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Blackhawks, Soccer Balls, and Freedom

By Chuck Colson

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The Blackhawk helicopter hovered low over a field in the Sunni Triangle. A lone child, about twelve years old, glances up. Someone, his father, or perhaps an older brother, has taught him to hate Americans—which is why the boy picks up a rock and takes aim.

Army reservist Steven Kiel, who is serving in Iraq, describes what happens next. “The gunner has something in his hand, too, and he’s a bit quicker,” Kiel writes in *National Review Online*. “Whoosh! A soccer ball flies out of the door of the chopper.” For a moment, the boy stands in utter disbelief. He then “collects himself enough to run after the ball.” Once he retrieves it, “he looks up and with a smile from ear to ear, . . . excitedly waves” to his American benefactors.

“Another friend is made,” Kiel writes. “Another member of the next generation is converted.”

Clearly, our soldiers in Iraq know that a big part of their job is to help heal a war-torn country ruled for decades by a barbaric tyrant—and they’re doing it through the kind of friendliness, generosity, and goodwill that has always marked American soldiers.

I love the way the late historian Stephen Ambrose once wrote about World War II: “The most terrifying sight to most civilians was a squad of armed teenage boys in uniform.” Whether it was the Red Army in Warsaw, the Japanese in Manila, or the Germans in Holland, this sight always meant trouble.

There was one exception to this rule. “Everywhere in the world,” Ambrose wrote, “the sight of a twelve-man squad of GIs brought joy to people’s hearts.” Why? “Because the sight of those American kids meant cigarettes, candy, c-rations, and freedom. They had come not to conquer or terrorize but to liberate.”

Today, Iraqis are seeing the kind of behavior always witnessed when American GIs show up. Sixty years ago, during the Berlin airlift, German children—the offspring of our recent enemies—watched the skies, waiting for American pilots to fly over and drop candy. And during the Gulf War, American soldiers, after vanquishing the Iraqis, offered cartons of milk to their children.

The polls show that many Americans are becoming tired with the war in Iraq. Our soldiers are not. They know they are doing a good and noble thing.

You and I can help them in their difficult task—by sending toys, candy, and socks. As Steven Kiel writes, “Each time I see the look on an Iraqi citizen’s face—the result of a gift back home—my faith in America is renewed.”

And today, Veterans Day, let’s especially pray for the safety of our servicemen—men and women who are winning the peace, and then capturing the hearts of war’s youngest victims—with soccer balls.

Before I sign off today, I want to remind you that Judge John E. Jones in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, is deliberating right now on a crucially important and much-publicized intelligent design case involving the town of Dover. The case may end up in the Supreme Court and could result in a constitutional opinion as to whether intelligent design can be taught in public schools. I hope Christians will do what I’ve been doing: praying for Judge Jones, for his deliberation, for his wisdom, and for the cause of truth.

For further reading and information:

Spend a year studying with Chuck Colson: Learn how to identify, advocate, and apply biblical truth in every arena of life. [Apply for the 2006 Centurions Program](#). The NEW deadline is November 28.

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If you want to donate gifts for children in Iraq through American soldiers, according to [Steven Kiel’s blog](#), send them to: LT Sean Cavanaugh, b Co, 1-502d,2BCT, 101 AASLT, APO, AE 09398; or go to [AnySoldier.com](#) for more ideas.

Steven Kiel, “[Soccer Victories: This Is What We’re About](#),” *National Review Online*, 4 November 2005.

See the Library of Congress’s [Veterans History Project](#).

BreakPoint Commentary No. 041111, “[No Greater Glory: Four Immortal Chaplains](#).”

BreakPoint Commentary No. 031111, “[The Promise of Our Country: Making Patriots](#).”

BreakPoint Commentary No. 040531, “[A Soldier’s Valor: Helping and Healing in Iraq](#).”

See the [Discovery Institute's coverage](#) of the Dover, Pennsylvania, intelligent design trial.

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