



Task Force Danger Progress Report

June 6, 2004

Ground Breaking held for school in Ash Sharqat

ASH SHARQAT, Iraq – A Ground Breaking Ceremony was held here on May 26 to mark the beginning of construction for a new elementary school building near Kassem Village in Ash Sharqat.

A bright, clear day dawned on a small cluster of houses 200km North of Tikrit when Task Force 1-7 Field Artillery conducted the ceremony to start work on the school.

LTC Kyle McClelland, TF 1-7 Commander, spoke to the students, parents and officials who attended the ceremony. He emphasized the importance of the youth and the role a quality education will play in Iraq's future.

Sharqat Mayor, the Honorable Muhsin Khalaf, echoed LTC McClelland's words and extended his appreciation to TF 1-7 for their partnership with the community in this important endeavor. The ceremony was followed by a small luncheon provided by the contractor for the new school.

During the luncheon, TF 1-7 Soldiers distributed school supplies collected from friends and relatives at home to the excited and smiling students of Othman School whom the Soldiers have noted to be "well-behaved and learning a lot of English."

The project is expected to be complete by July 1.



1LT Jared Purcell and SGT Dakir of Task Force 1-7 Field Artillery hand out school supplies donated by the Hype Park and Havilland Schools of Hyde Park, NY as part of Operation I CAN.

Re-opening of Olympic-sized pool



A member of the swim team leaps with the Iraqi flag from the three-tier platform during a ceremony, which celebrated the re-opening of an Olympic-sized swimming pool at Tikrit on May 22.

TIKRIT, Iraq – A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in the City of Tikrit Saturday to officially re-open an Olympic-sized swimming pool that was closed at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sheik Kannan Al Saied of the Al Shumar tribe hosted the event. LTC Jeffrey A. Sinclair, Commander of the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, was on hand. Also present was Falah Al Naqeed, Governor of the Salah Ad Din Province.

The citizens of Tikrit celebrated the re-opening of the pool, which was built in 1999, and watched the local swim team compete in 50 and 100-meter freestyle events.

Swimmers also demonstrated their skills by diving off each level of the three tier diving platform. Al Saied was instrumental in the pool's re-opening and has been heavily involved in rejuvenating the sports program in the Tikrit area, Sinclair said.

"The pool represents peace and progress, and a time for the people in the community to relax and just enjoy life," Sinclair told the crowd.

Sinclair showed his support for the sheik's cause by locally purchasing 700 soccer jerseys for the local soccer league.

"This shows the Iraqi people that we have a genuine interest in their quality of life," Sinclair said.

Iraqi Property Claims Commission Opens Office in Tikrit

TIKRIT, Iraq – Iraqis who had their land seized under Saddam Hussein now have a legal way to get it back.

The Iraqi Property Claims Commission opened for business May 25 in an old Iraq Ministry of Justice building. Citizens who had land taken will receive compensation, be it the land or cash.

If landowners still have the title or other documentation, the case is easy, according to CPT Dan Stigall, the 1st Infantry Division's legal liaison to the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Anyone who had land taken by the Ba'athist regime though April 9, 2003 is eligible for compensation.

"Often times the land was just taken by Saddam Hussein," Stigall said. "Sometimes, they were forced into a contract where they were given a petty sum...for the land."

The center will deal with claims of property seized by Saddam, but not property destroyed in war. Those claims are handled

by the regular Army claims process, Stigall said.

Besides providing a measure of justice, the commission will be an initial step in greater Iraqi autonomy, according to Stigall. "This is going to be an Iraqi commission run by Iraqis," he said. "It's a good example of what's going to happen in the rest of the country. We helped get it started, but after today it will be run by Iraqis for Iraqis. There will be very little coalition involvement. We will offer assistance, but it will be a very behind-the-scenes role."

Besides the legal benefits, Stigall thinks the commission will yield cultural dividends as well.

"Rather than...take a gun and have the victim turn into a criminal, this gives them a legal way to get back what was taken, and gives them a degree of healing. They deserve some measure of justice and this provides that. It helps people know when they were wronged, it didn't go unnoticed."



CPT Dan Stigall joins Iraqis in celebrating the opening of the Iraq Property Claims Center in Tikrit on May 25. Stigall serves as legal liaison to the Coalition Provisional Authority for the 1st Infantry Division.

North Central ICDC Training Center welcomes first class

TIKRIT, Iraq – Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division's area of responsibility began the first ten-day leadership class Saturday at the new regional training center designed to house Basic Training and Primary Leadership Development Training on Forward Operating Base Danger.

Big Red One Soldiers, U.S. Army drill sergeants and a group of current ICDC cadre will conduct the training. The students are junior enlisted soldiers, picked from the ranks of the ICDC for their potential leadership abilities.

The class is based on the U.S. Army's PLDC, a prerequisite to promotion for junior-enlisted Soldiers advancing into the Non-commissioned Officer Corps.

The Iraqi students come from many ethnic backgrounds and will train side by side in an effort to unify the ICDC, said SFC Ronald Hoover, drill sergeant from Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 79th Field Artillery, Fort Sill, Okla.

About 240 soldiers arrived and were processed into the first course. The training

will begin Sunday. The coursework consists of physical training, leadership classes, soldier skills and drill and ceremony.

The philosophy behind this course, as in its American counterpart, is to provide a "train the trainer" environment said MAJ Scot R. Bemis, Training Center commandant.

"Our overall goal is to give the ICDC the leadership skills and confidence to be able to secure their own infrastructure, economy, people and borders," said Bemis.

The goal is to turn the training program over to the ICDC. Every member of the center's staff has an ICDC shadow. From supply sergeants to class room instructors, ICDC members will learn from their American counterparts and will soon take over the training center and run the show.

ICDC cadre already run much of the out of classroom activities. A mix of Arabic and English cadence was heard as the troops marched from the parade ground to the dining facility – a sign that the U.S. and Iraqi partnership is melding into one.



An ICDC platoon from the first class of soldiers to attend Primary Leadership Development Training at the new North Central ICDC Training Center stands in formation May 29. (Photo by SFC Chuck Joseph, 196th MPAD)