacy, or simply feeling exhausted. Sometimes battle fatigue will present with symptoms such as a headache or stomach ache, these are referred to as somatic (being caused by stress) symptoms. Early recognition of these symptoms is the key to successful treatment of battle fatigue. Unfortunately, the fatigued Soldier is not the one who recognizes the symptoms initially. It is usually the battle buddy, the squad leader or someone in the Chain of Command that notices a change in the Soldier. Changes in eating, sleeping, or not “being him/her self” can be the first signs of developing problems.

In the next edition of “Dr. T’s Medical Matters”, we’ll discuss the prevention, and treatment of battle fatigue.



Picture of the Week:

Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld congratulates a member of the Iraqi Security Forces on a job well done during the January elections. (photo by Sgt. Daniel Lucas)



Headlines From the Other Side of the World

Lost love really can cause a broken heart Study: Tragic events linked to chest pain, shortness of breath

The Associated Press

In a study published just in time for Valentine's Day, confirming the wisdom of the poets and philosophers, doctors reported how a tragic or shocking event can stun the heart and produce classic heart attack-like symptoms, including chest pain, shortness of breath and fluid in the lungs.

Lawyer jokes case dismissed

Abrams Report staff

Previously reported on 'The Abrams Report', a senior citizen who swapped lawyer jokes with a friend outside of a New York courtroom was

charged with disorderly conduct. Now, as it turns out, seventy-year-old Harvey Kash had the last laugh: a grand jury dismissed the case. Kash testified that he was just expressing his First Amendment rights.

Low rider law stoops to new low

Dan Abrams

How low can you go? Apparently, not that far in Virginia, if the state's House of Delegates gets its way.

The House has spent some of its precious time, trying to pass a new law in Virginia, making it illegal to wear low-riding pants that expose underwear. Police who find anyone intentionally exposing their underwear in a "lewd or indecent manner" can fine them \$50.

Forecast Conditions	High/Low °F	Precip. Chance
Tonight Feb 14 Clear	53.0°/32.0°	0%
Tue Feb 15 Mostly Sunny	58.0°/36.0°	0%
Wed Feb 16 Partly Cloudy	61.0°/35.0°	0%
Thu Feb 17 Partly Cloudy	66.0°/40.0°	10%
Fri Feb 18 Showers	64.0°/44.0°	60%
Sat Feb 19 Light Rain	66.0°/42.0°	60%
Sun Feb 20 Showers	62.0°/40.0°	40%
Mon Feb 21 Partly Cloudy	61.0°/38.0°	20%
Tue Feb 22 Partly Cloudy	63.0°/38.0°	0%
Wed Feb 23 Partly Cloudy	64.0°/41.0°	20%

Sports Shorts

NBA

Cavs ruin Bryant's return

LeBron's second-half outburst helps Cleveland upstage Lakers 103-89.

Heat jangle Spurs

Wade keys Miami past NBA-leading San Antonio for sixth straight victory.

Malone leaves his stamp

'Mailman' brings official end to 19-year career with Jazz.

Baseball

Larkin takes his leave

Longtime Reds shortstop ends 19-year career, joins Nats' front office.

Brewers don't short Sheets

Milwaukee avoids salary arbitration, signs righty to one-year, \$6M deal.

College Basketball

No. 2 UNC ruffles UConn

Tar Heels shake Duke defeat, buckle down for road win

Duke women no crowd pleasers

Roundup: Devils trip Maryland before ACC-record throng; UConn tumbles.

Other Sports

Roddick, gone in 50 minutes

Top seed cruises to straight-set win in ATP Tour's fastest final this year.

Fowler in line for Vikings?

Reports: Arizona businessman close to becoming first black team owner.

U.S. crashes in team skiing

Germany beats Americans to fourth place for only medal at worlds