

# Commentary

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## Troop Talk

The following questions were received through The Monitor, other sources and from my visits to units around post:

**Q. Our unit has received a lot of Soldiers recently from Advanced Individual Training who do not have the required security clearances. Why are Soldiers allowed to leave AIT without at least an interim clearance if it is required for their Military Occupational Skill?**

A. Soldiers in AIT here do receive interim clearances ... they cannot complete the training without it. I can only assume that members of the 286th Signal Company who posed this question must be referring to AIT Soldiers they are receiving from the Signal School at Fort Gordon. The AIT Soldiers who are trained here are assigned to air defense units. The only non-air defense MOS that we train here is truck driver, 88M. We do not train any signal personnel here.

**Q. Why does it take so long to get an interim clearance here at Fort Bliss?**

A. Interim clearances can be granted with a one-day turnaround, once the S-2 security manager turns in the proper documents to the



Security Office, and there are no unfavorable actions on file against the individual. Interim clearances are granted for 180 days and can be extended depending on the circumstances.

**Q. The United States Army Sergeants Major Academy has a parking lot for motorcycles. Are there plans for any dedicated motorcycle parking areas on main post?**

A. There exists limited motorcycle parking throughout the installation. However, the senior occupants of the buildings can re-designate some of the available parking as motorcycle spots. This would need to be coordinated through the installation Department of Public Works and the Provost Marshal Office.

**Q. Why does Fort Bliss require a Texas safety inspection sticker on out-of-state vehicles that have post decals and a valid registration from another state?**

A. In accordance with current regulations, personnel seeking to register their privately owned vehicles on military installations or its territories and in overseas areas will comply with the following requirement: they must satisfactorily complete a safety and mechanical

vehicle inspection by the state or jurisdiction in which the vehicle is licensed. Therefore, if your vehicle has a current out-of-state registration and a current safety inspection for the state in which it is registered, it does not require a Texas safety inspection until your current safety inspection expires.

**Q. Drivers with a Fort Bliss decal can now vouch for all passengers in their vehicle. Why can't the driver vouch for his or her passengers if the vehicle has a valid decal from another military installation?**

A. I have authorized government employee access to the installation, upon rendering a federal government issued identification card to vouch for passengers in those vehicles without the passenger having to show identification cards to access the installation. This is in effect for personnel operating Fort Bliss registered (DD Form 2220) privately owned vehicles or GSA-plated vehicles only.

Brig. Gen. Robert P. Lennox  
Fort Bliss Commanding General

## U.S. flag stands for all that is good about America

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Special to The Monitor

Five-year-old Hunter Youngblood doesn't understand why people are sometimes mean to the American Flag. His father, who served in the Navy, always taught him to respect the flag. He told his son that the flag stands for everything that is good about America. Hunter loves the flag. He knows it is very special.

That's why he gets upset when he sees people burning the flag on TV. That's also why every time he sees the flag touch the ground, he runs over to pick it up.

And when he goes to bed each night, he kisses his daddy good night ... he kisses the flag.

You see, Hunter's father, Navy Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Travis Youngblood, was killed by an improvised explosive device while conducting combat operations in the

town of Hit, Iraq, last July. Three months after he was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, Va., his wife Laura gave birth to their daughter, Emma.

When he volunteered to go to Iraq, Youngblood told Laura, "We have to finish this now so that our son won't have to go over there in 15 years to fight the same enemy."

"I have to help make the world free now because bringing freedom to an oppressed people is the only way to help America win the war on terror ... that's what our country is all about ... that's what our flag is all about."

For little Hunter, the flag, service to country and the memory of his father are all one in the same.

We come together on Memorial

Day to pay tribute to every single American servicemember who has died in defense of this great country.

Hundreds of thousands have given their lives over two centuries of American history, from the Civil War to Europe, from Pearl Harbor to Korea, from Vietnam to Grenada, from Kuwait to Afghanistan and Iraq.

We gather to remember these fallen heroes who laid down their lives for the very freedom our flag represents.

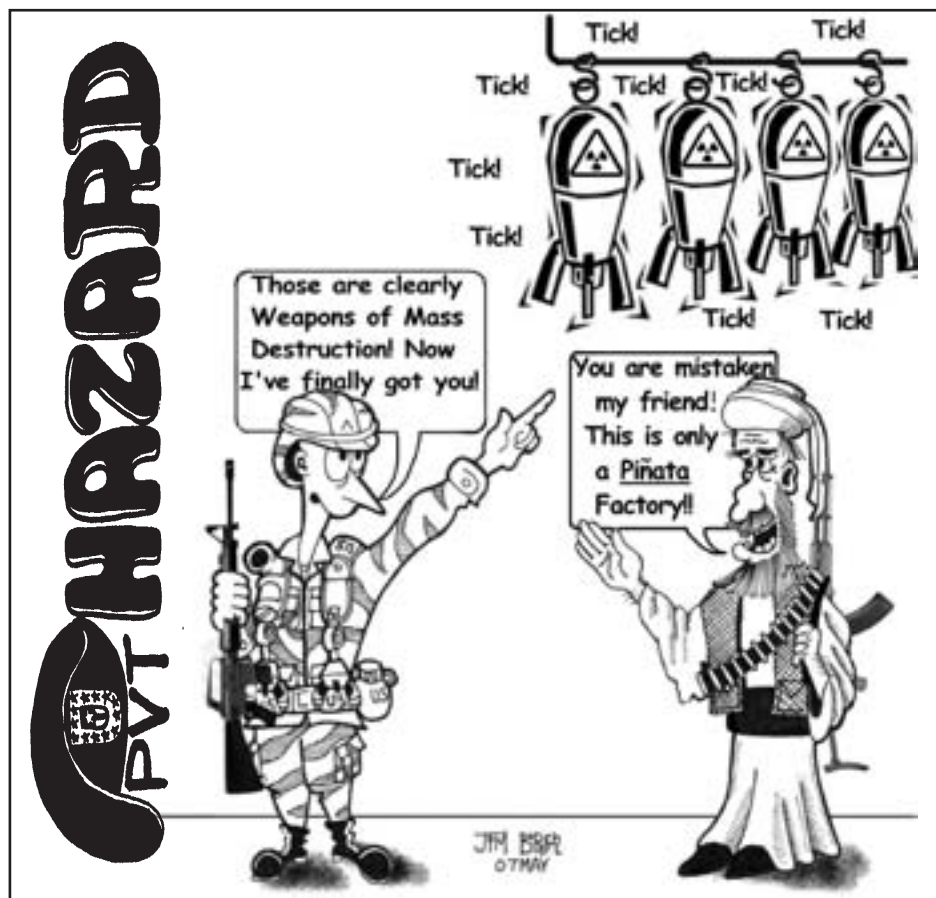
It is only natural that the panorama of this day be blessed with the bold colors of red, white and blue. Those colors paint a portrait of patriotism, pride and gratitude on our minds and engrave in our hearts an unending sense of pride in being an American.

President Benjamin Harrison understood how their sacrifices embody the very essence of our flag and what "Old Glory" stands for.

He said, "I have never been able to think of the day as one of mourning ... I have rather felt that the flag should be at the peak, because those whose dying we commemorate rejoiced in seeing it where their valor placed it. We honor them in a joyous, thankful, triumphant commemoration of what they did."

I submit to you that we can continue our commemoration of our fallen comrades by showing the same respect and reverence for our flag that they fought and died for. They were the defenders of our faith ... our faith in our country ... a faith that is

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### Web sites of interest

- The Monitor** [www.lavenpublishing.com/fortblissmonitor.html](http://www.lavenpublishing.com/fortblissmonitor.html)
- Fort Bliss** [www.bliss.army.mil](http://www.bliss.army.mil)
- William Beaumont Army Medical Center** [www.wbamc.amedd.army.mil](http://www.wbamc.amedd.army.mil)
- Department of the Army** [www.army.mil](http://www.army.mil)
- Department of Defense** [www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil)
- DoD news about the war on terrorism** [www.defendamerica.mil](http://www.defendamerica.mil)
- Defense Finance Accounting Service** [www.dod.mil/dfas](http://www.dod.mil/dfas)
- Army Knowledge Online** [www.us.army.mil](http://www.us.army.mil)
- Civilian Personnel Online** [www.cpol.army.mil](http://www.cpol.army.mil)
- Thrift Savings Plan** [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov)
- Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)** [www.defenselink.mil/brac](http://www.defenselink.mil/brac)
- Fort Bliss MWR** [www.blissmwr.com](http://www.blissmwr.com)
- Armed Forces Vacation Club** [www.afvclub.com](http://www.afvclub.com)

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**The Monitor** is published by the Commanding General of Fort Bliss through The Laven Group, LLC, 1420 Geronimo, Bldg. E, El Paso, Tx. 79925 (915) 772-0934, fax: 772-1594 [sflav@whc.net](mailto:sflav@whc.net), [www.lavenpublishing.com](http://www.lavenpublishing.com).  
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**The Monitor** has a circulation of 18,000 copies. Editorial content is prepared, edited and provided by the Public Affairs Office of Fort Bliss, Bldg. 15, (915) 568-4088 or fax (915) 568-3749.  
Items submitted for publication in **The Monitor** should be sent to **The Monitor**, Fort Bliss, Texas 79916, by noon on Friday before issue. All submissions become Army property and should be typed, double-spaced with the author's name, signature, and mailing address. Photos should have information attached describing photo and have photographer's full name. The editor reserves the right to reject or edit all submissions or advertising that do not conform to **The Monitor's** journalistic standards. All photos are U.S. Army unless otherwise designated.  
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