

TALON

Operation Joint Forge

Task Force Eagle

Saturday, September 30, 2000

JOINT WEAPONS DEMONSTRATION

PHYSICAL TRAINING

SOLDIERS STAYING FIT

EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL

DESTROYING MINES

CHARITY IS A VIRTUE

SOLDIERS DONATE FROM THEIR OWN PAYCHECKS

LIFE AND IT'S GREATEST VALUES

We convince ourselves that life will be better after we get married, have a baby, then another. Then we are frustrated that the kids aren't old enough and we'll be more content when they are older. After that we're frustrated that we have teenagers to deal with. We will certainly be happy when they are out of that stage. We tell ourselves that our life will be complete when our spouse gets his or her act together, when we get a nicer car, are able to go on a nice vacation, when we have more money, when we re-deploy back to the states, when we retire from the military.

The truth is, there's no better time to be happy than right now. If not now, when? Your life will always be filled with challenges. It's best to admit this to yourself and decide to be happy anyway. One of my favorite quotes comes from Alfred D. Souza, he said, "for a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin—real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be gotten through first, some unfinished business, time to be served, a debt to be paid. Then life would begin. Then it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life."

This perspective has helped me to see there is no way to happiness. Happiness is the way. So, treasure every moment you have. And treasure it more because you shared it with someone special, special enough to spend your time, and remember, time waits for no one...so stop waiting until you finish school, until you lose ten pounds, until you have kids, until your kids leave the house, until you start work, until you retire, until you get married, until you get divorced, until Friday night, until Sunday morning, until you get a new car or home, until your car or home is paid off, until spring, until summer, until fall, until winter, until you are out of the army, until the fifteenth, until your song comes on, until you've had a drink, until you've sobered up, until you die. Decide now that there is no better time than right now to be happy...Happiness is a journey not a destination.

Let us remember the greatest values in life:

The greatest handicap.....	Fear
The best day.....	Today
Hardest thing to do.....	To begin
Easiest thing to do.....	Finding fault
Most useless asset.....	Pride
Most useful asset.....	Humility
The greatest mistake.....	Giving up
The greatest stumbling block.....	Egotism
The greatest comfort.....	Work well done
Most disagreeable person.....	The complainer
Worst bankruptcy.....	Loss of enthusiasm
Greatest need.....	Common sense
Meanest feeling.....	Regret at another's success
Best gift.....	Forgiveness
The most painful to accept.....	Defeat
The greatest moment.....	Death
The greatest knowledge.....	God
The greatest thing.....	Love
The greatest success in the world.....	Self-fulfillment of Mind and Peace

THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK

- Saturday** "As you live your life, always forgive your enemies -- nothing annoys them so much."
- Sunday** "The doorway in our life that we seal shut to keep out the pain, is the same door through which love must enter."
- Monday** "Your companions in life are the buttons on an elevator, they will either take you up or they will take you down."
- Tuesday** "Are you so busy earning a living that you're forgetting to make a life."
- Wednesday** "The trouble with life in the fast lane is that you get to the other end in an awful hurry."
- Thursday** "Where there is love there is life. Love is life, and if you miss love, you will miss life. Life in abundance comes only through great love."
- Friday** "Live your life each day as you would climb a mountain. An occasional glance toward the summit keeps the goal in mind, but many beautiful scenes are to be observed from each new vantage point. Climb slowly, steadily, enjoying each passing moment, and the view from the summit will serve as a fitting climax for the journey."

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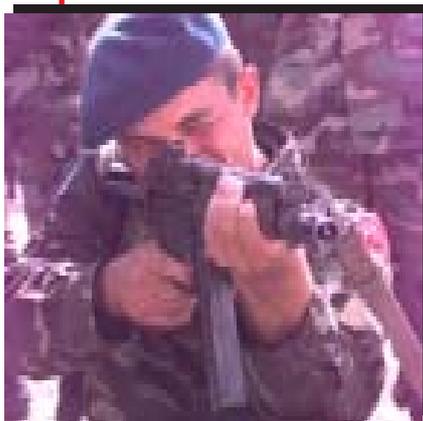
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CONTENTS



ON THE COVER

Pvt. Soner Yalcinkaya demonstrates one of the many firing positions that may be used to fire the MP-5 submachine gun.

6



TURKISH ARMY

An overview of their conscription system.

5



TARGET PRACTICE

Turkish soldiers practice their sharpshooting skills.

8

CSM/Safety Message	4
EOD hunts for mines	9
Turkish Soldiers stay physically fit	10
Soldiers donate their own money to help locals	11
Soldier's Spotlight	12

Before Closing The Book

By Command Sgt. Maj. Bobbie R. Adams

Command Sergeant Major, MND-N

In five days, SFOR 8 will begin a new chapter in the mission of bringing peace and stability to Bosnia and Herzegovina, but October 5, 2000 is not the end of SFOR 7. Our mission will not be complete until every piece of equipment has been shipped and accounted for back at home station and every soldier that we deployed with has returned home safely.

For the past several weeks, Maj. Gen. Halverson and I have stressed the importance of not letting your guard down and finishing the mission with teamwork and professionalism. I cannot stress this enough. We have come too far, accomplished too much and set too many standards to let a simple mistake ruin the mission for any of us.

Do not be lulled into complacency during these last few days. Just because



we have made it this far, does not mean we are able to start half-stepping now. Maintain your situational awareness and

professionalism until you are back at home in the United States.

It is our hope that some day a permanent peace will come to this troubled land. You have helped to move that process forward. Over the next few months and years, the significance of what you have accomplished here will be our legacy for future rotations. The SFOR 7 team is not only multinational, multidimensional and—with the AC/RC integration—multifaceted: it is the best yet. Thank you for making it so.

There is still much work to be done before we can close the book on SFOR 7. I want to thank each and every one of you for your willingness to serve in this noble effort. I am proud to have been a part of this historic mission; it has been an honor to serve with all of you. We have served our state, our country and the world as soldiers, not of war, but of peace. **LONESTAR/BRAVE RIFLES!**

HORSEPLAY: DON'T DO IT



Text by Maj. Ted N. Aanenson
Safety Officer, Eagle Base
Drawing by Maj. Larry Seefeldt
CPIC, Eagle Base

There is an old joke that goes "A Battalion Commander once said that there were three things that he didn't ever want to hear in his unit:

A Lieutenant say, 'In my vast experience.'

A Captain say, 'I've been thinking.'

And a Warrant Officer say, 'Hey guys! Watch this!'

There is a bit of truth behind that joke. 'Watch this' usually means someone is planning to do something out of the ordinary, which means it is either stupid, horseplay, or most likely both. Horseplay is dangerous. It creates unexpected situations that often lead to unexpected results. "I didn't mean for anyone to get hurt, I was just trying to have a little fun."

Whether it is something as simple as giving someone a playful push while walking on the boardwalk or as serious as 'joyriding' in a helicopter, they have one thing in common – they are deviating from

the standard. Remember the basic tenet of firearms – treat every firearm as if it is loaded. Use this philosophy in everything you are doing. Always drive your vehicle as if it could hurt someone; it can. Don't do things that are unexpected or that may startle someone when they are working. Never engage in practical jokes. Practical jokes are a particularly dangerous form of horseplay because one leads to another. The practical jokes escalate, getting bigger and bigger, until someone gets hurt.

No one should tolerate horseplay. People do get hurt, and too often it is an innocent bystander. Don't let it be you!

TURKISH ARMY

***DIFFERENT IN
STRUCTURE, BUT
SAME IN MISSION***



PASS AND REVIEW—Turkish conscripts march in formation for Pass and Review every day at 530 p.m. The soldiers are inspected by their commander and then stand at attention while their army song is played.

Story and photo by Spc. Destiny C. Smith

102nd MPAD, Eagle Base

Photos by Air Force 2nd Lt. Karen L. Roganov

CPIC, Air Force Liaison

One of the advantages of working in a Multinational Task Force is being able to work with armies and people from pretty much anywhere. And part of working with them is learning the cultures and customs that are unique to the armies.

The Turkish Battalion Task Force is located in the center of a quaint and ancient part of Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), where an old steel mill is located. This battalion is where Turkish Army officers, conscripts and specialists work together to keep peace.

The Turkish Army is different from the U.S. Army in many ways. There is an 18-month compulsory service (conscription) for all males over the age of 20. The Turkish Army requires every male to serve in the army unless they have an excuse—university education or medical reasons. The conscripts or draftees then undergo a three-month basic training, three-month pre-deployment peace keeping training and they are sent on a peacekeeping mission for a year. After that mission is over, their service is over; they are sent back to their families in Turkey.

During their conscription, they are allowed chances to gain rank. Tests are given, and depending on their scores, they can be promoted to corporal or sergeant. Their occupational specialties range from engineer to infantry to mechanic, much like the U.S. Army's system.

The officer passage is quite similar to the U.S. Army's way also. Turkish citizens (men and women) who have university degrees are allowed to enter as officers. However the majority of the Turkish officers are the results of graduating from the Turkish Army Military Academy. They don't have to go through conscription. The officer rank is the same as the U.S. Army's.

Turkey's Army consists of four Army Commands, a training command and a logistical command. The Army Commands constitute the striking power of the land forces. The First Army's headquarters is in Istanbul, the Second Army is in Malatya, the Third Army is in Erzincan, and the Fourth Army is in Izmir. These Army commands are all located in Turkey, where a majority of the Turkish Army works. But, if the United Nations (UN) needs a Turkish Army representative to fill a slot during a mission, they can travel all around the world.



D&C—The conscripts practice drill and ceremony, similar to U.S. Army soldiers in basic training.



ALL CLEAR—When learning firing techniques and zeroing the weapon, the conscripts have their weapons checked to make sure there are no rounds in the chamber.



PLUSES AND MINUSES—Lt. Col. Kudret Erkan, Turkish Battalion Task Force Commander, and Lt. Col. Edward Leacock, 629th Military Intelligence Battalion Commander, discuss the advantages of the M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon over the M-60 machine gun and the M-16 rifle.

WEAPONS



HERE'S THE TRICK—As Staff Sgt. Darren E. [Name obscured] Regiment looks on, 1st. Lt. Ugur Tashseten explains how the M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon can operate in daylight as well. A tiny hole in the lens cover can operate and see the target.



FAMILIARIZATION—Turkish soldiers fire M-4s and the M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon during a joint weapons demonstration. This joint demonstration was intended to help familiarize the soldiers with not only the weapons but also each other. Here, Sgt. John Pantilla coaches this Turkish soldier on the range while others fire in the background.



Ekberg of 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry explains how the night vision scope can be used in allows just enough light in so that the human eye



TAKING AIM—After several safety briefings, U.S. and Turkish soldiers were invited to fire each of the individual weapons used by each of the two countries. Here, Spc. Eric Chaffey fires the MP-5.

DEMO

INTRICATE DETAILS—As part of the demonstration, weapons and weapons systems used by the Turkish Military were on display for U.S. soldiers to see and learn about. Here, Sgt. Ali Kurtulmus explains the details of the Armored Mortar Carrier while a member of the crew stands by.



Photos and cutlines
by Sgt. Kevin Cowan
102nd MPAD, Eagle Base

FIFTH DUTY:

BUILDS ENDURANCE, ABILITY TO FIRE UNDER DURESS

By Sgt. Shanon B. Woods

69th PCH, Eagle Base

Photos by Sgt. Kevin D. Cowan and Spc. Destiny C. Smith

102nd MPAD, Eagle Base

Breathing, aim, body position and trigger squeeze; factors good marksmen are mindful of when engaging targets on the rifle range. Breathing was one of the most important factors for soldiers from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Mechanized Infantry Companies and the 2nd Mechanized Company, 3rd Platoon of the Turkish Battalion Task Force. They engaged in the fifth duty of rifle training called “gaining strength” on Sept. 21.

There are six “duties” that a soldier must excel in to earn his expert rifleman badge, according to 1st Lt. Baris Konak, 2nd Mechanized Company, 3rd Platoon.

The first duty requires soldiers to engage 25-meter targets; the second duty, 100-meter targets; third duty, 200-meter breast targets; fourth duty, 200-meter targets; fifth duty, 200-meter knee targets, the sixth and final duty is to engage targets at night. If there is a half or smaller moon in the sky, then the soldiers are required to engage 25-meter targets. If the moon is over half full, then the soldiers engage 100-meter targets, according to 1st Lt. Sinan Gokoglan.

The fifth duty, “gaining power,” tests the soldier’s endurance and ability to fire under duress. The soldiers are required to run 1 kilometer in full combat gear, aim and fire three 7.62 mm rounds using a G-3 rifle at a 200-meter target within six minutes.

Two weeks of intensive training prepares Turkish infantry soldiers for the G-3 firing range,” said 1st Lt. Sinan Gokoglan. During these two weeks, soldiers learn parts of the weapon, how to engage targets, body position, and safety. Officers are continuously checking and asking soldiers questions to ensure they understand. When a soldier needs it, he is sent for re-training. For example, if a soldier makes it to the fourth duty and does not excel, he repeats the training for that duty.



SCANYOUR LANES—Turkish mechanized infantry soldiers on the G-3 rifle range wave green flags indicating that they have finished firing all three rounds at the 200-meter target downrange.



WEAPON MAINTENANCE—Turkish mechanized infantry soldiers clean their G-3 rifles after firing on the range.

Soldiers at the Turkish Battalion Task Force are required to qualify with the G-3 rifle at least once a month.

Pvt. Ercan Endes of the 2nd Mechanized Infantry Company paid close attention during training and successfully completed the fifth duty. “I did everything that the commander said we needed to do for targetting,” he said.

It helps that the Turkish soldiers are used to conditioning exercises, “I am not tired. It was only one kilometer. We always run five kilometers twice a week wearing full combat gear,” Endes said.



RUN FORTHE GOAL—Soldiers of Turkish Battalion Task Force's 1st and 3rd Mechanized Infantry Companies sprint one kilometer in full combat gear prior to firing on the G-3 rifle range.



ZERO THE WEAPON—During a G-3 rifle training exercise, the proctor waves a red flag indicating that there is a possible malfunction or some other mishap with the weapon.

COMBINED EOD EFFORTS MAKE BIH A SAFER PLACE



IED—Master Sergeant Savas Gundogdu displays an improvised explosive device (IED). This toy camera, which contained an explosive, was turned in to the Turkish EOD team during a harvest operation.

Story and photos by Sgt. Shanon B. Woods

69th PCH, Eagle Base

Making Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) a safe place to live is a daunting challenge. However, the Turkish Battalion Task Force Explosive Ordnance Device (EOD) team in Zenica, BiH is up to this challenge.

Composed of a six-man team from various Turkish Armed Forces, the EOD team has a combined total of 83 years of experience.

Team leader, 1st Lt. Bulent Karaaslan of the Turkish Air Force has been in service for four years.

1st Lt. Ilhan Savici of the Underwater Defense Team of the Turkish Navy has been in service for 12 years and attended an eight-year long school.

Master Chief Saban Alan of the Turkish Army has been in service for 17 years.

Master Chief Cunevt Topcubasi also of the Turkish Navy's Underwater Defense Team has been in service for 16 years.

Master Sergeant Savas Gundogdu of the Turkish Air Force and Specialist Haken Zileli of the Turkish Army, have both been in service for 13 years.

These men work together to perform a multi-faceted duty that enables them to wear several hats.

Entity Armed Forces (EAF) soldiers in the Turkish Brigade sector, perform demining and clearing procedures under the supervision of the Turkish EOD team. The Turkish show them what they can and cannot do to get this important mission accomplished, safely.

On a regular basis, updates on progress are reported to the Mine Action Center on Eagle Base. The Turkish EOD uses maps and other intelligence provided them by the Mine Action Center to determine where the minefields are located.

Every month there is a meeting held to discuss the mission.

Here a report is given as to how many square meters of minefield have been cleared per week.

The types of mines discovered are also reported.

Other responsibilities of the Turkish EOD team include acting in the event that the mission of Stabilization Force (SFOR) is threatened; intervening if incidents occur that would prevent SFOR duties from being completed, monitoring the disposal of unexploded ordnance and visiting

schools to teach mine awareness to children, said Savici.

Special care and attention is given when teaching the children. They are shown how to beware of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), where toys for example could be made into weapons. So far this team has taught over 1,650 children.

According to Karaaslan, there were one million mines in BiH in 1993, and there are currently 18,000 minefields in BiH.

While it is difficult to determine the number of mines cleared since 1993, the EOD team agrees that it will take another 200 years to discover all of the mines and unexploded ordnances.

The demining teams work on a nine-cycle year. Each cycle runs for 30 days. They do not work in the winter as the frozen ground makes detection difficult.

On occasion, the Turkish EOD team does training exercises with the United States EOD team. "This combined training makes for a great opportunity for us both," said Topcubasi.

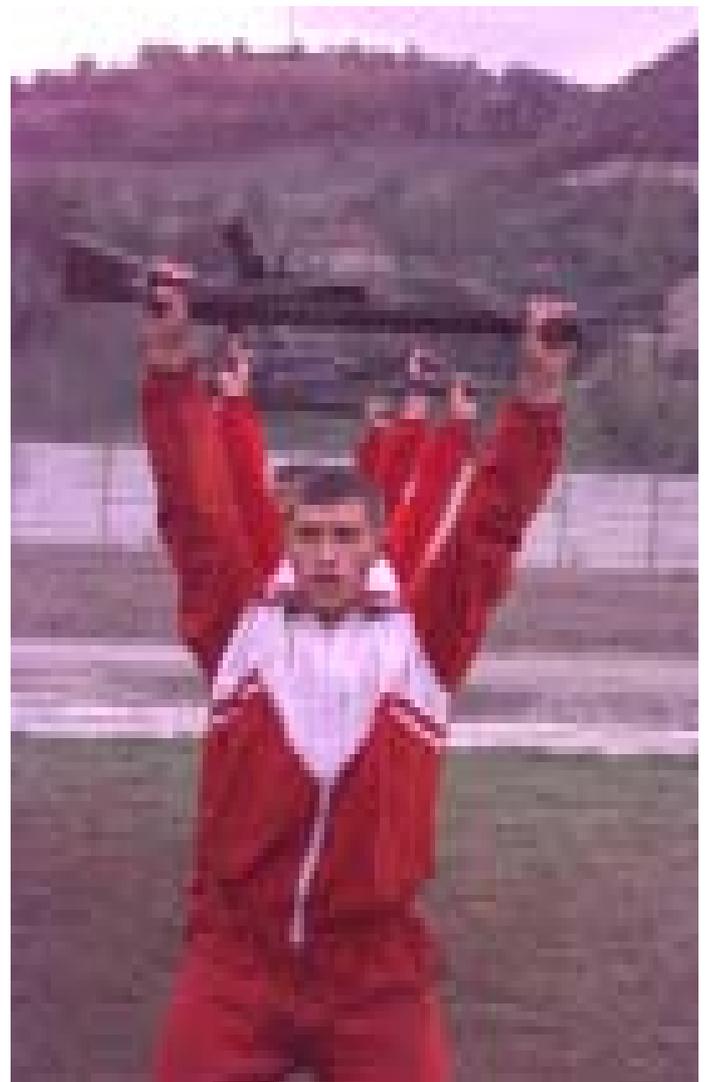
BiH still has a very dangerous landscape, but with the combined efforts of the Turkish and other SFOR EOD teams, the EAF and the community, there is hope that it will be safer.



JOINT SERVICE—The Turkish EOD team is made up of many services, ranks and experience levels. The team is shown here in the EOD office of the Turkish Battalion Task Force in Zenica. The first row is Specialist Haken Zileli of the Turkish Army; Master Sergeant Savas Gundogdu of the Turkish Air Force and Master Chief Cunevt Topcubasi of the Turkish Navy's Underwater Defense Team. The second row is Master Chief Saban Alan of the Turkish Army; 1st Lt. Bulent Karaaslan of the Turkish Air Force and 1st Lt. Ilhan Savici of the Turkish Navy's Underwater Defense Team.



ALWAYS READY



Photos and text
by Sgt. Kevin Cowan
102nd MPAD, Eagle Base

Professional, dedicated and motivated are words that describe soldiers in the Turkish Army. One key factor in maintaining these values is their physical fitness program. Every day, soldiers take part in two phases of the program. One phase, during the first hour, consists of individual physical training. Exercises include push-ups, pull-ups and jumping jacks as well as other standard calisthenics and some that are not so standard such as the long jump, the high jump and the rope climb. Also, included in the individual physical training are exercises with the soldiers' individual weapon. Such exercises are for building physical strength. During the second hour of physical training, soldiers participate in group exercises. While maintaining unit and company integrity, soldiers play team sports such as soccer, basketball and volleyball to increase stamina. These activities are rotated each day to allow all soldiers to participate in each sport. This physical fitness program continues to be a success...the results can be seen in the soldiers.

SOLDIERS DONATE EFFORTS, MONEY TO IMPROVE LIVES OF PEOPLE IN ZENICA

Story and photos

by 1st Lt. Karen L. Roganov

CPIC, Air Force Liaison

Every month, Turkish soldiers are giving up a part of their paycheck so Bosnians of all ethnicities can live a little better.

The program is called the Humanitarian Assistance Fund and it accounts for almost all the income Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) has to work with to offer help to those affected by the Balkan Wars living near Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), which is where the Turkish Battalion is located.

"It was established in 1994 with the arrival of the Turkish Battalion and prompted by the first commander, who wanted to do something for the community," said Major Recep Ozdemir, chief of civil and military affairs at Zenica. "We've raised 2,800,000 deutsche marks up until now."

As part of a totally voluntary program, the money from the SFOR soldiers goes to a variety of needs to include medical operations, building repairs, utility payments and school supplies, he said.

"If we fix the roads, the ones who left can return."

To request aid, a person needs to submit a simple application form and "give it to a soldier on the street, the main gate or a person who works here," said Ozdemir. "Last month we received 160 applications."

For the CIMIC, managing the program means making site visits to assess conditions before awarding aid. On such stop along the route was to the Basketball Disabled Club of Zenica.

Founded in 1995, the director explained to the CIMIC representatives that their organization needed more funding for a wheel chair bus-unloading device used when attending sport games.

"Many members lost their legs due to mines during the war," explained Hanumic Mahmut. "Wheelchairs aren't the only things they need. This program gives them psychological support."

The team was preparing to play a group from Sarajevo Sept. 30, while last year a match took the team to Istanbul, Turkey for 15 days to challenge a wheel chair group there, he said.

However, the people of Zenica don't have to go far to experience a bit of Turkey. In helping rebuild the community, the Turkish soldiers have constructed a traditional fountain with marble from Afyon and mosaic tiles from Kutahya imported from Turkey.

"People can drink water from the fountain, but it's also a symbol of friendship between Bosnia and Turkey," said 1st Lt. Ekrem Yazla, information operations officer, CIMIC.

Yazla pointed out that the park benches along a river running through Zenica were constructed by the Turkish soldiers.

Money from the Humanitarian Assistance Fund also recently went to fix a village sewer system, buy prostheses, create a school garden arrangement and rent a bus to get children to a concert, said Ozdemir.

An Orthodox Catholic Priest who was visited that day seemed pleased with the contributions his church received.

"Regardless of religious origin, they help everyone," said Jadran Danilovic. He was pointing out the new door on the church, which he said had been shelled with artillery. He had been ministering there since 1989, but had to leave from 1992 through 1994 during the war.

The church was 115 years old and the CIMIC team had recently made another donation so the congregation could throw an anniversary celebration party, said Danilovic.

Before heading back to the base, the CIMIC team made a stop



WATER FOR THE MASSES—The Turkish CIMIC team stands in front of the fountain constructed by the Turkish soldiers in an effort to help rebuild the community. It is a Turkish-style fountain with tiles imported from Turkey. According to 1st Lt. Ekrem Yazla, the fountain is a sign of friendship between Bosnia and Turkey. The Turkish CIMIC team is (from left to right) interpreter, Anes Polimac, Private Ali Kalkan, 1st Lt. Bilal Bayram and 1st Lt. Ekrem Yazla.



APPLY FOR HELP—Maj. Recep Ozdemir thumbs through the Humanitarian Assistance Fund applications. CIMIC is in contact with four local radio stations to get the word out about the program, he said.

for lunch. It was one more opportunity to realize how many lives the Turkish soldiers touch.

Upon leaving, the waitress nonchalantly commented to the CIMIC crew, "you paid for my father's heart operation."

A look of contentment came over the soldiers' faces.

Later, Yazla said, "We are here for these people. To help these people is our task."

Story and photos
by Pfc. Jessica E. Revell
102nd MPAD, Camp Dabol

An elderly Bosnian man leans across the table, speaks his native language for several minutes to a younger gentleman in his late twenties, who then turns to another man and from memory translates the speech in Turkish. The third man then renders to a woman in English. The circle goes on for an hour or so, until everyone is satisfied with the information they have received.

The gentleman in his twenties is Fikret Lekpek. And although he speaks Turkish, Bosnian, Hungarian, Russian, and English, he says the hardest part of translating is “making sure you say everything just right”.

Fifty-six years ago Lekpek’s family left Novipazar, Bosnia and Herzegovina to immigrate to Turkey. There, Lekpek studied economics at Istanbul University. After graduating in 1996, he took over his father’s business, a tourism organization that took tourists from Balkan countries to Turkey. He also owned a small textile company, but had to give up both to serve his time in the military.

In Turkey, military service is a required 18-month period. “Every Turkish boy who reaches 20 years old, joins the army with enthusiasm and honor,” said Lekpek. Three months after joining, Lekpek was sent to his parent’s native soil in BiH to serve with the Turkish Army. “It was very interesting for me to come here. My parents were happy, but were scared because of the dangers here from war,” said Lekpek.

Turkish forces have been a part of Stabilization Forces in BiH since 1994. The Turkish Battalion Task Force provides a safe and secure environment in Zenica and the surrounding area. “Our job is to prolong peace and keep readiness always at the highest level.”

Besides his duties as a soldier, Lekpek is a driver and a translator for the Civilian Military Cooperation Battalion. “CIMIC works at making life better in BiH. Since I’m in communication, I am always meeting new people and helping them makes me happy,” he said.

Lekpek enjoys working with people especially the children. He said the children of BiH remind him of his two-year-old daughter back in Turkey. She and his wife are home waiting for his return.

Lekpek is eager to reunite with his family and get back to work. His wife is presently studying economics to help with the business.

He will, however, never forget his peacekeeping mission in BiH, as a Bosnian in the Turkish Army.

“As other Turkish men, I carry out this holy military service with eagerness. In Bosnia, I am proud to serve in the name of humanity as a Turkish soldier.”

ONE AND ALL—Lekpek takes time to play with children after his mission.



SOLDIER'S SPOTLIGHT



GETTING READY—Lekpek prepares the vehicle for a mission.

HOMESICK — (right) Lekpek says the children in BiH remind him of his daughter in Turkey.

