

"Dziekuje!"

Written by AG

Monday, 11 December 2006 00:00



Kids living in a Polish children's home thank German "St. Nicolas" soldiers.

Forty-two Polish kids from the Szczecin-based children's home No. 1 were completely over the moon, when they were surprised by St. Nicholas on late December 6th, 2006. Like in the years before, soldiers from the Support Group to the Senior German Officer in NATO's Multinational Corps Northeast had invited both the kids and the persons responsible for looking after them to visit their barracks in Szczecin.

Samba Surprise

The first surprise came right after a common meal. A Polish Samba band livened things up quite a bit. Immediately after that, St. Nicholas responded to the kids' increasingly loud shouts. Accompanied by his superior, Captain Jörg Singert, the soldier who had slipped into the costume of St. Nicolas came trudging closer with a bag filled to the bursting with gifts. There was no holding the kids back any more now. Everybody wanted to recite a poem to St. Nicolas or sing a Christmas song as quickly as possible in order to swiftly get hold of one of the

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sought-after bags with gifts.

Long Tradition

The German soldiers of MNC NE have been maintaining a close relationship with Polish kids and those responsible for taking care of them in the children's home ever since the Corps was established in the Polish city of Szczecin, situated at the Odra-river close to the German border. There are common events taking place several times a year. Besides the St. Nicolas celebration, a common adventure day in the summer is a fixed date in the course of the year.

Both the events and the gifts are for the most part financed with donations of the German soldiers in the Corps. The catholic and protestant military chaplains support the St. Nicolas ceremonies in particular.

In addition to seeing faces beaming with joy, the soldiers therefore can rely on hearing a polyphonic and warm "Dziekuje – Thank you", put into words by Urszula Sarniak-Filipowska, director of the children's home, and accompanied by a storm of applause from the kids.