



## **US Army Military Intelligence Battalions vs. Iraqi Guerrillas**

Intelligence is very important for guerrilla, anti-terrorist, and counter insurgency warfare. Although the US Army sent 10-12 Military Intelligence Battalions to Iraq, they were totally ineffective. Why?

If you read the US Army's MI journal, Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin, you will soon get a clue as to what the psychology, mindset, and competence of US Army MI actually is. First of all, they don't like HUMINT, (the acquisition of intelligence through human sources instead of radio chatter SIGINT or pictures taken from outer space IMINT), in spite of the fact that the US Army has been emphasizing HUMINT since September 11, 2001. In 2007, US Army MI still focuses on SIGINT, IMINT and open source intelligence. Secondly, it is easy to spot the realization that MI personnel are a group of incompetent leftists who worry a lot about the rights of captured terrorists, but are not able to collect any useful intelligence.

For example, the US Army sent the 203d Military Intelligence (MI) Battalion to Iraq, which was a typical mistake. The 203d Military Intelligence (MI) Battalion is the Army's only tactical technical intelligence (TECHINT) asset. Doctrinally, TECHINT is intelligence derived from the exploitation of

foreign equipment.

The military intelligence TECHINT process begins when a soldier identifies a piece of new or modified equipment and takes steps to report it. The equipment is then exploited at successively higher levels until a countermeasure is developed to neutralize the enemy's technological advantage.

The mission of the 203d MI Battalion is to deploy worldwide to conduct TECHINT reconnaissance, establish the Captured Material Exploitation Center (CMEC), where the captured enemy materiel (CEM) is concentrated and exploited at the tactical and operational levels, and to prepare it for shipment to intelligence production centers where it can be exploited at the strategic level. The 203d is also responsible for disseminating the resulting intelligence to combatant commanders and any other relevant parties.

There was no need for 203d Military Intelligence (MI) Battalion in Iraq since there was no real need for TECHINT or SIGINT or IMINT, the usual high tech approaches of MI.

A and C Companies performed the majority of the TECHINT reconnaissance portion of the 203d's mission. The six mobile TECHINT collection teams collect and report on captured material from forward areas of the battlefield. These teams consist of experts in several fields, including foreign mobility (tracked and wheeled vehicles and rotary-wing airframes), weapons and munitions, communications and electronics, and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD). The teams provide intelligence on enemy weapons and equipment to combatant commanders and prepare captured material for further exploitation by the Exploitation Platoon (2d) of B Company. This platoon consists of experts in the same fields as that of the collection teams, but it is their job to conduct a more thorough analysis of the materiel. This includes detailed measurements, analysis of subcomponents, and assessments of upgrades to known enemy materiel. (How many times do you have to measure an AK-47 or a RPG?)

B Company also includes a packaging and warehousing platoon that receives, tracks, and temporarily stores all captured equipment. The 203d not only collects intelligence for the current

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battlefield, it also collects for future conflicts as well. Therefore, the platoon has the ability to package and ship various weapons, missiles, munitions, aircraft, and naval vessels to production centers back in the United States or coalition countries in order to conduct more detailed testing and evaluation to combat enemy capabilities in future conflicts.

The unit prioritizes enemy-materiel collection requirements according to a national collection requirements list submitted to and vetted by the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and other intelligence production centers. Using this list as a starting point, the Collection Management and Dissemination (CM&D) Platoon of B Company identifies potential targets of interest for TECHINT reconnaissance and works with the S3 in developing and coordinating TECHINT missions

Alpha Company performed more than 100 missions from bases at Al Hillah, Al Kut, Balad, and Baghdad. What did they do? Busy work of no use to anyone!

A typical collection mission consisted of the following steps:

- \* The teams went to the sites, cleared them of unexploded ordnance and booby-traps, then conducted exploitation of the site.
- \* The team photographed the sites and gathered measurements and specifications of the equipment found.
- \* Specific reports, called complementary technical intelligence reports (COMTECHREPs or COMTECHs), were compiled to send to higher echelons and requesting national agencies.
- \* Finally, after-action reviews (AARs) were conducted to determine what went right and wrong on the missions, how to improve operations the next time, and to report their results if the mission objectives were met.

In other words, they went to abandoned Iraqi sites, cleaned them up, took pictures, measured a few things, collected a few souvenirs, and then wrote reports in triplicate, which nobody read.

During their time in Iraq, 203d Military Intelligence (MI) Battalion soldiers noticed that they were the wrong guys in the wrong place. TECHINT doctrine is for a conventional battlefield, not the

asymmetrical battlefield in Iraq. Because the Iraqi Army disintegrated so quickly and the weapons used by the terrorists are well known, the battalion simply collected stuff that was not useful. They were totally inflexible.

The biggest problem affecting the battalion was the looting of materiel by local Iraqis. Looting of weapons and equipment that the unit was collecting, by local Iraqis, was the most frustrating part of this deployment, according to the noncommissioned officers (NCOs). "The most frustrating thing was going and finding something worthwhile, but finding that it had already been stripped by Iraqis," observed the First Sergeant. Another senior sergeant added, "We just needed to get across the berm sooner than we did."

They claimed that the "physical terrain also restricted our initial ability to provide useful signals intelligence (SIGINT) and imagery intelligence (IMINT) support to the units." That's funny? Their equipment was supposed to operate in any terrain. Why would the flat lands of Iraq present a problem?

The 203d Military Intelligence (MI) Battalion explained their ineffectiveness and passed the ball back to the infantry: "Generally, however, the low technology, HUMINT-rich nature of stability operations and support operations mitigated (and at times negated) the effectiveness of our technical intelligence platforms. Thus, over time, the HUMINT collector proved to be the "ISR collector of choice". The 203d Military Intelligence (MI) Battalion began acting as "enablers" by asking other units to carry out tasks unrelated to intelligence collection.

These enablers include the following:

- \* Infantry patrols (provided security presence and assisted in neighborhood projects).
- \* Unit ministry teams (UMTs) (coordinated with the local mosques and Imams).
- \* Attached civil affairs (CA) teams (worked with local government, schools, and public utilities companies).
- \* Public affairs (coordinated with local media for information dissemination).

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\* PSYOPs teams (worked IO in various neighborhoods).

\* Unit staff judge advocate (lawyers worked with the local judicial and law enforcement systems except for one problem, they didn't speak the local lingo).

In other words, they did nothing, and what they "enabled" had nothing to do with intelligence collection.

Other US Army MI Battalions were just as incompetent at collecting intelligence. The 311th MI Battalion was tasked to identify, vet, hire, train, and emplace former Iraqi military soldiers along the Turkish and Iranian borders. The MI soldiers also collected intelligence on the status of border sites, which included the various factions in camps or defensive positions along the borders (they reported such things as: "There is a squad of Iraqis at crossing point 3."). The 311th MI Battalion developed a comprehensive training program and is training Iraqi candidates on required border guard skills. (Huh?)

The 311th MI Battalion focused upon Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT). They "got information" and "also achieved situational awareness of the population's mindset via monitoring the public press (television, radio, newspaper, Internet)." The OSINT Cell also monitored a local "hotline" phone that any person could call to discuss their concerns. OSINT was a problem though, since they had only a few Iraqi interpreters watching TV and listening to the radio.

The largest failure among a list of total MI failures was the inability to rapidly translate important captured enemy documents. A majority of these missions disclosed various documents, articles, equipment, and assorted paraphernalia that needed immediate exploitation for time purposes. The MI battalions explained their failures as follows: "Since the capturing unit had to tag and transfer detainees and documents to the rear, we may have lost valuable time in analyzing the captured material; this information could have been "invaluable in supporting the Division's FP posture"."

The US Army should immediately disband all of its MI battalions and ask Special Forces to set up intelligence collecting units in every combat unit. US Army MI is a disgrace!

Breaker McCoy