

# Bulldog Brigade trains as it fights

## 3RD BRIGADE SOLDIERS

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FORT IRWIN, Calif.—As the country reels from the terrorist actions on one side of the nation, a band of soldiers go to work with a stronger, more united purpose on the other side of the country.

For members of 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, training takes on a more serious tone as they train for a battle that takes on more real-world implications.

“It is in the back of everyone’s mind,” said Staff Sgt. John Holleman, Company A, 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment. “It is like a devil on your shoulder saying something could happen.”

“This is a good opportunity for realistic training,” said Sgt. Neil Austin, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 13th Armor Regiment. “The whole purpose is to train as you fight and that is what National Training Center provides for us.”

The recent attacks have heightened the need for getting the job right.

“Everyone seems to be taking things more seriously than they did at Gauntlet [the unit’s previous exercise],” said Staff Sgt. Thomas Leturgez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 70th Engineer Battalion.

*“The whole purpose is to train as you fight, and that is what NTC provides for us.”*

Sgt. Neil Austin  
HHC, 1-13 Armor



*Pvt. Michael Leuchtmann from 596th Signal Company takes a big drink during a MOPP 4 exercise at NTC.*

“Current events have motivated the soldiers up a notch in their vigilance,” said Holleman.

Many soldiers’ thoughts have been with their loved ones back at Fort Riley and elsewhere. Soldiers had the opportunity to talk to

## SHARE COMMON PURPOSE

their families during their first week at NTC. Now that they have moved out to the engagement area, there is less interaction.

The words “New York” hit home for many native sons, no matter where they are located.

“It’s been kind of hard because my wife and family are in New York, but everyone is holding up,” said Sgt. Dwight Dancil, Company B, 125th Forward Support Battalion.

“It definitely hit close to home,” said Pfc. Jayson Williams, a radio operator with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade.

Williams’s mother worked in the B building of the World Trade Center complex.

Williams recalls following his mother to work in the building.

On the day of the attack, members of his section gathered in front of the television and provided support for him as he tried to call home. Later that day, Williams got through and found out his family members were safe.

No matter what the mission, the members of the Bulldog Brigade know that their family members are taken care of back home, no matter what their fears.

“There is a natural worry that is always there. I prepared my family like I prepared for the field and made sure that they had everything they needed so that I can focus on the task at



*A 125th Forward Support Battalion soldier takes position to repel an early morning assault by the Opposition Force. The Brigade Support Area soldiers are kept on their toes by a number of “attacks” during the NTC rotation.*

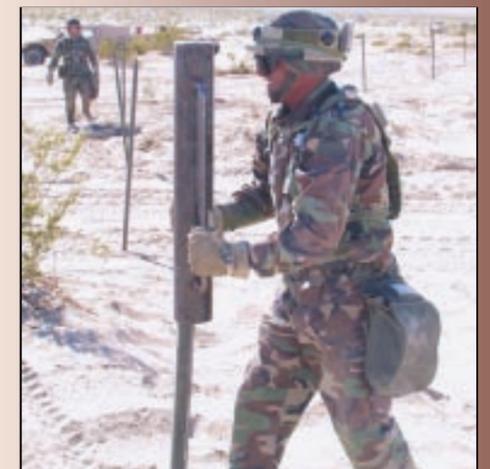
hand,” said Holleman.

He added that the family readiness briefings that the brigade provided before he left helped to put everything his wife may need while he was gone in her hands.

With most of the questions of their families’ security handled, soldiers ponder the who and why of the New York attack.

“I hope they find the guilty person or persons and, if force is necessary, then it should be used to bring them to justice,” said Williams.

“I’ve thought about it a lot . . .” said Holleman. “It (the attack) was something terribly wrong but what we are doing here is important and it helps us with any role we might have in the future.”



*Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Cotton from the 70th Engineer Battalion slams the hammer down on a fence post for concertina wire.*