



## **(S) SID Support to POW Rescue**

FROM: Charles Berlin  
SID Chief of Staff  
Run Date: 04/14/2003

(S) You probably saw news not long ago of the dramatic rescue of U.S. POW Jessica Lynch from a hospital in the Iraqi town of An Nasiriya. Today I'd like to relate details you may not know of the role played by SID analysts and others to help make that operation a success.

(S//SI) On March 25th, two days after Private Lynch was captured, the DCI Underground Facility Analysis Center (UFAC) asked NSA for all available SIGINT that would characterize the An Nasiriya Saddam General Hospital: they had seen indications that high-level Iraqis were using the underground portion of the hospital for command and control and as a "sanctuary." In response, SIGINT Support to Information Operation's (SSIO) Underground Facility (UGF) Support Cell (*see description at the end of this article*) quickly pulled SIGINT reporting dating back to November 1979; our reports showed that the An Nasiriya facility had been built by the Japanese firm "Marubeni Corporation."

(TS//SI) Later, on March 27th, SID's Middle East-North Africa (MENA) Product Line reported that "a wounded U.S. female soldier was at the Saddam hospital." This prompted the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) to request additional information on the facility in preparation for a planned rescue operation. A formal request incorporating SIGINT went to the Defense Human Intelligence Service (DHS) seeking assistance in securing blueprint information from the Japanese firm. Once obtained, Ufac analyzed the An Nasiriya facility blueprints and sent them as digital files to JSOC elements "literally minutes before the aircraft departed with the strike team" on April 1st. During the rescue operation, the GEOCELL Watch maintained a near real-time watch box for any hostile personal communications system activity in the area around the hospital.

(S//SI) Effective collaboration involving elements from SSIO, MENA, GEOCELL Watch, DHS, the Special Operations Forces NIST (National Intelligence Support Team), and Ufac helped provide JSOC forces with intelligence critical to the success of this mission. Well done to all concerned!

---

(S) *The NSA UGF Support Cell was established in SSIO on 26 August 2002 as part of the DCI's request to create an interagency effort capable of providing complete, up-to-the-minute all-source data to battlefield commands regarding foreign underground facilities and their operations. This interagency effort assesses the infrastructure and vulnerabilities of underground facilities used by hostile governments or military forces. Such information assists the warfighter in planning operations to destroy or disable an underground facility or, in this case, to rescue U.S. personnel and save lives.*

---

**"(U//FOUO) SIDtoday articles may not be republished or reposted outside NSANet without the consent of S0121 ([DL sid comms](#))."**

---