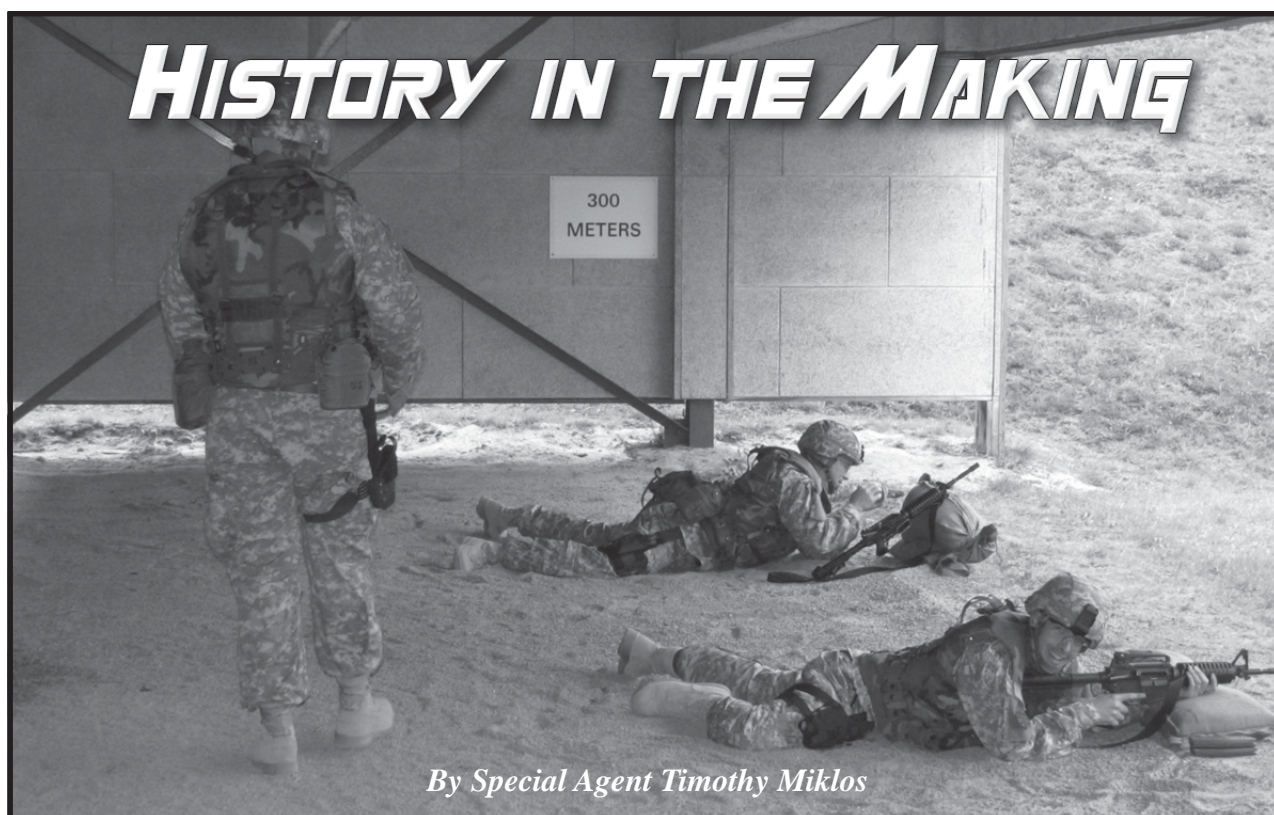


HISTORY IN THE MAKING



By Special Agent Timothy Miklos

As 2005 came to an end, eleven Soldiers from the 5th Military Police Battalion (Criminal Investigation Division [CID]) and one from the 1002d Military Police Battalion (CID) prepared to come together to deploy to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). For the first time in its history, the 481st Military Police Detachment (CID) would deploy.

The training in Germany, which had started months before, included live fire convoy exercises at the Baumholder Maneuver Training Area, the combat lifesaver course, and the unit's rapid field initiative issue in Mannheim. It continued with individual soldier readiness training at each of the agent's home stations and culminated with the Soldiers training together for 12 straight days. Although the group would come together one more time, for 5 days just before deployment, those 12 days were the most significant training time the Soldiers would have.

Decked out in the new Army combat uniform, the 481st Soldiers participated in training designed to prepare them for their mission in Iraq. The detachment concentrated on common tasks such as chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear training; first aid; and land navigation. The Soldiers also attended classes in convoy operations, improvised explosive device familiarization, and operation orders. Their training did not stop there. They also studied topics specific to CID agents, such as computer crimes, logistics

security, and war crimes. On top of all that, they received about 13 hours of survival, evasion, resistance, and escape training. The 12-Soldier detachment received about 96 hours of training in all.

On the ninth day of training, the detachment's Soldiers went to the range for pistol and rifle tables of fire. Not only did the Soldiers go through the CID qualification table with their assigned M11 pistols, they also got a chance to familiarize themselves with the new M4 rifle qualification table. Instead of using pop-up targets at various distances or paper targets with different sizes of silhouettes on them, the new qualification table consists of pop-up targets at only three distances—300, 200, and 100 meters. The Soldiers had 1 1/2 minutes to engage the 300-meter target with 20 rounds and 1 minute to engage the 200-meter and 100-meter targets with 10 rounds each. The consensus among the detachment's Soldiers was that the new qualification table was more difficult than previous qualifications.

After firing at the range, the detachment's Soldiers were taught combative techniques by members of the 230th Military Police Company. The training prepared the Soldiers for the unlikely possibility of unarmed fighting. The 5th Military Police Battalion commander said the purpose of all the training was twofold—first, to bring together Soldiers from the 5th Military Police Battalion (CID) and the 1002d Military

Police Battalion (CID) and build them up as a team; and second, to refresh combat skills that dwindle in a garrison environment.

The Soldiers had an advantage as they headed to Iraq. CID personnel have been in the country for almost three years and the detachment could learn from the experience of other agents and Soldiers who have participated in previous OIF deployments. Briefings on operations in Iraq and lessons learned by CID personnel previously deployed in support of OIF were also on the agenda. On the final day of training, a senior noncommissioned officer from the 11th Military Police Battalion (CID) briefed the detachment. He also provided up-to-the-minute information on the living and working conditions the Soldiers would be facing in Iraq.

The 12 days of training was not all hard work. On the final day, the 5th Military Police Battalion (CID) hosted a cookout. Since the agents came from various offices throughout Germany, the cookout gave them the opportunity to gain some much-needed insight into each other and build the camaraderie they would need to rely on for the year they would be deployed together. The battalion commander said, "By the end of the two weeks, it was evident that the Soldiers did indeed form a cohesive bond. We sent them back to home station ready to deploy with a full complement of refreshed skills, some idea of what life will be like during their deployment, as well as initiating the bond that will carry them throughout the deployment and beyond." The commander added, "I have the greatest confidence in my Soldiers' ability to perform their mission. They will succeed."