

TALON

Operation Joint Forge

Task Force Eagle

Saturday, October 07, 2000

WELCOME 3RD INFANTRY DIVISION

PASSING THE TORCH

DEPARTING SOLDIERS GIVE ADVICE

SPREADING THE WORD

PSYOP SOLDIERS DOING THEIR PART

SIGNAL WARRIORS

OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

HAVING PATIENCE CARRIES A LOT OF WAIT

Well, we are finally here! The Transfer of Authority is complete. SFOR 8 is under way. Like the Lone Star Division seven months ago, now the clock starts for the Rock of the Marne Division. As the 49th departed, we all saw the smiles on their faces and heard the repeated refrain from them: "I can't wait to get home!" Well, they did wait and so will we. They did important work for seven months during SFOR 7 and then they went home. The same will be true for us. We'll do our jobs and then we will go home. As exciting as the work here is, it simply cannot compare with the feeling that will come when it's time to return home!

Waiting is hard work. When we first arrived, we saw the calendars in our counterpart's offices with lines drawn through the days of the week. They were counting down the days until they could return home. Some soldiers even had their computer screen savers set to count down the days as a constant reminder that the day was steadily approaching for them to go home. Most of us are not too good at this waiting business. Lines at the commissary, lines at the gas station. We even had to wait in line as we processed into Eagle Base. The only thing that keeps us going is knowing that what we're waiting for is worth the wait.

Some years ago, my family went to Disney World. There were many things to do, see, and ride. By far, the most popular attraction was a ride called Space Mountain. Disney World is always crowded but the lines at the Space Mountain ride were exceptionally long because the Space Mountain ride is absolutely thrilling. The average waiting time to get on the ride was an hour. Well, we not only rode Space Mountain once, but we did so three times, and then went back the next day and rode it again! We didn't mind the wait because what we were waiting for was worth the wait.

In Habakkuk 2:3, God says, "The revelation awaits an appointed time. Though it lingers, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay." This was God's response to Habakkuk who had been impatient about his situation, and had asked God, "How long..."

Maybe you are like Habakkuk. Maybe the current deployment or another area of your life is hard because you are having to wait. Habakkuk wanted justice for his people and he wanted it right away. God in essence answered Habakkuk by saying, "I'll answer your prayer, but first, you must wait."

Getting God's best is a lot like the ride at Space Mountain – you have to wait for it. Sadly, scripture is filled with examples of people who couldn't wait for God's answer: Abraham – Moses – Jonah. They took matters into their own hands... maybe like you are doing right now – or you're tempted to do.

It could be that right now, God has asked you to spend some time waiting in His line of patience. It may feel to you that the line is not moving...nothing is happening. God's best always comes after a wait – like the birth of a baby. Right now God is preparing you for your answer and your answer for you. You can't rush it. God is building a faith in you that you would never have if you got an instant answer.

Don't rush it. You'll ruin it. You may be tired of waiting, but don't leave the line or jump the line. Stay where you are...wait patiently. What's at the end of the line is really worth the wait!

See me for the 'rest of the story...'

THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY

- Saturday—** A drowning man does not complain about the size of a life preserver.
- Sunday—** The best way to get the last word is to apologize.
- Monday—** Rank does not confer privilege or give power. It imposes responsibility.
- Tuesday—** Sorrow looks back. Worry looks around. Faith looks up.
- Wednesday—** True faith and courage are like a kite – an opposing wind raises it higher.
- Thursday—** Jesus is a friend who knows all your faults and still loves you anyway.
- Friday—** I would rather walk with God in the dark, than to go alone in the light.

TALON

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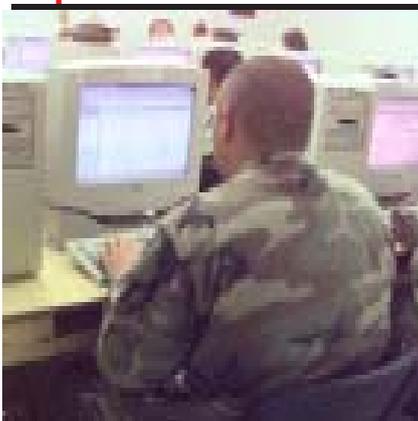
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3rd Infantry Division (Mech) soldiers arrive at Eagle Base, ready to begin their mission. (Photo by Sgt. Keith D. McGrew, Combat Camera)



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FINAL FAREWELL FROM THE COMMANDER

By Major General Robert L. Halverson
Commander, Multinational Division-North (SFOR 7)

Our historic mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has drawn to a close. It seems unbelievable to me that it could be October already, time to leave our new found friends here in BiH and return to our loved ones at home.

I hope that as you return to your homes and families that you have a new appreciation for all that you have, all of the privileges of liberty and freedom that are so precious and fragile.

I know that we have helped to bring these blessings here to all of the people of BiH, and I have every confidence that our able replacements from the 3rd Infantry Division will continue to ensure a lasting peace for all people here in BiH.

I am very grateful to all of the members of SFOR 7, military and civilian, who have worked together seamlessly to accomplish many unthinkable feats.

We have driven over a million miles with no major accidents. I would like to thank our maintenance workers for providing the safest possible vehicles to our soldiers.

We have had no accidental discharges during our rotation. I would like to thank every soldier, NCO and Officer for fighting complacency and abiding by the standards of safety and discipline that have made this goal a reality. It has been apparent that you have taken pride in your standards and lived to Army Values.



Over 8000 families have returned to their pre-war homes since March of this year. For this wonderful fact I thank the members of the International Community, especially the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Office of the High Representative, who work within the secure environment which we provide in order to move people back into their homes.

Perhaps the most significant indicator of the lasting peace being fostered here in BiH was the peaceful recognition of the 5th Anniversary of the fall of Srebrenica. Through the tireless efforts of the international community, the local police and officials, and with minimal assistance from

SFOR, the Women of Srebrenica were able to return to the site of their tragedy to remember their lost loved ones. I deeply appreciate all of the people who made this possible, and I know that the success of this event indicates the willingness of all the people of BiH to commit to lasting peace.

I have a special message to the soldiers of SFOR 7. I know the level of sacrifice you have each made in order to make our mission a success. Many of you have had births or deaths in your families while you have been gone. We have all missed birthdays and anniversaries, holidays and celebrations. We all know that the people of BiH are better for your sacrifices. In case any of you have not had the opportunity to see first hand the smiling faces of children walking to school all over this region, I want you to know that without you, there would be no school, no smiles. Your sacrifices are worthy, and they are appreciated—by me, by the people of BiH, and by the international community who want only peace in this region.

The work you have done here is good. This mission is worthwhile. You should be proud of yourselves, and I am proud of each of you.

I have every confidence that the soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division will continue the noble job of peace that we have carried through this rotation. I wish them the very best of everything in this endeavour, and we will all be watching for your safe return to the States next year.

SAFETY TAKES A HOLIDAY

Story and photo by
Maj. Ted N. Aanenson
Safety Officer, Eagle Base

On the second Tuesday of next week, safety will take a holiday. On that day everyone can forget about safety for the day. That's right! Forget the rules! Don't want to wear your seatbelt? Don't wear it! Tired of having to clear your weapon? Skip it! While you're at it, play in traffic, smoke in the barracks, or drive through stop signs. Heck – why not even drive on the left side of the road?

Hey, wait a minute, somebody could get hurt. Of course, I never said that there wouldn't be consequences for your actions. You might be able to drive for years without a seatbelt and not get hurt. You could probably drive through quite a few stop signs and not run into anything. After all, you are an above average driver. (Are'nt we all?) But what about the other guy? What if you aren't the one driving, someone else is and you're just along for the ride. Do you trust that person enough to let them drive without obeying the rules of the road? You would never fall asleep while smoking in bed. But what about the person in the seahut next to yours? When a seahut can burn down in just a few minutes, do you want to take that chance?

That's why we have developed rules, regulations, and standards. Without such "restrictions" there would be chaos. And chaos without consequences is anarchy. These rules are

made for everyone. If we all obey them, we know what to expect out on the road. The other driver will yield the right-of-way when he/ she is required to, just as you would.

Practice safety in everything you do, both at work and at play, on the job, on the road, and at home. Follow the standards and demand that those around you do as well. Safety is for everyone. Safety should never take a holiday.



REFLECTIONS

ON SFOR 7 –AN ACTIVE-DUTY

SOLDIER’S PERSPECTIVE



By CW4 FC. “Pappy” Badder

Public Affairs Officer, 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment

I’m active duty, but it hasn’t always been that way. I was drafted in early 1968 and spent 18 months in Vietnam as a helicopter door gunner. Leaving the service after that period, I entered the Army Reserve some 10 years later and was a crew chief and later a pilot on the same type helicopters I crewed in Vietnam.

During my six-year stint with the Army Reserve (I returned to active duty in 1987) I observed what could only be described as a “flying club” mentality among the unit’s members. We took beer coolers and lawn chairs to the field. “Real” deployments were not a threat, our interaction with the active component was nonexistent, and we were essentially poster children for a prevailing national attitude that the guard and reserve was a country club for those who wanted to “play at” being soldiers . . . but probably couldn’t cut it if the feathers hit the fan.

And there was a lot of truth in that assessment. For us to be players in the big

leagues would have required massive infusions of modernized equipment, intensified training . . . and time. A lot of time.

This view of America’s guard and reserve soldiers underwent some modifications as a result of their performance during Desert Shield/Desert Storm. But the “conventional wisdom” – still heard in hushed conversations among active component soldiers and even in the halls of the Pentagon – is that the Citizen Soldiers are not worthy of sharing the same playing field with America’s “real” fighting men and women.

Well, my seven-month tour in Bosnia with SFOR 7 is rapidly coming to a close. During this time, I’ve served on the Special Staff of the headquarters element of the 49th Armored Division, Texas Army National Guard. Because of my position, I’ve had a “front row seat” from which to observe the performance of the first National Guard unit ever to command a multi-national division. As a result of this close association, I’m reminded of something Samuel L. Jackson’s character said in the popular movie, Pulp Fiction.

“Allow me to retort,” he said, just before blowing his hapless victim away.

Because of the 49th AD’s involvement – not in spite of it (as you’re likely to be told by those dinosaurs who refuse to see the truth) – the SFOR 7 rotation may well be the best yet in terms of positive, tangible accomplishments (bridges built, roads improved, displaced persons resettled or returned to their former homes, safety record, and much, much more).

Much of this is because of a little known fact that has been quietly occurring over the past decade. Guard and Reserve units have been upgrading and modernizing their equipment with the best that American technology has to offer. And training time has increased commensurate to need. Hence they no longer need “massive infusions” of new equipment and training as the Guard of old certainly would have required.

And guard units assigned to the Bosnia mission receive the same amount of “train up” time as their active duty counterparts – to include the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE) at Fort Polk, LA, and Individual Readiness Training (IRT) which every soldier must undergo prior to deployment.

As a result, the “Lone Star” Division’s headquarters element didn’t come here to learn. They came here to lead. And they did so in magnificent fashion.

And it isn’t just the 49th Armored Division. The rotation’s Military Police contingent is an Army Reserve unit. The MEDEVAC (Air Ambulance) company is National Guard. And elements of the Signal detachment, Public Affairs assets, the Military Intelligence battalion, and many, many more are Guard and Reserve soldiers from Maine to California, Oregon to Texas.

In fact, aside from the major maneuver elements, supplied by Fort Carson, Colorado’s 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, the remainder of SFOR 7’s American contingent is either composed of or augmented by elements of America’s Guard and Reserve forces.

These soldiers have all stood shoulder to shoulder with their active duty counterparts, distinguishable only by the patch worn on their left shoulder. Their pre-deployment training was identical to the active component’s. Their equipment is top notch, their leadership superb.

I have no illusions that the SFOR 7 rotation will magically erase decades of skepticism. Nor will this article. But there is now at least one less skeptic. Because of my association with the Army Reserve in the 1980s, I was among those who needed to be convinced. I have no further doubts that today’s Guard and Reserve is competent, capable, and willing to do the job. I’m proud to have served both alongside them and under their leadership.

LEFT-SEAT, RIGHT-SEAT:

PASSING T

Story and photos

by Spc. Katherine L. Collins

65th PCH, Camp McGovern

Soldiers arriving and departing Bosnia and Herzegovina become very familiar with a process called the 'left-seat, right-seat ride.' A key element to this left seat-right seat ride is passing on knowledge gained from personal growth while here. Scenarios of what to expect while deployed are shared, and lessons in morale and nurturing relationships between those apart are taught. At Camp McGovern, the torch of wisdom is passed from those who have lived the mission and learned from it to those who must maintain health and happiness to carry it on.

"Deployment is definitely a growth experience. You not only apply professional knowledge you've learned, your soldiering and MOS (military occupational specialty) skills, but you apply personal knowledge while serving abroad," said Spc. Scott L. Sidesinger, 984th Military Police Company (MP Co.).

"I've learned a lot about relationships while here. Dealing with family separation reveals existing flaws in your relationships, and simply dealing with life during deployment teaches you about yourself," continued Sidesinger.

"Honesty is the biggest thing here. If you have honesty with your spouse, you won't have anxieties upon returning home," he said.

"It works two ways over here. By having to communicate more by being apart, you either get closer or further apart. Deployment separation, brings to light the weak areas of your relationship. If you see that you are growing further apart, then you know you must be more honest and communicate more. You must learn to have a trusting relationship while apart. It only strengthens it," said Sidesinger.

"Being apart from spouses and family is a difficult thing," said Capt. David E. Wake, 2nd Squadron 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment (2/3 ACR), Camp McGovern's general Protestant chaplain. "A sense of separation will naturally exist, but if you and your spouse and children pull out details about each day and each experience you are encountering, and tell them to each other, you will feel more a part of each other's lives."

"Furthermore, how you do business while apart depends on how you care about one another. It's better to have no radio or T.V. on in the background when you are talking with someone you care about. It's an honor for them to have your undivided attention. It tells them they are not just another entertainment center, but, rather, that you are truly interested in hearing what they have to say," he said. "Also, if you left home with problems existing in your marriage or relationships, don't stop trying to fix those problems just because you are apart. Start making positive changes in your life while you are away," said Wake. "If you and your spouse were considering divorce, or separating, if you weren't married yet, before you deployed, try agreeing to stop the clock on that and concentrate on you both just making it through the rotation. One, you both will be agreeing on something. Two, the time apart will give you both a chance to make improvements in yourselves and in the relationship. If your spouse does not want that, just concentrate on improving yourself. Conduct yourself with positive energy here, improving yourself, and hopefully it will shine on the person back home and change them." "Most soldiers depart having had strong relationships with their families, but the separation and life of deployment can cause problems in the relationships. The military is aware of this and, therefore, provides sources for soldiers to care for their relationships at home while away. We have a phone center here, and soldiers can use the computers in the library, education center and Cyber Café to e-mail those back home. Many soldiers have found the video teleconference system to be very effective too. Each soldier can use it about once per month. The person receiving the message does need a camera on the other end, but they cost only about



STRESS RELIEF—To help the time pass and to also improve physical fitness, soldiers are encouraged to suggest to those incoming the benefits of working out at the McGovern gymnasium.

A FAMILIAR VOICE—Well aware of the effect of family communication on morale and family relations, soldiers are provided with the opportunity to speak with their families on a regular basis, in addition to e-mailing over the Internet. Here one soldier makes a call home.



THE TORCH



al fitness, soldiers preparing to depart Camp McGovern to re-deploy
overn Gymnasium.

TIME TO RELAX—Soldiers preparing to redeploy suggest that enjoying a cappuccino at Camp McGovern's Rose Garden Cafe with friends is one of the best ways to relax after a hard day's work. Here soldiers sit back with a cup of coffee or a cool drink conversing at the Rose Garden Cafe.



\$30 each. Also, we have a book here in the chapel titled '101 Ways to Be a Better Long-Distance Super Dad...or Mom Too!' Soldiers can pick up a copy of this book and read it to help them nurture their relationships with their children while apart. These are just some of the sources soldiers can utilize to help maintain healthy relationships with their families," said Wake. "Make sure you and your spouse are on the same sheet of music though," he said. "One or both of you may think the other calls too little or too much. I write my wife every day and call her once per week, and this seems to work well for us. Other soldiers may communicate more or less. Do what is right for your relationship, but make sure you understand the needs of your spouse and children. You may have to make an effort to write more or less when you are not used to doing that, but it may be necessary for maintaining a healthy relationship."

"When apart from your spouse, you must ask yourself, 'Where does my heart lay?' How much you love your spouse will determine how much and how honestly you communicate with them, and how you conduct yourself while apart from them. Love for them will cause you to discipline yourself, possibly staying away from certain things. Discipline is necessary for a successful marriages," said Wake. "You also learn who your real friends are back home when you're away," said Spc. Craig W. Huffstutler, 984th MP Co. "You see who was only around when life was happy and who actually cares for your family when you are away."

Being apart from family and the comforts of home, soldiers face difficulties at times while on deployment. Those who have experienced these times and are now heading home suggest relying on fellow soldiers to successfully make it through these times.

"The best advice here comes from friends. Seek out friends and rely on each other to keep each other's spirits up and to help each other be better soldiers and better people, by having them be an objective point of view. Friends help each other to see both sides and the pros and cons of any situation. Then you must make the decision," said Spc. Kevin Souders, Howitzer Battery 2/3 ACR. "Sometimes, even just being able to verbalize a problem to a friend allows you to solve it yourself."

"Just keeping up your own spirits, taking care of your self, is something to pay attention to over here too," said Spc. Robert E. Temple, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop 2/3 ACR. "Work hard, but relax yourself when the job is done. People borrow movies from MWR (Morale, Welfare and Recreation) and watch them in their rooms, or they can watch whatever movies are played in the T.V. room in the ZOS (Morale, Welfare and Recreation center at Camp McGovern.) People hang out at the ZOS too, shooting pool and playing ping pong or whatever, and others relax at the Rose Garden (Café)."

"To help the time pass and to also improve yourself, you can take free classes through the education center. Many also choose to work out at the gym quite a bit, passing time and improving themselves," said Sidesinger.

Understanding the difficulties of living separated from family and without one's usual comforts, the military provides many outlets for communication with family and for relaxation for oneself. Using these sources, soldiers can maintain and improve their relationships with those at home and maintain their own physical and mental health and improve themselves.

Learning the ropes of any new environment is never easy. By pointing out these and any personal sources they have discovered and found beneficial, McGovern soldiers are striving to do what they can to help those taking the reigns of SFOR's peacekeeping mission adjust to deployment more easily, serve their rotation more successfully and re-deploy with few concerns. Then, those soldiers now gaining the knowledge of deployment survival and success will, in turn, pass on the torch of wisdom to those who shall follow in their footsteps.

PSYOP: MIDDLEMEN, WOMEN SPREAD MES- SAGES OF PEACE



ON THE AIR—An interpreter, Cpl. John D. Ellis, two locals and Spc. Emily Casad participate in a radio show. (left)

EXTRA, EXTRA, READ ALL ABOUT IT—Sgt. John R. Mitchell, PSYOP team chief promotes safety to the locals by passing out mine awareness pamphlets.

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

We, as Americans, often forget that this country belongs to someone else. We can do our best to help rebuild it, but ultimately it is the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) that will decide what happens. The four-man team from the 12th Psychological Operations (PSYOP) Battalion out of Seattle, Washington, has worked hard for the last seven months to find out how Stabilization Forces (SFOR) can be of better assistance.

“We come here with engrained notions of what happened during the war. Then you talk to people that were here and they have a different perspective of things,” said Sgt. John R. Mitchell, PSYOP team chief.

The mission of PSYOP is to disseminate selected messages of the squadron commander or SFOR to targeted audiences in the local population. They present the messages to the public either face-to-face or through posters, pamphlets, television and radio shows. They are the middlemen and messengers between the military and the local community.

The types of messages they relay reflect SFOR in a positive light.

“We let them know that SFOR is in support of the Dayton Peace Accord, and the Freedom of Movement. We also show support for the local police and let everyone know we expect a safe and secure environment for refugees to return home,” said Mitchell.

The PSYOP team’s job is also to access information. Through the various mediums they are able to find out how the populace feels about Displaced Persons (DP) returning home, the posters, radio shows, and SFOR in general.

“Everyone is willing to give their opinion. However, they are not as responsive to

the messages. It seems a lot of the Muslims, Bosnians, and older Serbs are completely in support of SFOR. On the other hand, a lot of younger Serbs say that they don’t have problems with you as a person, but don’t care for SFOR as a whole,” said Mitchell.

Mitchell said that sometimes the Serbs accuse SFOR of only caring about the Muslims, and not taking what the Serbs think and want into consideration. He also said that those in DP camps can’t understand why they have been there for years and watch others go home all the time.

To ease the concerns of the people, PSYOP frequently visits areas throughout their AOR. They randomly select people through crowds in coffee shops, restaurants and on the street. Sometimes they zero in on one particular target to get a unique perspective. For instance, they may need a woman’s perspective, younger people’s perspective, or a DP’s perspective on a particular issue.

Sometimes it is the other way around depending on the information that is needed. “If we need opinions of SFOR and we walk in and there is someone glaring at us, making comments, and you can tell he really despises us, then he might be the first person we talk to,” said Mitchell.

Being conscious of what tactics are most effective is also part of the PSYOP mission.

The quote by Socrates, “The perfect human being is all human beings put together, it is a collective, it is all of us together that make perfection,” is an example of the influential phrases displayed on their posters. Some of the other posters have children’s drawings on them, or photos of local families that the crew has taken themselves.

“If we’re driving down the road and we see something interesting, then we’ll stop, take a picture and submit it for a poster,” said Mitchell.

Most of the posters, however, are designed in the Product Development Cen-

ter at Eagle Base.

Throughout their rotation the team has put up thousands of posters.

“It’s an ongoing fight we have. We’ll hang up 200 posters one day, and then return the next to see how they deface the posters. We used to use tape, but now we have this really good glue and it’s a lot harder to get them down,” said Mitchell.

These middlemen also reach the public through pamphlets and magazines. The contemporary European-cultured magazine *MIRKO*, is distributed to young teens to “make them aware of what other teens are doing in other parts of Europe,” said Mitchell.

Lastly, they educate through television and radio shows. The PSYOP film crew at Eagle Base produces television spots and addresses issues such as mine awareness and DPs. The radio shows promote cultural awareness, play popular music, and receive feedback from listeners on SFOR.

Disc jockeys Spec. Adam W. Renn and Cpl. John D. Ellis work a live two-hour show on RADIOFERAL 106.5 FM every Saturday night.

“We play mostly music, but we do have guests from SFOR, which are usually soldiers with different MOSs (Military Occupational Specialty),” said Renn.

“Back during Project Harvest, we had members from EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) come to the station and talk about mine safety,” said Ellis.

Most of the ideas they get for the shows come from the listeners.

“There is a fair mixture of what I call ‘conservative optimism’. Older people want things to go on, while the younger seem to be firm believers in an ethnically pure Republica Srpska. Overall, the people are not sure whether peace is for good. No one feels confident that if SFOR would withdraw, things wouldn’t return to hostilities,” said Mitchell.

As SFOR continues to provide a safe and secure environment in BiH, the PSYOP team will continue to spread the idea that tolerance is the best hope for long-term stability and prosperity.

BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE, THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME



SMOOTH OPERATORS—While in ‘the box’ Sgt. Jason P. McDaniel answers requests for phone connections (above). Sgt. Rodney L. McCarroll uses the Digital Non-Secure Voice Terminal (right).

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

About the size of a ‘porta-potty’, it looks like a shack on the back of a HUMMV. Many have mistaken it for a storage shed, some thought it was an information booth, but to five members of the 249th Signal Battalion at Camp Dabol, it’s been home for the last seven months.

The box is about six feet wide by six feet long, with 70 pieces of scrap wood for a floor, a plastic tarp for a roof, and the enclosed manned secured switchboard area they call ‘the hut’.

There is no insulation. Light, air and precipitation seep through the separation between the walls and ceiling. To keep the box warm, the crew uses bubble wrap, t-shirts, plastic covers or anything they can find to fill in the cracks. When they arrived in February, five feet of snow was just starting to melt through the gaps in the frame.

“The first thing I thought was, ‘It’s cold’. Then I thought, ‘This is it? Where’s the surprise,’” said Sgt. Jason P. McDaniel.

Not only were they forced to endure an indoor arctic climate, they also discovered that their predecessors left them a wiring nightmare. The team said that after much consolidation, they’ve come a long way.

The “signal warriors” can provide up to 42 phone lines using Digital Non-secure Voice Terminals (DNVT) and 52 computer hookups. They do not provide the phones or the wire itself; however, they offer the service and a demonstration on using the DNVT to those that need the assistance. Not only can the phone lines be used to communicate with other base camps, they perform as DSN lines as well. By pressing “0”, the members act as switch operators and connect callers to the states.

Through this communication haven, Intranet access is also made available. It is only limited to the theater, but can be used to send e-mail from camp to camp.

Before Sprint entered the theater a few years ago, these were

the only means of communication. And while the methods may seem primitive, an advantage of using them is to backup the system.

“We have two generators with AC (alternating current) power, so when Sprint’s system fails, we are the only operating system, said Sgt. Rodney L. McCarroll, Non-commissioned Officer in Charge.

That makes the system reliable when facing Camp Dabol’s frequent power outages.

The squadron commander and his staff use the system as well as the Tactical Operations Center (TOC). The TOC uses it for communication with convoys out on missions. They have a combat net radio interface which will convert the DNVTs to radios. Others use the phones for backup.

“We are similar to the Maytag repairman. We are the Army version of southwestern bell or GTE (General Telephone Equipment),” said McCarroll. McCarroll, who is technical support for MCI at home, also said this job is a good stepping-stone for soldiers with civilian jobs in communication.

In case of emergency, the box is manned 24 hours and each of the five is on call to provide the most thorough assistance possible. The hut itself also remains combat ready.

“If the cavalry has to move out, we have to move out with them. Back home, when we are in the field, we have all the communication responsibility so we are mobile all the time,” said McCarroll.

But for the last seven months, these soldiers haven’t gone anywhere. After much effort, the funding was finally approved for a new building. Although this rotation won’t be able to enjoy it, the next one will.

The new building will be four to five times larger than the one presently used. Briefings can be held in the new building, whereas now the box has only room enough for two people. There will be insulation, more room for storage and a safer environment.

“We are definitely leaving things better than we inherited them,” said McDaniel.



STAND AND DELIVER—Sgt. Edward Blakey of HHT 2/3 ACR, encourages and instructs fellow soldiers in God's Word during the Sunday gospel service. Blakey said his upbringing greatly influenced his volunteer work as a spiritual minister.

BREAK BREAD TOGETHER—In addition to serving others as a soldier, Blakey volunteers as a spiritual minister to his fellow soldiers. Fulfilling this role, he serves communion to his "brothers and sisters" present at the Sunday gospel service.

MCGOVERN SOLDIER ANSWERS CALL TO PREACH

By Master Sgt. John Sullivan

102nd MPAD, Camp McGovern

Photos by Spc. Katherine Collins

65th PCH, Camp McGovern

Sgt. Edward Blakey can best be described as soft spoken with an easy smile that seems to fill a room when he walks in.

A member of Headquarters Headquarters Troop, 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment (2/3 ACR) at Camp McGovern, those attributes are extremely helpful in his non-duty related job.

His normal job as a logistics expert dealing with fuel and oil products keeps him busy, but on Sundays he takes on a completely different task.

Blakey is a volunteer who preaches Gospel Services at Camp McGovern. It's a calling that the 32-year-old cavalry trooper from Fort Carson, Colo., said is something that he has always wanted to do.

"I received the calling while I was in the U.S. Army," Blakey said. "Before that, though, I always had an interest in going to church."

That interest was cultivated by his mother, Mrs. Dorothy Blakey, he said. The love of the church is "something that she instilled in me from my youth until now."

Blakey said the turning point in his spiritual life came in 1996 at the True Holiness Church of God in Christ in Clarkesville, Tenn., while he was stationed at nearby Fort Campbell, Ky. That day he said he accepted the calling.

"I heard the Lord's voice calling me to step forward," Blakey said. "And I did."

Blakey said he really had no idea what would happen once he accepted the calling and decided to live his life for Christ.

"If there is a need and the Lord is asking me, how could I resist," Blakey said with a slight laugh. "He's a very persistent caller and how could I say no?"

Within two years after accepting the calling, Blakey said he was more heavily involved with church-related activities that ever, including preaching the Gospel.

"I made a commitment to the Lord," Blakey said. "I asked myself – what can I do?"

While stationed at Camp McGovern, Blakey said he approached the base chaplain, Capt. David Wake, better known as Sabre Cross

around the 2nd Squadron, to help.

"He has been an outstanding volunteer preaching the Gospel," Wake said. "His service here has been invaluable. He has preached both here at Camp McGovern and at the Full Gospel services at Eagle Base at well."

Blakey sees no problem meshing his religious feelings with his career as a trooper with the 2nd Squadron. In fact, he sees his religious beliefs as a strength that he has carried forward into his military career.

"A good soldier must be physically fit, but I feel that a good soldier must also be spiritually fit," Blakey said. "The Army gives you a sense of belonging, a sense of being something that is greater than just the single person."

"That's what the Gospel is all about – belonging to something. I believe that my fellowship in the family of Jesus Christ has strengthened me as a soldier."

The pace of activities at Camp McGovern is fast to say the least, with patrols leaving every few hours for missions to Modrica, Brcko, Gradacac, Odzak or Samac.

According to Blakey, it's a hectic lifestyle, but one that never intrudes into his other calling.

"I always manage to find times of solitude," he said. "When time allows, I go the chapel and spend some time praying to God, asking Him for strength, and courage to complete my tasks."

Being an NCO has been easy, Blakey said. He just carries the values he says he finds in the Scriptures into his duties as a sergeant and a junior leader in the 2nd Squadron.

"All of the values we cherish as NCOs can be found in the Scriptures," Blakey said. "Think about it – loyalty, courage, strength, devotion to others, all of these are values that NCOs are taught and all of them are right there in the Scriptures."

Blakey said he isn't sure what the future will bring for him in either the Army or his decision to serve the Lord.

"Every morning I wake up amazed that I am here in Bosnia doing this work," Blakey said with a laugh. "My goal is pretty simple – spread the Gospel and witness to others the amazing power of the Lord and to be a good soldier with the 2nd Squadron."

"It's really a good feeling. I have a couple of families that I belong to – my family, the family of the Lord and the family of the 2nd Squadron. I just want to do the best for all of them and in doing that, praise the Lord and share the good news about Him."

PROUD TO BE A PART OF THE MND (N) FAMILY...

By Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp
Commander, MND (N)

The successful transfer of authority from the 49th Armored Division is both a beginning and an end. We have begun our mission to maintain a safe and secure environment in which the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) can build their futures. At the same time, our year-long training mission is now over. We have made it, and are now ready to show the world what the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), all the other units that deployed with us, along with our combined, joint and multinational partners can do.

I want to remind you of some of the training we have conducted over the past few months. At the mission rehearsal exercise at Fort Polk in July, we had many long nights and many challenging days, which yielded many memorable successes.

After redeployment from Louisiana, we did not stop our mission preparations. We culminated this training with our right-seat, left-seat ride with the 49th Armored Division.

During the past two weeks you have spent long hours with your counterpart to assure that you understand and can



accomplish every facet of your newly assigned duties.

Those experiences, along with our home-station training, will be the things to rely on now that we are in country. If ever you are challenged, think back to these capstone-training events, and have faith in the knowledge that we are fully prepared to accomplish our mission. I am confident that you have what it takes to meet and

surpass every challenge!

I again want to thank each soldier from Maj. Gen. Robert L. Halverson's 49th Armored Division, Col. Anthony W. Harriman's 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and all other supporting units for the professional manner in which they have welcomed us. Along with those who preceded them, all have collectively set the standard for mission accomplishment, soldier discipline, morale, and pride in the Balkan's mission. We are proud to have executed a relief-in-place with such outstanding organizations and professionals. As they begin their journey back to the United States, we send our best wishes and bid them a safe return to their families and friends.

I have never been so proud as I am to take command of this mission. The multinational team of soldiers and civilians are highly motivated, competent, confident, and extremely professional. I am honored to command such a force.

I thank you for all your hard work to this point, and know that as we move forward with SFOR 8 you will continue to work hard, and to bring great honor upon our division and every represented nation.

Rock of the Marne!

Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, commander of Multinational Division-North, bows his head next to the symbol of the 3d Infantry Division as MND-N/TFE Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Clarke L. McGriff (right) says the invocation for the new 3d ID plaque installed at the Eagle Base Army Chapel Oct. 1.



CG'S AIDE DOES MUCH MORE THAN AID

SOLDIER'S SPOTLIGHT



STANDING BY—A tedious part of being the CG's aide is waiting; however, keeping up with the CG's changing schedule is equally challenging.

by CW4 F.C. "Pappy" Badder
3rd ACR Public Affairs Officer
Photos by Spc. Kyran Adams

What's the hardest job in Multinational Division – North (MND-D)? Is it walking the wire? Is it doing presence patrols or being the webmaster? Every soldier in Bosnia and Herzegovina could probably make a case that his or her position is difficult, challenging – even downright exhausting.

But one that might not have occurred to you is being the aide to the MND-N commanding general, Maj. Gen. Robert L. Halverson. Capt. Greg Barrow has filled that highly demanding position since the SFOR-7 train-up began.

"They needed someone to go on a (leaders) recon (reconnaissance) and I got picked," he said, adding that the general's previous aide took an Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) job and was reassigned. Following the reconnaissance, he was asked to remain in the position.

Barrow said the most difficult part of his job is "keeping up with constant changes in the general's schedule. You always have to have two or three plans for everything, and plan a week to two weeks

out to coordinate with everybody."

He said the best part of the job is, "getting to meet all the high-profile people who come into daily contact with the CG (commanding general) – that and having the fun of coordinating and moving the general all around the AOR."

A 17-year veteran of the 49th Armored Division (AD), Barrow has four enlisted personnel to help in the enormous task of coordinating the CG's activities. Sgt. 1st Class Steve Rush is the Staff non-commissioned officer in charge (NCOIC), Deputy Aide-de-Camp and a Russian linguist. Staff Sgt. Phillip Royal is the CG's enlisted aide. He and Rush are with the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment (3d ACR). Sgt. 1st Class Rob Balderston of the 49th AD serves as the CG's driver, while another 49th AD soldier, Staff Sgt. Erik Felde, is the communications NCO.

"They're more responsible for getting the CG's mission accomplished in a timely manner than I am," Barrow said.

Barrow is an infantry officer, having served as an infantry rifle platoon leader, mortar platoon leader and as executive officer and commanding officer of an infantry rifle company. Before taking the job as



BIG SHOTS—The best part of the job is getting to meet all the high-profile people who come into contact with the general.

Halverson's aide, Barrow was an infantry liaison officer to the 3rd Armored Brigade, one of three brigade-sized maneuver elements in the 49th AD.

Barrow said his field experience includes a National Training Center (NTC) rotation, two Mission Readiness Exercises (MRE) and attending the National Guard's Winter Warfare Center at Camp Ripley, MN.

"I would do eight months here again in a heartbeat rather than go back there (Camp Ripley) for another week," Barrow vowed, adding, "54 degrees below zero? Try that one on!"

Barrow has spent the past 11 years with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

As this issue of the "Talon" was being prepared, CPT Barrow was facing the greatest challenge of his life. And we don't mean the Transfer of Authority that happened two days ago, 5 October (although that is a challenge for any CG's aide). On 4 October, Jenifer Barrow, Capt. Barrow's wife, gave birth to their first child, an eight pound, nine ounce bouncing baby boy, Davis Alexander Barrow.

Organizing the TOA while thinking about the birth of your first child? No problem. Hell, he's *infantry*!