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Spc. Will Lamoy boards the aircraft as he deploys to Southwest Asia with Task Force Desert Lion. (photo by Spc. Aaron Thacker)

Task Force Desert Lion Deploys to Gulf

by Donita Kelley, Fort Bliss public affairs team

FORT BLISS, Texas (Army News Service, Jan. 25, 2000) - The deployment of Task Force Desert Lion to Southwest Asia this month marked the first time a National Guard air defense artillery unit has gone to the Persian Gulf with an ADA rotation.

A Patriot battery from the Alabama National Guard deployed with Fort Bliss soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Air Defense Artillery, 35th ADA Brigade.

Individual Guard air defenders have deployed to the Persian Gulf before and a number have gone as part of the 32d Army Air and Missile Defense Command, but never has an entire Guard unit deployed, officials said. They explained that Battery B (Patriot), 1st Battalion, 203rd ADA, Alabama Army National Guard, is the first to join a rotation to Southwest Asia.

Soldiers, family members, and friends of those deploying gathered at Fort Bliss Jan. 10 to attend a farewell ceremony for Task Force Desert Lion.

Col. Richard L. McCabe, commander for the 35th ADA Brigade, introduced Task Force Desert Lion to those attending the ceremony. He thanked all the citizen-soldiers who made great personal sacrifices to their jobs and families, and volunteered to go on this mission.

(See 'Task Force', p 6)



Lt. Gen. John M. Riggs
First U.S. Army Commander

First U.S. Army Commander's Message

addition...the Army is globally engaged, heavily committed to meeting the daily requirements of the National Security Strategy and National Military Strategy." ...General Eric K. Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the Army, in testimony before Congress, Sept. 27, 2000.

Training and Readiness Support to prepare for Warfighting remains job #1 for the First U.S. Army. I know that all of you work hard to ensure that our National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers and units are as prepared as they can be to ensure they DO NOT go into harm's way unprepared. I sincerely appreciate the efforts of First Army's training team of almost ten thousand soldiers and civilians from our Headquarters, and the 78th, 85th, and 87th Divisions (Training Support). You are all true professionals adding value to the readiness of The Army.

Successful mobilizations and deployments are the payoff for your hard work. Before Desert Storm, the Reserve Components were rarely mobilized; a Reserve Component (RC) soldier could serve 30 years and never go on a mission out of his state. Now it is almost an everyday event for RC troops to be deployed throughout the world. That is why training to standard is critically important; when the Army and our Nation needs these soldiers, they must be trained and ready for mobilization, deployment, and mission accomplishment across the full spectrum of operations.

Recently, I visited our troops in Kuwait to discover if there was more we needed to do before we deploy them to this far-off place. I have addressed my findings with you in separate correspondence. But, let me say that our soldiers are doing a magnificent job and are certainly

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force multipliers for our Army and our Nation. Their morale couldn't be higher and they know why they are there. When they return, make them welcome and tell them "thanks" for a job well done!

Remember to keep this fact in mind as we go about our daily business--solid training and simulations support leads to successful mobilizations, deployments and mission accomplishment. The number of successful mobilization missions since 1995 bear this out. Nearly 19,000 RC soldiers have deployed to the Balkans, a number that rivals the population of a small city. Missions to Southwest Asia require hundreds of troops at a time.

"Warfighting is job #1. But in National Guard aviation units fly critical missions along borders, and infantry soldiers guard Patriot and Avenger missile sites against the threats of an uncertain world. This is important work for America. The First Army team is critical to meeting the requirements for these missions, to provide trained troops to the gaining CINCs. If you see a way to do something better or smarter, share it. A vital part of our mission is to improve upon the way we do business. As we push farther into this year, I also ask that you keep safety, risk management, and force protection high on your list. As you visit your client units, also pay special attention to family support and to Guard and Reserve employer issues; they may not be in your lane, but be sensitive if you hear of any areas that need to be surfaced and addressed.

Keep up the great work, I am proud of you, one and all! 

DOD Launches Web Site for Transitioning Service Members

News Release from the U.S. Department of Defense

The Department of Defense announced a new Internet resource for service members leaving active duty. Dubbed the DoD Transportal and located at [<http://www.dodtransportal.org>], the web site is designed to be the doorway to Internet transition and job assistance information and services for departing service members and their spouses. 

Veteran actor credits National Guard with much of his success

Story & Photo By Cpt. Sheldon Smith, Public Affairs Officer, DC Army National Guard

WASHINGTON -- Actor John Amos brought the crowd to its feet Dec. 16, 2000, as he spoke to a graduating class of young men and women who completed the five-month military-style ChalleNGe program at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

The 500-seat base auditorium was filled to capacity with people standing in the aisles. Many of them were parents who came to experience their once at-risk children in Class 15 graduate from a program that instilled self-pride, self-discipline and self-respect. Others came from miles around just to give their children a chance to meet a man some consider a living legend.

Amos, a former N.J. Army Guardsman, feels his part-time job as a radio operator in the 199th Regiment, 50th Armor Division was his first introduction to communications. At 15-years-old, Amos had no trouble passing for 17.

For Amos' family, the Guard had some extra benefits. "I could go away for two weeks and she [his mother] didn't have to feed me," he said. "She saw that as a big savings."

The National Guard showed Amos a new world he didn't know existed. It also shaped his character in ways he would never forget. One of his sergeants had a lasting impact.

"Sgt. Catana adjusted my uniform and my attitude," Amos said.

Amos challenged each of the graduates of Class 15 to take their own Sgt. Catana with them. "Walk the walk and talk the talk that leads to success," he said. The Freestate ChalleNGe program is presently a joint National Guard effort shared by DC and Maryland. Ninety-two cadets from Class 15 graduated. Of that number, 14 were from the Washington. Six of the 14 DC students earned distinguished graduate status.

The program serves teens who want to make major changes in their lives and finish high school, and who are willing to take the necessary steps. It provides participants with marketable job skills making them viable citizens. 



Army Announces Additional Installations For Army University Access Online

Office of the Secretary of the Army
Washington, D.C. 20310

Former Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera launched the Army University Access Online program on July 10th and hosted an Industry Day on August 2, 2000. Industry Day brought together over 1,000 participants from academia and industry.

On September 13, 2000, the Army released a Formal Request for Proposal for the Army University Access Online program and selected Fort Benning, Fort Campbell, and Fort Hood as initial sites for program implementation in fiscal year 2001. On December 14, 2000, the Army awarded the \$453 million contract to PricewaterhouseCoopers and implementation will commence January 16, 2000. In order to enhance installation and community planning and facilitate adequate program funding, the former Secretary of the Army announces seven additional installations

[\(See 'University Access Online', p7\)](#)



First U.S. Army Command Sergeant Major Bids Farewell

By Karen Bradshaw, First U.S. Army Public Affairs Office

Fort Gillem, Ga...Jan. 19, 2001. Rain and blustery cold did nothing to dampen spirits of the two hundred well-wishers who attended the recent indoor retirement ceremony of First U.S. Army's senior NCO, Command Sergeant Major John Jones. He was wrapping up a thirty-year Army career and appeared at ease while smiling broadly at an audience that included the FORSCOM commander, Gen. John W. Hendrix and FORSCOM Command Sergeant Major Andrew McFowler along with twenty other First Army sergeants major and the entire First Army headquarters staff.

Earlier in the week he had reflected on his thirty years in the Army, remembering his draft notice arriving while in his third year of college. Jones was well on his way toward a degree in organic chemistry when Uncle Sam's "greetings" arrived the day before his wife's 21st birthday. The young father, figured he would "do" his two years and expected it would include a trip to Vietnam, before he and his family would head back home to Sacramento, Calif. What began as an enlistment with a beginning and end took an unexpected turn as Jones discovered that he loved leading soldiers.

The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division at Ft Bragg, N.C., only whetted his appetite. He applied for the Army's tough Ranger school where he advanced rapidly. As a buck sergeant and first sergeant he was on the ground floor of starting

two new Ranger battalions. He served years as a Ranger...no picnic. Jones won't tell you this, but at his fourteen year mark, he was selected for command sergeant major, one of the youngest ever. A stint as command sergeant major (CSM) for the 25th Infantry Division, for the 6th Infantry Division, for Camp Red Cloud, Korea and rounding out his career as command sergeant major for First U.S. Army, Jones was able to mentor thousands of soldiers. He believes in the NCO creed and the power of the NCO to affect change and he shared that knowledge with soldiers every chance he got. He believes in adhering to the Army standards to a fault. He was tough, but as he said, he learned from his leaders that soldiers are people, too and take that into account. Jones was a committed soldier in a day and society that doesn't seem to know the word. He simply says, "everything I did was for the soldiers. I never wanted any soldier to go into harm's way unprepared." 

First Guard patrols keeping peace in Bosnia

by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell, NGB Public Affairs Team

CAMP DOBOL, Bosnia-Herzegovina (Army News Service, Jan. 31, 2001) -- The current six-month rotation of U.S. soldiers in Bosnia is the first time that National Guard troops have patrolled the countryside in vehicles armed with automatic weapons to ensure that the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords are not violated.

Although National Guard soldiers have been part of the NATO peacekeeping force from the start, presence patrols in the American sector were conducted by active Army troops until last fall. Even when the Texas Army Guard's 49th Armored Division ran the operation last spring and summer, the line units were active Army.

One hundred seventy-six infantry and armor Guard soldiers from North Carolina's enhanced 30th Infantry Brigade and 170 infantry soldiers from Oklahoma's 45th Infantry Brigade are the first to pull patrol duty with active Army soldiers. After weeks of intense training back home they joined the rotation commanded by the 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga.

[\(See 'Patrols', p 5\)](#)

(cont.) 'Patrols'

The Guard troops are based at two northern camps, Dobil and McGovern, where tanks and infantry fighting vehicles are covered by canvas and ready to roar into action should they be needed.

For the most part it has been an uneventful as well as an unusually mild, snow-less winter in the Balkans. At Camp Dobil, for example, the citizen-soldiers have taken turns pulling guard duty, driving visitors to the U.S. sector's headquarters in nearby Tuzla and back, and conducting the presence patrols.

They have earned their spurs among the 3,900 American troops, according to Texas Army Guard 1st Sgt. John Hayes.

"It took the active duty folks time to learn that we know our jobs and that we can do this," said Hayes who is serving as the liaison officer in Bosnia for the Germany-based U.S. Army Europe during this rotation. He was in Bosnia the previous rotation with his 49th Division comrades.

"There were some concerns early on whether active or reserve component troops were going to be assigned to the tough, contentious areas such as Brcko and Srebrenica," Hayes added. "I don't hear that anymore. The 3rd Infantry Division leaders have accepted the idea that National Guard troops can handle themselves as well as the active forces."

The jobs that Guard troops are doing and places they are seeing are the sources of the stories that 1st Lt. Matt Stapleton said he will take back to his history students. He teaches at New Hanover High School in Wilmington, N.C., as well as part-time at the University of North Carolina's School of Education. Many of the Tar Heel State's "Wolverines" helped guard a mass grave outside Bratunac day and night during their first couple of months in the country. United Nations workers exhumed the remains of about 200 Muslims reportedly killed by Serbs at a warehouse during the summer of 1995, explained local interpreter Eldar Hadziefexidic, a young Muslim man.

The grave, a couple of acres of mud surrounded by leafless plum trees and the rubble of blown-up houses, was sealed for the winter.

"There were piles of bones and skulls. The place stank. Even your clothes stank. It sure wasn't like home," said Spec. Kevin Bryan, 47, who spent two years of Army time in Thailand during the Vietnam War and who remained in the Guard for an additional year to serve in Bosnia.

A soccer field surrounded by a cement-block wall and a nearby school where Serbs reportedly killed many more Muslims in Bratunac and homes still scarred with bullet holes along the river that borders Bosnia and Serbia are other grim reminders of man's inhumanity to man.

"Ten thousand people are still missing from Srebrenica. Most of them are Muslim boys and young men. They are presumed to be dead," said Eldar.

Yet, five years after the fighting has ended, there is hope among the horror of overgrown fields that are still heavily mined and where a girl's foot was blown off during the winter, Stapleton said.

Corncribs are filled with golden ears and fat chickens peck and scratch beside farmhouses. People are moving in, and they are tilling the land.

The Guard soldiers support that effort regardless of ethnic ties during their presence patrols.

(See 'Patrols', p 6)

First In Deed Links

To further assist and inform you we have added the following links to important First Army web pages and others.

[First Army Phone Directory](#)

[FORSCOM Home Page](#)

[US Army Home Page](#)

[US Army Reserve Home Page](#)

[-US Army Reserve Command](#)

[National Guard Homepage](#)

[TRICARE](#)

(cont.) **‘Patrols’**

"How is everything?" "Is anyone bothering you?" "Has anyone asked you to leave?" are routine questions that Stapleton asked Serbian refugees who have moved into houses where Muslims once lived.

"Everything is well. Yes, we are all right," the people reply.

Small, hard-rubber balls are a hit with the children who the soldiers meet in the cities and along rural roads. "My wife sent me about a million of them," said Stapleton. "We give them to the kids wherever we can."

He is a good enough soldier, after four years in the Army and 10 years in the Guard, to understand the wisdom in Theodore Roosevelt's words about walking softly and carrying a big stick.

"This is a perfect job for infantry units that are not at war," said Stapleton of the armed peacekeeping presence. "Nothing happens in a town that has a lot of cops. It's easy to be friendly while appearing to be aggressive. But it's a little harder to become aggressive if you show up and don't look like you're ready."

He is also a good enough historian to appreciate his interpreter's comment about the war in which some of Eldar's friends died and in whose shadow the country still lives.

"Nothing good came from the war, and nobody won," Eldar lamented.

That may well be the most important lesson about the war in Bosnia that Stapleton said he will take back to his history students after his days as a NATO peacekeeper are done. 

DoD's Special Needs Network

[<http://mfrc.calib.com/snn>], a Web site for military families with special medical or educational needs, went on line Jan. 24, 2001.

(cont.) **‘Task Force’**

The adjutant general for the Alabama Army National Guard, Maj. Gen. Willie A. Alexander, assured the citizen-soldiers that their families in Alabama will be taken care of during their absence.

Task Force Desert Lion Commander Lt. Col. John G. Rossi said that the warriors standing on the field "are not looking for headlines, they are just here to do their job." The task force consists of about 80 soldiers deploying over the next few weeks. This deployment is part of the regularly scheduled six-month Patriot rotation to Southwest Asia, officials said.

Air defense rotations have been in the Persian Gulf area since Desert Storm 10 years ago. Nine air defense battalions have rotated to Southwest Asia so far, officials said. Some units have sent forces two or three times already. Some individuals have deployed as many as eight times. The task force normally is divided between both Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, officials said. 

Army Reserve rich with African American history

by Army Lt. Col. Randy Pullen, Public Affairs Office of the Chief, Army Reserve

African Americans in the Army Reserve have made and continue to make more history than can be confined to Black History Month in February.

The month does make for a suitable occasion, however, to take note of some of the things that African Americans have accomplished in the history of the Army Reserve. The following article is hardly exhaustive, but just a sample of the contributions these citizen-soldiers have made to the Army Reserve, the Army and the nation.

Black Americans have been part of the Army Reserve since World War I. In 1917, history notes, 639 "colored" reserve officers (as the segregated Army then designated them) were commissioned from the Officers' Training Camp at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. To read the article in its entirety, click on:

<http://federalvoice.dscccols.com/federalvoice/020200/aahm.html> 



www.tricare.osd.mil

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Stabilization Force 10 Prepares for Peace Keeping Mission

By Carolee Nisbet, Fort Dix Public Affairs Officer

Stabilization Force 10 will hit the ground next fall to take on the crucial mission of keeping the peace in Bosnia. Composed mainly of the 29th Infantry Division (Light), the mobilization is the largest Reserve Component call-up since Desert Storm. It will include soldiers from more than 20 states, half a dozen Regional Support Commands and active-duty units, tons of equipment and hundreds of vehicles.

Fort Dix has the mission of pushing them out and reeling them back in when their six-month tour is finished. "Fort Dix is one of the Premiere Power Projection Platforms in the United States," said LTG John M. Riggs, First Army Commander, to soldiers and civilians from the 29th, Fort Dix, the 1079th Garrison Support Unit, the 78th Division and others who will be part of the mobilization process, all gathered at Timmermann Center Dec. 16 and 17 to hash out details of the mission. "There are more soldiers and equipment scheduled to flow through here than almost anywhere else. "We'll be looking at Fort Dix's capability throughout the process. Down the road, someone in this room will say, 'Why can't the Army get it right?' The answer is pretty simple: You are the Army. You do it right."

COL James Snyder, installation commander, gave the group an overview of Fort Dix and what to expect

[\(See 'Peace Keeping Mission', p 10\)](#)

Eligible Uniformed Services Retirees, Spouses, Survivors To Get Expanded Health Care Benefits

Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense

(Public Affairs/Washington DC)

Medicare-eligible uniformed services retirees, their spouses and survivors who are age 65 and over will be entitled to expanded health care benefits under legislation signed by former President Clinton on Oct. 30.

Access the TRICARE web site for complete details. http://www.tricare.osd.mil/ndaa/fast_facts.htm

STAFFEX Is Successful

By Capt. Jayson Altieri, 4th Brigade (TS), 85th Division (TD), Fort Knox, Ky.

Fort A. P. Hill, VA - Approximately 11 officers, warrant officers and NCOs from the 4th BDE (TS), 85th Division, served as Observer Controller/Trainers (OC/Ts) on Jan. 8, 2001, for the 29th Aviation Brigade STAFFEX, which was held at Fort A.P. Hill, Va. The purpose of the STAFFEX was to assist with training and observation of the 29th's battalion and brigade level staff work as they prepare to deploy to Bosnia in support of SFOR 10. The 4th Brigade, which included personnel from the 1st (TS)(AV), 337th Regiment, are assisting the 78th Division (TD) with the mobilization of the 29th.

The STAFFEX tested the 29th's ability to conduct the Military Decision Making Process during simulated Steady State Operations in a Bosnia scenario. Units participating in the Brigade STAFFEX included: 1st Battalion (Attack), 183rd Aviation Battalion, Idaho Army National Guard; 2nd Battalion (Assault), 224th Aviation Battalion, Maryland/Virginia National Guard, and 498th MEDEVAC Company, Fort Benning, GA. During the STAFFEX, 4th BDE OC/Ts provided feedback that is designed to enhance staff operation.

(cont.) University Access Online

(6 CONUS and 2 OCONUS) where implementation will begin during fiscal year 2002. Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Fort Carson, Colorado; Fort Drum, New York; Fort Lewis, Washington; Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Fort Wainwright, Alaska; Camp Casey, Korea; and the Heidelberg Military Community, Germany were selected. These additional installations, coupled with the initial three sites, increase the eligible pool of participants to approximately 150,000 soldiers worldwide. Point of contact for this notification is LTC Bruce Batten, 703-697-1244, Office of the Chief of Legislative

Army gets new slogan, logo

by Joe Burlas

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Jan. 10, 2001) -- To "Be all you can be" in the Army now means being "An Army of one."

Former Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera announced the new Army slogan that underscores the importance of individuals in a unified effort and unveiled a new Army logo -- a white star superimposed over a yellow star -- during a Department of Defense press briefing at the Pentagon Jan. 10.

"I am tremendously inspired by this new campaign and feel as if we are conveying a more accurate view of the men and women who comprise our Army," Caldera said. "It speaks to the individual strengths of each soldier and their part within the overall Army force."

The new slogan and logo will be featured in future Army advertising and recruiting efforts.

Leo Burnett USA, selected last June as the Army's lead advertising partner, has already developed a campaign featuring real soldiers rather than actors in a series of television, radio, print and web commercials. The first television ad, titled "Dog Tags," initially airs during NBC's "Friends" sitcom Jan. 11. It will also air later on "The Simpsons," "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," and MTV.

"Leo Burnett took the time to learn about the Army and the people who are making significant contributions each and every day," Caldera said. "They understood that over time the Army had strayed from the true story of the American soldier -- one of strength, intelligence and opportunity. And, they have showed a strong commitment to presenting a clear, unified picture of the Army."

"I am the Army" is the literal translation of the new message going out to the Hispanic target audience of 17- to 24-year-olds. The message is bilingual with Army being in English and the rest in Spanish. The reason for Army being English is to differentiate it from armies in Latin American countries, according to Victoria Hudson, executive vice president of Leo Burnett's Hispanic advertising partner Cartel Creativo.



The reason for a different message is because it says close to the same as "An Army of one" but accounts for Hispanic cultural differences such as the need to fit in and be embraced, said Hudson.

One of the key reasons why the Army needed to change its message was the fact that the Army has missed its recruiting goals three out of the past five years -- Be all you can be just wasn't working, Caldera said. Another reason is that advertising messages get old and tired with time no matter how recognizable they are, he continued.

The first slogan for the all-volunteer Army was "Today's Army wants to join you." This was followed in 1973 by "Join the people who've joined the Army" which evolved into a short-lived "This is the Army." "Be all you can be" first appeared in 1981.

Along with senior Army leaders and key Leo Burnett staff, five of the soldiers featured in the \$150-million ad campaign attended the press briefing. They were Cpl. Richard Lovett, assigned to 27th Engineer Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C. and shown as the lone runner in the Dog Tags commercial; Sgt. Joseph Patterson, Soldier Systems Center, Natick, Mass.; Spc. Natalie Ortiz, 32nd Medical Logistics Battalion, Fort Bragg; Spc. Carlos Perez, a reservist assigned to the 6252nd Army Hospital, Ventura, Calif.; and Sgt. Leroy Durrah, 1st Signal Battalion, Fort Campbell, Ky.

Streaming video vignettes telling about the past, present and future plans of each of the advertising campaign soldiers can be viewed at <http://www.goarmy.com>. New Army radio, television and print commercials will direct viewers to the web site. 

First Army Commander Pins Bronze Star Medal on Korean War Veteran

By: Karen Bradshaw, First US Army Public Affairs Office

Ft. Gillem, Ga., Jan. 30, 2001...In a simple ceremony at Alabama's state capitol, 50 years were swept away as Lt. Gen. John Riggs, First U.S. Army commander pinned the Bronze Star medal on Edward Reynolds, a Korean War veteran.

Reynolds, an Alabama native, served at Fort McPherson before going to Korea in 1950. When he was finally discharged from the Army a couple of years later, his awards and medals never caught up with him. Now, 50 years later, Reynolds was recognized for his contributions in the Korean War with help from Alabama Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army (CASA), Richard Allen and First Army. Riggs recounted events in the young soldier's odyssey half a century earlier. Reynolds joined the Army in '48, and was assigned to special services at Ft. McPherson, Ga., where he was captain of the sports teams and ran the golf course.

He met his wife, an East Point girl, at one of the ball games, they married and lived in a little apartment over the golf house. It was a wonderful Army assignment for a while. In June 1950, the war on the Korean peninsula erupted and by August, Ed Reynolds was on his way to the 2d INFANTRY Division in Korea. He had been gone a few days, when his family received a telegram delivered by taxi informing them of his death. Shocked by the news his mother and wife broke down were hospitalized. The report caused an uproar in Alabama, because he would have been the first killed in action. As it turned out, another soldier with the same name was the victim. Reynolds never knew of the mix up until he returned home.

For Reynolds, there was no silence on this eastern front where shelling, rifle fire and atrocities were the order of the day. Fighting was brutal and conditions harsh.

Winter arrived with a vengeance and most of the troops were ill equipped for the terrible cold. Sgt. Reynolds, assigned to the frontline, to a squad of nine was part of 2nd Division's push northward.

Fighting on the move each day, the troops stopped at night to chip out foxholes in the frozen earth, hunkering down in the subzero cold with only field jackets for warmth. Pain and fear was their constant companion. In the dark, no one moved in their foxholes, it was too dangerous; there were no fires for cooking; supper was a frozen C-ration, and sleep was fitful. This went on for months as they fought northward to the Manchurian border, they had come so far and lost so many, to the cold and to enemy fire. Riggs went on, "And, finally Sgt. Reynolds came home to an America that called this bloody war, a police action. But he knew differently...he had seen the face of war; the unspeakable horrors of what people can do to each other...even to children, women, and old people. He remembers the starving children's haunted faces as he fed them food from his C-rations.

Riggs continued, "it is only fitting that we offer our humble thanks and bestow a "bit of ribbon" ...The Bronze Star Medal – for meritorious service to Sergeant Edward Reynolds on behalf of a grateful Army, a grateful nation and a grateful old soldier. Thank you and your family for your service and sacrifice. We will never forget."

Overcome with emotion as the Bronze Star and other medals were bestowed on him, Reynolds with tears in his eyes could only thank his wife. 



Sgt. Edward Reynolds and his wife, Tense, share an emotional moment after he was decorated with the Bronze Star and other medals stemming from his service in the Korean War 50 years earlier.

(cont.) ‘Peace Keeping Mission’

when soldiers arrive here. “We’re here to tell you what you need to know ten months from now to get through here successfully,” he said.

A procession of Dixans and representatives from other supporting units followed, outlining requirements and procedures for training, for Soldier Readiness Processing, for medical and dental care, for logistics management, for family support and dozens of other issues that are all part of the installation’s mobilization expertise.

The 78th Division will assume the burden of Lanes training for soldiers from deploying units over the summer. The 1079th GSU, a longtime partner of Fort Dix, will augment a variety of staff sections, both during the training and the deployment. Medical personnel from West Point will head up that portion of the process.

The 29th Division is headquartered at Fort Belvoir, Va., but its units cover a couple dozen states and a wide variety of occupational skills.

First Army, headquartered at Fort Gillem, Ga., has oversight of the mobilization process.

MG H. Steven Blum, 29th Division (L) commander, told the crowd that the amount of time available for advance work means units shouldn’t have to rely on that expertise.

“The plan is for this NOT to be a good test for Fort Dix,” he said.

Blum said he expects a 90 percent solution to mobilization requirements before the first unit arrives on post. “What happens at SRP and elsewhere will be by exception,” he said.

Blum noted that medical and dental problems have routinely been the two major issues for deploying units, issues that can now be fixed ahead of time under new programs that fund care for soldiers before they are mobilized. “Don’t worry about winning the arguments,” he advised.

“Let’s just get everyone on the same sheet of music. We can eat this elephant of a mission a lot easier if we cut it into bite-size pieces.”



Lt. Gen. Riggs Addresses the 29th Infantry Division (Light)

For every soldier called to duty at least several other people are affected. The Family support element of deployment is one of the primary challenges the 29th ID (L) faces.

“I have given Family Readiness a top priority,” said Blum. “If soldiers and their families don’t have all the support in place before we go to mission, I am looking at major mission distracters.

“I am working this issue every day to ensure my soldiers and their families have the best support available.”

The Fort Dix Family Readiness team has pledged its support during the mobilization process.

The weekend of briefings, tours and introductions -- billed the Key Leaders Rehearsal Drill -- helped bring the difficult topics to the surface.

“The Fort Dix element has done a great job of supporting the process,” Blum said. “This is the one of places the tough questions have to be answered and the Fort Dix team has gone all out to get us those answers.”

Riggs made it clear that the process is a lot easier if problems and concerns are brought to the table prior to the 29th walking in the door next fall.

“Nothing is automatic in this business, unless we make it automatic,” he said. “The reason we are here is to ensure the process becomes automatic. Now, go forth and get the nation’s job done.”

(MAJ Ed Larkin, 29th Division PAO, contributed to this article.) 

First Army Soldiers in Action



Soldiers train at Fort McCoy for their role in Kuwait. First U.S. Army's, 2d Brigade, 85th Division at Fort McCoy, Wisc., employed twenty observer/controller trainers from First and Fifth Army to validate nearly two hundred mobilized Iowa and Minnesota Army National Guardsmen for their desert mission. The Guardsmen, who are deploying to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, will be on the frontlines, defending and protecting Army Patriot missile units and soldiers. (photo by: Maj. Jamie Dodson).



Photo by: Maj. Jamie Dodson

Capt. Michael Smith (A/S3, 1-183 ATTACK BN), tracks the battle during 29th Aviation Brigade STAFFEX at Fort A.P. Hill.



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