



Pvt. Richard Slaughter, a Soldier with Btry. B, 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt., 4th IBCT, 1st Inf. Div., watches over the dusty terrain of the Ghazi province as he mans the .50-caliber machine gun of a Humvee's gun turret, May 29. The 4th IBCT was at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. conducting a mission rehearsal exercise in preparation for a deployment to Iraq later this year.

Spc. Shantelle Campbell
4TH IBCT



'Proud Americans' partner with security forces at NTC

By Spc. Shantelle J. Campbell
4TH IBCT PAO

FORT IRWIN, Calif. – Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, recently partnered with Iraqi security forces and Iraqi police in providing support to the people of Abar Layla, a fictional Iraqi town at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif.

"I think the mission we're going to have in Iraq is going to be very similar as far as partnering with the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi police (in helping) them provide security," said Maj. Pat E. Pro-

ctor, the operations officer for 2nd Bn., 32nd FA Regt. "I feel the brigade commander's intent here is ... to make those units so capable that they no longer need our help."

As the "Proud Americans" train, they learn how to properly interact with the Iraqi people along with becoming more knowledgeable of the Iraqi culture and language.

"At every level and with everything that we're doing ... we're partnering with the Iraqi Army, who is using a different language and tactics that we're not used to," said Proctor.

He also said the Soldiers have to learn how to interact with a force they can't always coordinate and talk to due to lan-

guage barriers, but at the same time learn how to integrate themselves with an army of a completely different culture.

Despite the language and cultural differences, Proctor said the training is going well and encourages the bad days because he believes it's in those bad days where they learn the most.

"You have good days and bad days," he said, "but you learn from the bad days probably more than you learn from the good days. We've had a few stumbles up front, but I'd rather have them here than have them in Iraq when Soldiers' lives are on the line. But, I think that everybody is getting better every day and are learning."