



Volume 2, No. 26

INSCOM *INSIGHT*



U.S. Army Intelligence & Security Command Sept. 17, 2002

Recalling Sept. 11

Major General Alexander's remarks delivered Sept. 11 at a commemoration ceremony at INSCOM headquarters

Most of us probably began this day by recalling where we were or what we were doing on this date last September. How could we forget? Throughout this year, who among us has not relived those terrifying moments of bewilderment and tragedy as we watched the nightmare unfold? The horrific events of Sept. 11, 2001, will forever be a part of our memories and our Nation's history. America, our Army and certainly INSCOM have not been the same since the devastating attacks against our people and our sovereignty.

Today, as we observe the one-year anniversary of Sept. 11, we are stronger, united and more resolved than ever to endure as a stalwart of freedom and democracy. Our objective is to provide the intelligence to ensure that justice is done, that freedom prevails, and that the principles that built this nation endure.

As President Bush observed, "A terrorist attack designed to tear us apart has instead bound us together as a nation."

Americans around the world banded together under the colors of our flag. Visible representatives of that re-born spirit of unity are here today with us to pay tribute to over 3,000 victims—military, civilians and rescue workers—who died or were injured because of the Sept. 11th attacks. Please join me in saluting our very special guests, the men and women of the Fairfax County Fire Department and the Mount Vernon Police District. These brave professionals stand for the thousands of law enforcement and emergency services personnel whose daily hard work, caring and willingness to sacrifice, help keep our friends, families and loved ones safe. Police officers Shane Chung and Dave Duffett and firefighters Capt. John Caussin, Dale Dommel, Steven

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Fairfax County, Va., firefighters and police officers join INSCOM personnel Sept. 11 in a commemoration ceremony at INSCOM headquarters, Fort Belvoir, Va. (Photo by Robert J. Bills)

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McCay and John Adams, please accept, and share with your fellow police officers, firefighters and emergency personnel, our grateful thanks for your devoted service and your unrelenting dedication to protect us from harm.

Nor do we forget those who have given their lives in Operations Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle, as well as the brave service members and civilians who are part of the ongoing war against terrorism. Together, we mourn those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and give thanks to those who sustain the fight.

We must never forget Sept. 11 or the importance of our INSCOM mission. In accomplishing our mission, we help to defend America, our Constitution and our way of life against such further attacks.

I am proud to be an American, and I am proud of each one of you and your tremendous contributions. Whether deployed or on station, everyone in this command is part of the solution. You are making a difference in the war on terrorism, while protecting our forces and promoting world peace. I thank you, the Army thanks you, and America thanks you for the hardships and sacrifices that you and your loved ones have endured these past 12 months.

However, as President Bush reminds us, the war is far from over. There is still much to be done before Americans will again feel safe on our soil. We, our friends in law enforcement and emergency services, and our fellow Americans will continue to be asked to continue our efforts to protect our citizens and our country. As we have learned, the price of freedom is not free. I have every confidence that you will continue to excel as professionals, and I ask of you that which I demand of myself; the very best every day.

Because of you and the efforts of countless patriots who love our country, we are now and always will be "One Nation, Under God, Indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for All."

God bless you, God bless our Army, and God bless America.

Survivor of Pentagon attack speaks at INSCOM

By Scott Andraea
Insight Editor

A survivor of the terrorist attack on the Pentagon told his story Sept. 13 at the fall prayer breakfast at INSCOM headquarters, Fort Belvoir, Va.

It was a story of finding comfort in faith for Lt. Col. Brian D. Birdwell, executive assistant to the Army deputy assistant chief of staff for installation management. His injuries as a result of the attack kept him hospitalized for three months.

"I stand before you as a soldier in the United States Army, but the most important credential that I carry is not one on my uniform or in my wallet; it's one that I carry in my heart as a soldier of Christ," Birdwell said.

"The Lord can use a trip to the men's restroom for his glory," he said, describing why he was not in the workspace where two co-workers were killed. As he walked back to the office, the hijacked aircraft struck 15 or 20 yards away, at an angle that prevented Birdwell from being directly in its path.

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Lt. Col. Brian D. Birdwell

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"There's no human, engineering or other explanation for why I'm alive other than the sovereignty of God," said Birdwell. He outlined several other aspects that he counts as miracles. A fire sprinkler overhead sprayed water on his burning body even though many water pipes had been ruptured. When he stood up after a minute or two, he walked into an area that he couldn't have escaped from, because one side had secured doors and the other side was boarded up for renovation. Some people came through a secured door to search for survivors, however, giving Birdwell an escape route.

Finally, he was escorted in a private vehicle to Georgetown University Hospital by an Air Force Reserve sergeant who worked there and didn't know how to find any other hospital. The director of trauma at the hospital had spent the year before in a residency program at a burn center.

"The number of things that occurred that day were not luck, they were not chance, they were not fate. They were the Lord putting the right people in the right place at the right time in my life to make sure I could stand with you this morning and tell you what a great Lord he is," said Birdwell.

He was burned on 60 percent of his body, and 40 percent of the burns were third degree. He has had 25 operations, with a few more to come. He started working part time in March and full time in July.

Of the mood at the Pentagon, Birdwell said "there's the sadness of the loss, but also a very strong confidence that we're taking the fight to the enemy and we're causing him to pay a price that he'll never be willing to pay again.

"I've had people ask me, where was God that day? I've said the same place he's always been, it's just as a nation we've had our backs turned for so long. In many cases it is those lowest valleys that you experience that bring you to your highest peaks. I think that's what our nation is experiencing from Sept. 11. I think we are rediscovering God's role in our lives and our nation's life."

24 years ago in INSCOM

From the pages of the INSCOM Journal, 1978



June

The first enlisted woman to hold diplomatic accreditation in a Communist Bloc country was Spc. Lorraine Holmes of INSCOM's Administrative Survey Detachment, selected to be a defense attaché specialist in Romania.

August

An Armed Forces record for playing continuous volleyball, 41 hours, was set by a team at Field Station Berlin. The team kept on playing to set a "Guinness Book of World Records" mark of 51 hours and 5 minutes.

INSCOM Insight is published weekly as a Command Information e-publication for the men and women of the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of HQ INSCOM, the U.S. Army, or the Department of Defense. Send inputs to INSCOM Public Affairs Office at pao@inscom.army.mil

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Communication, translation tested in exercises

By Staff Sgt. Eric Reinhardt

66th MI Group Public Affairs

Field exercises for two components of the 66th Military Intelligence Group in Darmstadt, Germany, tested the group's capabilities in providing intelligence, communications and translation.



Spc. Jake Wilbert of the Vicenza Military Intelligence Detachment pores over Russian text during a Document Exploitation exercise in Darmstadt, Germany. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Eric Reinhardt)

Company A's Deployable Intelligence Support Element (DISE) team refined its tactical skills and its role as a downrange intelligence and communications hub during an exercise Aug. 19-23.

"We need to be prepared to go wherever the intell is," said DISE platoon leader 1st Lt. Stacy Bare.

While in the field, the DISE also provided communications for Company B's Document Exploitation exercise, taking place at the same time near the Dagger Complex.

In addition to honing the DISE team's technical skills, the field problem was a chance to practice "displacement," packing up and moving to a new location and setting up again, said Bare.

That's no simple task, given the DISE's complex array of equipment and vehicles, according to DISE Platoon member Spc. Jacob Quesenberry.

Analysts from the 66th MI Group's U.S. Army Europe Analysis and Control Element also took part in the exercise to practice their briefing skills.

Spc. Matthew Whitesel, an analyst who is deploying to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia soon, said it was good preparation for his upcoming mission. "I think it helps give me a idea of what to expect when I'm down there," he said.

The 66th MI Group put its document exploitation, or DOCEX, process to the test in an exercise Aug. 19-23.

While document exploitation is nothing new to the intelligence field, the way the 66th processes it is. Using a combination of linguists and machine translation, and high-tech dissemination systems, the group's DOCEX innovations have earned it the distinction of being chosen to develop Army doctrine on the subject.

Toward that end, the group's DOCEX team has sought input from intelligence units around the world, to develop a field manual that will have broad applications, no matter what the mission.

With the help and communications assets of Company A's DISE and the group's S-6 division, the exercise also tested the team's ability to get the information they translate to the customers who need it.

"We're validating the DOCEX process. Once you come into possession of a document, you then have to determine whether it has any intelligence value," said Chief Warrant Officer Mark Koselke, DOCEX officer in charge for the exercise.

While it was an exercise, much of the material translated had real-time value, he explained. "We're not only conducting training but also something of real intelligence value," he said.

While the machine-translation aspect of DOCEX may leave some in awe, it's merely a tool for linguists, not a "fire and forget" system. "Linguists are still key to the translation process," said DOCEX action officer Capt. Patricia Driscoll. "It requires the quality control of a linguist."