What a Day to Re-Enlist â€“ July 4th, 2008

Description

Update 7/5/2008:

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From DefenseLink:

> More Than 1,100 Troops in Iraq to Re-enlist in Independence Day Ceremony
> By Jim Garamone
> American Forces Press Service
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> WASHINGTON, July 3, 2008 Ã¢â‚¬â€œ More than 1,100 servicemembers stationed in Iraq will celebrate the nationÃ¢â‚¬â„¢s birthday tomorrow by re-enlisting, the senior enlisted leader for Multinational Force Iraq said today.
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> Army Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin L. Hill said 1,157 soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines will re-enlist at the Al Faw Palace at Camp Victory, in Baghdad. This may be the largest re-enlistment ceremony since the all-volunteer force began in 1973, Hill said via phone from Baghdad.
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> This is becoming an annual blockbuster event for the command. Last year, 588 servicemembers re-enlisted.
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> Ã¢â‚¬Å“We are extremely proud of the accomplishments we have made in security on the ground as well as proud of all of our great warriors for the work they are doing since they arrived in theater,Ã¢â‚¬Â• Hill said. Ã¢â‚¬Å“We recognize the sacrifices they make and the sacrifices their families and communities make as they serve in Iraq.Ã¢â‚¬Â•
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> These servicemembers know the cost of war and they are still re-enlisting, Hill said. Some serve in Ã¢â‚¬Å“the most austere conditions â€” meaning they are in patrol bases and combat outposts,Ã¢â‚¬Â• he noted. Some of the re-enlisting servicemembers are in places where the troops Ã¢â‚¬Å“hot-bunk itÃ¢â‚¬Â• â€” that is, they take turns using limited sleeping space â€” and burn human waste because they lack plumbing. Others are based in more comfortable surroundings.
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> The vast majority of the servicemembers tell Hill and others that they are re-enlisting because Ã¢â‚¬Å“they are doing what they joined the military to do,Ã¢â‚¬Â• he said.
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> Ã¢â‚¬Å“If they joined to be a rifleman, theyÃ¢â‚¬â„¢re doing it in combat,Ã¢â‚¬Â• the sergeant major said. Ã¢â‚¬Å“If they joined to fix helicopters, theyÃ¢â‚¬â„¢re doing it and

doing it in combat.Ã¢â‚¬Â•

Often in years past, he said, some warriors probably felt they werenÃ¢â‚¬â„¢t doing what they joined the military to do, he said.

Ã¢â‚¬Å“Now, since weÃ¢â‚¬â„¢ve been fighting this global war on terrorism Ã¢â‚¬Â¦ these warriors are doing what they joined to do,Ã¢â‚¬Â• he explained. Ã¢â‚¬Å“They can see the fruit of their labor and see the fruit of the sacrifices of those who have gone before them. It makes them feel good about what they are doing.Ã¢â‚¬Â•

The ceremony will be broadcast on the Pentagon Channel, Hill said. Multinational Force Iraq Commander Army Gen. David H. Petraeus will preside. Hill and Petraeus will speak at the ceremony, then Petraeus will administer the oath of enlistment.

A 50-gun salute will honor of the nationÃ¢â‚¬â„¢s birthday, and then all will sing Ã¢â‚¬Å“God Bless America.Ã¢â‚¬Â• The ceremony will end with a medley of service songs.

All components of the military are represented in the ceremony. Officials said 738 active-duty soldiers, 188 National Guard soldiers, and 122 Army Reserve soldiers are re-enlisting, along with 54 Marines, 39 sailors and 16 airmen.

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â€œâ€¦to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of Americaâ€¦â€•

Commitment in capital letters, with 1,100 raised right hands taking an solemn oath.

Update 7/4/2008 later in the day: Early this AM, when posted, this was what was to be. Today, it is now part of history and 115 more service members came to the event, for a total 0f 1215 re-enlistees in the combat zone, while the Nation is at war, while many of use are preparing for friends and family to come over and sit without worry, to watch fireworks displays. Wowâ€¦just wow. How can we thank them?

Category

1. Navy

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