

Subject: Hello from Iraq

From: "<REDACTED> H 1LT MIL USA USAREUR 7A" <redacted@us.army.mil>

Date: Wed, 20 Aug 2008 14:56:51 +0400

To: highmeadow1@verizon.net

Dear Col. Sullivan,

I wanted to take a few minutes to say thank you for the care packages that I have recently received from you. It is a blessing to know that people on the home front care about Soldiers and what we are doing here.

I also would like to properly introduce myself. As you know, my name is <REDACTED> and I am a 1LT in the US Army. Currently, I am a platoon leader responsible for 27 Soldiers, 2 mechanics, and a medic deployed on the eastern side of Baghdad at a Forward Operating Base named FOB Hammer. Though we execute engineer tasks from time to time, a majority of our operations are "infantry" in nature. Thankfully, the area that we do business in is relatively calm, which allows to focus on things like providing jobs and improving the local infrastructure and economy. I am a 2006 graduate of Texas A&M University, and I have a wife, but no children (yet!). I have some of the best Soldiers the Army has to offer. They put in long, and usually late hours, deal with the hot sun, and still do it wearing a smile. I am also blessed with a strong group of NCOs who can work wonders with a task, purpose, and very little guidance from me.

With regard to your letter dated 06 August 08; Calling cards are a GREAT thing to send this direction. I usually pass them out to my younger Soldiers who are newly married. Thankfully, we have A/C in our living quarters and we keep coolers in our vehicles, so we manage with the hot days. One thing I have noticed that my Soldiers really enjoy is music! It seems to keep them going when nothing else does. iTunes cards or cards from other music retailers would make their day. We interact with children on almost a daily basis and the number one thing that they say is "Mister, give me pencil," or "Mister, do you have football (soccer ball)?" Toys or anything of that nature would be excellent items to send as well. As for silly string, We've yet to run into any trip wires, though I have heard it is a common occurrence in other portions of Baghdad. To be honest, I think if I passed out silly string, myself or my platoon sergeant would end up wearing most of it!

Again, I want to thank you for your kindness and generosity, and also for your thoughts and prayers. It truly is a blessing to know that people back home care and are willing to give of their time and resources to lend us a helping hand!

Respectfully,

<REDACTED>

1LT, EN

Platoon Leader