

Dear Mr. Renteria,

Greetings from Al Taqaddum Iraq. Once again, your organization has provided some terrific support for our men and women fighting here in Iraq. We received 8 cases of OI C-Rats the end of May and another delivery just a few days ago. They were packed and delivered in good shape. I can't tell you how much my men and women over here enjoy getting these relief packages. You can go out on any convoy mission, distant FARP, resupply run, what have you, and you will see the many gifts you send us being well used. Places like Mudaysis where there is nothing at all for American servicemen and women, the boarder crossings at the Jordanian and Syrian borders, and small outposts and expeditionary areas all over our area of operations. We cover the Al Anbar Province. It is huge and there are many, many units fighting every day and night out here. A small thing like hand sanitizer, insect repellent, or a pack of candy from back home mean a lot to someone who can't accumulate or carry much with them. Being able to duck into the rec tent and grab a couple of razors, soap, and shave cream and hit the road again is worth gold to us.

Thank your many members supporting and running this operation for us. Believe it or not, it has become a favorite pass time of our boys to look at the customs statements and see who the boxes came from and where.

I have to tell you that a bunch of "stress relief balls" made it to us and no sooner had I passed them around when a huge game of "dodge ball" broke out all over camp. It was funny to see "teams" surreptitiously form to go after favorite targets and bomb them with stress balls. OK - maybe not how they were intended to be used, but what the heck - they relieved a lot of stress. Many of my Marines got out their frustrations by bombarding their buddies and NCOs with those harmless sponge rubber balls. The fact that they couldn't hurt anyone or break anything turned everyone into a "target of opportunity." No one was spared, not even at the staff meeting.

Your young men and women are "working" hard over here. Whether kicking down doors and going in after the bad guys, or refueling aircraft that pick up sometimes critically injured Marines, Soldiers and Sailors, we are making a big difference in this part of the world. The benefits will be felt in our part of the world long after we are gone from here.

Thanks again for your generosity and kindness. It's great for morale to know we are not forgotten. God bless you all.

Semper Fi,  
SgtMaj Garcia  
Al Taqaddum, Al Anbar Province, Iraq