

HAMMER TIMES

OPERATION HAMMER FREEDOM 3.2

Vol. 1, Issue 6

Published for the Soldiers of the 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty

May 23, 2005

Next step in Iraqi independence takes place

3rd BCT turns CMOC and Blue Dome over to Iraqi Security Force

Story and photo by Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

BAQUBA, Iraq -- The Diyala Province took one more step toward self reliance when the Provincial Government Center, and a large portion of the Civil Military Operations Compound, both in downtown Baquba, were turned over to the Diyala Government.

Responsibility of the Provincial Government Center, nicknamed the "Blue Dome," where the provincial council operates, was given to Diyala, May 1, in a peaceful transition.

On May 5, Diyala Governor Ra'ad Hameed Juwad and Deputy Governor Auwf Rahumi Majeed moved their offices out of the Blue Dome and into the Binayat Al-Muhafadha Al-Qadima building. The Binayat building had long been home to the Governor's office, but was almost completely destroyed during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In the courtyard of the building, where a formal ceremony was held, Governor Ra'ad kissed and hoisted the Iraqi flag before cutting the blue ribbon attached to the door that led into his new office building.

In a speech, Col. Steven Salazar, commander of Task Force Liberty's 3rd Brigade Combat Team, congratulated Diyala's citizens, government officials, and Security Forces, on their movement to freedom.

"We are honored to walk with you hand in hand on this road to peace and prosperity," Salazar said. "But soon, you will not need our hand and you will walk alone. We will be proud to watch you continue down that road as your honorable friends."

"We are giving the rightful government house back to the Iraqi people," said Maj. Michael Charlebois, 3rd Brigade's Civil, Military Officer.

Maj. Ed House, Operations Officer for the 3rd BCT, said this transfer is a step in proving the independence of the Diyala Province and Iraq.

"They are willing to fight the insurgency on their own," he said. "They are getting better everyday and this

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Governor Ra'ad Rasheed Hameed of the Diyala Province kisses the flag of Iraq before hoisting up the flag pole at the Civil Military Operations Center Compound May 5, in downtown Baquba Iraq.

IPS and coalition forces work together for safer Iraq

Story and photo by Spc. Natalie Loucks

3rd BCT PAO

BAQUBA, IRAQ --“Book ‘em Danno” may not be heard every day at the Diyala Provincial Joint Coordination Center but the Soldiers assigned to Task Force Five – O are involved in every aspect of the province’s police operations.

Task Force Five – O, is made up of Soldiers from 1-10 Field Artillery, Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Brigade Troops Battalion, 3rd BCT, Company E, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment and HHC of the 42nd Inf. Div. Located at the Provincial Police Headquarters in downtown, Baquba, Iraq, the Task Force’s mission is to teach, mentor and coach members of the Iraqi Police Service.

Task Force Liberty’s 3rd Brigade Combat Team’s mission is to develop Iraqi Security Forces to promote Iraqi self reliance. Eventually, the team would like to be able to turn all responsibility for the province over to the independent people of Iraq.

“They had a system under the old regime that seemed to work,” said Maj. John Colombo, Task Force S3, “but because of the leadership, the system was corrupt.”

The Police force is one of the only

parts of the old government that has not changed or been recreated, Colombo said. Some police officers were fired or quit, but for the most part, the organization has stayed the same.

New Police recruits are trained in one of several police academies located in Jordan, Baghdad, or Sulaymaniyah. Returning officers attend a two-week transition and integration course designed to bring their training certificates up to date.

The IPS consists of many major parts including SWAT teams, quick reaction forces, investigators, traffic police and facility protection officers.

A highway patrol force will stand up in the near future.

Task Force Five – O Soldiers working at the Provincial Police Headquarters must distribute information to both coalition and Iraqi police channels.

The U.S. Soldiers will coordinate solutions to police issues through both the American Police Partnership Program and the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior.

“We are streamlining the communication up and down the various chains of command so both the Americans and the Iraqi forces are

See ISF, Pg. 8



Capt. Wahleed teaches a classroom full of Iraqi Police located at the Provincial Joint Coordination Center in downtown Baquba, Iraq during a transition and integration course, May 11.

Transfer of Authority demonstrates stronger Iraq

Continued from Pg. 1

gives them the opportunity to prove themselves.”

Although coalition forces have stepped back, House said US combat power is still close enough to provide quick reaction if additional force is required.

The majority of Iraqi police and the Iraqi Soldiers have stopped wearing black masks over their faces concealing their identity, House said.

“This shows the insurgents that the people (of Iraq) are tired of the insurgency and they are now capable of defending themselves,” he said.

The ISF have been training and conducting missions alongside coalition forces and House believes they are progressing everyday.

“Our guys take pride in their counterpart units,” House said. “They take pride in how they perform in combat operations.”

“We are on the way to freedom,” Salazar said. “everyday we take another step towards peace and prosperity.”



Children from a local school perform songs, the american alphabet and counted to ten for Col. Steven Salazar, 3rd Brigade Combat Team commander and Governor Ra’ad Hameed Juwad of the Diyala Province.

The Hammer Times is published in the interest of servicemembers. It is an Army-funded newsletter authorized by AR 360-1. Contents of the Hammer Times are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government.

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Hellcat's Company changes command

Story and photo by Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

BAQUBA, Iraq - Members of the Headquarters Company stood in formation at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, April 4, to bid farewell to their former Company Commander, Capt. Mathew Ingraham, and to welcome incoming commander, Capt. Richard Bratton.

Ingraham enlisted into the U.S. Army as a Patriot Missile operator in 1992 and deployed to Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Southern Watch.

The Idaho Falls native attended Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning in 1996 where he graduated Distinguished Military Graduate.

Ingraham has served with the 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division in Schweinfurt, Germany.

His assignments include Line and Assault and Obstacle Platoon leader, Company A, 9th Engineer Battalion and Task Force Engineer for 1st Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry in Macedonia and Kosovo during Operation Allied Force.

After completing the Engineer Officer Advance Course, the University of Idaho graduate was assigned to the 36th Engineer Group.

During Operation Desert Spring, Ingraham joined the 317th Engineer Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Inf. Div. serving as Company A commander and Task Force Engineer for 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment from May 2003 to May 2004.

He will report to Fort Carson,



Former commander of Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty, Capt. Mathew Ingraham hands the company guidon to Maj. Christopher Barron, acting commander of the Brigade Troops Battalion, 3rd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., Task Force Liberty in a ceremony held April 4, at Forward Operating Base Warhorse Iraq.

Colorado and serve in as a reserve component advisor.

His awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Army Commendation Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Army Achievement Medal with four oak leaf clusters and Parachutists Badge.

Bratton graduated from the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y. with a bachelor's of science degree in mechanical engineering. He earned a master's of science degree in engineering management from the University of Missouri, Rolla.

The Houston, Mo. native's first duty assignment was Fort Stewart, Ga. where he served with the 10th Engineer Battalion as a Sapper Platoon Leader and Company Executive Officer and was deployed to Bosnia.

Bratton was also assigned to the 317th Eng. Bat. where he served as the Battalion Maintenance Officer.

He continued serving with the 3rd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. reassigned as the Assistant Operations Officer for the 3rd Brigade Troops Battalion.

Bratton deployed with the "Sledgehammer" Brigade in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III serving as the brigade's Projects Coordination Cell Officer.

He is a graduate of the Mechanized Leader's Course, Engineer Officer Basic Course, Engineer Captain's Career Course and Combined Arms Service and Staff School.

Bratton's awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal and Army Service Ribbon.

"I have a really strong 1st Sgt and a really good executive officer." Bratton said he is honored to be serving with such a strong team. "They have helped me through a really smooth transition." ☑



Leadership change for Headquarters Company 2-69 Armor

Story and photo by Panther Pride Newsletter

FOB SCUNION, Iraq -- Capt. William "Chip" Colbert passed the Guide On to Capt. Gregory Wallstein in a recent change of command ceremony held at Forward Operating Base Scunion.

As the commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Capt. Colbert handed off, to Capt. Wallstein, a great responsibility.

The number one responsibility, of course, are the soldiers. Secondly is to lead those soldiers throughout the remainder of 2-69's deployment in a combat zone. Capt. Wallstein made it clear, however, that he was up to the task.

Capt. Colbert will depart for Ft. Benning, GA in the next few days, where he will prepare to enter Columbia University in New York, NY as a prerequisite for acceptance as a Tactical Officer at the United States Military Academy at West Point. ☑

WARHORSE CHAPEL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Friday

1 to 3 p.m.
Muslim Juma Prayer

6 to 8 p.m.
Jewish Prayer and Fellowship

Sunday

8 to 9 a.m.
Early Bird Protestant – Chaplain
(Capt.) Smith

9 to 10:30 a.m.
Gospel – Chaplain (Capt.) Pickens

11 a.m. to Noon
Mid-Morning Protestant – Chaplain
(Maj.) Rauch

12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
Latter Day Saints

1:45 to 2:45 p.m.
Roman Catholic

8 to 9:30 p.m.
Evening Protestant – Chaplain (Capt.)
Smith

Bible Study

Tuesday:
6 to 7 p.m. at Education Center –
Chaplain (Capt.) Pickens

Wednesday:
7 to 8 p.m. at Warhorse Chapel –
Chaplain (Capt.) Smith

Mid-Week Service

Thursday:
7 to 8 p.m. at Warhorse Chapel –
Chaplain (Capt.) Pickens

Friday:
10:15 p.m. – Chaplain (Capt.) Smith
'Movie of the Week'

God has purpose for you

By Chaplain (Capt.) Se Parks
2-69 Armor

God loves you and He has a purpose for your life. God works through ordinary people, like Soldiers and their families, to accomplish His purpose on Earth. Be assured that His purpose for you is for good and not for evil.

Joseph was a prime example of this truth. When Joseph was 17 years old he was betrayed by his brothers, sold him

into slavery, and taken away to a foreign country. There in Egypt, Joseph remained a slave and prisoner for 13 years. At the time, Joseph didn't understand why God permitted these hardships into his life. But through it all, Joseph continued to trust God, refusing to doubt the goodness of God in his life.

As God would have it, Joseph became Prime Minister of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. In a time of great famine, God used Joseph to save many people from certain death.

His brothers, who gave Joseph up for dead long before, were now bowed down in desperate need before the feet of Joseph. Joseph had the power to return evil for evil, but in humility, he forgave his brothers, and provided for their needs.

God has a purpose for your life.

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

- Romans 8:28

You are special in His eyes, not by what you have done, but by what Christ has done on your behalf. All God asks, is that you believe in Him, trust Him, He will never let

you down.

Soldiers of 3d BCT, we have a mission in Iraq. It is a difficult and noble mission. Like Joseph, I encourage you to "trust in God with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path" (Proverbs 3: 5, 6).

What is God's future purpose for you?

Whatever it may be, know that you serve a loving God, who has your best in mind. ☑

1-15 Soldier killed on Mother's Day

By Mick Walsh
Columbus Ledger-Enquirer

FOB MACKENZIE, Iraq -- Joyce McDuffie's mother had already been prepped for knee replacement surgery in a Mobile, Ala., hospital when the phone call came in.

Probably somebody asking about her mom, she suspected.

But it wasn't a well-wisher on the line.

It was her daughter-in-law, Cayssia Givens, calling from Columbus. With bad news.

Her husband, and Joyce's only child, Spc. Steven Ray Givens, a soldier with the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, had been killed in Iraq.

On Mother's Day, Cayssia had just been

told that Givens was shot in a firefight with insurgents. And now it was her duty to let the rest of the family know.

"I still can't believe it," said the 22-year-old native of Dallas from her Willow Creek apartment. "We were married three days before he left. Now... he's gone."

Steve and Cayssia met before his first deployment to Iraq in 2003.

"At the old Camelot Music store at the mall," she said, forcing herself to remember happier times. "We decided to get married right before his unit shipped out again." The couple have a 2-year-old son, Blake.

The news was tough on Steve's Mobile family, too. "It's been hard,



SPC STEVEN GIVENS
1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment

real hard," said a mournful Billy Givens, Steve's uncle and a deputy with the Mobile County Sheriff's Department, when reached at his home Wednesday.

See MOTHER, Pg. 5

Mother receives gift from deceased son on Mother's Day

Continued from Pg. 4

He'd escorted his mother, Helen Givens, to the hospital on Monday. At the hospital, he met his sister and they planned to remain there until the operation was completed.

Then came the news.

"Steve was a good man, from a good family," he said. "He believed in what he was doing and believed we were doing the right thing in Iraq."

Though they were notified that Steven, 26, had been fatally wounded, the family knew little else.

"I've been in the military," said Givens, "and know we may never really know the whole story."

Maj. Steve Warren, the public affairs officer from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, based in Baqouba, Iraq, described the fight.

"It happened on the banks of the Tigris River, next to a village called Ad Montissim," he said in an e-mail. "It was a fairly large contact — eight enemy killed and one captured... It started when insurgents fired at a helicopter."

Doug Givens, Billy's brother and Steven's uncle, said he and Steven had pretty much grown up together. "We're only five years apart," he said. "It wasn't an uncle-nephew sort of thing; more like a brother-brother thing."

On Saturday, he said, a delivery man with a dozen roses showed up at his sister's home. Joyce McDuffie told the man he must have been given the wrong address.

But the card said "Happy Mother's Day" and was signed by Steven.

"He wasn't the type to send flowers," Doug said. "This was a first."

This was Steven's second trip to Iraq with the 1-15 Infantry.

"I could tell his first trip had been traumatic for him," Billy Givens said. "He'd seen a lot of combat. But he wanted to go back. He loved working with kids. In fact, we just got a bunch of pictures that he's taken with Iraqi children."

Cayssia, who works at the Eckerd's Drug Store on Beaver Run Road, and her son and her parents are en route to Mobile for what is expected to be a weekend funeral. But no final arrangements have been made. █

Dragons receive combat patch

Story and photo by Spc. Natalie Loucks
3rd BCT PAO

FOB MACKENZIE, Iraq -- Two ceremonies were held, May 2, for the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty, to receive both the Marne combat patch of the 3rd Inf. Div. and the Rainbow combat patch of the 42nd Infantry Division.

The first ceremony took place under the cloudy sky of Forward Operating Base Mackenzie in Ad Duluiyah, Iraq one day before the 144th birthday of the 1-15th Infantry.

From Mackenzie, Col. Steven Salazar, 3rd BCT Commander along with Lt. Col. Gary Brito, Commander of the 1-15 "Dragons," who both presented the combat patches to the leaders of the "Dragon" battalion, traveled to Forward Operating Base, Wilson, also occupied by 1-15 Infantry.

The Soldiers of FOB Mackenzie and FOB Wilson have qualified for the patches because they are serving in what is declared a hostile environment for a period of 30 days and have received the approval of the Army Chief of Staff.

The have earned their patches through the hard work and dedica-

tion to completing the mission to aid the people of Iraq in self reliance during OIF III.

During the ceremony, the "Dragons" were reminded of the history behind the 15th Infantry Regiment, the 3rd BCT and the 42nd Inf. Div.

The 15th Infantry's colorful history is remembered in a crest of the regiment's coat of arms which includes an acorn, the symbol of General Thomas' XIV Corps and the mountain of stone to symbolize the Corps' firm stand at the Rock of Chickamauga.

The four acorns on the shield represent the four major engagements of their Civil War service.

The 3rd ID earned its name "Rock of the Marne" after fighting, and holding the line, in France against superior German forces during the battle of the Marne in 1918.

The 42nd Inf. Div. is said to 'stretch like a rainbow from one end of America to the other' hence acquired the nickname "the Rainbow Division".

After WWI, the full rainbow symbol was torn in half in remembrance of those lost in the war. Today, the Rainbow Division expresses the motto, "never forget."

Salazar reminded the Soldiers, "this patch represents what you have done for your team, the Iraqi people and this great nation." █



Col. Steven Salazar, commander for 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty, hands both the rainbow patch of the 42nd Inf. Div. and the "Rock of the Marne" patch of the 3rd Inf. Div. to Capt. Lee Gerber, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment. Soldiers of 1-15 Infantry sang the 4th Inf. Div. song and the "Dog Face Soldier" song at the ceremony. 3rd BCT personnel who received both patches were given the choice of what patch to wear as their combat patch.

3rd BCT brings joy and justice

Photos by Spc. Natalie Loucks

3rd BCT PAO



(left) Private 1st Class Tiffany Catron (Baucom), 3rd Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Liberty, hands out "I Love Iraq" stickers to the children who attend Al Mahasin Mixed School in Al Ali. 3rd Brigade Combat Team's Command Security Detachment along with soldiers of the Iraqi army and Brig. Gen. Ha'ad of the Iraqi army (below) spoke to the students on . Iraqi children swarmed the visitors with smiles, peace signs and outstretched hands ready to receive the gifts the military had brought.





(top) Soldiers of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty, search a room in a house where suspected insurgents were captured. Iraqi Army soldiers cleared four objectives May 14, in the towns of Esawid, Iraq, Al Ali, Iraq, Hambis, Iraq and Taiha, Iraq. Lt. Col. Daniel Kessler (above), along with coalition forces, observed the operation and provided support where it was needed. Throughout the day, the ISF seized weapons caches (right) and detained approximately 50 suspects of the Iraqi insurgency. Detainees were given a test that can detect explosive residue.

US Troops use Guns, Candy and Patience

By Ian Simpson
Reuters

MUQDADIYA, Iraq, -- Even before the car bomb blew up at the head of his armoured column, Lieutenant Colonel Roger Cloutier had had a busy day.

The bombing late on Sunday that left one attacker dead and one wounded but U.S. troops untouched topped off a long day that saw the American commander deal with a fight over a junkyard, threaten to cut off millions of dollars in projects and hand out candy to schoolchildren.

Cloutier's whirlwind schedule showed the cocktail of diplomacy, money and firepower that the 140,000-strong U.S. forces are using as they try to weaken popular support for a stubborn insurgency.

"This is all about shades of grey here, it's about transitions," Cloutier, a battalion commander in the 3rd Infantry Division, told Reuters after the attack.

"Everything I do here, I have to think about possible outcomes -- will what I do be playing into the terrorists' hands?"

Cloutier's 700-man force is the security backbone around Muqadadiya, a city of about 250,000 people in farm country 50-miles northeast of Baghdad.

His battalion is the target of an average of one roadside bomb a day, even though attacks on Iraqi forces have dwindled to almost nothing following a fatwa, or religious ruling, from local Muslim leaders several weeks ago.

So security was a top item when Cloutier met with Mayor Allawi Farhan, police chief General Ammer Kamel and other officials at city hall, a low-rising building surrounded by blast barriers, guards and barbed wire.

"I've been very patient, but my patience has run out. I want some names (of suspected bombers). As of now, all the money that is coming into the city for projects is going to stop," said Cloutier, who oversees 60 development projects worth \$15 million.

Farhan, whose city has a jobless rate of 70 percent, pleaded for more

ISF, teachers and students

Continued from Pg. 2

getting all of the information," Colombo said.

Col. Mohamed Kafhem Jasam, a senior officer in the Diyala IPS, is pleased with the support of coalition forces both tactically and operationally and said the cooperation is accepted by the citizens of Diyala.

"The people of Iraq want safety and security for their families and their community," Mohamed said through a translator. "They know why the coalition forces are here."

Mohamed compared the IPS to a child who needs to be raised by experienced hands in order to grow up and take care of itself.

Although the U.S. forces are succeeding in their mission to bring the IP to self reliance, challenges including money, equipment, modernization, and discrepancies between American and Iraqi laws create some difficulty.

"Some actions are totally acceptable in the Iraqi culture and will get you locked up in the American culture," said Colombo. "An example is, in Iraq, it is okay to physically discipline your wife."

Colombo also noted that there is some corruption within the ranks of the IPS due to the leadership of the former regime, and that part of Task Force Five -- O's job is to help eliminate that corruption.

"The police force here can be compared to the American police force from the 1950s as far as what they have to do their job," Colombo said.

Although the Iraqis are set back in

their experience and resources, Colombo noticed they are eager to establish a fair democracy for their country.

Eventually Colombo said he would like to see the IP take more control of what they are doing for their country. He also wants to see the concept of the rule of law being uniformly enforced and would like to see martial law disappear.

"Right now, the Army and the Police are doing the same job," he said. "It's not the Army's job to enforce the law; it's the police force's job."

Mohamed believes true self reliance will occur in the IPS when the Iraqi government has been independent for a steady period and each governmental party can work together as a unit.

"It took Saddam a short time to destroy our country but it will take a long time to rebuild it," he said.

As much as the IPS is learning from the U.S. Soldiers located at the Police Headquarters, Colombo said they are teaching just as much as they are learning.

"They teach us about their culture," he said. "They teach us different ways of doing things and different ways of approaching problems."

The IPS and coalition forces will continue to work together until the mission is complete and both Mohamed and Colombo are seeing major progress.

"We are continuing to build as a team," Mohamed said, "so we can complete the mission to make the Diyala Province safe." ▣



A new central booking facility building is being constructed at the Joint Cooperation Center in downtown Baquba, Iraq. The Provincial Joint Coordination Center is undergoing various changes to help modernize the organization of the Iraqi Police working there.

See CLOUTIER, Pg. 12

Tip-offs lead to capture of HVI, weapons

Story and photos by Spc.

Natalie Loucks

3rd BCT PAO

Iraqi civilians are increasingly reporting terrorist acts against coalition forces according to Maj. Dean Wollen, intelligence Officer of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Liberty.

Local citizens of the Diyala Province have provided the Iraqi and Coalition Forces with information resulting in the capture high valued targets, pin-point locations of insurgent weapons and equipment, as well as locations road side bombs known as Improvised Explosive Devices.

"There is a positive momentum," said Maj. Ed House, Operations Officer for 3rd BCT. "People are tired of getting blown up, tired of their kids not being safe going to school, tired of not having a functioning government, tired of not being able to live their lives."

Iraqi and coalition forces have been able to locate approximately 60 percent of all IEDs before detonation and 25 percent of those found were due to tip-offs from Iraqi citizens, Wollen said. That is a 17 percent increase over the last two weeks.

"There is strength in numbers," House said.

"People are becoming more positive about reporting and are willing to take on the insurgents."

House recalls one incident where an Iraqi citizen noticed an insurgent planting an IED in front of his house. After confronting the insurgent, the IED was removed and the terrorist fled.

On a separate occasion, another citizen observed two insurgents delivering munitions to a shack for storage. When the insurgents left, the man collected the items and took them to Forward Operating Base Normandy. When the resident was offered a reward he declined.

"The current trend is reporting incidents and unusual happenings tied to insurgent activity," said House.

The reports are usually brought to the local Joint Coordination Center however Iraqi and coalition forces have also been notified directly.

Reports from the JCC are called into the local police station and from there are dispatched accordingly House explained.

In IED incidents, the Iraqi explosive ordinance disposal team responds to the site where they inspect, assess, and defuse the device. If the Iraqi police feel they cannot defuse the bomb, coalition forces will



Tip-offs from Iraqi citizens have lead coalition and ISF to seize weapons, ammunition and IED making material.

be called in for technical assistance.

"Iraqi citizens believe in their Army and Police and have no problem reporting suspicious activity," House said.

As security responsibilities transition to Iraqi authorities the Iraqi people are beginning to understand their own security forces are a credible deterrent against the insurgency, House said.

"People trust the Iraqi security forces more and are getting over the bad impressions they had during Saddam Hussein's era. They are also realizing that coalition forces are not in their country as occupiers" House said.

House said the U.S. military has gained credibility from the Iraqi citizens because of the professionalism demonstrated by Soldiers as individuals and units.

"Our Soldiers are trained to be individual ambassadors, to treat people with dignity and respect," House said.

Wollen, the Brigade's Intelligence Officer, believes the civil manner demonstrated by U.S. Soldiers aids in the respect and faith shown by the people of Iraq.

Recently, 3rd Brigade was involved in a combat operation to search for high value individuals and weapons caches.

Wollen said local leaders were so impressed by the professionalism that American and Iraqi Soldiers demonstrated that they turned in a number of terrorists.

Although there is an increase in reports on terrorist actions and the people of Iraq are aiding in the security and freedom of their nation, there is still some fear.

"These insurgents have no problem killing their own people," House said.

Many citizens work on coalition military bases.

"These people are just trying to make a living," House said.

"It takes someone very courageous and who loves their family and their country very much to take a chance like this," Wollen said. "They are the real heroes."

Rewards are offered to citizens who can provide information to the JCC, IA, IP and coalition forces that lead to the capture of high valued individuals and weapons caches.

The value of the reward depends on the amount of ammunition and the type of individual, Wollen said.

Reports of insurgency and names of the citizens reporting the activity are confidential.

3rd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. Task Force Freedom has put out a list of HVI with their price value. 



After suspects have been apprehended, they are tested for explosive residue. Their hands are swiped with a pad then the pad is sprayed.

Armor School hits Benning

Post transformation includes creating U.S. Army Reserve Center, axing arrival of new 5th Brigade

By Mick Walsh

Columbus Ledger-Enquirer

FORT BENNING, Ga. -- Friday's long awaited BRAC report brought Fort Benning and the local economy some good news... and some bad news.

When Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's final Base Realignment and Closure list was submitted to the nine-member BRAC commission Friday, it was readily apparent that Fort Benning would be a big winner and was even recognized as such by the national media.

After all, it would be gaining a net of 9,839 personnel, most of them instructors and students from the Armor School at Fort Knox, Ky., and a Pentagon input of \$460 million. Few installations anywhere showed such a gain.

But once he had a chance to crunch the numbers, post commander Brig. Gen. Benjamin Freakley dropped this bomb: Fort Benning will not be getting the new 5th Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, that it — and area leaders, school officials and housing developers — were expecting in the fall of 2006.

"It (the proposed new brigade) will go to another location to be determined and that gives us ground for bringing the Armor Center here," he said.

The brigade, scheduled for the Harmony Church area on post, would have brought 3,400 soldiers to Fort Benning as well as almost 6,100 spouses and children based on Army estimates. Total: 9,500.

But consider this: the Armor School realignment to Fort Benning will bring only 1,500 permanent party military and 700 civilian jobs, which would translate to an additional

6,200 spouses and children, again using Army projections. Total: 8,400.

The vast majority of those that will come here with the Armor School will be students, up to almost 8,000 a year.

Combining Fort Benning's established Infantry School with Fort Knox's Armor School will create the U.S. Army Maneuver Center, a key component of the Army's transformation program. That scenario would mean the post would have three general officers on staff — one with the center and one at each school.

In addition to the Armor School, Fort Benning is also expected to create a U.S. Army Reserve Center, which will include moving the nine personnel from the Columbus reserve center onto post, and will get the Equipment Concentration Site for the 81st Regional Support Command of Fort Gillem, Ga.

Fort Benning is losing its Drill Sergeant School, a net loss of 842 military and 69 civilian jobs. They're headed to Fort Jackson, S.C., where the Army is consolidating three such schools into one.

"The decision process," said Freakley, "is ongoing and will not be finalized until November 2005, at the earliest."

That's when the list from the president will be turned over to Congress.

"Of course," said U.S. Rep. Phil Gingrey, whose district includes Fort Benning, "there will be a lot of lobbying by folks who are losing bases and personnel. I'm sure the folks at Fort Knox will fight losing the Armor School. But what is bad news now for them is certainly good news for Fort Benning."

In previous BRAC rounds in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995, the commission accepted about 85 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations for closure or realignment. This time it will be harder for the commission to make

many changes, due to a series of provisions in the law authorizing the BRAC round. One such provision: it will take the vote of at least seven of the nine commissioners to add a base to the list or expand a proposed realignment. Before, only five commissioners had to support additions. While implementation of the BRAC decision will take between two and four years, Fort Benning will prepare itself to become an even bigger U.S. training installation.

"Currently," Freakley said, "Fort Benning trains between 75,000 and 80,000 a year. Two years from now as we have the Armor Center here, we'll train about 90,000."

--Brig. Gen Benjamin Freakley
Fort Benning Post Commander

If you think the addition of armor training will bring with it more loud noise, you're right.

The 64-ton M1 and M1A2 tanks, with 1,500 horsepower engines, will be firing 120 mm cannons. "The music of freedom has added pieces to its orchestra," smiled Freakley.

He wasn't sure where the new Armor School will be located on post — "We only got the news at 10:30 this morning," he said — but he conceded the tank ranges would probably be located in the northeast sector.

With the arrival of the Armor School will come a bunch of Pentagon money — about \$460 million, Freakley said. Couple that with the \$600 million-\$800 million contract with Clark Pinnacle for new and refurbished housing on post, and the "new money" figure now exceeds the \$1 billion mark.

Columbus City Manager Isaiah Hugley conceded that the arrival of almost 10,000 soldiers over the next few years will create many challenges. He quickly listed housing, schools, hospitals and the city's transportation network as areas that "we need to gear up for. But I'd rather have these problems than those of cities that are losing bases are facing." ☑

Hammer Times will accept your stories and photos! Send your submissions digitally by emailing the Editor at sean.riley@us.army.mil, or bring them to the Public Affairs Office next to the 3rd BCT TOC on FOB Warhorse. Submissions should be single spaced, non-tab format and are subject to editing of content by the Hammer Times staff. Ensure all identification used in stories includes rank, first name, last name, duty position, hometown and unit. When submitting photos, please include information on all people in the shot. DO NOT embed photographs into the story! Please include author's point of contact information will all submissions. ☑

Eye Protection...Not Just for gates

By Capt. Matthew Carter

203rd Support Battalion

We are all aware of the need for eye protection when on guard duty, when at the gates or when leaving the FOB. However as we enter the sunny and windy seasons, it becomes just as important to wear eye protection on the FOB. In our day to day lives, we face two major threats to our vision: sun and airborne objects.

A lifetime of sun exposure damages the eyes. The most common result of long term sun exposure is the development of cataracts. This occurs when your eye's lens becomes cloudy and hard, obscuring your vision. In virtually all cases, this requires surgical correction to return you to a vision compatible with things like driving or reading. Because of the increased time and intensity of sunlight encountered in this region of the world, providing protection for your eyes takes on added importance. The best way to save your eyes from the sun is by wearing lens with UV protection. The issued Wiley-X and UVEX lenses have UV-A and UV-B protection. These are perfect for time spent in the sun. Your lenses DO NOT have to be tinted, though that will certainly make most people more comfortable in the bright Iraqi sun.

Additionally, as the windy season approaches, it is necessary to protect your eyes from dust and other airborne

foreign bodies. Wraparound style lenses afford the best protection from the swirling winds we have seen and will see. On the unpaved or partially paved roads of the FOBs, vehicles exceeding the speed limit frequently launch small rocks to heights of five feet and higher. If you are running or walking along these roads, you may be struck at chest level or above. Because of the possibility of other objects such as pieces of wood or metal becoming airborne as the winds increase, you should consider lenses that offer ballistic protection. Again, the Wiley-X, UVEX or ESS goggles are more than adequate.

Although contact lenses are not authorized for wear in theater, they are being worn. With the increase in dust in the air, lens care will become imperative. If you choose to wear contact lens, I would offer the following guidelines.

- 1) Spend more time out of your contact lenses than in them.
- 2) Wash your hands well before handling your contact lenses.
- 3) Clean your lenses regularly and thoroughly.
- 4) WEAR EYE PROTECTION
- 5) If you develop eye pain, irritation or blurry vision, remove your lenses and see your health care provider immediately.
- 6) Do NOT use drops such as Visine without consulting your health care provider. ☑

Brig. Gen. Paul Genereaux visits Task Force 1-10

By Rock Task Force News

FOB GABE, Iraq -- Brig. Gen. Paul Genereaux, 42nd Infantry Division's Assistant Division Commander for Maneuver, visited Forward Operating Base Gabe, April 19 to receive a tour of the base's facilities, projects and a quick summary of key issues and events Task Force 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery is currently working.

Genereaux received a briefing from the Task Force staff.

Thy gave a summary of all current Intelligence, Operations, Logistics and Diyala Police Team Task Force issues.

Genereaux said he was very impressed with the work the Task Force was doing stated that "what we did was a big deal...Task Force FOX is ahead of all other units in the Division."

He further stated "Diyala has been a big problem, lots of intimidation, you guys make it look easy."

Genereaux continued with other examples of the differences between TF FOX and his other units.

He reemphasized the importance of classified information and its disclosure and accessibility among the Iraqi

Army and Police.

Genereaux further added, "OPSEC we have to come up with a system that works for them and we have to come up with a system that works for us".

Upon completion of the briefing, Genereaux presented Sgt. Nathan Kramer, Spc. Alvin Howard, Spc. Mohammed Kherbouche, and Private 1st Class Nicholas Hei each a Division coin for their outstanding contributions to the Task Force and its mission to build a better relationship with the Iraqi people. ☑



Brig. Gen. Paul Genereaux presents a division coin to Spc. Alvin Howard for a job well done during Task Force 1-10's deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

Fallen IA honored



Iraqi and American forces held a small ceremony to celebrate the lives of four Iraqi Army soldiers who were killed in action by a suicide bomber, on the morning of March 16. In addition to the four soldiers who were killed, the ceremony also celebrated the life of Col. Emmad Marhoon Ali, the former Khalis JCC Deputy Director. Ali and his 19-year-old daughter were attacked by terrorists on February 12 while at a car shop. The ceremony was attended by local leaders, including the town Mayor and several council members.

TF 1-30 takes stand against insurgents, wins hearts of Iraqi citizens

Continued from Pg. 8

time to get Sunni Muslims at the heart of the rebellion involved in politics. Sunnis, the dominant sect under dictator Saddam Hussein, largely stayed away from January elections and majority Shi'ite Muslims and Kurds now run the national government.

"The people's mentality is not at that point yet. I, personally, have told people repeatedly that if you don't attack the Americans they will stay on their bases," said the Sunni mayor, who has a personal security detail of 10 men.

Kamel, a Sunni imprisoned under Saddam, told Cloutier that seven of his 11 cars were out of service and he needed more officers.

He added, "I tell people every day, 'Hey, you pimps, they are building a

road that Saddam didn't do anything about for 25 years. What the devil do you want?'"

Cloutier, whose unit also spends millions of dollars for base construction projects and maintenance, backed off his threat on the projects. He agreed on heavier patrolling and stricter enforcement of the 10-p.m.-to-5-a.m. curfew. Before the security talk, Cloutier handed over \$500 contributed by his troops to the black-clad widow of the assassinated city engineer. He and the mayor also turned aside a claim from a petitioner that a heap of auctioned-off scrap metal on city hall grounds belonged to him, telling him to file a complaint in court.

Cloutier, a 17-year Army veteran, along with the mayor and police chief then jolted over dirt roads in a long convoy to tour dilapidated rural schools, including ones in Sunni vil-

lages that had never seen a U.S. officer.

"We made an inch of progress here today. These kids will go home, tell their parents, we'll put some money in these schools," Cloutier said after plunging into a classroom to hand out candy.

That night, his patrol was at a checkpoint when a van drove up to the lead Abrams tank, the driver jumped out and the van exploded. The fleeing man was shot dead, and the column was also hit by small-arms fire.

Four suspects were detained. A simultaneous rocket attack on the U.S. base slightly wounded one soldier.

"I really think that the word is going to get out that, don't mess with the coalition forces, don't mess with IA (Iraqi army) forces, because you are going to die," Cloutier said. ☑



TF 1-10 Drum Major

07 MAY 05

Line of Operation: Security
Who: 32nd Iraqi Army Battalion
What: Clearing Operation
When: 05 May 2005
Where: Palm Groves West of Buhriz
Why/Significance: The 32nd Iraqi Army BDE which includes the 204th, 205th, 206th, and the 213th Iraq Battalions conducted a palm grove clearing operation to the West of Buhriz. The operation's main focus was weapons caches and known AIF mortar sites. In the past, the AIF have used this area to store their weapons and shot them from underneath the protection of the palm trees. The operation was an overwhelming success of this operation, further proves that the ISF are gaining the upper hand on the AIF. Everyday stronger and better organized.
Bulletize: 32nd IA BDE conducts palm grove clearing operation.

DRUM MAJORS



Each battalion submits a daily good-news story called a "Drumbeat" to the Brigade. Weekly, a distinguished panel of judges evaluates the "Drumbeat" and selects the best one, which is crowned the "Drum Major." *Hammer Times* proudly presents the "Drum Majors" for the last two weeks. ☑

TF 66 DRUM MAJOR

13 MAY 2005

LOO: Security
TIME CATEGORY: 05 0500 MAY 05
Who: 3RD IA BDE
What: 3RD IA BDE conducted a raid in the town of Buhriz and a clearance of the Buhriz palm groves. The BDE detained 17 personnel, 5 of which tested positive for HE. They captured: 3 mortar tubes w/ 14 rds, a SPG-9 recoilless rifle, Dushka AA gun w/ 12 boxes of ammo, 6 x 107 mm rocket launchers, 12 RPG launchers w/ 18 rds, 15 x 120mm or larger IEDs, many other smaller explosives, along with numerous electrical components used to make IEDs, and small arms weapons.
Where: Buhriz, Buhriz Palm Groves
Significance: This was the first four battalion operation and use of indirect fire for the brigade. They seized the most weapons cache of any operation to date. BG Ha'ad discussed the success of the operation and its impact on the people of Buhriz and the greater Diyala region during a news conference.

