

Happy Holidays

Iron soldiers on point for the nation *in the year 2000*



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Maj. Gen. George W. Casey, Jr.

Where has this year gone? As I look back on 2000, I am so very much impressed by the skill, stamina and professionalism of the men and women of this great division. We have deployed to Kosovo now twice this year, once in the summer and once in the winter—yet another Balkans winter deployment for Iron soldiers. These deployments followed rigorous train-ups which first made units ready for their warfighting mission and then prepared them for peace support operations. And we have done terrific work in Kosovo—maintaining peace and stability while allowing and supporting the international community to implement civil reforms.

We were used as the test bed for USAREUR's concept for an IRF—an immediate ready force maintained at a high state of readiness and alert and ready to deploy anywhere in the USAREUR AOR within 96 hours. The 2nd Brigade Combat Team developed that concept, formed the units and Force Enhancement Modules, trained and prepared the force and then deployed them to Hungary in a validation of the concept.

We were notified in February that the division would close its installations in Bad Kreuznach and move the division units to Wiesbaden by the summer of 2001. The result was a phenomenal effort to develop a plan for movement, identify facilities in Wiesbaden, obtain the appropriate level of funding to support the move, and then begin the preparation of facilities for a new headquarters.

Our training has been hard. We have prepared ourselves well for war through time in the field at Grafenwohr, Hohenfels, Baumholder and even in Hungary and Kosovo, building competent, confident teams of staffs and warfighting units. Warfighter 2000, ARRCAD FUSION, and intense contingency planning helped to hone our warfighting skills.

This year has ended with a tough simultaneous deployment and redeployment as TFF2B built around the 2nd BCT reports for duty in Kosovo and relieves Task Force Falcon 2A and 1st BCT in place so they can redeploy to Germany. Done in the winter with uncooperative weather, the division has again excelled in planning and executing a stellar operation. My thanks and appreciation to those of you involved in making this a success.

I also want to recognize the editor

and staff of the 1st Armored Division Public Affairs Office for their outstanding contribution to our division in the form of this magazine which was formally recognized by the Department of the Army with a Certificate of Excellence.

Finally as the year comes to a close, Sheila and I would like to recognize and thank all of you for your esprit, professionalism and hard work to make this division combat ready and an effective instrument of national policy. As those of us in Germany celebrate the holiday season with our families, I ask that you remember these Iron Soldiers deployed to Kosovo sacrificing their Christmas so that others less fortunate may celebrate theirs in peace.

Well done, Iron Soldiers!

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