



Task Force Danger

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BRO Progress

1st Infantry Division

Surgery gives Iraqi boy ability to walk

SAMARRA, Iraq--After months of discussion, a badly injured four year old boy received life changing medical treatment to enable him to walk for the first time. The boy was first noticed in May by 1st Infantry Division Soldiers of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment, New York Army National Guard. While patrolling the Arab Jasim neighborhood in the Salah Ad Din Province, the Soldiers were approached by the boy's mother. The child's left leg had been severely burned when he was an infant and the resulting treatment by Iraqi doctors had left the upper and lower leg grafted by a sheet of skin that made the leg nearly immobile, permanently keeping the leg in a flexed position. The family was unable to afford the treatment that was needed, so it seemed that the child would remain this way for life.

The platoon medic, CPL William Provoost, examined the child and took some photos back for the battalion surgeon

to examine. The surgeon, COL Russell Zelman, concluded he could not help the child with the level of medical equipment at the battalion aid station. The only alternative was the Baghdad Hospital.

Shortly afterward, B Company was relocated to a different area of operations and was unable to pursue the matter further. One month later, attacks seemed to increase from the area of this tiny village. B Company was sent back into the area to quell the escalating attacks. It conducted reconnaissance, raids and searches in the area and opened lines of communication with the village leaders to try to eliminate the attacks.

Once again the child's mother asked the Soldiers for help. SFC Michael Boyer managed to get an appointment to have doctors at the Combat Support Hospital on Logistical Support Area Anaconda get involved.

The patrol took the child and his relatives to the Hospital where a plastic sur-

geon was confident she could perform the surgery. The date was set for Monday July 12. Boyer's patrol returned the child and cousin to the village and made the arrangements to have the child, mother and the cousin picked up on Monday morning.

After 6 hours of surgery, the doctors had removed the skin that restricted the leg's movement and grafted parts of skin from the other leg. The operation was a success. The prognosis was excellent and it was assured the boy would be able to learn to walk normally over time. The child would need to stay in the care of the CSH over the next 10 to 14 days.

Although the battles rage on, an Iraqi child in need of care was made better, and a mother's hopes and dreams came true all because of a group of Task Force Danger National Guardsmen from northern New York. "We can all leave this place knowing that we did something good here," says Boyer. "We made a difference in the life of an innocent child."



Democracy comes to Wynot, Iraq

WYNOT, Iraq - Ahmed Mutlok Oda creases his ballot slowly, seemingly worried he will fold it wrong. He starts to place it in the cardboard-and-tape ballot box, then pulls it back, unsure if he's doing it right.

He looks to an interpreter for the 1st Infantry Division, who tells Oda he's doing it correctly. Reassured, Oda drops the ballot in.

If Oda seems unnecessarily timid, consider that no one in Wynot has ever voted before. Oda has no predecessor, no way to know if he's doing it right.

After Oda, another 145 voters came through, representing nearly every household in this tiny village about 15 miles outside of Tikrit. The Wynot City Council elections of Sept. 13 came after months of work and planning by Soldiers of A Co., 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division.

The strong turnout completed a turnaround in how

Wynot residents view the U.S., according to the company commander, CPT David Krzycki.

"This was probably the most anti-coalition town in this sector when we first got here," he said. "Kids and adults were throwing rocks at us and calling us names. But we established a knock-and-talk program, where we'd go to six to eight houses per night. We'd ask people what they needed and what they thought of us. Eventually they realized we're here to make their way of life a little bit better."

Prior to helping run the Wynot elections, Alpha 1-18 Soldiers had helped bring city council elections to the nearby town of Owja. Krzycki thinks success there helped bring around Wynot residents.

"In Owja, people are happy because they get police patrols through town and they coordinated and funded a city cleanup program," Krzycki said. "And people here can



see the effects city councils are having."

Wynot residents elected new leaders to seven positions: director, vice director, city manager, and directors of agriculture, education, transportation, and utilities. Krzycki said the company

will help the city council in its nebulous stage, but the long-term goal is for the council to be self-sufficient.

And Oda has no doubt that it will be. "It feels good to vote," he said. "A city council will help our community."

Bayji Power Plant improvements

BAYJI, Iraq- The 1st Infantry Division's Engineers Electricity Ministry Team is currently overseeing a series of improvement projects at the power plant in Bayji, Iraq. Construction is underway on a Health Care center that will service more than 4,000 employees and family members of employees of the Bayji Power Plant.

A chemical warehouse is also being constructed at the power plant. The new chemical warehouse will improve operational capacity at the thermal power plant.

These projects are providing jobs for Iraqi workers and improving the quality of life for families in Bayji.

