

Realistic training prepares 4th Brigade combat team of the 1st Infantry Division

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Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division have 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. Proctor, the operations officer for 2-32 FAR. “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 Maj. Proctor.

He also said the Soldiers have to learn how to interact with a force that they can’t always coordinate and talk to due to language 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, Maj. Proctor says that 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.”

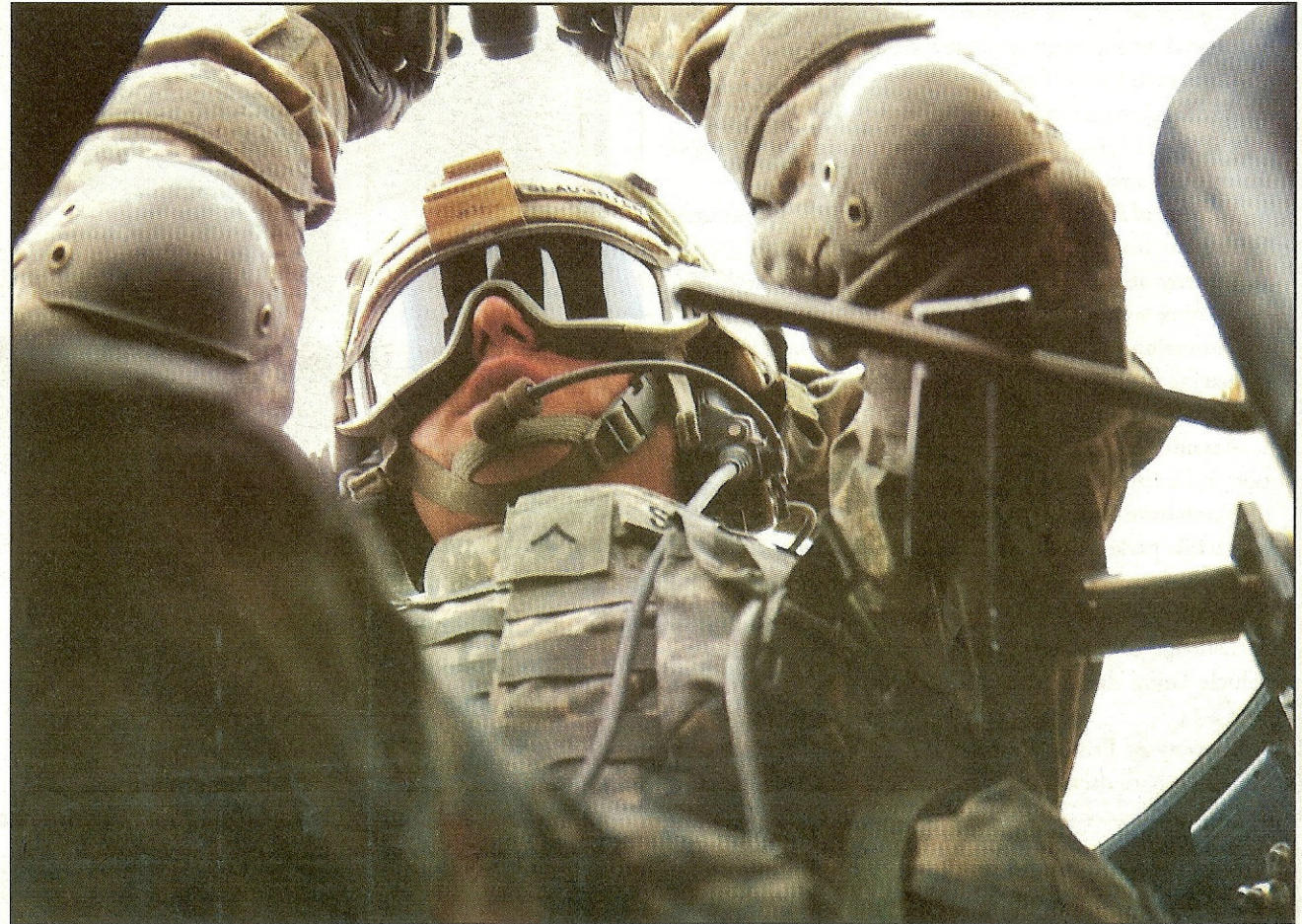


Photo by Spc. Shantelle J. Campbell

Pvt. Richard Slaughter, a Soldier with Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division 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 4IBCT is conducting a Mission Rehearsal Exercise at NTC in preparation for a deployment to Iraq later this year.