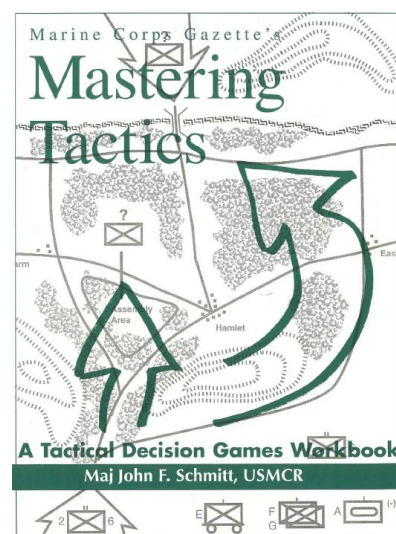
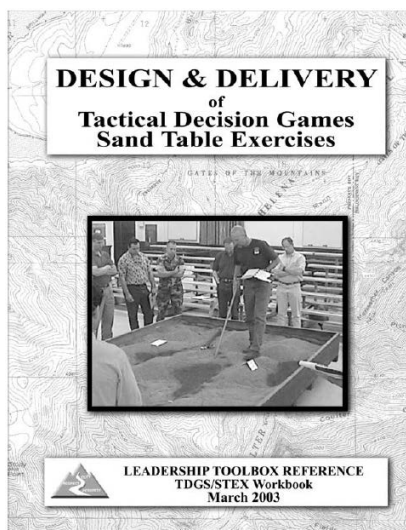
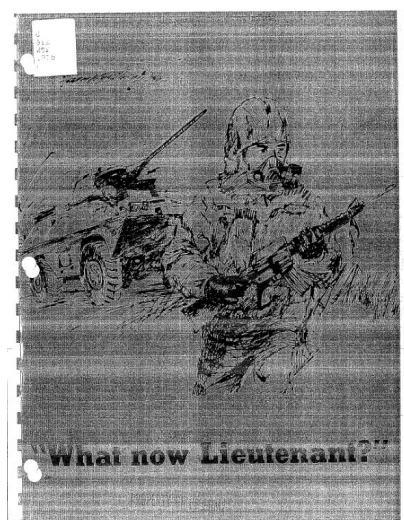
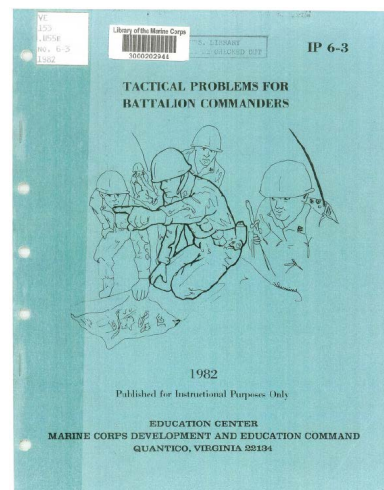
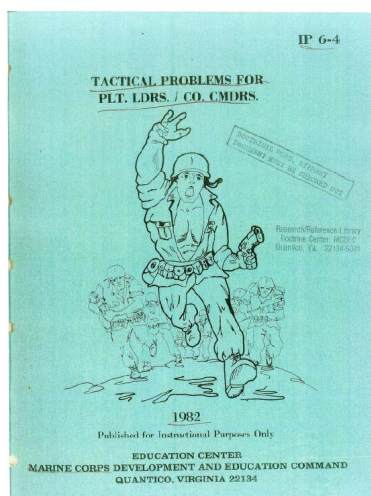
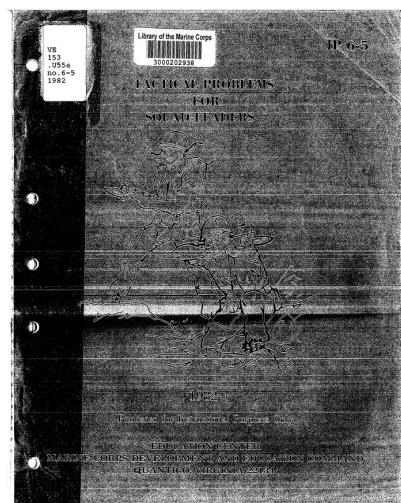


Recopilación de fuentes para el estudio de los *Tactical Problems* y los *Decision Games*



Colección preparada para *Comprender la Guerra* (<https://minervae.top/>)

Elaborada con fines pedagógicos, a partir de fuentes abiertas y sin ánimo de lucro. Julio, 2023.

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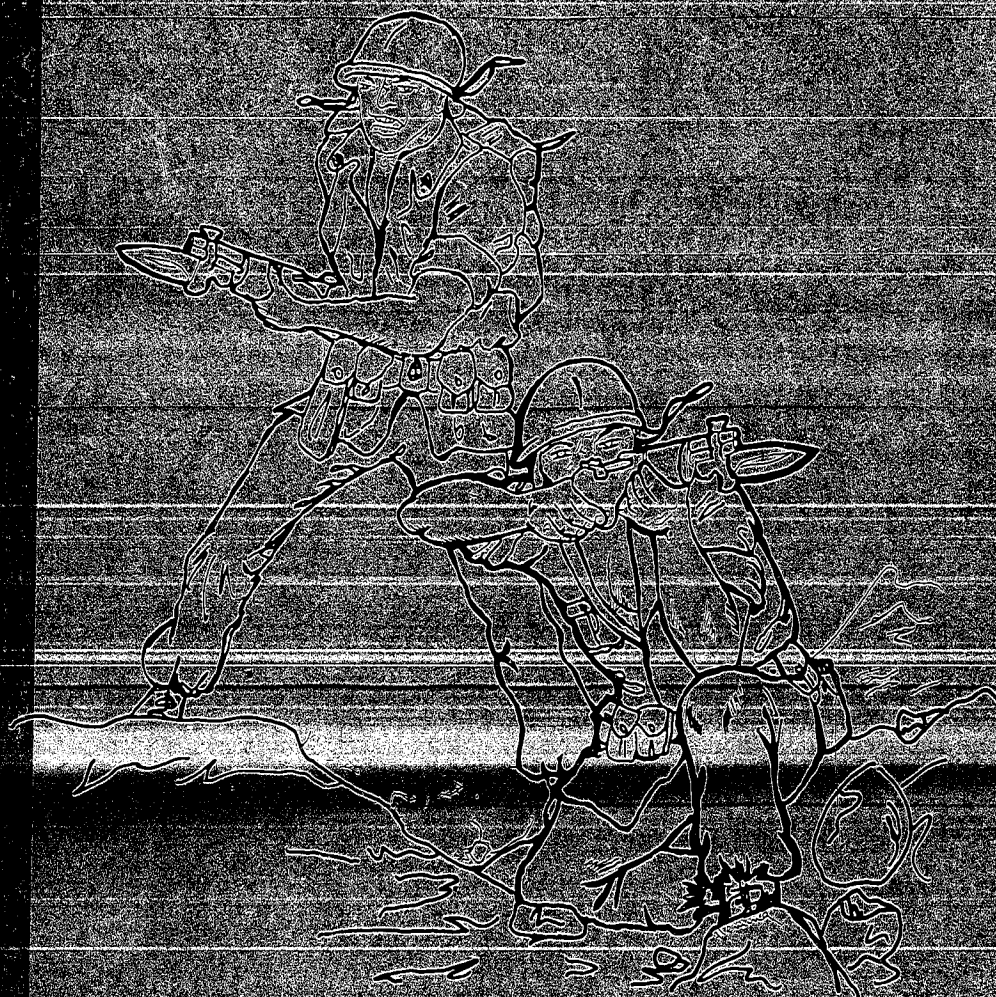
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TACTICAL PROBLEMS FOR SQUAD LEADERS



1982

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FOREWORD

The contents of this IP are designed to reawaken an interest in history and the study of tactics. Too often we get caught up in the mundane affairs of life and neglect our professional obligation to improve our competence in fighting battles. Tragically, the day to day management of the myriad administrative and management tasks associated with commanding and leading tactical units leave too little time for study and reflection on the very purpose of our existence as Marines i.e., to train, fight and win battles. Each and every one of us from fire team leader through division commander has a moral and professional obligation to continuously upgrade and add to our war fighting skills. The ultimate in being a Marine is leading other Marines in battle. Therefore our moral obligation is to lead them well and win! The study and analysis of how the warriors before us functioned in combat gives us priceless insight, knowledge and benefit of their experience. Nothing teaches better than experience. The historical scenarios enclosed within have been carefully selected to correspond to your level of leadership and experience. They require no equipment, little time for preparation and can be used in the barracks, at the club, or during dead-time in the field as you await the next evolution of training. Your training aids are as simple as a piece of chalk and blackboard, or a stick and sand or dirt to develop and depict the terrain and situation. This IP is certainly not the total answer to improving our tactical skills, but it provides an excellent and an interesting approach in that direction.

D. M. Twomey
D. M. TWOMEY
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps
Director

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TACTICAL PROBLEMS FOR SQUAD LEADERS

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

101. GENERAL

This handout presents, for instructional purposes, a selection of tactical scenarios requiring analysis and decision on the part of Marine Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) at the squad and platoon level. "Tactical Problems" is presented as a vehicle for development of the tactical skills necessary to win battles and so is directed primarily at the combat arms. Readers should keep in mind, however, that any Marine Corps unit may suddenly find itself involved in combat - even units that traditionally are considered rear echelon units. These tactical problems can therefore be used by any unit in the Marine Corps as a training tool.

102. BACKGROUND

A training package called What Now, Lt? was developed at the 9th Infantry Division (USA) to prepare the division's company level leaders for combat. The original concept was developed by the Division Commander, MG H. F. STONE, to present junior leaders with tactical problems and require them to solve those problems. Grateful acknowledgement is made to the personnel of the Battle Simulation Center, Ft. Lewis, Washington as the source of some of the original material contained in this text. The Education Center, MCDEC, has undertaken this expansion of the original training package with the conviction that it has valuable potential as a training vehicle with Marine Corps-wide application.

103. APPLICABILITY

This publication is not directive in nature and no attempt is made to develop doctrine. The tactical problems presented are drawn straight from historical examples and no comment is made on the validity of the historical solutions. Readers are left free to draw their own conclusions.

104. INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

One of the scenarios is depicted on a sand table around which the Marines are gathered. A discussion leader reads the scenario to the group and calls upon one Marine to make a decision. All scenarios are written from historical accounts of small unit actions in both World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, and the Israeli Wars. When the selected individual has made his decision, the real battle begins because at that point, the discussion leader throws it open to the floor for other opinions. Since every individual has his own perceptions and opinions, a lively debate usually results. Every participant gets instant feedback on the pros and cons of his decision. When the discussion leader feels that no further learning will result from the discussion, he presents the historical solution made by the actual leader on the spot. That solution is not the "right" one because in some cases, that decision led to the destruction of the leader's force or failure to accomplish his mission. The historical solution is merely an account of what really happened and is a vehicle for further discussion.

105. OBJECTIVES

a. "Tactical Problems" confront Marine leaders with problems they may face in combat. Since the great majority of Marines serving today have never been to war and have at best a scanty knowledge of what they are likely to encounter, "Tactical Problems" can give some foresight of what may happen. It should be stressed that these scenarios are not fictional; they were actually faced by an earlier soldier.

b. A second objective is to stimulate professional interest among Marines in warfare. Actual combat experiences of earlier leaders may awaken a desire in the participants to know more about what took place; leading them into a trip to the library and the beginnings of professional study. The source of each problem is listed at the head of the scenario for reference.

c. The key objective of the exercise is to generate thought upon tactical problems. There is absolutely no intent to imply that the same tactical problem will occur in some future war that requires the same solution. The only intent is to develop reason. There are no "school solutions" and no Marine should come away believing that problem "A" calls for solution "B" in all cases. Also, "Tactical Problems" is not designed as a tool by which a company commander, for example, may teach his NCOs the exact course of action he wishes them to pursue in a particular situation. The tactical possibilities of any given situation will be unique to that situation and realistically, the junior leader on the spot will make his own decision based on his own perceptions and experience. "Tactical Problems" is used to develop a rational thought process for solving a tactical situation and commanders can get their best results by guiding their junior leaders in the development of this thought process.

d. A final objective is the development of creativity. The participants are encouraged to express any solution to the tactical problem which they feel might work. As a result, extremely innovative solutions often emerge.

106. ROLE OF THE DISCUSSION LEADER

a. The discussion leader is all important in using "Tactical Problems". It falls upon his shoulders to generate thought. Until the other participants begin to do so, he must second guess every decision and point out problems that the Marine expressing a decision failed to consider. He must also force the players to express their intentions in detail. Each step must be dissected to determine exactly what the leader will do. Do not settle for generalities! It is not enough to claim that one would order his machineguns to open fire. He must determine how he is going to get those machineguns to open up in the midst of a noisy fire fight when his radio is shattered and there are fifty meters of open ground swept by fire between himself and his guns.

b. The best discussion leaders are Marines with more experience than the participants. For example, the company first sergeant might be just the man to do a great job with platoon sergeants or squad leaders. There are many senior NCOs in the Marine Corps with valuable combat experience, and utilizing these individuals as discussion leaders is an excellent means of drawing on their knowledge.

c. Whenever possible, the discussion leader should try to keep each group of participants of similar grade or experience. The free expression of opinions and the heated arguments which generate so much enthusiasm usually flow best in such an environment. He must maintain the understanding that there are no right and wrong answers, while at the same time encouraging the participants to speak freely.

d. There is no intent to limit Marines to a particular set of "Tactical Problems" scenarios. If a discussion leader desires, he may introduce problems from a higher or lower leadership echelon. For example, a company gunny may use the company grade problems in a discussion with platoon sergeants to generate thought on how they would handle the situation if their platoon leader was taken out of action.

107. RECOMMENDATIONS

a. The "Tactical Problems" series is continually expanding, which generates a constant need for new materials. Supplements will be published regularly and holed for easy collection in binders. Individuals are encouraged to develop new scenarios and forward them to the address given below so that all Marines may benefit from their contribution. New scenarios should include:

- (1) A description of the general situation (friendly and enemy).
- (2) A sketch map of the area.
- (3) The specific situation requiring a solution.
- (4) The historical solution and exact reference where it was found.

b. Recommendations for improving this publication are invited from commands as well as directly from individuals.

Editor
MCDEC Operational Overview
Amphibious Instruction Department
Education Center, MCDEC
Quantico, Va. 22134

108. SOURCES

At the head of each scenario, the source from which the material was adapted is listed along with the name and organization of the individual developing the scenario. For easy reference, the sources are given in a combined list below:

- (1) Pork Chop Hill, by S. L. A. Marshall (Pub. William Morrow and Co.)
- (2) Small Unit Actions (Pubs. U. S. War Dept. Historical Division 1946)
- (3) Combat Actions in Korea, by Russell A. Gugelor (Pub. Office of Chief of Military History, U. S. Army)
- (4) Scorched Earth: The Russian-German War 1943-1944, by Paul Carell (Pub. Little, Brown and Co.)

TACTICAL PROBLEMS
FOR
SQUAD LEADERS

SECTION II
SCENARIOS

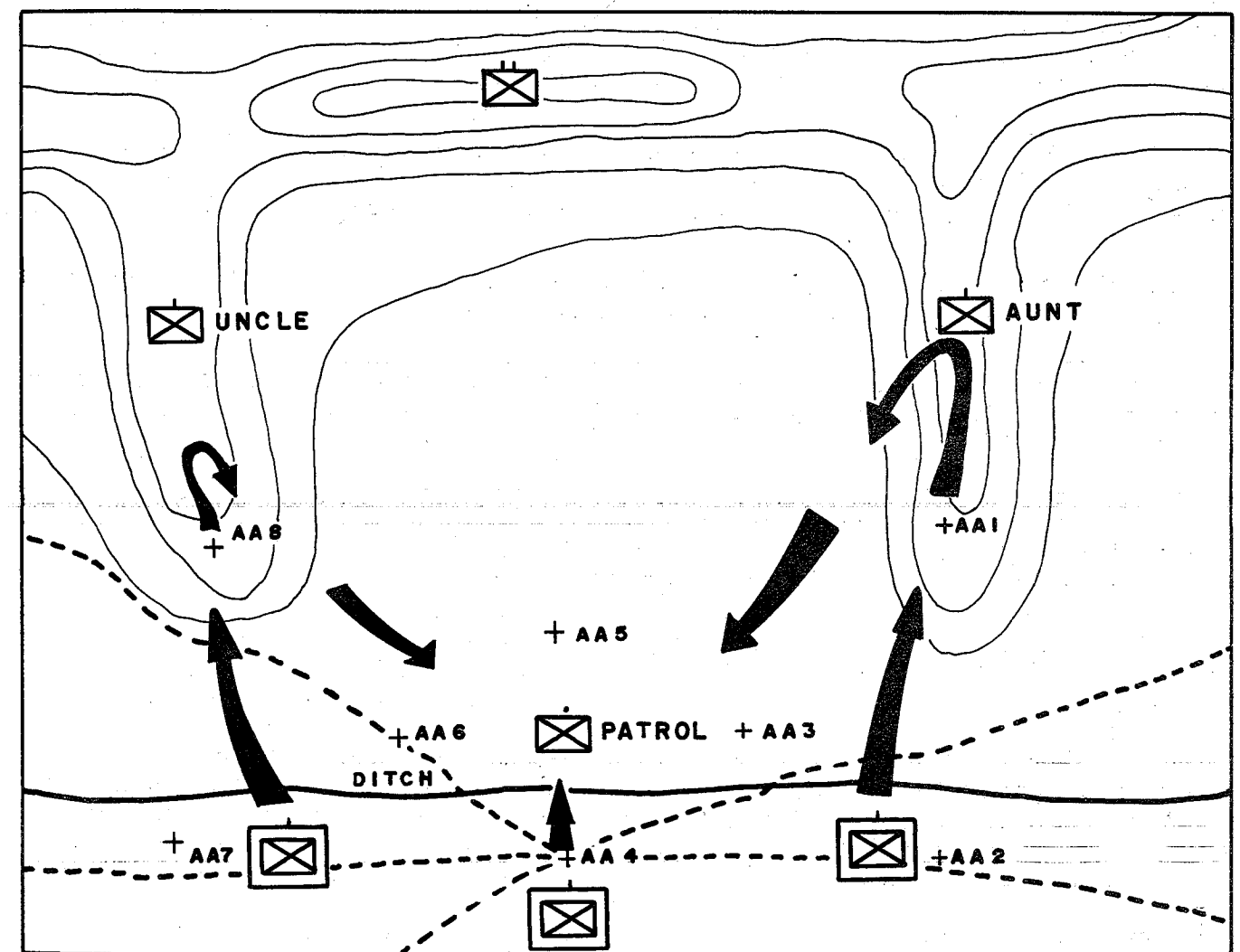


SCENARIO 1

FROM: S.L.A. Marshall's Pork Chop Hill
Capt Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Div (USA)

THE INCREDIBLE PATROL

SITUATION 1: Your battalion is occupying defensive positions on a ridgeline. Jutting down from that ridgeline are two fingers on which your company has prepared two fortified positions called Aunt and Uncle. Below those fingers is a valley through which runs an irrigation ditch. About 200 meters in front of that irrigation ditch lies the intersection of three trails.



You are leading 15 men, with two M60 machineguns, on a combat patrol forward of your company's positions. Your only indirect fire support is the 81mm mortar platoon. The numbers on the board represent pre-planned targets for that platoon. Your mission is to ambush an enemy patrol and return with prisoners. It is nearly midnight. You select a

position behind the irrigation ditch overlooking the intersection of the trails. You are no sooner in position when an enemy soldier appears 300 meters to your front. He is quickly joined by more and more enemy forces until approximately a company has been assembled at that location. You try to call your company, but the radio will not break through. As the enemy company forms to your front, you spot another company about 500 meters to your left moving towards one of the fortified knobs your company defends (Aunt), and still another company moving towards Uncle on your right. In other words, you are in the middle of a battalion attack of two columns attacking Aunt and Uncle, connected by a reserve company in the center. By the time you have fooled with your radio for a while, one column is at the foot of Aunt and the other has crossed the irrigation ditch approaching Uncle. The enemy to your front is about 200 meters away and moving slowly towards your position. However, you have a well concealed route of withdrawal available to your rear. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader crawled from man to man cautioning everyone to be silent and to hold fire until he opened up. He also tried his radio from different spots among his men to see if he could break through from another location. He made no attempt to send back messengers or retreat, presumably because the enemy was already behind him.

SITUATION 2: Still unable to cut through with your radio, you see that the enemy point is within 10 meters of your patrol's position. The company on your left is climbing the finger towards Aunt while the third company is approaching the finger of Uncle. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol opened up with everything they had. The enemy point element was cut down immediately, but the rest of the company hit the dirt and began returning fire.

SITUATION 3: Your patrol is under heavy fire from the company to your front. Finally, you are able to break through on the radio. The battalion S-3 answers your call. What do you tell him?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader said that he was surrounded, had killed some of the enemy, and wanted mortar fires on AA1. In other words, he ignored the threat to his immediate front, hoping to shatter the columns moving on Aunt.

SITUATION 4: Skirmishers from the company you have just engaged begin moving on your left flank. Illumination rounds landing over AA1 reveal that the mortars are killing some of the forces moving on Aunt. However, they also reveal enemy figures swarming amidst the positions at Aunt. You report that the enemy is in Aunt's position and request VT directly on Aunt. Enemy artillery is now falling on the two fortified outposts and on the battalion's positions along the ridgeline. However, American mortar fire has, in your opinion, shattered the forces not yet in Aunt's position. You realize that you are probably the only man in your battalion who can see the whole picture of the battle. You alone know of the massed attacks on both outposts. However, you also realize that due to the slope of the fingers (which point towards your patrol's position) your location is the likely spot where the enemy battalion will converge if they fail in their attacks. You see the second enemy company in a draw just below Uncle, obviously massing for the attack. The company to your front has moved soldiers onto your left flank and is closing in on you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader shifted some of his men to the left to thwart the flanking movement. Then he shifted the mortar fire to AA8, right on top of the company massing to hit Uncle.

SITUATION 5: The enemy has shifted over 90 degrees and is on your left flank and rear. Stragglers from Aunt and Uncle are streaming back towards your location and join the attack on your patrol. You have about 30 rounds of ammunition remaining in the entire patrol. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader called for fires on AA5. When he ran out of ammunition, he simply kept up the fires all around his patrol's location, gradually closing the ring. For two hours, the patrol remained in position without ammunition, calling in mortars on every attack against them.

SITUATION 6: You have no ammunition remaining. Daylight has arrived. There are no signs of live enemy left in the area, but your patrol has been in combat for seven hours. Battalion orders you to search the battlefield, examine the dead bodies for documents, and capture any wounded. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Believe it or not, the patrol leader led his men about the battlefield for three hours, carrying out his latest orders, without ammunition, before he returned to his company's position. The patrol leader was a young Ethiopian lieutenant who had arrived in Korea only 3 days before he received this mission.





SCENARIO 2

FROM: S.L.A. Marshall's Pork Chop Hill
CPT Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Div (USA)

AMBUSHERS AMBUSHED

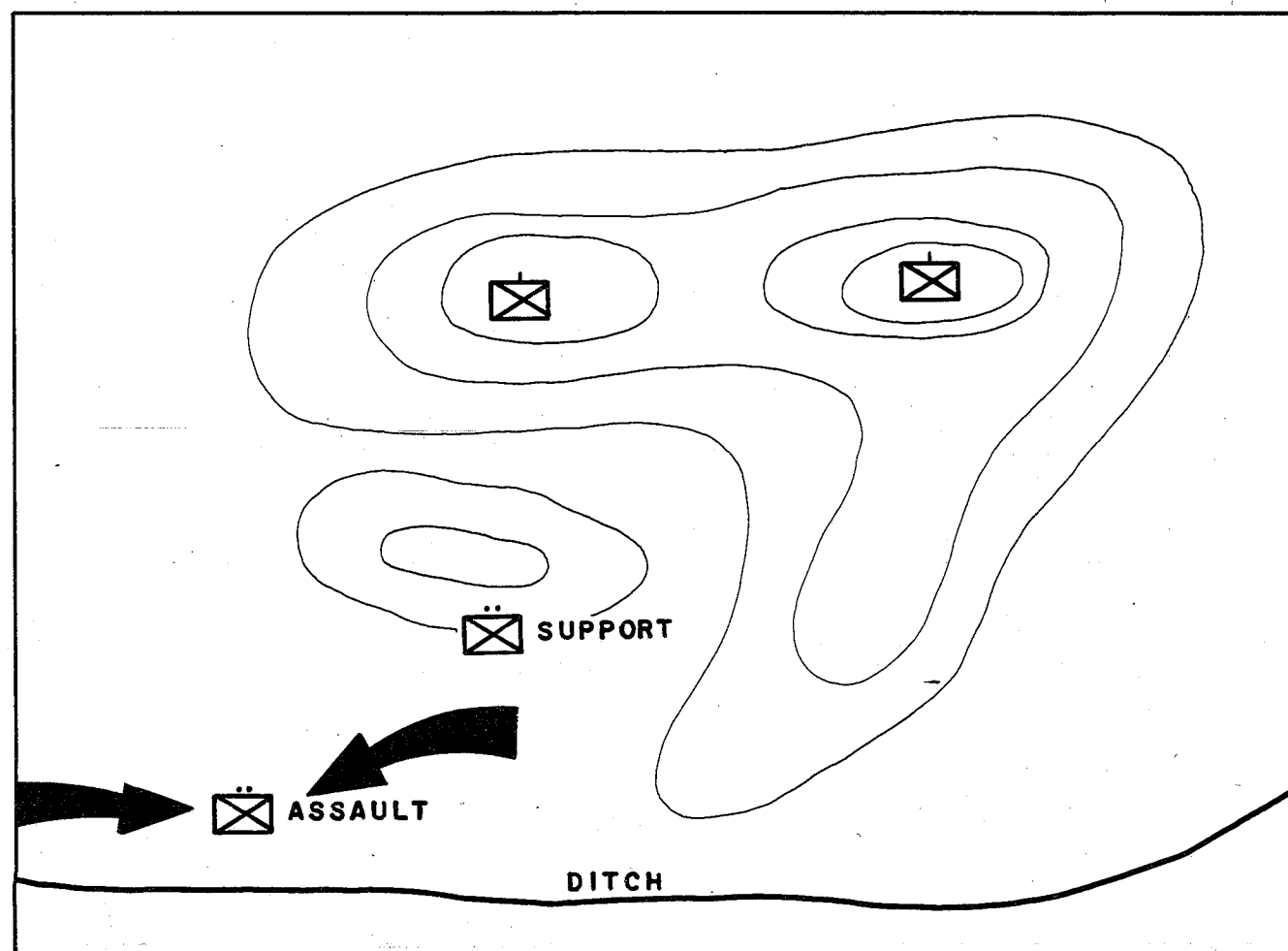
SITUATION 1: You are a patrol leader on your first combat mission of the war. Your task is to set up an ambush along a drainage ditch about 1500 meters in front of your company's position. Your ambush position cannot be supported by direct fire weapons from friendly lines, but you do have mortar and artillery support. There are 24 men in your patrol divided into two groups: the assault group, led by you (a SSgt), and the support group, led by a corporal. The two groups are about 100 meters apart. It is a dark night and your patrol is to stay in position from 1000 to 0200. The fighting has been quiet in this sector and you expect no action. You have been in position for 4 hours. Although your men are still awake, they are rather unalert; their senses dulled by the quiet night and the expectation that the enemy is not around.

You are on the horn, telling your commander that you are returning to base, when suddenly the enemy opens fire on your assault element from both flanks. Your position is crisscrossed with rifle fire, but nobody is hit in the first fires because the enemy is firing high. You scream into your TA-312 to get fire from the support group, but cannot raise them because your Ratello, while diving for cover in the hail of bullets, ripped the wire from the phone. The radio is with your F.O. who is 75 meters from your location. Unfortunately, he is the only man in the force hit by the enemy fire. At the same time, the support element is illuminated for all the world to see by a misplaced mortar flare called by a neighboring company. They are perfectly silhouetted against the sky by that light and are under effective enemy fire. The unexpected light has destroyed your visual purple and, as it disappears, you are blind. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader kept calling uselessly into his phone for help, while everyone else hugged the earth. Most soldiers did not return fire. The enemy did not close on either position because they were afraid of American firepower. One or two eventually charged. One NCO started to recover enough vision to "sense" someone approaching him and fired point blank into the enemy's face, then past him into another soldier. Nevertheless, there was very little fire from the US patrol.

SITUATION 2: Instead of providing you with supporting fires, the beleaguered support group panics, abandons their position, and rushes toward your location with the assault group. The enemy forces are also struggling with the effects of the blinding light and their fire slackens momentarily. At last, the soldiers with you in the assault group begin to use their weapons. Just then, you see soldiers running toward you calling your name and yelling "Don't shoot! Don't shoot! We're coming in." You recognize elements of your support group running right over top of the enemy who had been attacking you. But at the same time, you see several of the enemy soldiers leap up and follow the Marines into your ambush site, throwing grenades over their heads into your lines. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader yelled to hold fire. His soldiers obeyed, but the Chinese kept firing and throwing grenades. The Americans frantically thrust aside grenades and finally two soldiers fired at anyone without a helmet, killing several. The action of those two soldiers saved everyone's life because it stopped the only Chinese who had taken action.



SITUATION 3: You are badly wounded by grenade fragments in one leg, momentarily unconscious, and thought to be dead by your soldiers. In the seconds that you were passed out, your patrol has grabbed the wounded and begun a fighting withdrawal towards friendly front lines. You do not know how you got there, but when you regain consciousness, you are crawling uphill. You crawl until you hit some wire which you recognize as a portion of the company's defense. You cross back into friendly lines and learn that your patrol has not yet returned. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Another lieutenant organized a relief patrol and went to give support to any patrol members still in the valley.

SITUATION 4: You have organized a ten man relief patrol and are leading it back to the ambush site to give support. You encounter the remnants of your patrol struggling up the hill carrying the wounded, but they have left the dead behind. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader left the relief patrol at that spot to protect the wounded patrol and went alone with a medic to certify that the soldiers left behind were really dead.

SITUATION 5: Setting up your relief patrol to provide cover, you and your medic go down to the dead bodies to see if they are actually dead. They are all dead. At that point four to five enemy soldiers attack; you kill several. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader led patrol back to the company perimeter as he did not want to risk more lives removing dead bodies. The bodies were picked up in the morning with a fresh patrol.



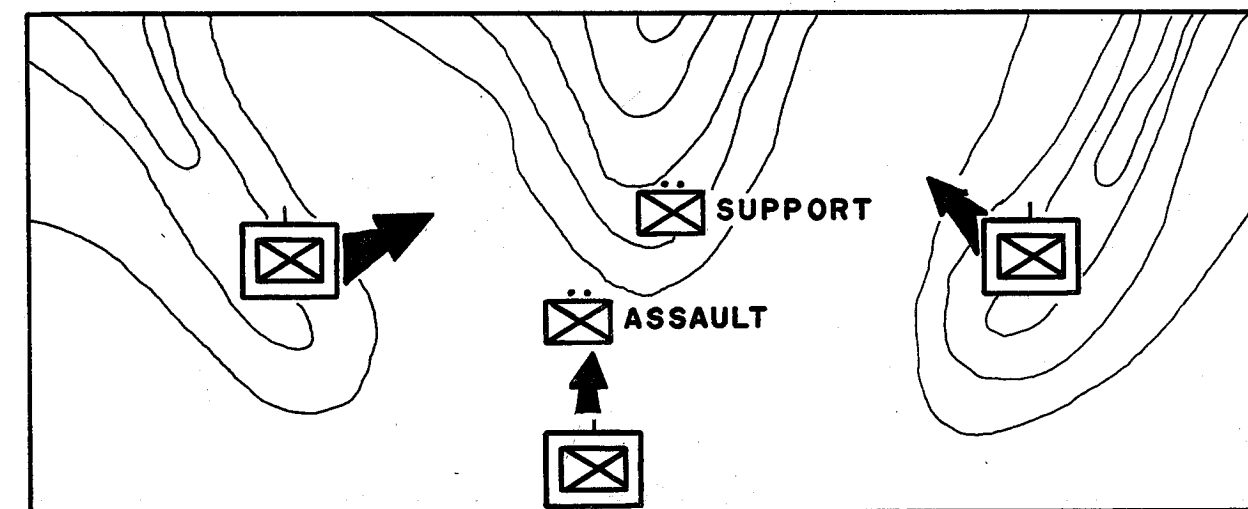


SCENARIO 3

FROM: S.L.A. Marshall's Pork Chop Hill
CPT Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Div (USA)

THE PATROL TO THE VALLEY

SITUATION 1: You are the leader of a ten man patrol operating on rocky, lightly vegetated terrain. Your company occupies a defensive position on a finger jutting from a ridgeline, along which your battalion is located.



It is nighttime and visibility is poor. Your mission is to move from your company position down the finger to a valley below, ambush any enemy forces and attempt to capture prisoners. You have your company mortars and the 81mm mortar platoon available to you. You position your patrol so that a five man assault team is on the valley floor and a five man support force is on slightly higher ground. The teams are close enough to provide mutual support. However, in the darkness, they cannot see each other. You are with the assault team. After being in position for several hours, you spot a force of about 50 light infantry enemy soldiers moving towards you. At the same time, silhouetted against the evening sky, you can see enemy forces swarming over the high ground to your right and left. The enemy is obviously making a full scale attack upon your company's position. You try to call your company, but the radio cannot raise them. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: In real life, the assault team fired at the 50 Chinese and attempted to fall back on the support element and return to the company perimeter. The support team, seeing the enemy all around them, attempted to link up with their patrol leader and return to the company. The teams missed each other in the dark.

SITUATION 2: While moving uphill towards your support element, you and the assault team are caught in heavy mortar fire from your own battalion's mortars. You order everyone to race to a cluster of boulders about 100 meters to your front. Once there, you find that two men are missing. The enemy can be seen in great numbers on the high ground all around you, but you still cannot talk to anyone on the radio. After waiting awhile, you hear the groans of the two missing men. You investigate and find them alive, but they are unable to move. The mortar fire is now coming in heavier than before; most of it from your own 81 platoon. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader ordered his men into a shell hole and had them dig it as deep as they could while he attempted to carry the wounded men to the hole. One of the wounded died in the attempt.

SITUATION 3: You attempt to make it back to friendly front lines. However, of your ten man patrol, five are still missing, one man is dead and another is unconscious. In the retreat up the hill, more mortar fires land in your group. The unconscious man is killed and a second man has his legs shattered so that he cannot walk. Although conscious, he gives up and pleads with you to kill him. The other man with you is now a bundle of nerves and is urging the two of you to make a break for it. At that moment, eight enemy aid men, carrying stretchers and kit bags, come out of the dark towards your location. They have not yet seen you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader fired on the enemy soldiers and scattered them. Then he and the other man picked up the badly wounded man and continued heading towards friendly lines. The patrol leader attempted to convince the man with the shattered leg to keep fighting for his life. Eventually, the three of them made it back to their company, which had successfully fought off the Chinese attack. One man from the support team also made it back.



SCENARIO 4

FROM: Combat Actions in Korea
Chapter 3
CPT Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Div (USA)

DEFEND THE GUNS

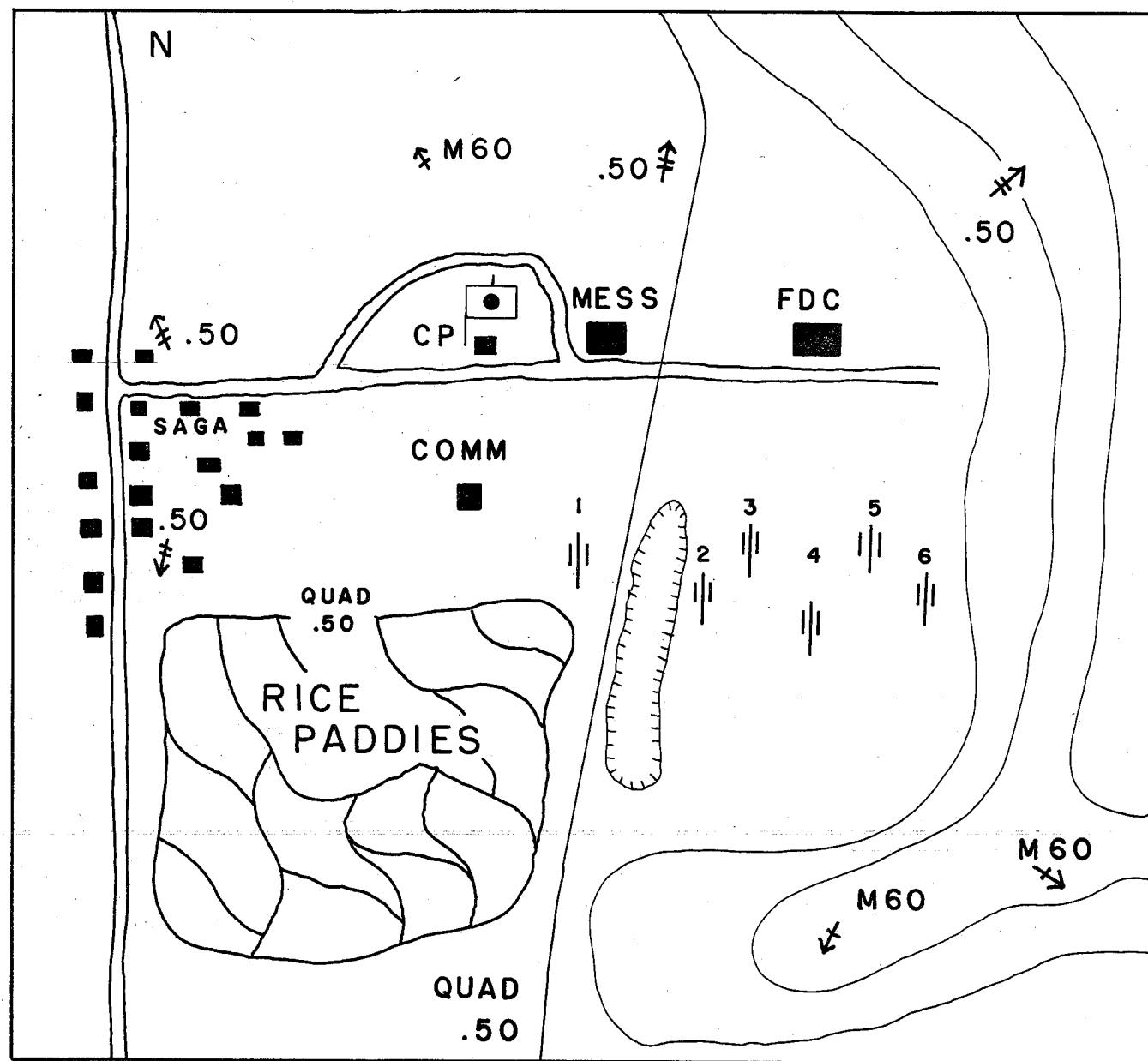
SITUATION 1: You are the first sergeant of a battery of 105's in direct support of an infantry battalion. Your battery is part of a MAU which has been rushed to Korea in response to a North Korean invasion of the south. The powerful enemy drive has blasted through the South Koreans and the U.S. 2nd and 82nd Divisions which were first on the scene. Your MAU reinforces the battered 2nd Division on the new defensive line. You move into a position within a shallow bowl formed by a low ridge. A railroad track runs through the front edge of that bowl and since the bowl is too small to accommodate all your guns, you place one gun to the north edge of the tracks. Your FDC is dug in on the south side of the tracks but your signal personnel and your headquarters men are set up in several Korean houses north of the tracks. Due to North Korean infiltrators, you have kept your battery as close together as possible and have set up ten defensive positions around your guns, including four 50 cal's and three M60 machine guns. In addition, 2 quad 50's are in your sector, but they are not assigned to your commander. There are several American infantry companies (USMC & Army) scattered around the area, but you have not coordinated with them and you have had little contact with their soldiers. Your battery is alert and firing a mission in support of the infantry around 0230 one night. You are checking your positions and have reached the communication people when you see three figures walking down the road dragging something. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The 1stSGT asked "Who's there?" When he got no response, he ordered the figures to halt. They continued walking. Then they pulled the thing they were dragging into a position along the road. The dragged object proved to be a heavy machine gun and the three figures were North Koreans. They opened fire on the battery and killed several people immediately.

SITUATION 2: You see the three figures on the road open fire with a heavy machine gun. At the same time, three machinegun's on the ridge open fire on the gunners in their pits and still another heavy machine gun opens up from the town of Saga. A North Korean soldier suddenly appears beside you and empties an AK47 into your communication sergeant and NBC NCO who are standing a few feet in front of you. The Korean then throws a grenade into the hut and disappears behind the building. You race towards the guns and run into one of the 50 cal positions, but it is manned by only one man. As you reach him, a North Korean team comes within 30 meters of you and begins to set up their machinegun pointing at you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Tried to fire the machinegun, but the gun failed to function. The sergeant (actually this situation happened to another NCO) ran across the rice paddies in the direction of an American infantry company where he had seen a tank earlier in the day. He eventually returned with help.

SITUATION 3: You run to the mess tent to organize a force to protect the CP. You find four men in the building and order them to grab their weapons and set up in a perimeter to the north and east of the CP. They rush out the door and right in the middle of 15-20 North Koreans mingling around. The lead man is shot and you pull him back into the building. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: This actually happened to several PFC's. They pulled the wounded man back into the building and tried to get out another door but ran into more North Koreans. They hid in the corner of the room. They did not prepare hasty positions or make any other effort to escape or fight.

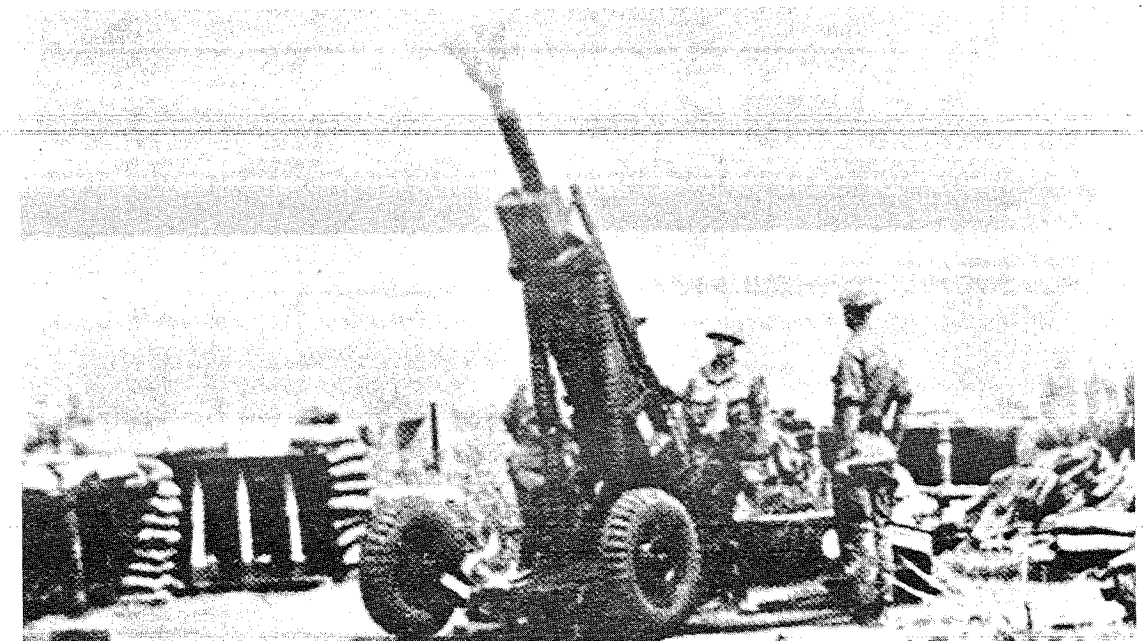
SITUATION 4: All of the above action occurred in the first 4 or 5 minutes of the fight. But you know that already your communication section is either dead or cut off and that the mission has been stopped as your crews lie in cover in the gun pits. Tracer rounds from Saga and the ridgeline crisscross over your gun positions. With the enemy already inside your defensive perimeter, you know that all the firepower positioned around your guns is

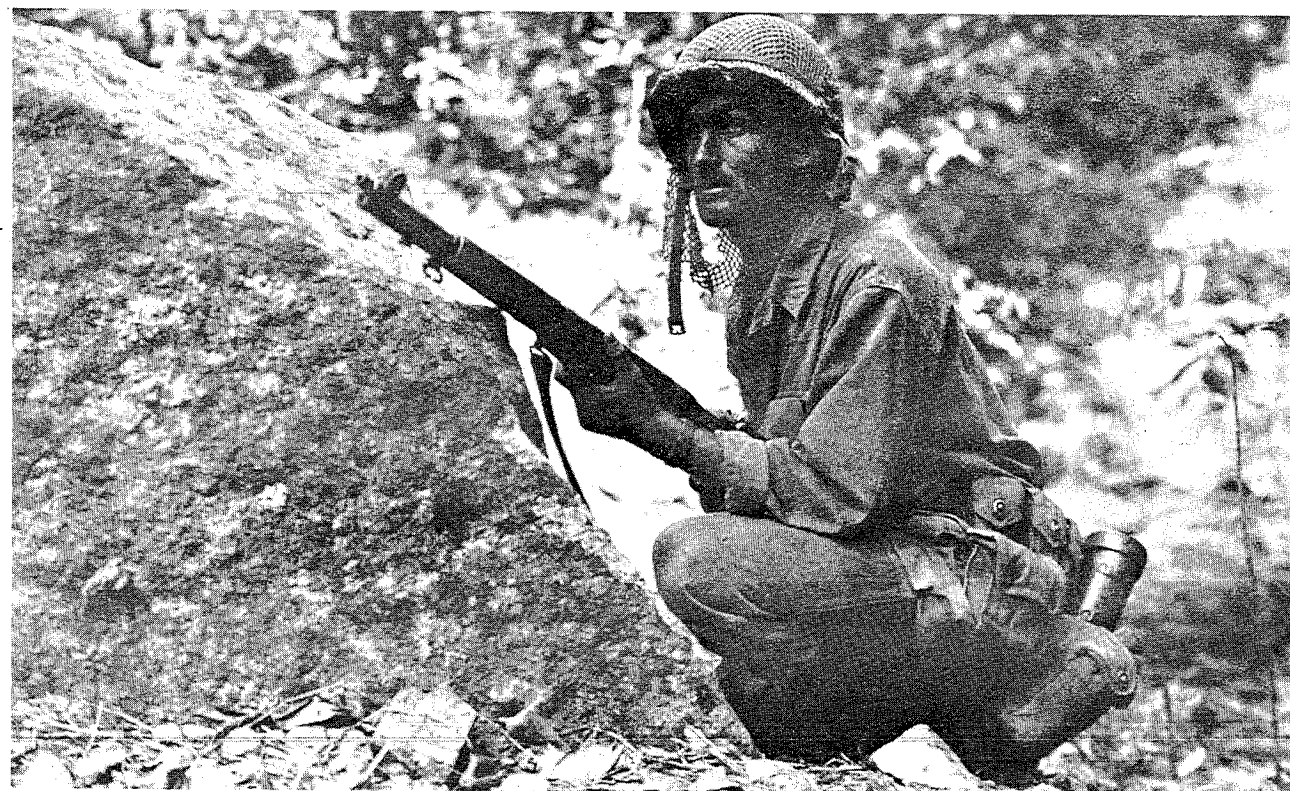
useless since friendly machine gun fire would probably now hit friendly troops. Battalion is on the radio wanting to know why the mission has been stopped. Cries for corpsmen ring out from the gun positions. Suddenly there is a flash and explosion; gun #5's ammunition pile has been hit! From the blaze of its light, you can see North Koreans rushing towards your guns. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: This actually happened to the battery XO, who ran to gun #3 and had them lower their tubes and fire against the ridgeline. He also figured that the crew of gun #5 must be dead or gone, so he fired on that position. The two howitzers fired about 18 rounds against the ridge and the gunners on #3 fired their small arms and grenades at #5 for 10 minutes. Then the XO ordered the crew to fall back to the gully by the tracks. Supporting fire was given by the two soldiers who crawled behind a 50 cal and poured 1300 rounds into the North Koreans. The battery commander attempted to make certain that all his people were out of the gun pits by rushing from gun to gun.

SITUATION 5: The battery has regrouped in the gully beside the tracks. The corpsmen are working feverishly to handle the wounded. The enemy is reluctant to attack this stronghold and fire slackens. You have battalion on the phone. What do you tell them?

HISTORICALLY: Called for fire on the ridgeline and on the hill in front of the guns. The fires were right on target. Then the tank which one of the soldiers had run to get came rolling up. The tank helped chase off the North Koreans, but scattered rifle fire continued until daylight when the enemy retreated and the battery could return to its guns. Seven men were dead and 12 wounded. The guns were undamaged and the battery continued its mission.





SCENARIO 5

FROM: Small Unit Actions
U. S. War Dept Historical Div
(1946)
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction Dept
MCDEC

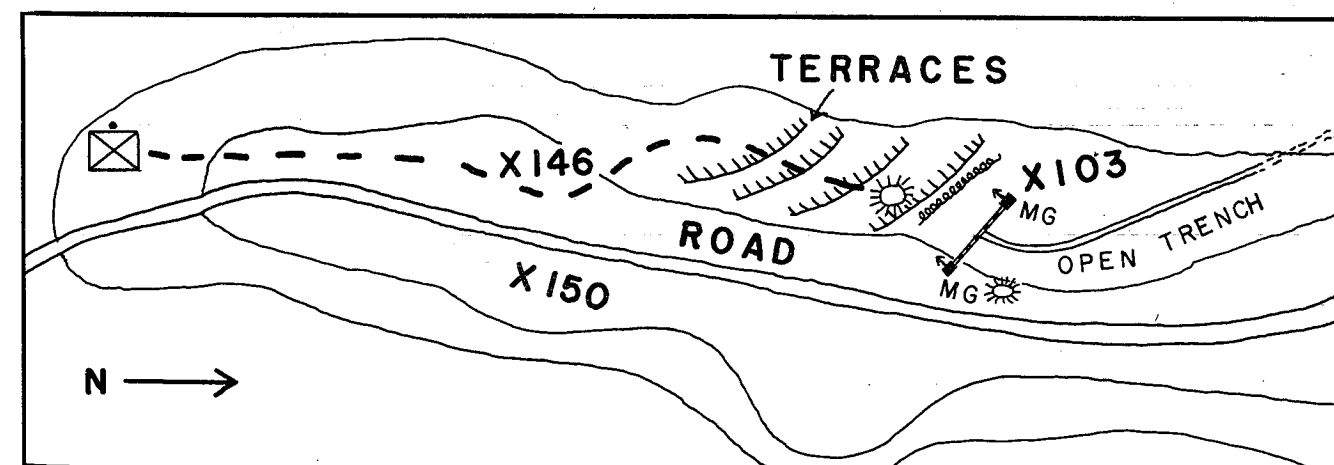
HILL 103

SITUATION 1: You are a squad leader in charge of 11 Marines. For the last month, your unit has been fighting in hilly terrain against a skillful enemy that shows no sign of giving up, even though he has been pushed steadily back. Finally, the enemy has made a stand in fairly strong positions astride a ridge. Because the fighting has been fairly heavy and the battalion commander does not want to risk heavy casualties, he decides to mount a night attack to achieve surprise. You receive your 5 paragraph order in the afternoon which details your part. H-Hour is set for 2300.

At first, all goes well. Your company moves in platoon columns to its attack position without much problem and deploys for the attack. Your platoon is going to guide on a road 25 meters off on the right. Your squad is on the right, another squad is to your left and the remainder of the platoon is to your rear. Prep fires have been working over the enemy positions and as soon as those fires shift to the rear, the platoon leader gives the word to move out.

Almost immediately, you discover that it is much more difficult to maintain direction while in a tactical formation than it was to move in column earlier. (There is no moon and it is pitch dark.) Moving up a small slope, you rapidly lose contact with the rest of the platoon, which moves off into the night without you.

You decide to push on in hopes of catching up to the rest of the platoon somewhere ahead. Your squad walks fast up the forward slopes of Hill 103 under cover of an ascending row of terraces, which protect you from the machineguns known to be on the crest of the hill. Indiscriminate mortar fire begins falling all around you on the way up. Finally, you reach the highest terrace on the slope which is the last line of protective cover against machinegun fire. You lead the squad into a large shell hole, set up a hasty defense and assess the situation. There are enemy machineguns firing from two dugouts on the crest of the hill. Though you're not too sure they are firing at you, they are only 35 yards away and their line of fire is even with the top of the terrace you're on - so firing rifles over the terrace doesn't seem like a good idea to you. Also, there is concertina wire strung along the top of the terrace. To make the night complete, you now discover your radio does not work. There is absolutely no sign of any of the rest of the platoon. What do you do?



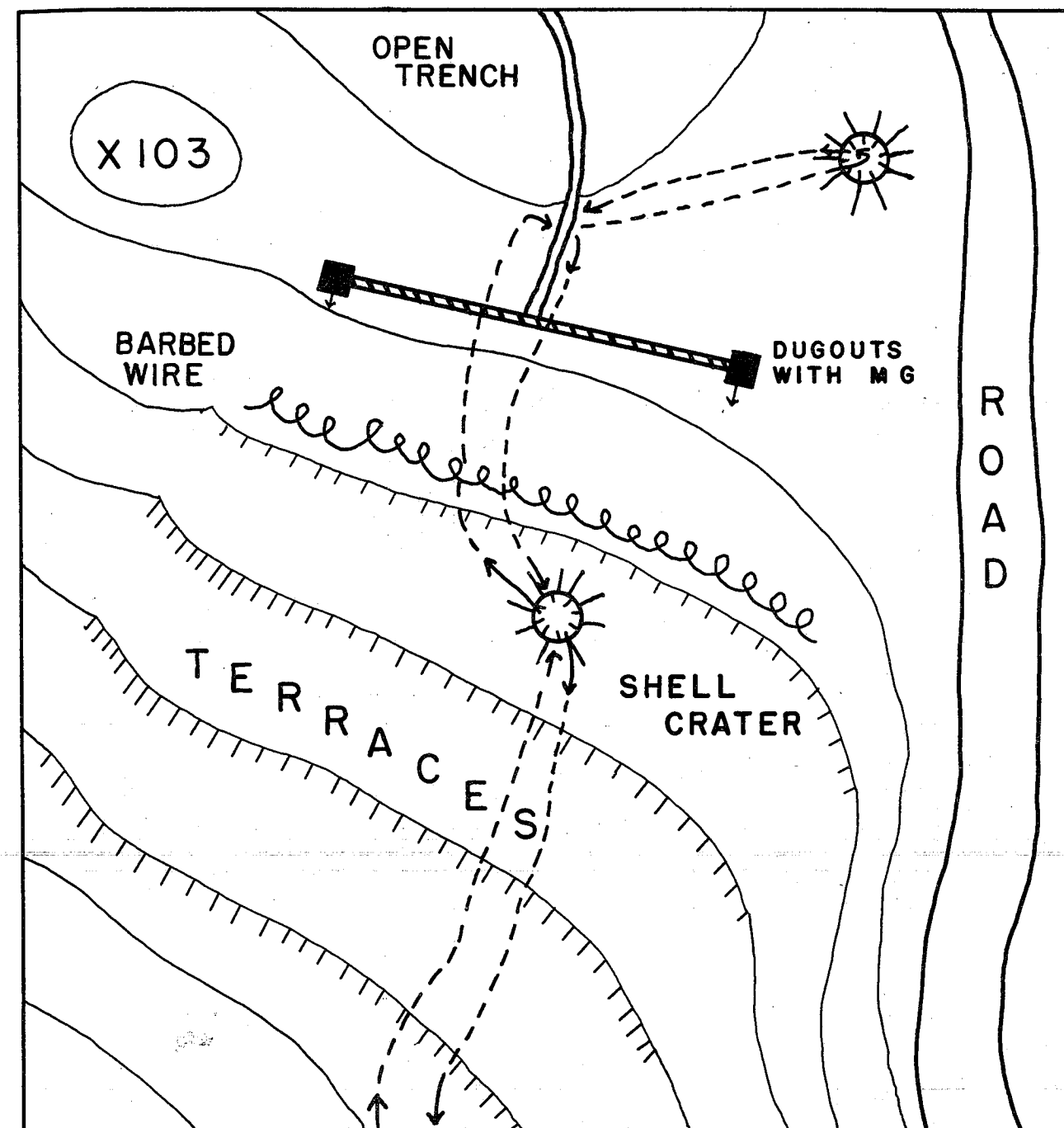
HISTORICALLY: This action took place in Italy during May, 1944. The 11 men in the shell crater were actually led by a lieutenant. First they tried throwing grenades at the dugouts, but this had no effect. Leaving a few men in the crater, the Lt. led the rest over the terrace towards the machineguns. Clearing the barbed wire without injury, they crawled forward under heavy machinegun and mortar fire until they reached an open trench into which they dropped for protection.

SITUATION 2: You are slightly behind the two enemy machineguns now. The trench you are in connects the machinegun dugouts with sleeping quarters and other enemy positions on the reverse slope of Hill 103; it is 30-50 yards long and 5-6 feet deep, but is barely wide enough for one man to wiggle through. The south end of the trench 'Ts' into another trench connecting the two machinegun dugouts. This connecting trench is covered, but you don't know if there are enemy soldiers in it. You are protected from machinegun fire so long as you keep your heads down. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The Americans once again threw grenades at the machinegun positions. They threw every grenade they had without doing any damage at all to the enemy. At this point, American mortar fire began to land all around them, and the Lt. left the trench and crawled to another shell hole near the road. There he saw a dozen men dash across the road, but he couldn't tell if they were friendly or enemy. When they threw a grenade at him, his doubts were resolved and he beat a hasty retreat back to the communications trench.

SITUATION 3: Your radio still is not working. You receive word that the fire team leader you left in charge down below on the terrace has been shot; additionally, you are surrounded. As if arranged to confirm this, an enemy soldier pops up and shoots the rifle out of one man's hands and damages your own weapon. You decide that you are indeed surrounded. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The Lt. decided to run for it, so he led his group back over the edge of the terrace where he rejoined the group that had remained in the first crater. In the rush, two men got left behind in the communication trench on top of Hill 103. He decided to wait for them and set up a hasty defense, but when mortar fire killed two men he decided to pull out. He sent all survivors back to the rear and stayed behind with an NCO for 15 more minutes, hoping the two missing men would make it back to his position. At the end of 15 minutes, he gave them up for dead and returned to the rear. He and his men returned safely, but took no further part in the battle. The two missing men - both wounded - later returned unassisted to the battalion's lines.



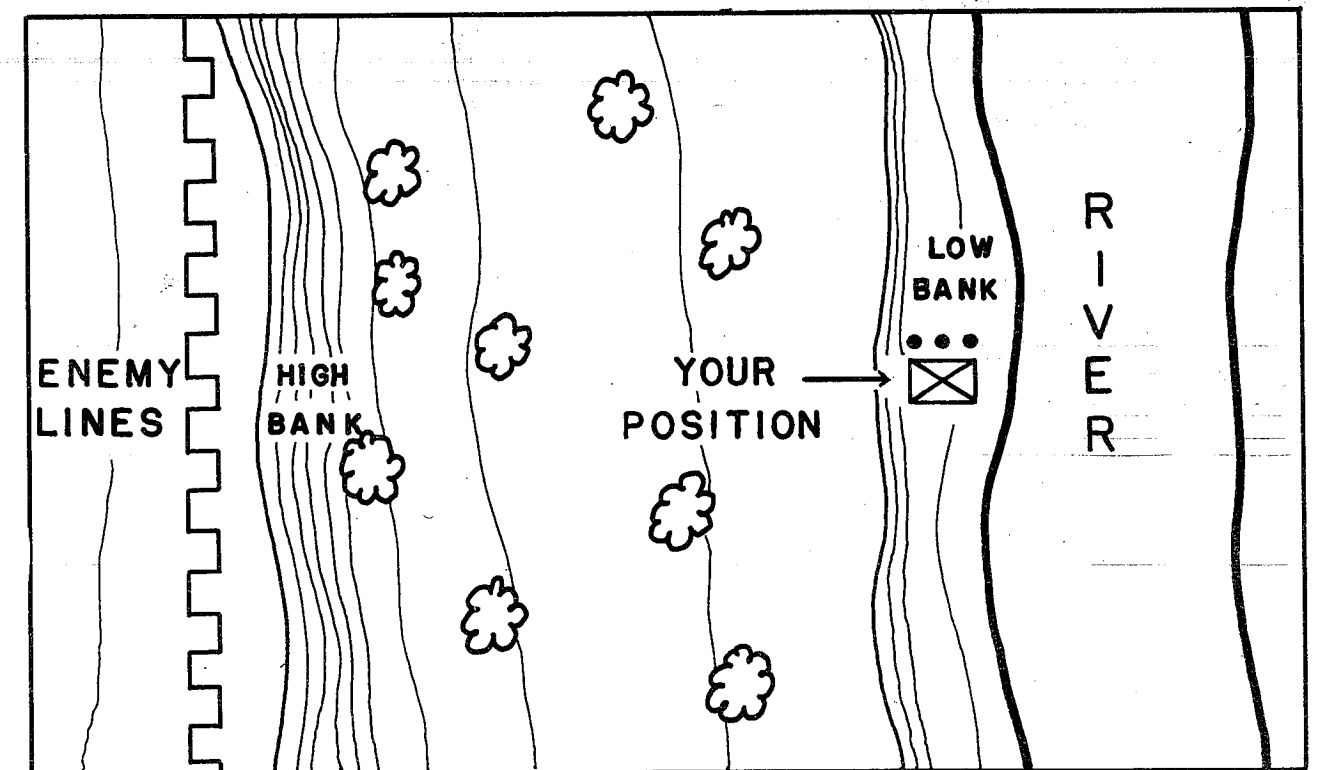


SCENARIO 6

FROM: Paul Carell's Scorched Earth:
The Russian-German War, 1943-
1944
 CWO2 Lavender
 Amphibious Instruction Dept
 MCDEC

SERGEANT NEFEDOV'S BRIDGEHEAD

SITUATION 1: You are an infantry platoon sergeant. Your battalion is making a night assault in rubber boats across a defended riverline. The attack was supposed to be a surprise but the enemy discovers your movement before you are even halfway across the (600 yards wide) river. Flares light up the night and direct fire weapons are brought to bear. Boat after boat sinks. Finally, your platoon reaches the riverbank and you take stock. You have 20 men armed with: 13 M16s, two M203s, one M60 machinegun and one .50 cal machinegun from the heavy weapons platoon. You also have a radio, but you can not raise anyone who can tell you anything that seems to make sense. Behind you, you cannot see any friendly forces - the attack seems to have been stopped cold. You are on a low riverbank, without cover, and you are sure that when the sun comes up in an hour, the enemy on the 100-foot high bank 200 yards away will see you and cut you to pieces. You're just as sure that if you take your boats and try to recross the river, you'll be seen and quickly blown away. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: This situation happened to a Russian NCO, Sgt Nefedov, in September 1943 when the Soviet Army was trying to force crossings over the Dnieper River. Sgt Nefedov quietly led his small platoon right up under the noses of the German defenders on the high bank and dug in. The Germans discovered his position and made platoon and company-strength counterattacks throughout the day. Sgt Nefedov was down to ten men at the end of the day, but was reinforced during the night. Sgt Nefedov's bridgehead was eventually expanded to a multi-corps strategic bridgehead and was the starting point for a Soviet offensive that liberated Kiev.



SCENARIO 7

FROM: S.L.A. Marshall's Pork Chop Hill
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction Dept
MCDEC

"KEEP A SHARP LOOKOUT"

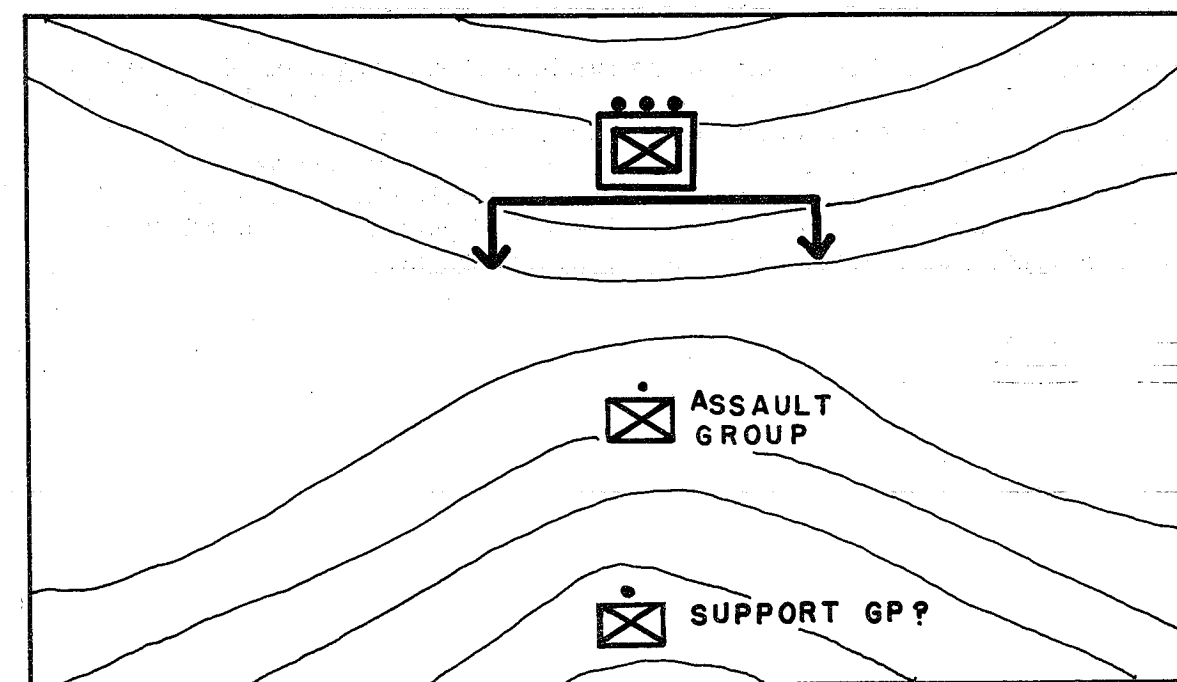
SITUATION 1: You have been given the mission to conduct an ambush patrol and attempt to capture a prisoner. The patrol of ten Marines was put together from several different units, but as a sergeant of Marines, you feel confident that you can handle the assignment.

A rehearsal was planned for 1600, but enemy mortar fire prevented that and you were not able to gather the entire patrol until dark. A quick brief is all you have time for before you move out at 2000. The patrol is organized into an assault team and a support team of five men each; you are with the assault team. For communication, you have a TA-312 land line. Weapons include: two M60s, one M203, and seven M16s. All hands have six hand grenades.

The passage through friendly lines is uneventful and you push rapidly down to the ambush site. The assault group is in position at 2115. Though you have not physically seen the support group behind you, you assume it is in position 200 meters to the rear of the assault group.

Using the land line, you report to the company CP that the patrol is in position, but are taken aback when the XO tells you "Keep a sharp lookout. We are expecting a main attack." What's this? Why weren't you told? Your orders remain the same, though - an ambush patrol, POWs desired.

At 2230, you spot about 50 enemy troops coming down the slope of the hill in front of the patrol's position. They are well spread out on line and heading right for you. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader sent one man forward to scout the enemy line and sat tight. He did not inform the company CP of the situation.

SITUATION 2: Your point man is back in less than 1 minute. He says, "They're all around us! They cover the slope! For Christ's sake, do something!" What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader still did not inform CP of the situation. Instead, he took two men forward and threw grenades at the Chinese when they were 20 yards away. Only then did he try to call the CP. But he had forgotten that in setting in the ambush he had explored the ground to the front while carrying the phone. The land line was looped through rocks in front of him and he cut it with his own grenades. He quickly tried the radio but it wasn't working.

SITUATION 3: The enemy line in front of you has melted into the dark. You have no communication with the CP. The support group is not where it is supposed to be. There are apparently hundreds of enemy soldiers climbing the slopes of the hill around you, though so far, they don't seem to know where you are. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader waited 15 minutes, then tried to climb back up the hill to friendly lines. They only got 40 yards before friendly artillery and mortars laid down fire all across the front between them and the company. They took shelter, but still lost one man to this fire. The sergeant in charge never did find his support group, but succeeded in bringing out the assault group many hours later.

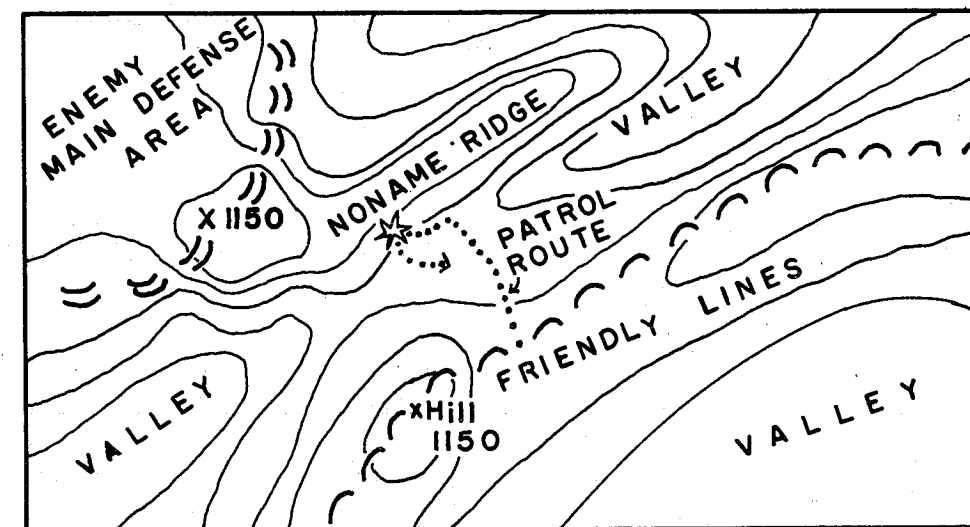
This patrol fired the first shots in the Battle of Pork Chop Hill. The sergeant had just walked in off R and R when he was put in charge, and so was unable to participate in the rehearsals held the day prior, which were supposed to give organizational unity to men from two different companies - a serious error. The 31st Regiment had been told to expect a major attack that evening, but having doubts about the reliability of the information, decided to send out the scheduled patrol anyway. The NCOIC (as indicated above) received not one hint of this expected attack until he was deep in no man's land.

SCENARIO 8

FROM: Russell A. Gugeler's
Combat Actions In Korea
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction Dept
MCDEC

PATROL TO NONAME RIDGE

SITUATION 1: You have been assigned the mission to conduct a combat patrol to Noname Ridge to kill or capture any enemy encountered. You will take two reinforced rifle squads out on this patrol the night of 3 April. It is now the afternoon of 2 April. Information on the enemy is sketchy; all that is known for sure is that they are digging trenches and bunkers on Noname Ridge. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: (Discussion should cover all steps taken in preparation for a patrol.) The patrol leader selected the squads going, reinforced them with other men from the same platoon, prepared his patrol order, and prepared a sand table model. The next day he took the entire patrol up to a point where they could see the planned route and issued his order. Details were discussed over the sand table model.

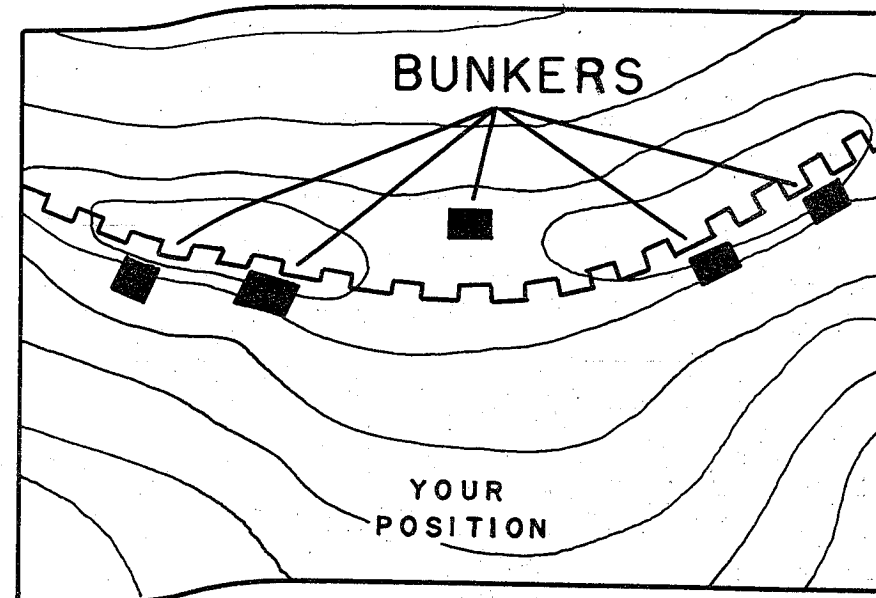
The patrol was divided into an assault squad of eight men plus the patrol leader, and a support squad of the 11 other men. Communications were provided by two field radios and a field phone with two spools of slash wire. The communication was tied in to an OP on the front lines which would be manned by the company commander and FOs. There was direct communication from the OP to the Battalion CP by both phone and radio.

SITUATION 2: You feel confident that you have covered every detail as you lead the patrol out at 2100. You reach the objective area a little after midnight with no contact. Instructions from the rear are continuing on: "Get a prisoner if you can. If you can't, shoot 'em up. Decide on the route you are going to take to make contact, move forward a hundred yards, then report again." The move forward is made without incident, then a second move of another hundred yards. You are now only 150 yards from the top of the ridge. Now you see a group of enemy soldiers coming down from the enemy's main defenses towards Noname Ridge. They are on the other side of where you think the trenchline is. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader called artillery fire on the enemy group.

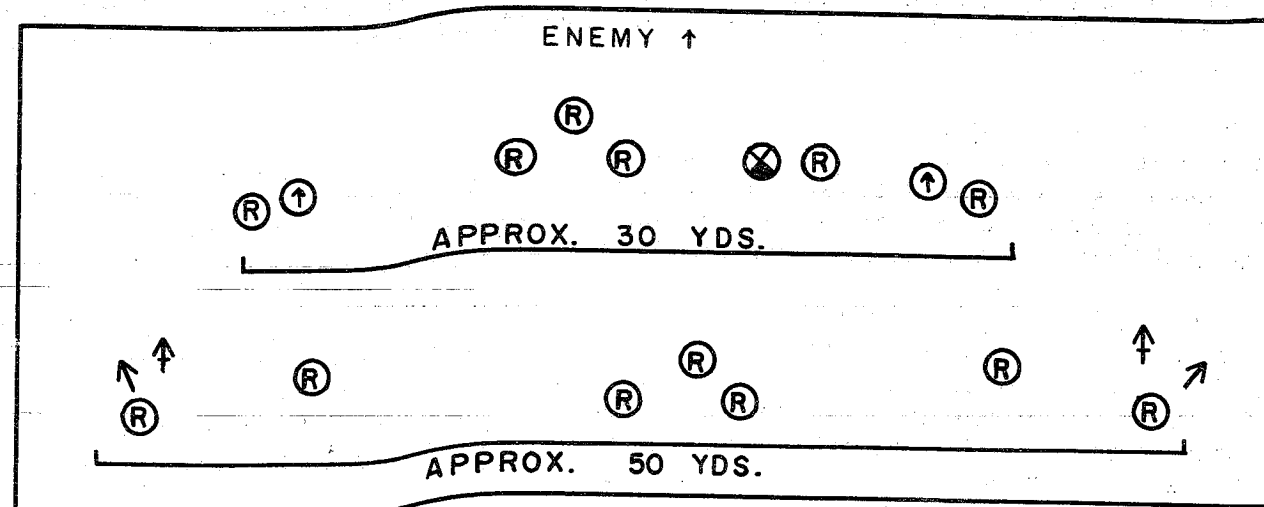
SITUATION 3: The artillery fire you requested landed right where the enemy troops were sighted. Your patrol has now made contact of sorts, but hasn't captured a prisoner. The enemy may be suspicious as to how such accurate artillery fire is being called in on them and may decide to patrol forward of their lines. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader cautiously led the patrol another 100 yards up the ridge and stopped.



SITUATION 4: You are now only 50 yards from the very top of the ridge. You can see a very large bunker a little to the left and smaller bunkers on both sides. The position is definitely occupied by a large number of enemy troops. You can hear them talking, laughing, and the clink of mess gear tells you that a late meal is in progress. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader formed the patrol for assault.

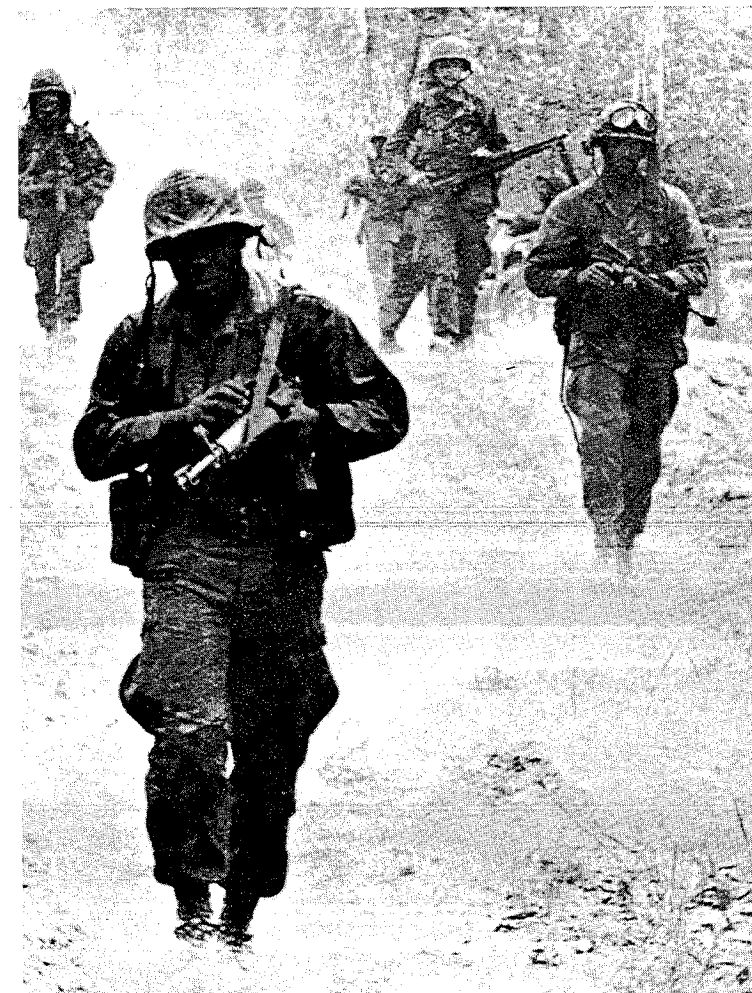


(Discussion should include assault formation and disposition of weapons in the formation. Assume two M60 machineguns w/tripods, two more M60 machineguns w/o tripods, two M203s, and all others M16s.)

SITUATION 5: Your assault group is moving slowly up the slope now. You are only 25 yards from the enemy trench when one of your men trips a booby trap. The concussion grenade throws him to the ground and every other man hits the ground almost as fast. Should you assume surprise is lost? Should you assault immediately or withdraw? What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Nothing happened. The American patrol lay quietly for several minutes, but the N. Koreans apparently ignored the noise and continued to chatter away. The assault group then moved on up. The man who tripped the grenade was unhurt.

The assault group got into the enemy trenches, had a prolonged firefight and successfully withdrew. The observers at the OP were able to cover the withdrawal of the patrol with artillery and mortar fire even though communication was lost early in the action. All members of the patrol returned, with only one seriously wounded.



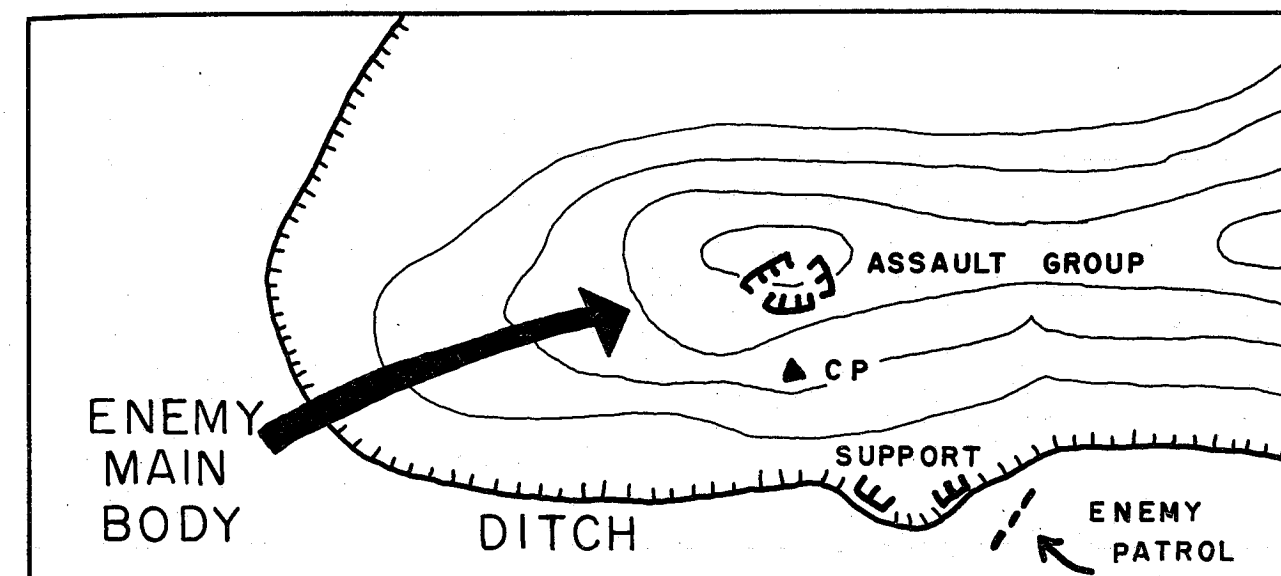


SCENARIO 9

FROM: S.L.A. Marshall's Pork Chop Hill
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction Dept
MCDEC

POINT - BLANK

SITUATION 1: Your ambush patrol has been in position for 6 hours now on a pitch black night. Your reinforced squad is arranged as shown below:



When you laid out the positions, it was with the expectation that the assault group would make the first contact, probably against enemy troops climbing up the knoll on some small trails. The support groups were placed to engage withdrawing enemy forces. All elements are tied to your position by land-line and you have both land-line and radio communication to higher headquarters. At 0300, the corporal in charge crawls up to your position and hand signals that at least one enemy soldier is approaching the support group. This is not the way you planned it. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader alerted the assault group by sending a runner rather than risk using the phone. The alert was carried out noiselessly and soon all weapons were trained in the direction of the enemy. Then he waited.

SITUATION 2: The NCO from the support group returns and signals that more enemy troops have been sighted. You think this may be a good opportunity to take a prisoner. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader sent one man out on the left to throw a single grenade at the enemy, figuring this would be enough to stun them and enable the support group to bag the lot.

SITUATION 3: The grenade goes off, but in the brief flash reveals a dangerous situation. There are at least 20 enemy troops out there, the grenade didn't hurt them, they are deployed and lying flat with all their weapons aimed straight at your left support group. For a brief instant everything is silent, then the enemy line opens fire on the left support group. The support group begins blasting away, but the odds are uneven to say the least -- five-to-one.

The two firing lines are less than 15 yards apart! The right hand support group cannot join in because the turn in the ditch interdicts their fire. The assault group on the hill cannot fire without risking the lives of the four men in the ditch; they're just too close to the enemy. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader told both unengaged units to stay where they were and hold their fire. He then took his runner and two aid men and moved down the hill to the left of the beleaguered support group, firing as he went. They gained the ditch and joined the point-blank firefight with grenades and automatic rifle fire.

SITUATION 4: You are trading fire with the enemy troops from your position in the ditch. Three of the four men in the original support group are dead or wounded, but the enemy fire seems to be going a little high now. Could it be you're gaining the upper hand? Just now, a messenger from the assault group crawls into the ditch and tells you the battalion CO is on the radio and wants to know if he should send you some help? What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader replied, "Tell him no. Tell him I can hold this field with my own men." The messenger left and he resumed firing. Soon after that, the enemy stopped firing and so did the patrol.

SITUATION 5: You have two WIA, one KIA, no more grenades with your particular group and the machinegun is out of ammunition. To check the area, you call for artillery illumination, which arrives in less than a minute. By chance, you glance back at the assault group's position and you see an entire enemy platoon moving up the knoll about 100 yards from them. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Called fire on a pre-arranged target that broke the Chinese formation. He also consolidated the support groups at the right-hand position. For the next hour, the patrol held position, didn't fire a shot and shifted artillery fires to break up Chinese attacks. The return to friendly lines was uneventful.

Lt. Wongele Costa and his twenty men had just had their first experience under fire. Their patrol was the first one sent out from a newly-arrived Ethiopian battalion. Their preparation for this patrol was notable. For four straight days, the entire patrol had spent hours in the afternoons studying the area from a good vantage point. Wongele Costa said, "Every detail of that ground had become part of a print in my mind. It was like moving in my own house. I could see in the dark."

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To assist the Education Center to provide the best possible product for you, we request you take 2 or 3 minutes to fill out the following self-addressed, postage paid questionnaire and drop it in the nearest mail box.

NAME: _____ GRADE: _____

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1. Did this IP create interest for you? Circle one.

Yes Somewhat No

2. How do you rate this IP? Circle one.

Outstanding Excellent Good Average Fair Poor

3. Should this IP be continued with regular supplements of new materials?

Yes No

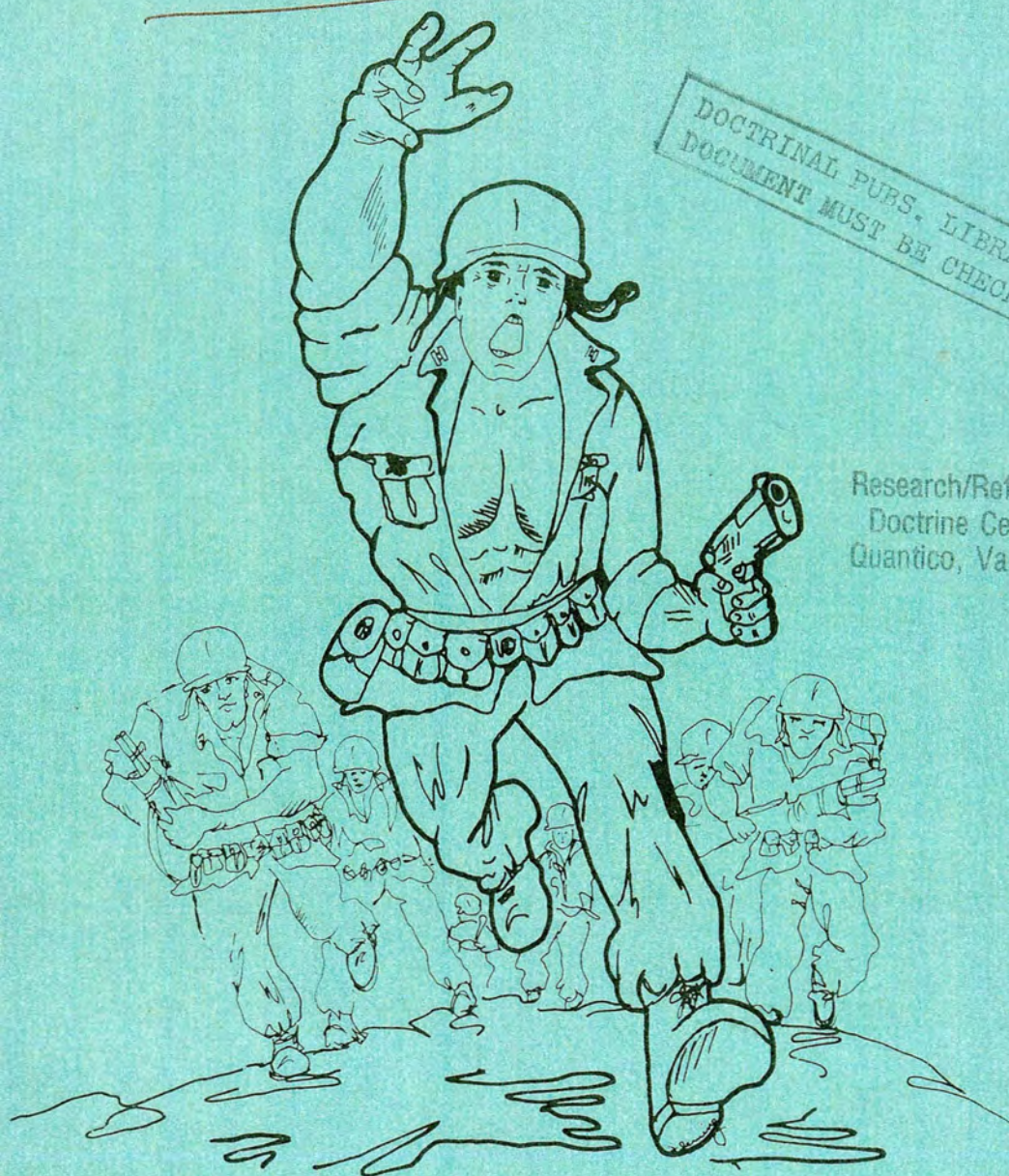
4. If you have used this IP to conduct group discussions, how was it received by the group as a whole? Did it generate discussion?

5. How can it be improved?

Other Remarks:

IP 6-4

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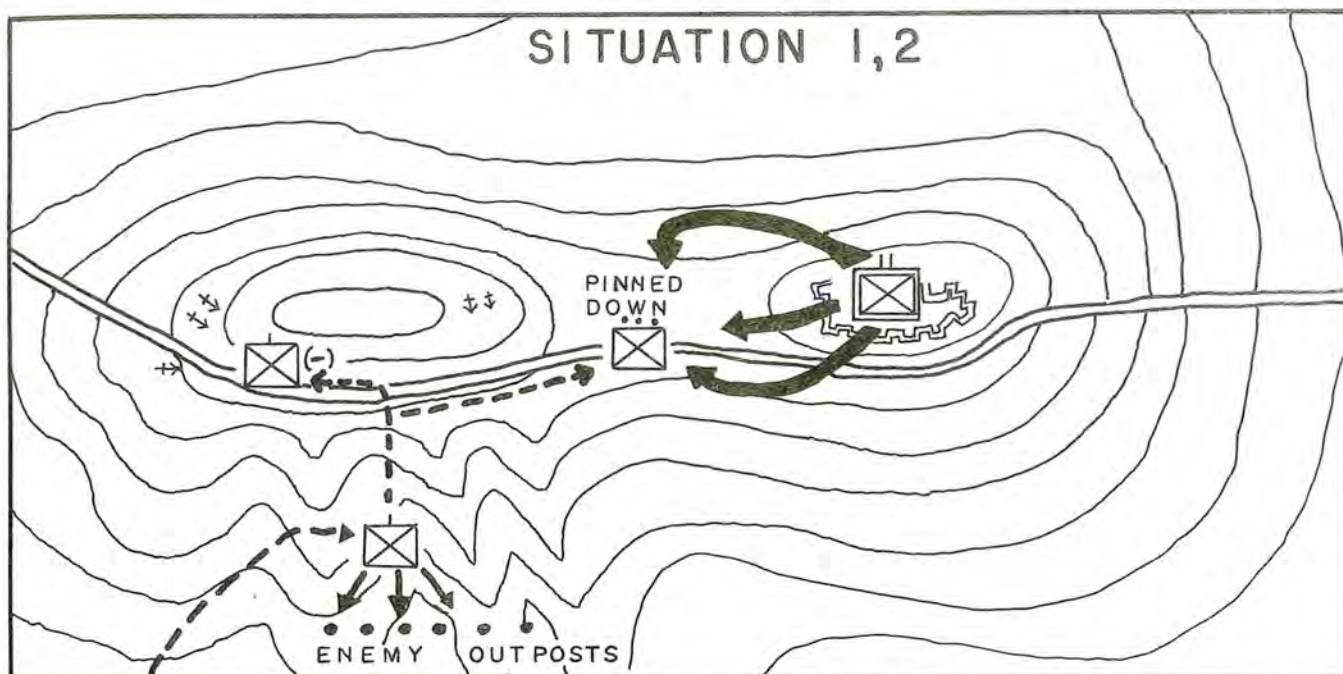
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SCENARIO 1

FROM: Infantry Attacks
By Erwin Rommel
CPT Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Division USA

ATTACK IN THE MOUNTAINS

SITUATION 1: You are commanding a company that is attacking as part of a battalion assault to seize high ground occupied by enemy forces. The terrain is cut by deep ravines and washed out gullies, but is sparsely vegetated. Observation and fields of fire - except in the ravines - are excellent.



By working your way up a ravine, you cut off and capture several of the enemy's outposts and now have several hundred prisoners to control. You elect to bring them up the hill trailing your company. Near the top, you encounter a road running to the key enemy positions on your right. You send one platoon to fix the enemy while you take the rest of the company and the prisoners around the hill in order to attack from the rear. However, after a short distance your force encounters heavy machine gun fire and is pinned down. At the same time, you hear heavy fire coming from your rear, where your detached platoon has been engaged by the enemy's main body. You realize that you are up against at least an enemy battalion and that the success of your battalion's mission depends, for the moment, upon that platoon. Should the enemy succeed in overcoming that platoon, he will cut off your company, recapture the prisoners you now control, and ruin the battalion's mission of securing this high ground. In addition, you now learn that the road leading from your position to the detached platoon is covered by machine gun fire. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Rommel left several machine guns to block the route between his location and that of his detached platoon. He reasoned that if that platoon were overcome and the enemy attempted to cut him off, the machine guns would slow them down. Then he overcame the fires to his front, broke contact, and moved downhill into the gullies. He sent the prisoners, with only two men to guard them, to the foot of the hill and out of the battle area. Then he moved as fast as he could to reunite his company.

SITUATION 2: As you approach your detached platoon, you see that it is surrounded on three sides by a force five times its size. It is desperately returning fire, but will be overrun if the enemy mounts an all-out attack. Before you can act, the enemy attacks the platoon on three sides. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Rommel detached his machine guns and sent them to a position where they could hastily support the detached platoon. Then he assaulted the enemy from the rear with his riflemen. The Romanians were caught between two fires, panicked, and broke off their attack. Rommel followed them and seized their positions, taking still more prisoners. He then moved along the high ground to aid the other companies in his battalion in their attacks.

SITUATION 3: Your attack has succeeded in driving the enemy away and clearing the high ground. The battalion commander joins you atop the hill and hastily gives you the mission to continue the attack to take the small village of Marr, as part of a coordinated battalion attack. You will be supported on your right flank by a second company while the third company in the battalion will be held in reserve. As darkness approaches, you reach your LD/LC. From that point, you can see figures moving about the town and you guess that they are probably soldiers hastily preparing positions. You are ready to attack and know that the longer you wait, the better prepared will be the defenders. However, you have not established contact with either of the other companies and a quick recon reveals that they are not yet in place. The battalion commander has ordered complete radio silence for the attack, and you cannot send a messenger to him because--for the time being--the CP consists of just him and his S-3, and they are on foot somewhere in the mountains. Moreover, his order did not give an attack time, but vaguely ordered the attack to commence when ready. As you wait, you realize that this attack was not planned as a night attack, and that your company has made no preparations to conduct a night attack; but, if you wait much longer, you will have to do so. Finally, you also know that you have not had a chance to properly recon the objective, but from your position, you can see several enemy sentries alert and watching. What do you do?

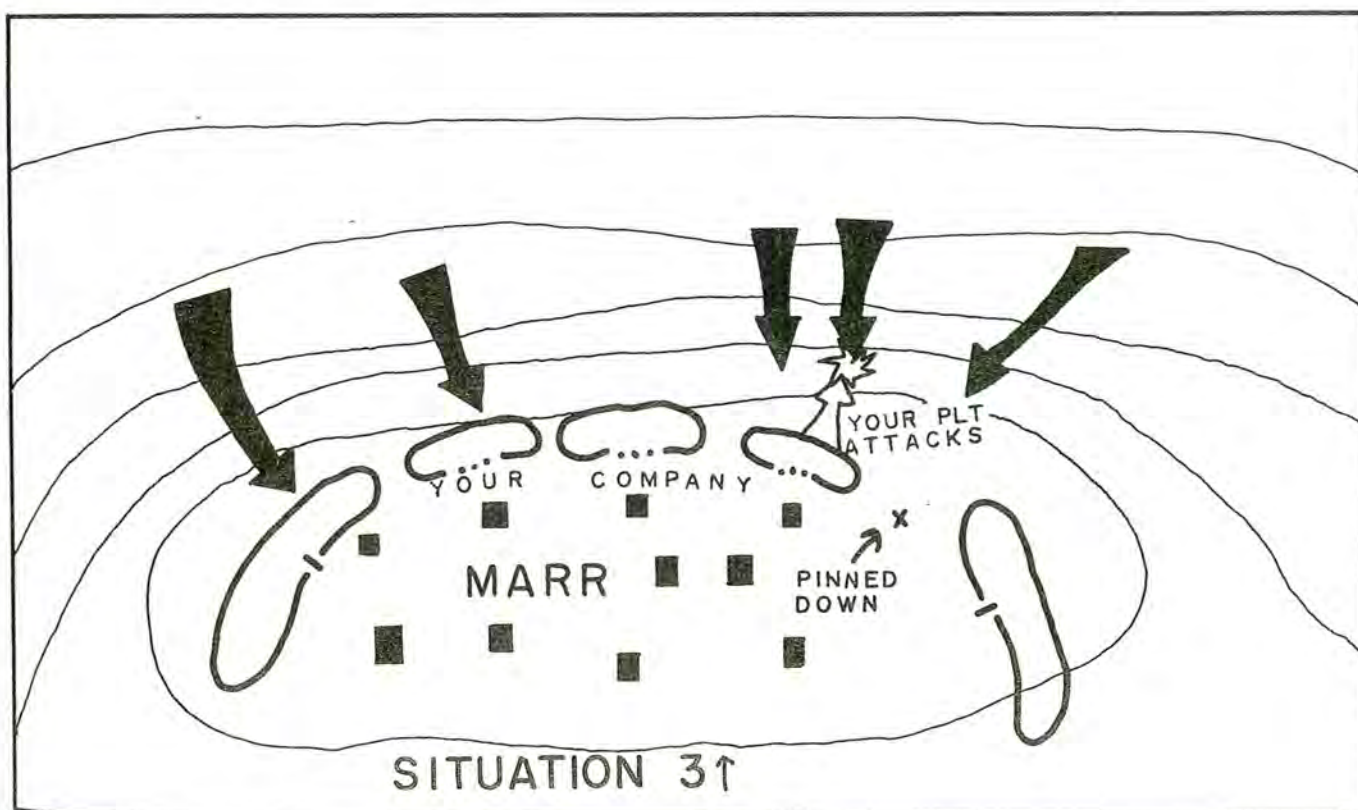
HISTORICALLY: Rommel decided to await the arrival of the flank and supporting units before he launched his attack. He kept his company concealed in their jump-off positions until it became dark. Then, he formed a perimeter and set up security. He did not allow any reconnaissance forward of his present position because he did not want to give away his location to the enemy. His LP/OPs were instructed to alert the company as soon as the rest of the battalion came up. Meanwhile, he allowed his soldiers to sleep in place. Several hours later, the other companies arrived, the attack was made and the enemy was chased from the village.

SITUATION 4: The attack on Marr was successful and you suffered no casualties. Daylight arrives, but with it comes a heavy fog which limits visibility to 50 meters. Last night, you consolidated within the village and assumed a portion of the battalion defensive sector with two platoons established in hasty positions on the edge of town, and a third platoon in reserve within Marr. However, your positions were selected in the dark and are not tied in with the company on your right. Therefore, there is a 300 meter gap in the battalion position. One of your LP/OPs reports that two enemy infantry battalions on foot are forming up almost on top of him. He wants to know if he can open fire. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Rommel brought up a machine gun and opened fire on the enemy, hoping to catch them while they were bunched together in the assembly area. Then, he ordered his platoons to hold in position at all costs while he ran over to the neighboring company to make coordination. He was pinned down by fire from the friendly company and no amount of arm waving and shouting would stop the fire. Under cover of the fog, he escaped and rejoined his company, as he now knew the limits of the company on his right. He also brought his reserve platoon forward and placed them behind the right platoon to protect their flank.

SITUATION 5: You left your company in order to coordinate with the company on your right and close the gap in the battalion defense. Before leaving, you ordered your first platoon to hold its position at all costs and you placed your second platoon behind the first in order to protect their flank. When you return, you find that the first platoon has disregarded your order and attacked the enemy. They have driven forward about 500 meters, but their success has created an even larger gap in the defense. You hustle forward to investigate and run into the platoon leader returning to find you. He tells you that the platoon has driven the enemy back and has captured several machine guns. However, he says, "the platoon's in close combat with a strong enemy force. We are nearly encircled and both of my machine guns are knocked out. I've got about ten men wounded. If help doesn't come immediately, the platoon is finished." To make matters worse, the fog is lifting and no longer offers good concealment. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Although pleased with the aggressive initiative of his platoon leader, Rommel realized that the man's action had hurt his defense significantly. If he committed his last reserves to the aid of the platoon, the company could be outflanked and the enemy could have rushed into the gap between his company and the one on his right. That could have led to the destruction of the entire battalion. But could he allow a platoon to be destroyed? As much as he wished to aid them, Rommel had to order the platoon to fight its way out and return to their defensive positions. He did position his other platoons to provide covering fire and they put heavy fire into the Romanians. The remnants of the first platoon fought their way back to the company, but they had the enemy right on their trail, which made it difficult to provide covering fires. In addition, Rommel reported the situation to the battalion commander, who sent him some reinforcements. The Romanian attack was defeated, but the company lost three men killed and 17 wounded.



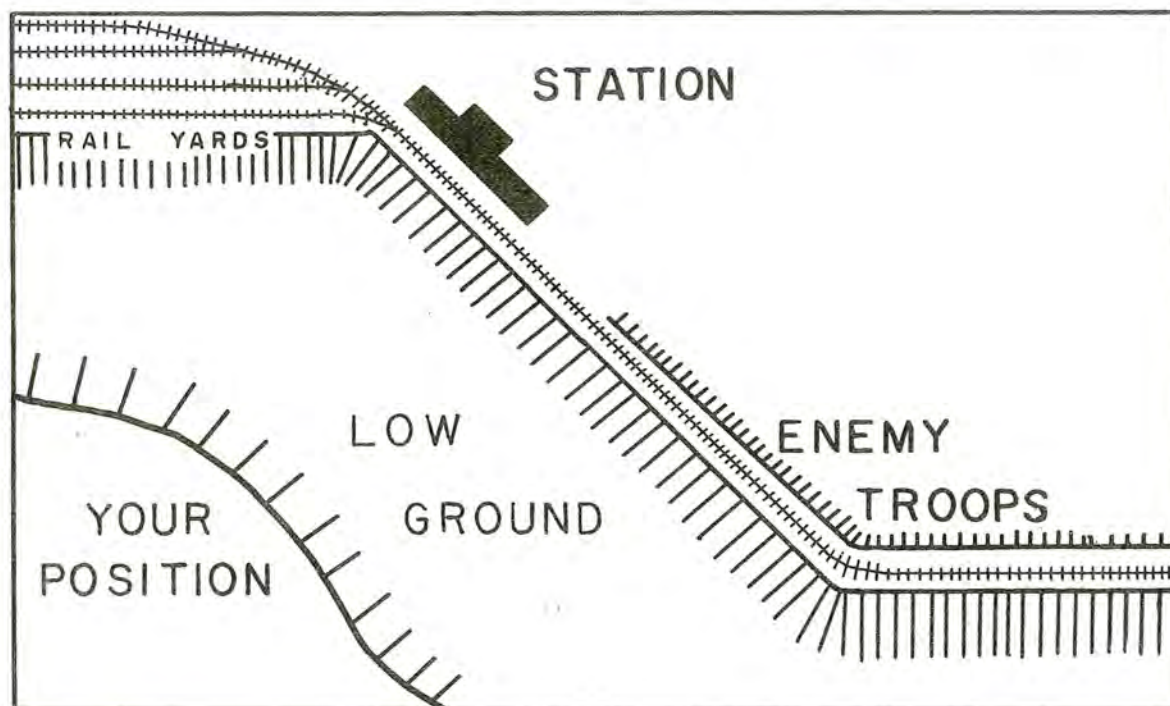
SCENARIO 2

FROM: Robert D. Heintz Jr.'s
Victory at High Tide
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction Dept
MCDEC

THE VOICE OF COMMAND

SITUATION 1: The rifle company you command is advancing against light resistance in a large city. Pressure has been put on you from the highest level on down through your battalion to maintain a high rate of advance.

You have reached some high ground overlooking a railway yard and passenger depot. From this spot you are carefully checking over the low ground and rail yard ahead when your observer spots some enemy soldiers behind the rail embankment. You look and sure enough, there are numerous unfriendly faces peering over the embankment. Battalion is on the radio again, demanding you advance. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: The company commander held up where he was, brought up all his machine-guns and had his FOs call in mortar and artillery fire.

SITUATION 2: When the first artillery rounds land on and behind the rail embankment, hundreds of enemy soldiers start running out from behind it! The machinegunners start mowing them down and the FOs keep the fire coming. You are killing enemy troops at a terrific rate and taking no casualties in the process. Battalion is back on, demanding that you advance. You resist this as unnecessary and try to get them to understand just what is going on. Battalion remains insistent--advance! You see no point in leaving a strong position from which you are doing such damage at no cost to your company and descending into the low ground where the enemy is still present in strength. Battalion remains insistent--advance! What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Captain R. H. Barrow (CO, Co A, 1/1) turned off his radio, held his position, and continued to kill North Koreans. In the guise of bridging a communication "failure," he sent back a persuasive lieutenant as a liaison officer. This lieutenant soon returned with the battalion CO, who quickly grasped what was going on and gave his approval of the action taken by the company commander. Captain Barrow turned his radio back on.



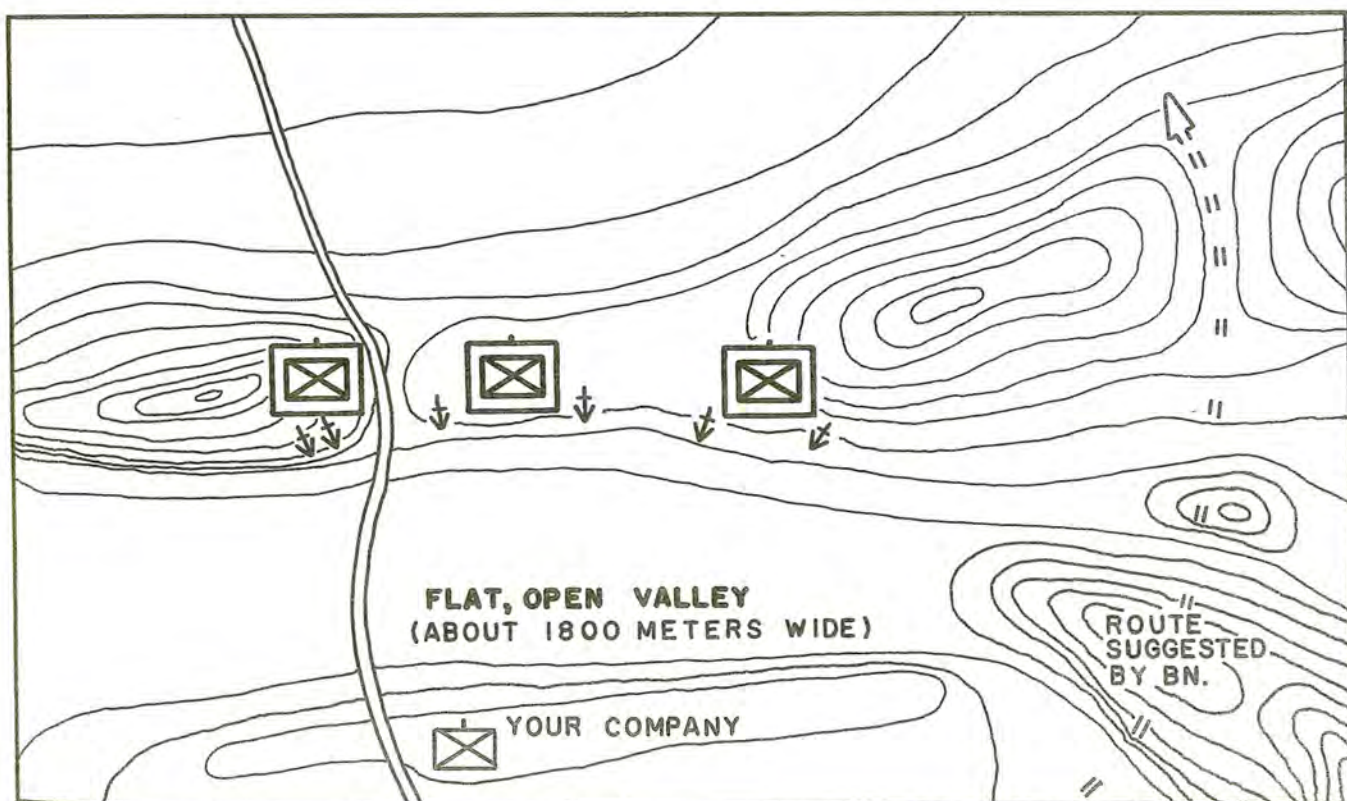
SCENARIO 3

FROM: Infantry Attacks
by Erwin Rommel
CPT Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Div (USA)

THE ROMMEL DETACHMENT

SITUATION 1: You command a company fighting in mountainous terrain. It is springtime and the snows have melted. The resulting mud has seriously hampered American resupply efforts. Your company has only the ammunition and equipment which it can carry on its back or on its 1/4 tons and gamma goats. The mountains are extremely steep and rocky. Movement has been slow and difficult, usually requiring ropes and the use of your hands, especially at night. There are foot paths on the mountains, but they force you to move in single file.

Your company has been fighting and marching for 36 straight hours in this terrain. You began with a movement to contact, ran into an enemy company, and had to pry them from their defensive positions. All night long, your force pursued and fought the enemy's rear detachment until you hit hastily prepared positions this morning. One of your platoon leaders got a squad behind the enemy position and forced them to fall back. Although you pursued energetically in the hopes of finishing them off, they skillfully fell back from position to position. At 2200 hours, you called a halt and put your exhausted unit in a perimeter.



It is midnight. Battalion calls you and orders you to attack an enemy position located on high ground overlooking a valley. They want you to make a night movement over rocky, steep terrain, move around the mountain, and attack the enemy positions from the rear at daylight. To the battalion commander looking at a map, that movement does not look too difficult. But, from experience of fighting on this terrain and your knowledge of how hard you have pushed your troops for the past 36 hours, you do not feel your unit can make the proposed movement on time. The alternative is to attack frontally across the valley. Fortunately, you do not feel that the enemy has very good positions. What do you do?

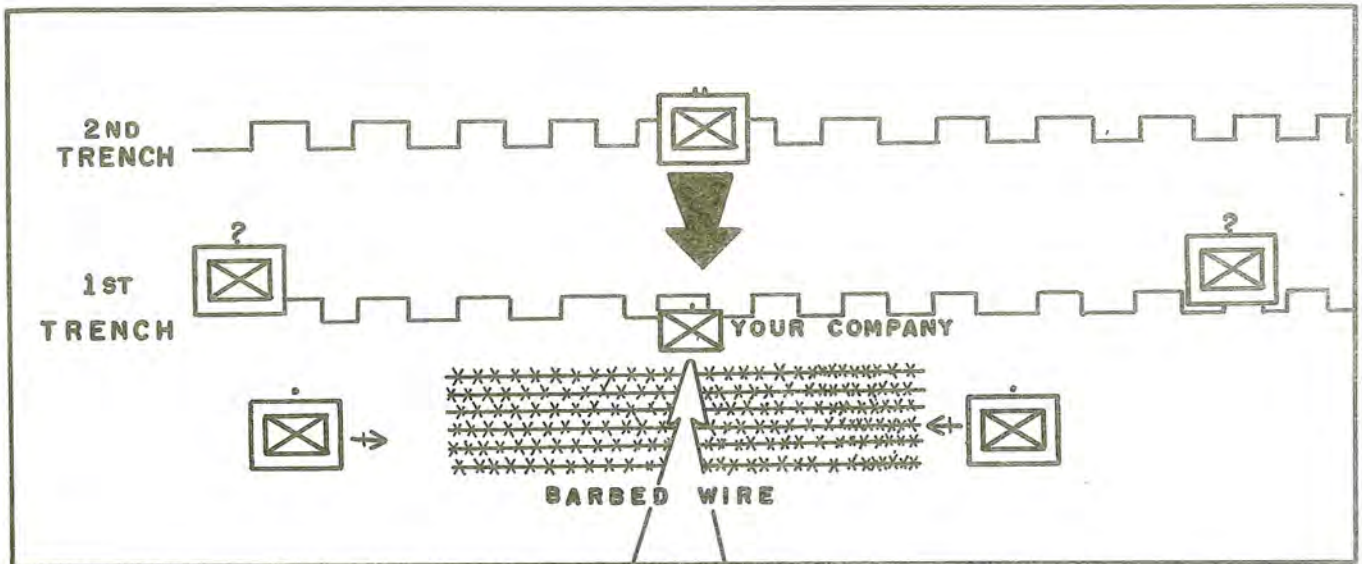
HISTORICALLY: Rommel requested that his orders be changed so that he could attack up the valley. Although exhausted himself, he reconned the approach thoroughly (to the point that he came under fire). He also sent a platoon around the mountain.

SITUATION 2: You sent one platoon on the route suggested by battalion, but continued to rest the remainder of your force. It is now the next morning and your company is at least partially rested. The enemy is entrenched on sloping ground overlooking a road running up the valley. The valley is flat, offers no concealment, and its only cover is "microscopic folds in the earth". The enemy's individual positions look good; in fact, their positions look much more formidable than you had realized last night when you had assured the battalion commander that you could secure the pass from the front. Their main positions are protected with interlocking grazing fire from machine guns and their flanks are protected by barbed wire entanglements covered by fire. Attacks up either hill would be foolhardy as the terrain is so steep that the enemy could probably stop you by simply rolling rocks down on your head. It is too late to make the flanking movement around the mountain, while a flank movement around the smaller mountain would require scaling a sheer rock wall. You have no helicopters or air support and artillery support will not be available for several days, as the muddy roads have greatly slowed resupply. However, you do have an additional platoon and an additional machine gun in each platoon. The high ground from which you are conducting your recon offers excellent fields of fire over the valley; however, the distance between it and the enemy positions is beyond the maximum effective range of your machine guns. The platoon you sent around the mountain is nowhere near being able to support you and will be unable to do so before dark. But the battalion commander is pressuring you to clear the pass as the position is holding up the battalion's mission. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Rommel placed his machine guns along the high ground and concentrated their fires on the enemy's left flank. Although outside the maximum effective range of his machine guns, they could still harass the enemy and keep his head down. Then he attacked up the valley astride the road with a squad. Although he had a platoon in position to exploit the squad's success, he actually attacked with the smallest force possible. The rest of the company provided supporting fires. (Rommel did not believe in the two up, one back approach to attacking). The harassing fires from long range caused the enemy to fall back to better positions higher up on the saddle. As they crowded together, the long range fire became more effective and the increased casualties caused panic. The Romanians then got out of their trenches and were exposed to machine gun fire which, even at that range, was effective against a bunched-up, unprotected force. Rommel's squad easily seized the pass and his exploitation force occupied the position.

SITUATION 3: It is now the next day. After clearing the pass, you are ordered to pursue the enemy. Your audacity has carried your company well ahead of the rest of the battalion when your unit encounters about 100 meters of barbed wire obstacles. Thinking you can get behind the enemy via this route, you lead your company in a crawl beneath the wire. On the other side, you beat the enemy in a quick fire fight and occupy his trenches. You have about 70 men with you when you are attacked by a battalion of Romanian light infantry. You call your battalion commander and request reinforcements and ammunition. You are told that

resupply and fire support, to include air and artillery, is impossible and you are ordered to withdraw to the battalion's position about 3,000 meters to your rear. However, the barbed wire through which you crawled is now covered by enemy machine gun fire from both flanks. You estimate that you will suffer 50% casualties by such a move. You have 10 minutes of ammunition remaining, at best. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: Lt Rommel felt he had three choices: 1) retreat according to orders and suffer 50% casualties; 2) fire the remainder of his ammunition and surrender; or 3) attack, disorganize the enemy and then retreat. Rommel attacked. One of his platoons penetrated on the enemy's right flank and poured fire down the length of his line. The enemy broke and fell back, taking the machine guns covering the wire with them. Rommel then broke contact and hustled his company through the wire. The enemy eventually regrouped and put some fire on Rommel's force, but the company rejoined the battalion with only five men wounded and nobody killed.

SCENARIO 4

FROM: Robert D. Heintz Jr.'s
Victory at High Tide
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction Dept
MCDEC

EXPLOITATION

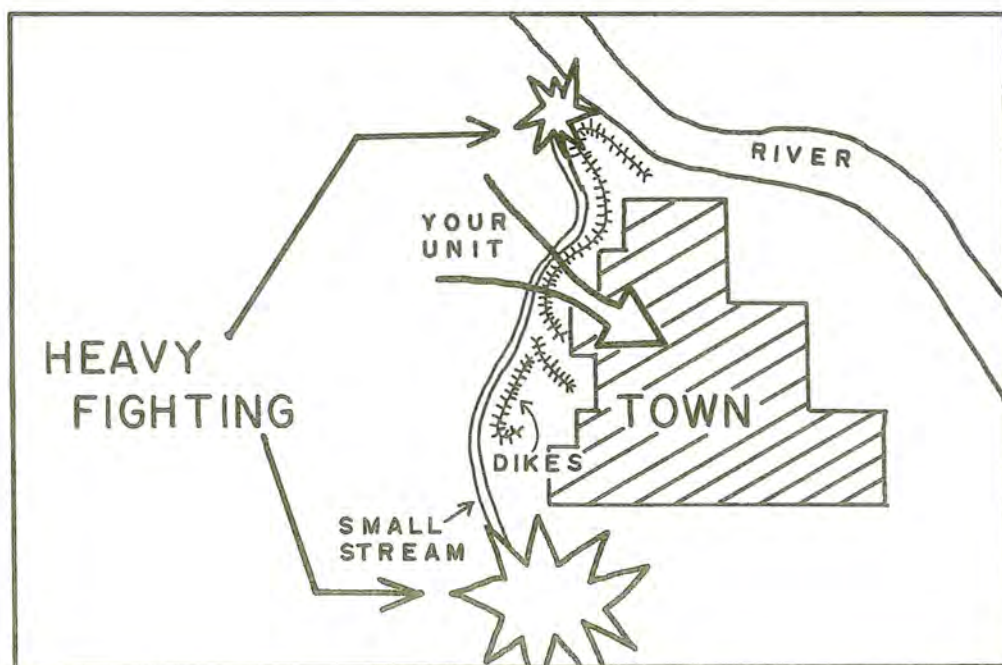
SITUATION 1: You have been ordered to take your rifle company forward on the right of your battalion's attack against a strongly-defended town. Your mission is to attempt crossing a small river, climb the levee on the far side and probe what is thought to be the central defenses of the town.

You take A Company out of the attack position two up/one back. The approach to the river is across flat paddy fields, but nothing happens. Your Marines work their way over the last dike and down into the stream bed expecting enemy fire any second. It seems like everyone else is catching it, so why should your company escape enemy attention?

"Across the (small stream), the town levee - (its) escarpment and rampart - loomed up. To the right they could hear (2/1) hammering the ridge. Up to the left came the din of B Company's fight. Concentrations from the 11th Marines hit right and left with the rippling crack-crump of massed artillery. To the north, low over the town, they could see VMF-214's . . . (air) strike shrieking in to help (B Company). Communist mortars, high velocity tank guns, artillery and hammering heavy maxims, everything the (enemy) could throw, were firing into the Marine assault units.

But nothing whatever was firing into A Company."

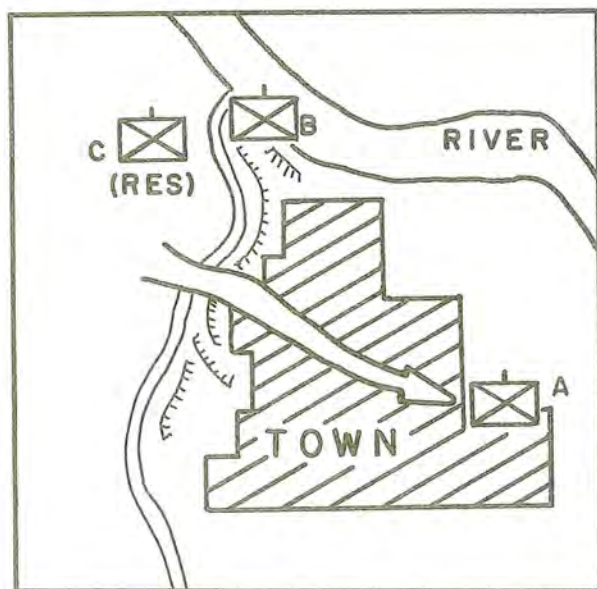
Your platoons gain the top of the high level unopposed. There still hasn't been a shot fired against you and from your position, you can't see a single enemy soldier. The town ahead of you looks deserted. Is this a trap? What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: The company commander advanced. "We simply slithered into town undetected." It was a gap in the enemy defenses.

SITUATION 2: By noon, you are 400 meters into the town and still no sign of the enemy. You report your position to the battalion commander and receive orders to continue the advance. It is a distinctly odd feeling to know that even though you are cutting the enemy position in two, you are only 200 strong while the enemy has at least a regiment. You move on. Late in the afternoon, your leading platoons emerge in the center of town, smack into heavy enemy traffic. The platoon leaders immediately attack and scatter the enemy. The second platoon rushes a levee ahead, gains it and commences heavy firing to the north. When you make it to the top of the 25-foot high embankment, you can see they are engaging a company-size unit.

You are deep in an enemy-held town, apparently alone. It is late in the day and your radio batteries are weakening. From the sound of the fighting, you can tell that other Marine units are not making any progress toward your position. The enemy knows you are there, but apparently has not sealed the way out behind you. If you stay, you can expect counter-attacks by armor and infantry since you are sitting on the enemy's main supply route. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: Captain R. H. Barrow and A Company, 1/1 dug in on top of the dike and prepared to spend the night. They dug deep and weathered an attack by five T-34's firing at 100 meters with only one casualty. They got four of the tanks with rocket launchers. Later in the evening they beat off five separate infantry attacks. The enemy quit just when A Company was down to its last rounds, leaving 275 dead. This hornets nest in their rear must have persuaded the North Koreans to abandon the town because when the regiment pushed forward the next morning, the town was empty except for A Company.

SCENARIO 5

FROM: Battles in the Monsoon
by S. L. A. Marshall
CPT Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Div (USA)

THE FIGHT ON THE FINGER

SITUATION 1: You are commanding a company of three rifle platoons in steeply sloped, heavily jungled terrain. You have no mortars, artillery, or close air in direct support of your unit. You are opposed by an unknown-sized enemy force of light infantry. Your battalion is searching for those enemy forces throughout an area about the size of an American county. You have been directed to spread out your unit by squads over an area which separates each squad by 500-1,000 meters and battalion has consistently discouraged you from bringing your squads closer together. Your platoon leaders are calling you with reports of finding large caches of rice, communication wire, medical supplies, and clothing of the type used by the enemy. One of your platoon leaders tells you that his second squad found several bicycles, which are used by messengers in the enemy's battalion and regimental headquarters. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The company commander decided that the enemy was nearby and in strength. Therefore, he brought his three platoons together and moved as a company force, despite the reluctance by battalion for him to do so.

SITUATION 2: You have brought your squads together and are moving as a company. Your new mission is to establish a blocking position on a ridgeline. A sister battalion will be attacking towards that ridge and your Battalion CO wants your company in a position to destroy any enemy forces retreating from that attack. Your force must move through thick bamboo growth and up and down steep ridges to get to the objective. You have been enroute for 6 hours, under an equatorial sun, when you arrive at a series of three fingers jutting down from a ridgeline.

Your platoons are in file, each about 200 meters apart. Your lead platoon leader informs you that he can hear enemy voices about 300 meters to his left front. He wants to know if you want him to orient on those voices or continue on azimuth to your blocking position. What are your orders?

HISTORICALLY: The commander held up his lead platoon while he brought up the rear platoons to his location. Then he ordered the lead platoon to deploy in a line formation and move towards the voices. If contact was made, one platoon would join the lead platoon on its left flank while the last platoon would position itself so that it would support or reinforce the others.

SITUATION 3: As the lead platoon moves slowly forward, 10-15 enemy soldiers are spotted beside a stream washing and cooking. Your lead squad engages them, killing or wounding them all, and moves up the finger against considerably more enemy forces which now appear. After 5 minutes, the completely surprised enemy begins to recover and your lead platoon is pinned down. You deploy a second platoon on their left flank, but when it is about 50 meters beyond the first platoon, it receives extremely accurate small arms and automatic weapons fire. That platoon continues to move forward but the heavy bamboo makes fire and movement difficult. Most of the members of that platoon are in front of the lead platoon attempting to out-flank the enemy forces, when they receive a heavy volume of automatic fire from their left and are pinned down. At that point, Soviet-made 51 cal. machineguns begin firing into both platoons and your command group from the ridgeline on your right. What do you do?

SITUATION 4: Your last platoon is about 1/3 of the way up the ridgeline on the right when it receives intense small arms fire and is unable to advance farther. The left-most platoon has moved within 30 meters of the enemy's small arms fire coming from the front. However, enemy forces are now maneuvering to the left, and are within hand grenade range. There is a large explosion from their direction. Then a terrified voice comes over the radio screaming, "The lieutenant's dead, platoon sergeant's dead, everybody's dead. I'm the only one left. We're overrun!" The radio then dies and you cannot reach them further. The bamboo is so thick that you cannot see them despite your close proximity and the fire is so heavy that a

messenger would probably not reach them. Now your first platoon leader comes on the phone to say that the enemy is assaulting his position in force. You can see many enemy soldiers to your front and can hear grenades going off all over the place. You have been using artillery fires but the thickness of the vegetation precludes observation and forces your F.O. to adjust by sound. Air cover has been diverted to your A.O. Some Marines from your first platoon are falling back on your location. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander had to assume that his platoon on the left had been overrun. The other platoon leaders felt they were in eminent danger of being overrun. The commander popped a smoke grenade and threw it about 15 meters to his front, then called an air strike on that location. He did not know what armament the aircraft was carrying. It turned out to be napalm, which landed just forward of his 1st and weapons platoons.

SITUATION 5: Two airstrikes deliver napalm just forward of your troops. All fire from the flanks and front ceases almost immediately. Your two right-most platoons extract their casualties and equipment and pull back to the edge of the finger where you form a perimeter. You maintain artillery fires on suspected enemy positions. About an hour later the enemy probes your position but is beaten back. As darkness falls, more and more Marines from your left platoon drift into your perimeter until all but three are accounted for. You have suffered 11 KIAs and about 40 litter cases from an original force of less than 100 men. You realize that you have been fighting at least a battalion and perhaps the better part of a regiment; but you feel that you are not surrounded and an escape route exists to your rear. There are no clearings in the area of sufficient size to handle medivac, but your force needs medical attention badly, despite the heroic efforts of your corpsmen. A man lying on a stretcher near your C P is groaning quietly; skin on his leg has been burned away to the bone. The night is so dark that you can hardly see your hand in front of your face. Sounds from the jungle reveal that the enemy is massing for another attack about 75 meters to your front. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander knew he did not have sufficient personnel to carry out his litter cases. He called in artillery on the forces massing to his front and notified his battalion commander that he was staying. Claymore mines were placed in front and illumination was maintained throughout the night. Early the next morning a second company fought through to the company's perimeter and reinforced them. Other attempts to reach them were unsuccessful as the enemy was attempting to surround the unit. Helicopters brought in additional medical supplies and litters, but could not land. The following morning, the company withdrew successfully and reached a useable LZ.

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SCENARIO 6

FROM: S.L.A. Marshall's
The River and the Gauntlet
CPT Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Div (USA)

THE BIVOUAC AREA

SITUATION 1: You are the XO of a company in Korea setting up in an informal bivouac along a river prior to moving forward to the front lines. Intelligence expects the North Koreans to retreat. Your commander has two platoons forward in a V position, one parallel and one perpendicular to the river. To the latter's front is an artillery battery layed in to support the battalions across the river. The third platoon is about 300 meters to the rear. You are relaxing in the mess tent talking to your cooks when one of them asks you if you hear fire. You don't. Then someone says he hears bugles blowing. You feel that it comes from far away, but decide to walk out anyway to talk to the platoons. As you approach the first platoon, you are nearly bowled over by most of the platoon which has panicked and is running to the rear. On their heels are a bunch of naked North Koreans (they took off their clothes to cross the river and were fired upon before they could redress) firing in all directions. One of your machine guns on the extreme left flank holds fast, however, and pours effective fire into the Koreans. Nevertheless, swarms of Koreans rush by you and into the company rear. You do not know where your company commander is located. What do you do?

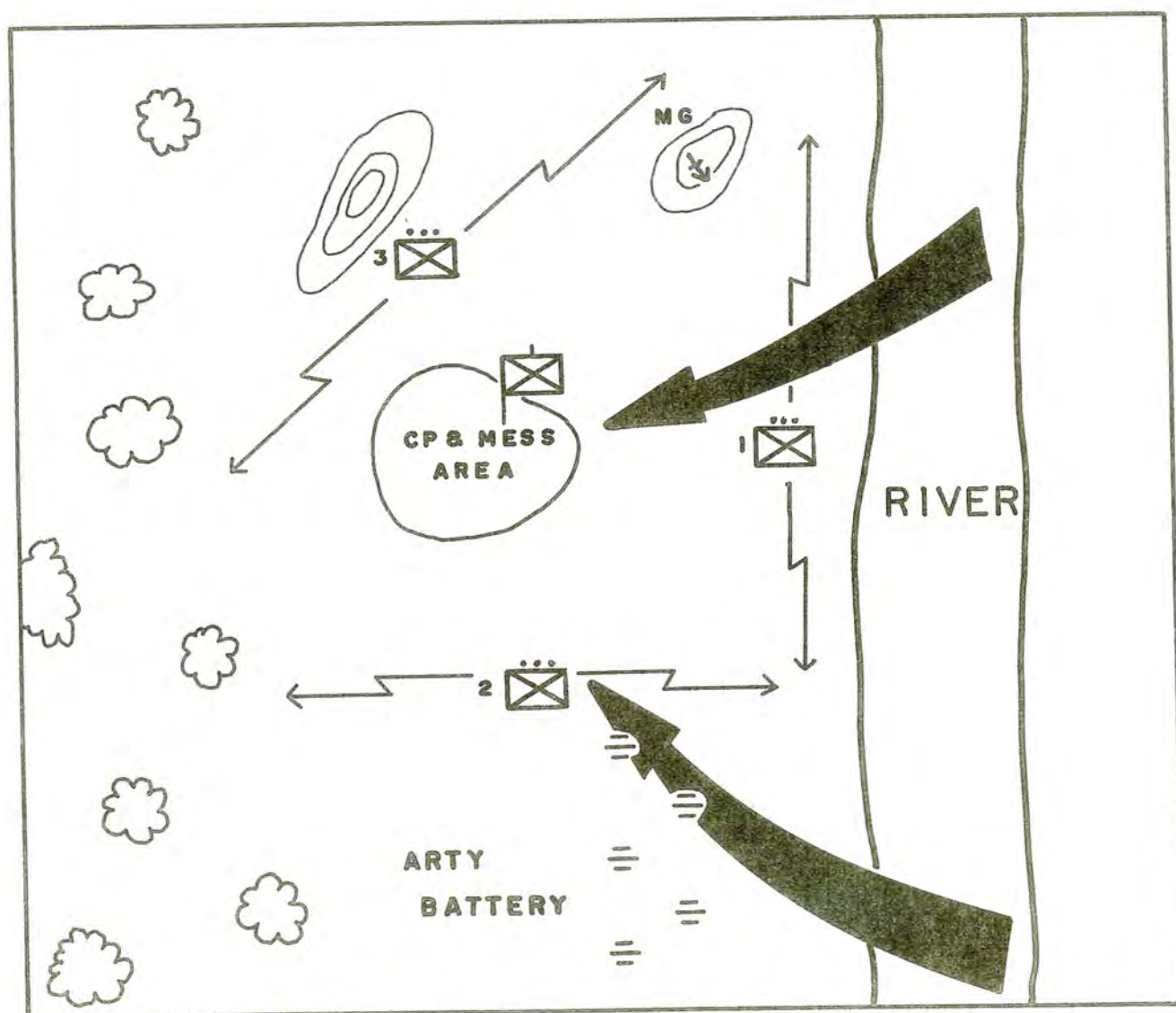
HISTORICALLY: The XO ran back to the kitchen area and placed his messmen and cooks in a defensive line near the mess area. Then he raced to the third platoon and told the platoon leader to take his platoon, gather up any stragglers he could find and retake the first platoon's position.

SITUATION 2: You have ordered the third platoon to counterattack towards the river. As they prepare to move forward on their mission, enemy mortar rounds begin falling around your position at the mess tent. From the direction of the second platoon you hear cries of panic and see that the artillery men have abandoned their guns and are streaming through that platoon's positions. Some members of that platoon throw down their weapons and join the panic. There is complete confusion in the camp. The North Koreans are as confused as you. Most of them are mingling around, shivering in their nakedness or scrounging food from the kitchen area. The third platoon is standing amidst the Koreans, seemingly mesmerized by all the enemy in their midst, by the exploding mortar rounds, and by the panic-stricken artillery men. Your commander is still missing. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The XO got the troops moving by setting the example; he attacked the Koreans and yelled at the troops to follow him. Then he ordered the third platoon to grab the fleeing Americans and attack towards first platoon's positions.

SITUATION 3: You got the third platoon moving. They attack energetically, firing and moving perfectly while yelling and screaming like crazy men. The machine gun still in position on the left flank mows down the better part of a Korean company attacking over first platoon's old position. However, the third platoon's weapons are jamming due to cold weather and they must attack using their rifles as clubs. They retake the position, but are no sooner there than their platoon leader is killed. There are hundreds of Koreans in the river wading toward your position. Looking toward your second platoon (through which the artillery men had run), you see that they are heavily engaged by what appears to be the main Korean attack. The six artillery howitzers have been captured by the Koreans and are being turned towards you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The XO called battalion and asked for reinforcements. Battalion, several thousand meters to the rear, sent some nearby armor towards the company's position. The XO also called for artillery all around his position and in the river. He counterattacked by fire to drive the enemy off the artillery tubes and held on with his remaining soldiers until the armored help arrived and drove them back across the river.



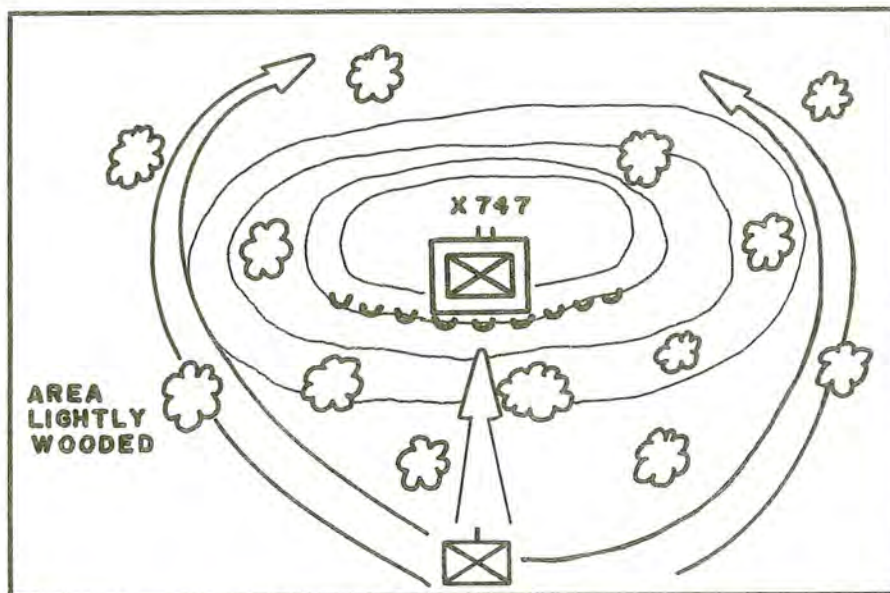
SCENARIO 7

Dept of the Army Pamphlet No. 20-269
Small Unit Actions During the German
Campaign in Russia
CPT Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Div (USA)

THE FIGHT IN THE SNOW

SITUATION 1: You command a company occupying Hill 747 somewhere near the Arctic Circle. It is November and temperatures have dropped to (-15°F) . Hill 747 commands good fields of fire into the rear of your battalion's positions and dominates the ground held on either side by neighboring companies. The landing force is on the offensive and you receive orders for an attack through another battalion's sector. You and your platoon leaders are several thousand meters away on a recon when a heavy snowstorm hits. The enemy takes advantage of the snowstorm to launch a surprise attack on Hill 747 without an artillery or mortar prep. You return from your recon to find your company in hasty defensive positions behind Hill 747, the enemy occupying the key terrain, and your battalion commander ordering you to recapture the hill in a surprise attack at 2200 that night. You have one battery of 105's in D S, as well as your company mortars. Your recon indicates that the enemy has at least five machine guns in position. Based on information from your soldiers, you know the enemy has plenty of indirect fire support. The frozen ground prevents digging in. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander asked the company on the right to cause a diversion in front of their positions. He divided his company into three groups. Two groups were instructed to bypass the enemy strongpoints (machine guns) and slip around to the rear. The third group was to creep as close as possible to the Russian sentries without being detected. Preplanned targets were assigned to the artillery and mortars and signal flares coordinated.



SITUATION 2: You have divided your company as did the commander historically. You are moving with your center group and are within 35 meters of the enemy sentries. Your assault groups (the two groups bypassing the enemy strongpoints) are not yet in position. The sentries are dressed in summer uniforms and are obviously freezing and unalert. Suddenly, two machine guns open fire on your men and three of your people are hit instantly. What do you do?

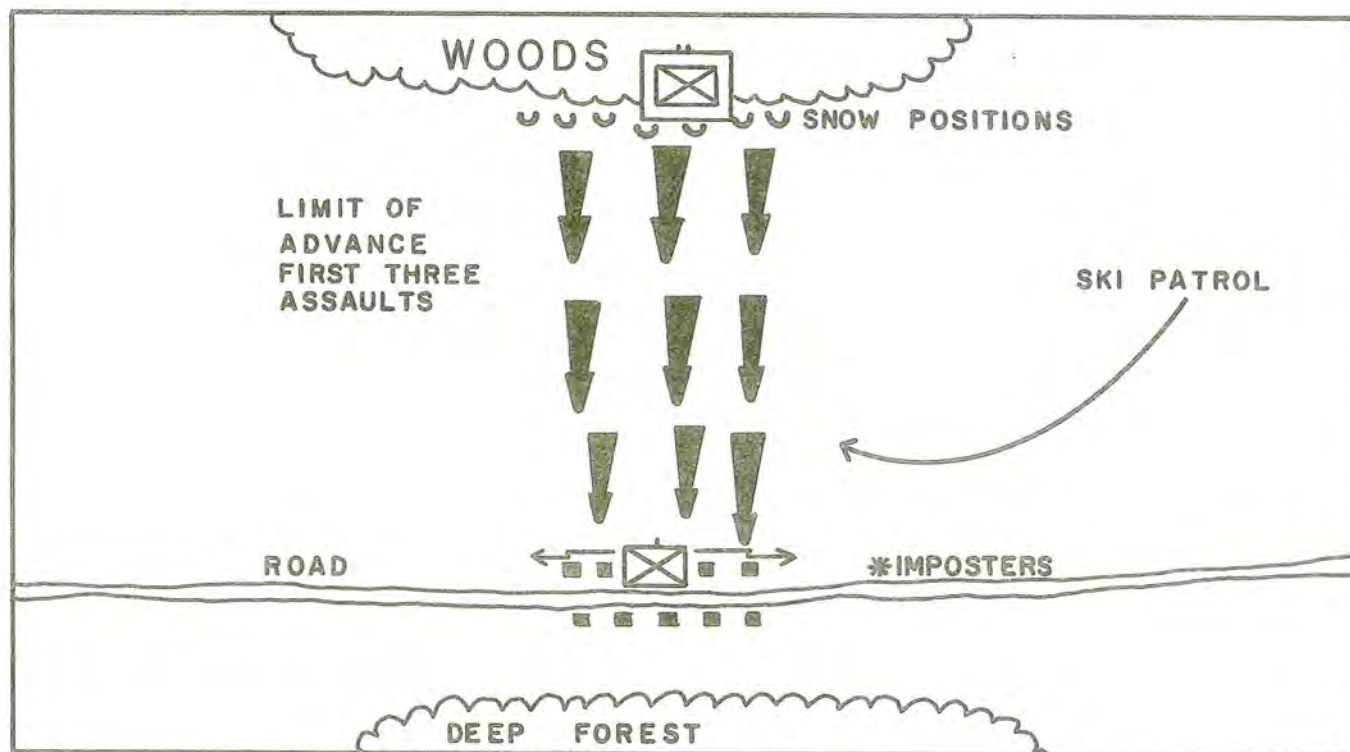
HISTORICALLY: The commander led an immediate assault straight ahead which overran the sentries and struck the Russian fighting positions.

SITUATION 3: Struck by machine gun fire, you launch an immediate assault into the enemy positions. There you find sleds loaded with furs and felt boots which were being issued to the enemy, but which your men badly need. Most of the enemy is falling back in a panic, but two machine guns continue to put out effective fire and most of your Marines have dropped out of the attack to grab furs and boots. You have heard nothing from either of your assault groups and cannot raise them on the radio. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander physically pushed his men away from the furs and directed them towards the machine guns. It took hand to hand fighting to stop the guns. He could not suppress them with fire, so he placed most of his group in supporting positions and attacked with a fire team. The two elements sent into the Russian rear cut off a large portion of the fleeing Russians. The Russian furs and boots were issued to his soldiers after the hill was secured.

SITUATION 4: You remain on Hill 747 overnight. The storm continues, leaving three feet of snow on the ground, and your original mission is postponed. The next day you are ordered to provide protection against partisan raids on the regiment's resupply route. You begin by clearing the road. About 10 kilometers down the road, you encounter a group of 25 soldiers in American Army uniforms standing by the road beckoning to you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander allowed only his point element to move forward. They were fired upon and fell back under covering fire. The commander set up a company perimeter in a small village at that location and tried to determine the strength and disposition of the Russians by sending out patrols.



1 SITUATION 5: You have placed your company in a hasty defense in front of a small village
and established a vantage point from which you can see the enemy. An enemy battalion has
moved into position in front of you and is building snow positions. They place four heavy
anti-tank weapons in front of you. Battalion reinforces your company by attaching two 50
cal machinegun crews and two additional TOWs to your command. The enemy probes your
positions and exchanges fire with your troops, but there is no indication of an impending
attack. That night, around 0400, a 50 man enemy ski patrol approaches your positions. They
are about 400 meters away. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The ski patrol was detected early, but was allowed to come very close
before being engaged. About 40 men from the patrol were killed or captured. Those captured
were interrogated on the spot.

SITUATION 6: Prisoners have informed you that two light infantry divisions are moving
south to seize the village you occupy. The enemy in the snow positions to your front remain
passive. You notify battalion of your information and are told to defend to the north, but they
move no other force to support you. The deep snow prevents you from obtaining grazing fire
with your machine guns, and the frozen ground precludes digging in. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Platforms for the machinegun's were improvised; in this case, placed on
anti-aircraft tripods. Snow and ice positions were built. (Four feet of frozen snow and water
will stop small arms fire and artillery shell fragments. If reinforced with wood, scrap metal,
or sand, it is even more effective.)

SITUATION 7: Early the next morning, three enemy columns are observed moving in your
direction. They appear to be carrying no heavy weapons. An infantry force of about 400 men
emerges from the woods and attacks on a broad front. The three feet of snow combined with
your automatic weapons stops them about 700 meters from your position. Immediately, a
second force, slightly larger, attacks over the bodies and packed-down snow of the first wave.
They advance to about 400 meters of your position before they too melt in your fire. A third
wave begins its attack without weapons; arming itself from the hands of their dead comrades
to your front. Two of your machine guns were knocked out in the 2nd assault and now your
company is forced to constantly fire and move its machine guns, then fire again from a new
location. This 3rd assault reaches into your right platoon's position before it is beaten back.
Now you see a 4th and larger assault forming in the woods to your front. The snow between
you and them has been largely beaten down and is no longer an obstacle. There is a vast
forest about 400 meters to the rear of the village, but there is deep snow between you and it.
You have about one magazine per rifle remaining and no machine gun has even 200 rounds.
All mortar ammunition is expended. You have no artillery within range and battalion is
involved in a fight elsewhere and cannot help. You have 30 dead, 15 litter cases and 60
Marines who are walking wounded or injured. Neither you nor the enemy has any air support.
What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander ordered a withdrawal to the forest. He sent the walking
wounded to the woods to beat down a path and ordered the mortars and AT crews to destroy
their weapons and follow carrying the litter cases. Then he left a light covering force to
cover the withdrawal. That covering force delayed the Russians and withdrew to the forest
without loss. For 3 days, the company marched through the deep snow within the forest
before it could rejoin its regiment.

SCENARIO 8

FROM: S.L.A. Marshall's
The River and the Gauntlet
CPT Williams
Battle Simulation Ctr
9th Div (USA)

THE RIVER AND THE HILL

SITUATION 1: You are the second platoon leader in a company fighting in mountainous terrain against a huge army of light infantry. Your battalion has been cut off by a strong communist offensive which has left it several miles ahead of the location where American forces are regrouping for the defense. Your men are well rested and well supplied with ammunition. Your company has occupied positions on a series of short ridges and low hills overlooking a small river. The key position is Hill 383 on the company's right flank. The ridges are extremely rocky with several steep dropoffs. The area to your front is covered with scrub oak, stunted pines, and briar thickets. There is both cover and concealment for enemy forces to your front. A draw with a small stream runs right through the center of the company's positions. Your platoon's position is closest to the river, atop a hill facing the river with a rocky cliff too steep to climb. You have a one man LP/OP near the intersection of the draw and the river. Around 2100 that night, that man opens up on forces to his front. He reports that he has seen four or five enemy soldiers and requests permission to fall back. The man is not particularly reliable and you note that there has been no other fire from his direction aside from the short burst from his weapons. What do you tell him?

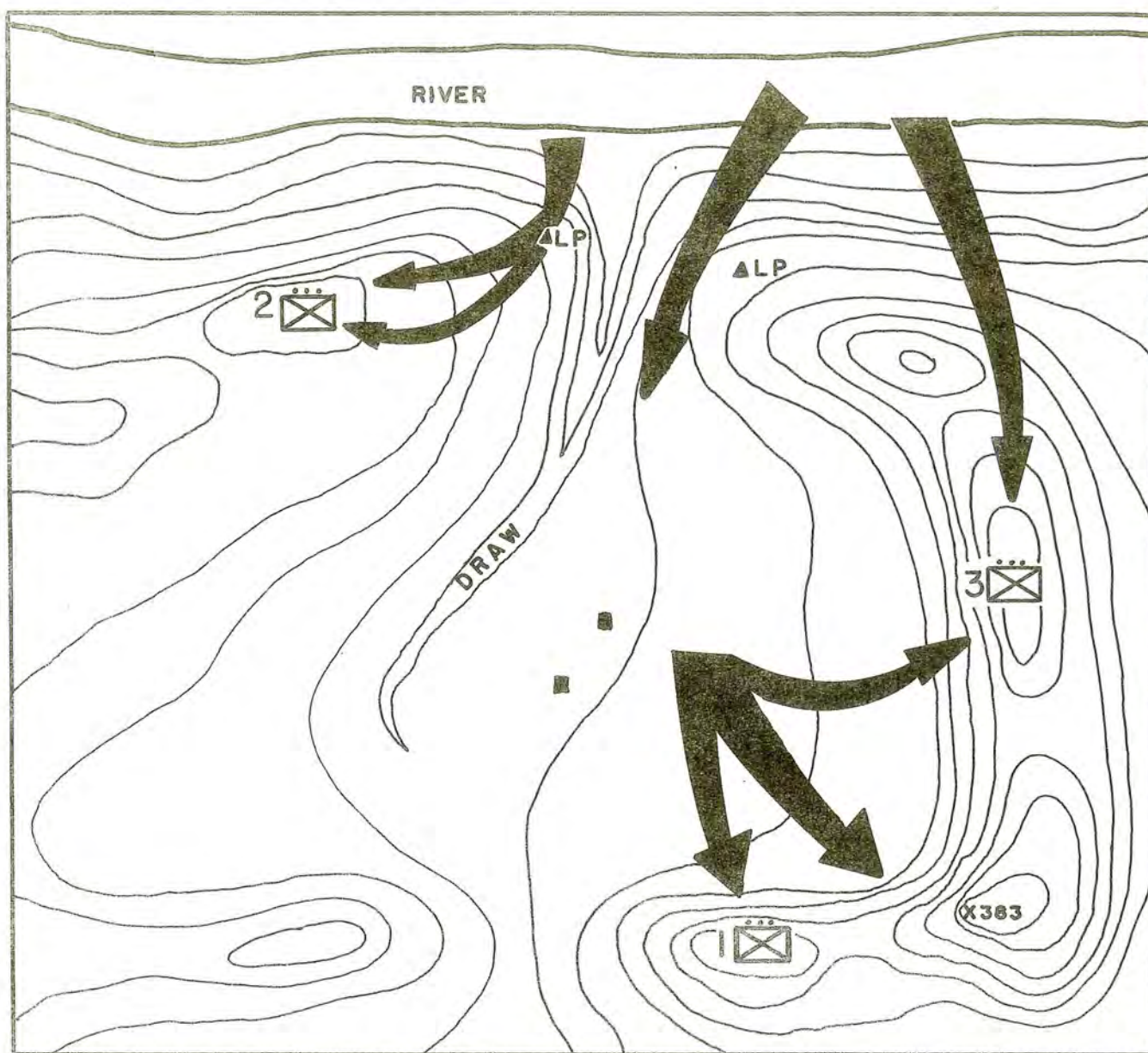
HISTORICALLY: Platoon leader told him to stay put and report on the enemy's action.

SITUATION 2: You send a second man to the LP/OP. After about 30 minutes, they open fire and keep up the fire. You can get no information from them over the phone. Mortar rounds begin falling directly on their location. Friendly fire from that location then stops, but the men from the LP/OP do not reenter your lines. Before you can react to their aid, hand grenades begin to fall amidst your positions. The enemy forces are obviously within 15 meters of your positions, yet you can see nothing of them. At this point, you realize that your positions are not as good as you might wish them to be. The fires of two of your machine guns are masked in the direction you wish them to fire by the positions of two of your squads. Your men are firing into the bushes to their front and lobbing back grenades upon the enemy. You have suffered no casualties. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The LP/OP escaped up the draw and linked up with another platoon. The platoon leader withdrew his men to the crest of the hill, even with the machine guns, and continued to fight. However, this left the draw uncovered by fire.

SITUATION 3: You have withdrawn your men to the crest of the hill, set up in new positions and found that you have 16 men still fighting. The enemy is working its way through the rocks toward your new line. But you have good fields of fire; so good, in fact, that your troops are soon running low on ammunition. You send a runner to the company to bring back more and redistribute what you have. In the lull, the enemy works up onto your flanks and begins lobbing grenades into your positions. You have ten men remaining; with two dead Marines and three too badly wounded to walk. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The platoon leader pulled back farther using some of his men to carry the wounded and the rest to cover their withdrawal. He suffered more casualties and soon was forced to abandon the entire hill.



SITUATION 4: You have fallen back with seven men and linked in with the first platoon in the center of your company's position. You are occupying positions in the draw overlooking several thatched farm huts. You stay with the one machine gun you have left in a good position with excellent fields of fire into the draw. The other four men of your "platoon" are placed in supporting positions to protect the machine gun. However, you do not know if everyone coming up the draw will be enemy. There are very likely several of your Marines still alive and still attempting to reach friendly forces. Shadowy figures are moving up the draw. At 25 meters, you challenge them, receive no reply, and open fire. More figures bob and weave to your front, rushing from cover to cover. About 100 meters to your front is a thatched hut. Near it a machine gun opens up on your position and seriously hinders the fire from your positions. Moreover, you cannot pinpoint its position. You can get no illumination or mortar support and still cannot determine if all the figures to your front are the enemy. The thatched hut

beside the enemy machine gun is now becoming a serious problem as it effectively blocks your fire from behind it. Now an enemy mortar sets up behind the hut and rounds begin to fall closer and closer to your location. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The problem of no illumination, as well as the problem with the house blocking fires, was solved by firing right into its roof and setting it afire with the tracer rounds. The heat and light drove away the enemy. The problem with the mortar was solved by firing a recoilless rifle right at the gun, thus wiping out it and its crew.

SITUATION 5: You assume command of the company. You have 70 men remaining in your company and that includes all the reinforcements which battalion can spare. Your position is being fired upon by light weapons from Hill 383. Now mortars begin falling on your positions and on the battalion CP from that hill. It is the linchpin of the battalion position as it covers your company's lines as well as the company on your right and the battalion rear. But you still have enemy forces in the draw and on 3d platoon's hill. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Tried to recapture the hill, but was repulsed. The next morning, the Chinese unexpectedly withdrew across the river, despite having won the key terrain. That was all that saved the American regiment.



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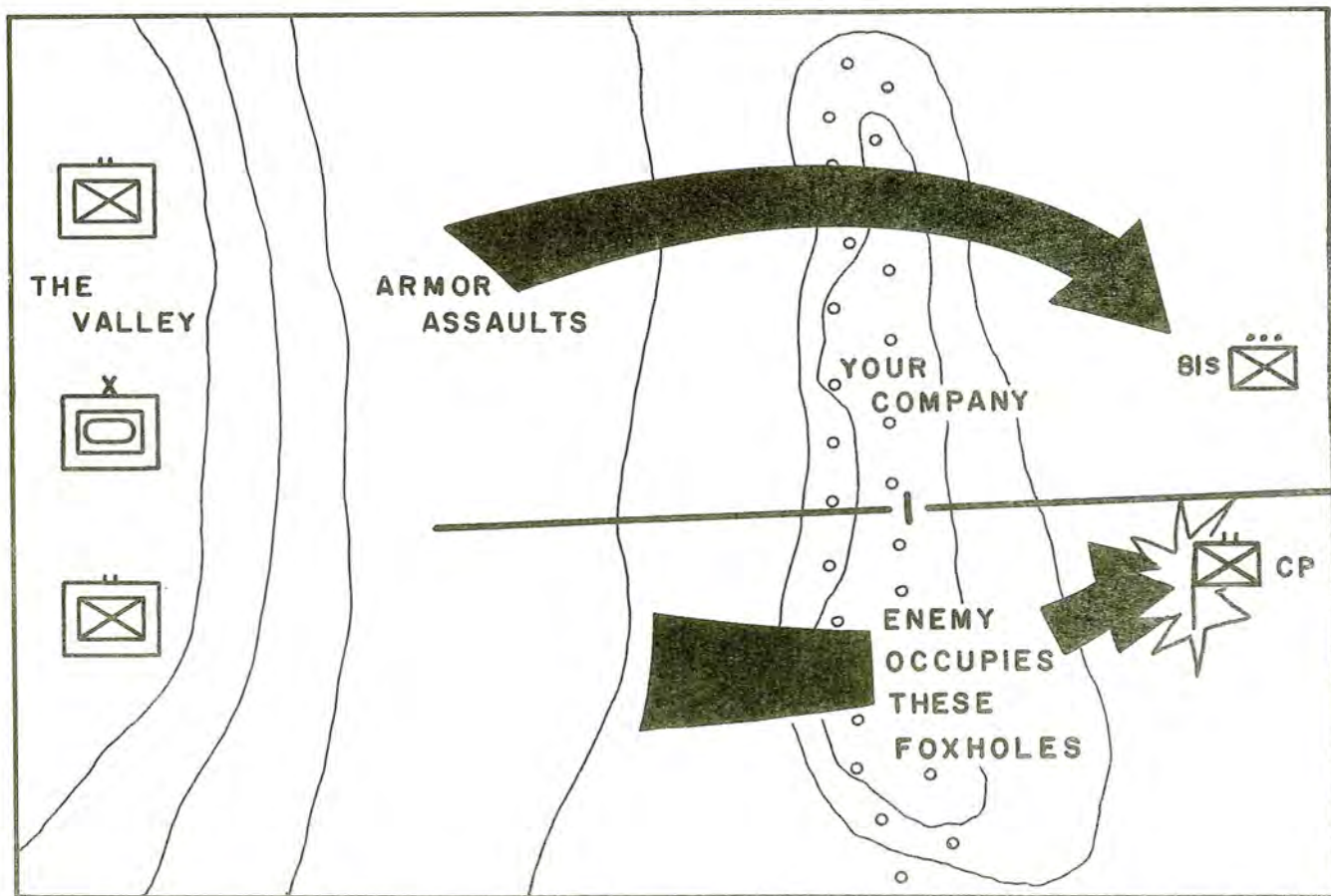
SCENARIO 9

FROM: DA PAM 20-269 Small Unit Actions
During the German Campaign in
Russia
 CPT Williams
 Battle Simulation Ctr
 9th Div (USA)

OVERRUN BY ARMOR

SITUATION 1: You command a company of about 80 men who have been fighting for several weeks straight. It is early December. The terrain on which you are situated is level, with no trees, shrubs, or buildings which could provide cover or concealment. However, you have excellent observation and fields of fire. You are on the battalion's right flank, defending a 500 meter sector. Your foxholes are as solid as concrete due to the freezing ground. You have six M60 machinegun's, six Dragons, and some LAWS and DEMO. However, both of your TOWs have been destroyed. Although you have your basic load of ammunition, no resupply will be possible for several days. Ammunition shortage has also hampered your artillery support and you must be sparing of its use. On the night of 3 December, you hear engines betraying the presence of tanks in a valley 2,000 meters to your front. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Commander sent out patrols, checked his positions to steady the troops, notified battalion, and waited. (The discussion should include talk on the composition of the patrol, its weapons and personnel, action on enemy contact, mission, etc.).



SITUATION 2: At dawn, a heavy fog settles over the ground severely limiting your observation. Forty T72 tanks, followed by dismounted infantry, come into view. They are spread across the battalion's frontage, but the ten tanks in your sector are suddenly through your positions and beyond your foxholes. The company on your left flank has been driven from its position and enemy infantry has now occupied their foxholes. They are firing into your left flank, while enemy infantry to your front makes a frontal attack. You can see the T72s overrunning the battalion mortar position and the battalion CP behind the company on your left. Your foxholes are being crisscrossed with enemy fire. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Despite the precarious situation, the company held its ground. The frozen foxholes did not collapse under the weight of the tanks rolling overhead, and the Russian infantry to the front was pinned down by machine gun fire. The commander also called for artillery on the infantry to his front. Several of the Russian tanks were destroyed by shaped charges after they passed over the foxholes.

SITUATION 3: You are still in your fighting positions. Darkness is falling. The tanks, leary of your positions after their losses in the morning, have fallen back to the valley from whence they began their attack. The bodies of dead infantrymen are scattered across your front. However, enemy soldiers still occupy the foxholes of the company on your left. But a truce seems to have been established as neither group fires on the other. You cannot talk to battalion and do not know where they are. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The left wing platoon of the German company attacked the Russian held foxholes and captured them without firing a shot. The Russians were taken by surprise because their soldiers had been drinking vodka to "keep warm" and maintain "courage".

SITUATION 4: Your battalion counterattacks and regains all its positions, capturing several hundred prisoners in the process. As the German account of the fight states, "once again an experienced infantry unit had demonstrated that a seemingly hopeless situation can be mastered, provided the men do not give way to panic". However, you have only 50 men remaining and many of those are wounded. You are concerned about the mental strain imposed on your soldiers. The next day, the enemy launches another assault. Your positions are exposed to a 1 hour artillery barrage. That is followed by an assault of tanks with the infantry riding in on top. Once more, your positions are penetrated. But this time you have infantry, as well as armor, in your rear. Your force is completely cut off from the rest of the battalion. Your 50-man company is severely short of ammunition. In addition, among the wounded, you have some Marines in real need of medical attention, which you cannot give them. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander held in position. He felt his mission was to defend, and since his positions were strong, he felt he could best do it where he was. The next morning, his battalion counterattacked yet again, drove the Russians from the site, and extracted the wounded.

SCENARIO 10

FROM: Small Unit Actions During the
German Campaign in Russia
CPT Williams
9th Div (USA)

CITY FIGHT AT ENGLER

SITUATION 1: You are leading a platoon fighting in an industrial area. It is January and the temperature drops to -50°F at night. Snow is three feet deep. Enemy forces are believed to be weak and incapable of launching an offensive; but then, so too are American forces. Your battalion has the mission to defend the town of Engler and block enemy advances along the road to Lodz. The battalion has dug snow positions amidst the houses on the edge of town because it is impossible to dig into the frozen ground. To the east lies about 2,000 meters of open ground which rises into a forested ridge on which enemy forces are massing.

Your platoon occupies one section of the town and is responsible for patrolling to its front. Due to high winds from the east which churn the snow into the air, you have to post sentries every 20 meters to your front. In addition, you have to relieve them every 30 minutes due to the cold. During the day your positions are struck on several occasions by extremely accurate mortar fire. That night, your sentries report at least an enemy company on skis moving towards your sector. You order the sentries back and have the machine guns open fire. But the guns will not fire; they are frozen shut. About 25 enemy ski troops succeed in seizing a building in your sector. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The machine guns were brought indoors in order to warm them sufficiently so they could function later. Immediately attacked the Russian-held building so that he could clear them out of his sector. Also, called for mortar fire on the ridgeline to his front to hit any other forces before they could attack his positions.

SITUATION 2: You have cleared the enemy-occupied building in your sector and placed your machine guns in buildings with warming fires. That night you hear loud cries and shouting from the forest. From experience, you know that commissars are "reorganizing" their units by shooting uncooperative soldiers and leaders. An attack the next morning is beaten back and you are surprised to see 20 enemy, while retreating to the woods, shot down by fire from the woods. After the attack, hundreds of enemy soldiers move to the edge of the forest and build solid snow positions with overhead cover made of wood and packed with ice. That night, while you are touring your OP's, several figures appear out of the dark and say in good English, "Hello, Marines. Don't fire. We're American." Your sentry calls out the password, but they claim they are from the 7th Marines and don't know your password. They come closer and you see they are in American uniforms. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Sentries allowed them to get within 20 feet, at which time the Russians (dressed as German soldiers) hurled hand grenades at them and killed or wounded the two sentries in that area. Then they rushed into the nearest house, followed by other Russians, and chased the occupants back to their alternate position.

SITUATION 3: The enemy has penetrated your positions again and occupied one of your squad's buildings. Now they are attacking that squad's alternate position. From the first building, where they have set up two machine guns, they beat off a squad you sent to regain the building. Now they fire rifle grenades into the second house (alternate position) which catches fire. The squad then rushes out of that building and completely opens up that sector of your defense. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Organized another relief squad, reinforced it with personnel from platoon headquarters, and picked up some more forces from company headquarters. In addition, he grabbed the squad which had abandoned both of its positions and led the combined force on a counterattack. Throwing hand grenades and firing their weapons on the run, they drove the Russians out of Engler. However, a Russian commissar and eight soldiers defended the building to the last man and all had to be killed.

SITUATION 4: You have counterattacked and regained the positions you lost, killing a fanatical group of enemy soldiers to the last man in order to do so. You find some sophisticated communication gear left in that building by the enemy. It is of the type used at their regimental headquarters. What do you do?

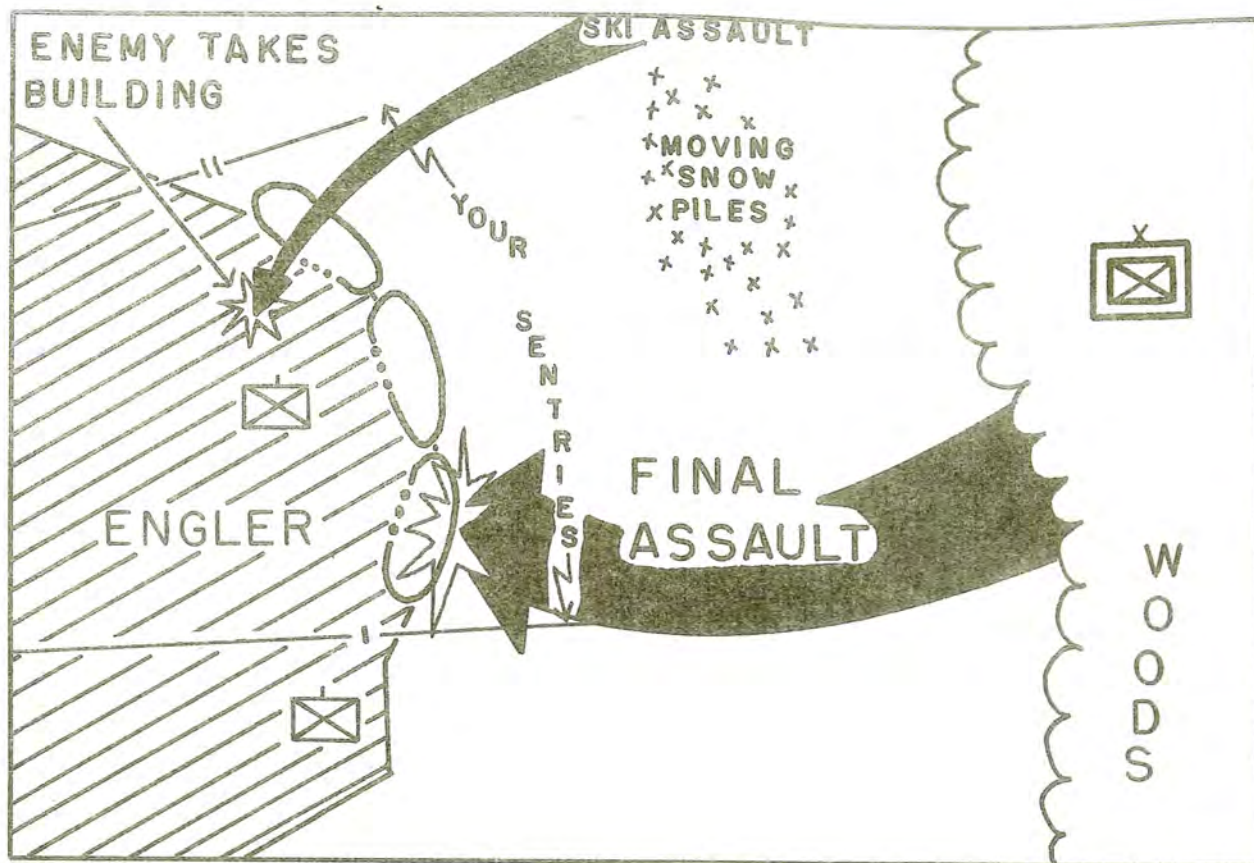
HISTORICALLY: The commander reasoned that such equipment indicated that a sizeable Soviet force was in the area and probably waiting to exploit any advantage gained. So he called for artillery on the woodline on the ridge, assuming that that would be the Russian jumpoff point for such an attack. The fires probably stopped an attack because the rest of the night passed quietly.

SITUATION 5: Just before lunch, artillery opens up on Engler and continues heavily for 4 hours. One of your sentries reports that there are a large number of small piles of snow in his sector that were not there the day before. Since the corpses from the day before are gone, you tell him that the snow piles probably contain those bodies. Nevertheless, you feel uneasy and go take a look. Sure enough, there are a large number of snow piles, yet the only movement you can detect comes from the woodline. But your sentries swear that the snow piles move. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Lieutenant told his sentries to fire into each snow pile. After doing so, they reported no further movement. Russian prisoners later reported that 40 men had been ordered to move under cover of darkness as close to the town as possible, to dig into the snow and wait until nightfall, when they were to launch a surprise attack. Most of those soldiers were killed by the German fire, but those that survived spent 10 more hours in the snow without being able to even shift their bodies. Yet not one suffered frostbite.

SITUATION 6: That night, at 0330, you suddenly hear wild screaming from just beyond your positions on the edge of the town. Rushing from your CP, you see hundreds of enemy infantry, shoulder to shoulder, assaulting your buildings. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Fortunately for the German platoon leader, his men were awake and their weapons were warm. The Russians attacked in column with no gaps between units or men. They marched to within 50 meters of the German lines without a word, then assaulted wildly. But only a few were able to make it into the German positions. They were raked by fire and destroyed in a half hour of fighting. Row after row of soldiers were mowed down, yet repeated waves kept coming. Within two or three yards of German positions, Russian dead were piled to a height of several feet. The town held because the men were alert and had learned to take proper care of their weapons.



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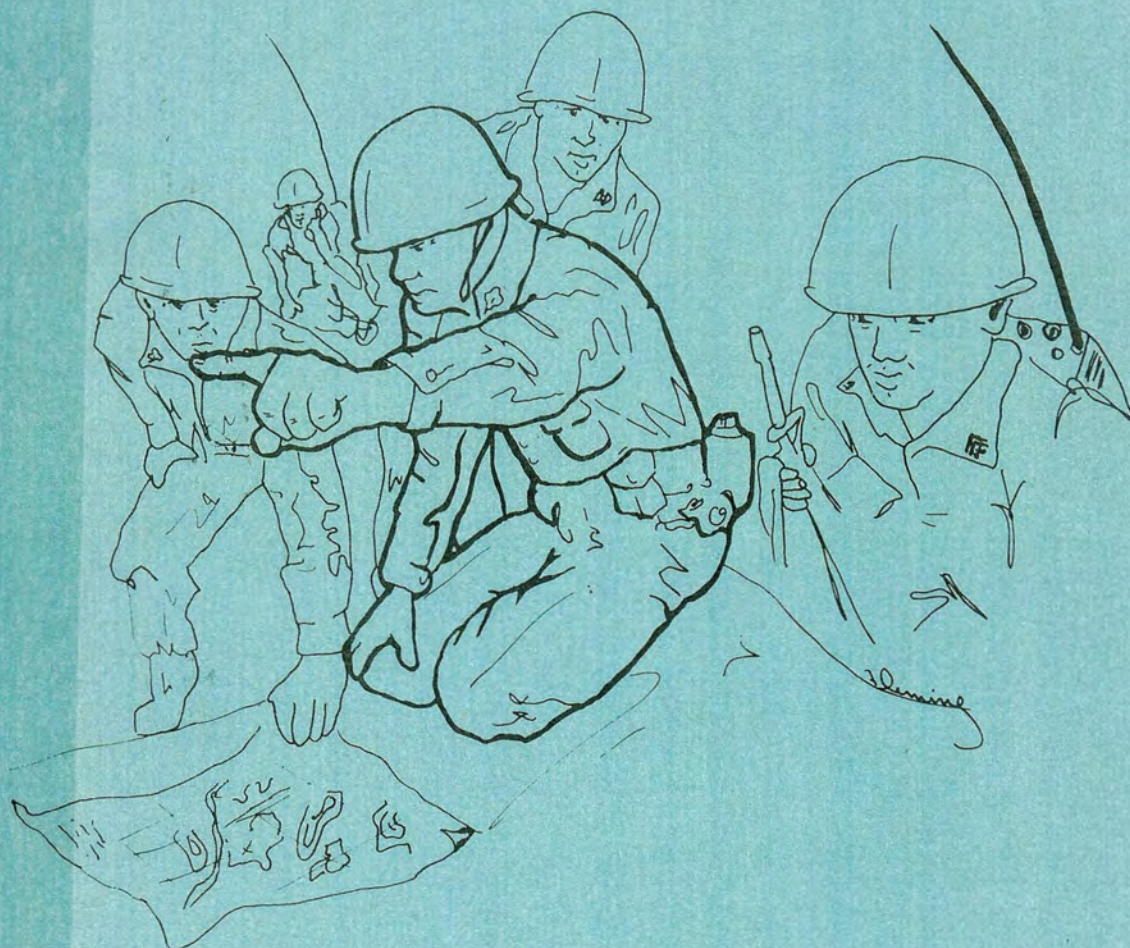


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TACTICAL PROBLEMS FOR BATTALION COMMANDERS



1982

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MARINE CORPS DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION COMMAND
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134

SCENARIO 1

FROM: Small Unit Actions
 War Dept Historical Div (1946)
 CWO2 Lavender
 Amphibious Instruction Dept
 MCDEC

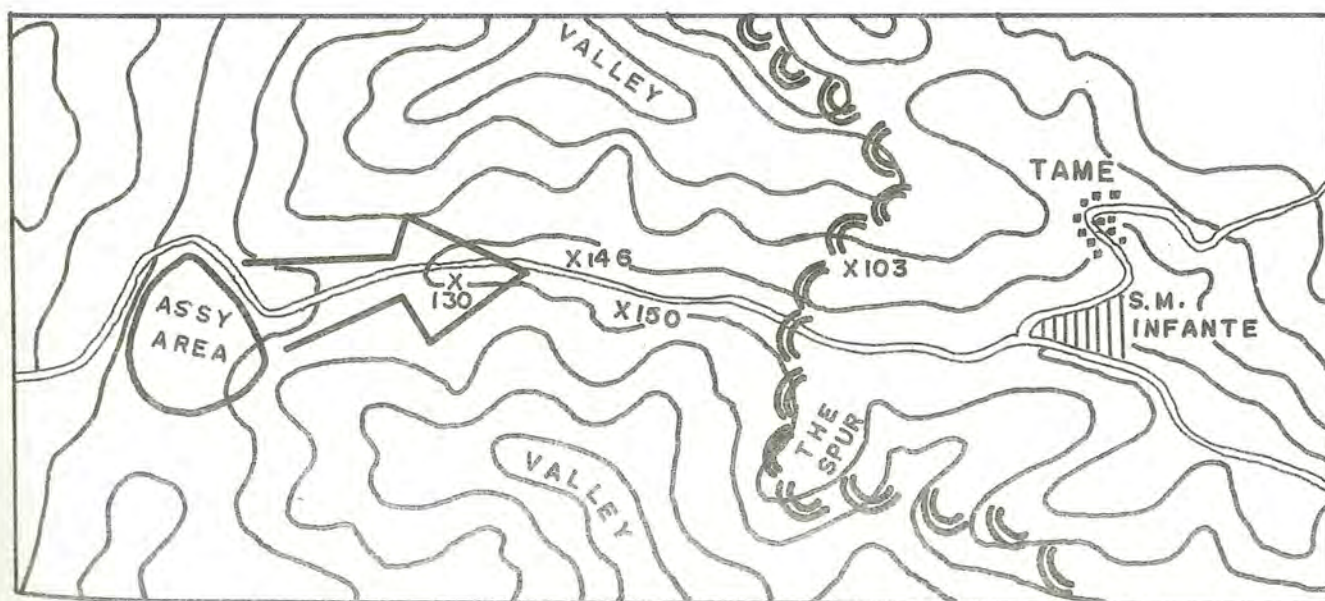
SANTA MARIA INFANTE

SITUATION 1: You command 2nd Battalion, _____ Marines, who have been fighting for about 2 weeks in country characterized by hilly terrain and sparse vegetation. The enemy is predominantly infantry with good antitank and artillery support. This enemy force has proven to be tough, resourceful and able to restore seemingly hopeless situations with rapidly improvised solutions. He is not to be taken lightly.

You have been given the mission of seizing Santa Maria Infante in a night attack. Your attack will move up a long, low ridge to the town. Small knolls are dotted along the length of the ridge (150, 146, 103) and its sides are cut by draws into small spurs. Three hundred meters beyond Hill 150, a terrain feature called The Spur juts 750 meters east of the ridge. The Spur is known to be strongly defended.

1st and 3rd Battalions will support your attack on your right and a battalion from _____ Marines will be attacking 800 meters to your left.

The plan of attack is for two companies to move abreast up the ridge with the third in reserve. Company F on the left of the ridge road and Company E on the right will advance with platoons in V formation. Company E's initial objectives are Hill 130 and 150; Company F's, Hill 146. Once these are secured, Company E will move ahead to capture The Spur and occupy the high ground east of Santa Maria Infante, while Company F takes Tame (a smaller ville west of Santa Maria) and then the high ground north of Santa Maria Infante. Following one objective behind Company E, Company G will go to the Y-junction south of the town and advance along the road through the town, closing the gap between Companies E and F and mopping up pockets of enemy resistance left by the assault companies. Even though there will be no moon until 0130 and even then, very little light, you feel only visual contact and radio communication will be required to keep E and F in touch with each other. Your schedule calls for securing your objective in 2 hours after commencing the attack. H-Hour is 2300. No artillery preparation will be fired because you wish to achieve surprise.



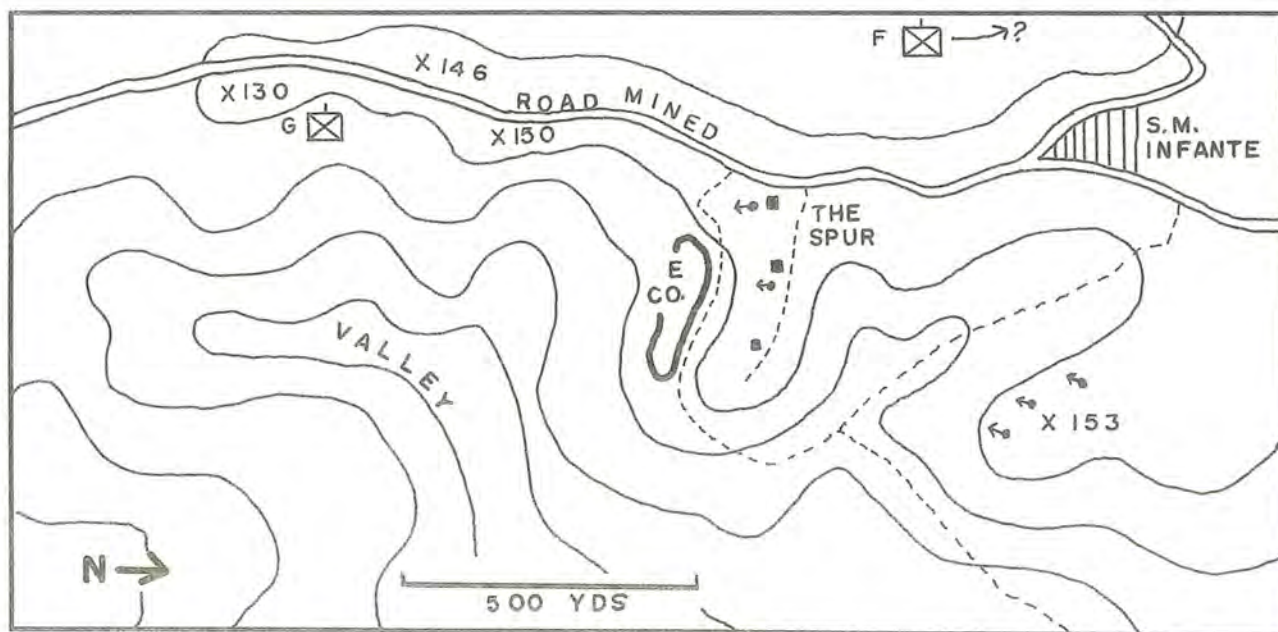
The companies move off on schedule in platoon columns. Progress is relatively fast and the platoons encounter no enemy resistance. Hill 130 is secured and the platoons move into V's for the next objectives. This is accomplished in the next 20 minutes while Hills 146 and 150 are taken under fire by machineguns, mortars and artillery. When the barrage lifts on schedule, companies E and F move out.

Problems arise almost immediately. F Company loses its 3rd Platoon in the dark, along with most of the second platoon. The remainder of F continues on towards Tame.

Company E has more success in staying together, even though the platoons do get somewhat separated. Hill 150 turns out to be free of enemy forces and Echo moves on to The Spur. Almost immediately Echo is taken under fire by machineguns on The Spur, stops, reorganizes to get its bearings and then begins assaulting the position. Company E's assaults get bogged down because of poor coordination. The company commander is wounded and the reports you are hearing lead you to believe that Echo is pinned down. You move forward to Hill 150, disturbed because Echo is lagging behind its time schedule. On the way forward, you collect some lost elements of Echo and send them forward. Just forward of Hill 150 you encounter Echo's CO who has put one of his platoon commanders in charge and come back for medical aid. You take up a position in a ditch on the slopes of Hill 150 and direct artillery fire on The Spur. You also request tank support to assist Echo. So far as you know, Company F is still advancing toward Tame.

Company E attempts to storm The Spur, but you are able to see the hail of enemy fire that pins Echo to the ground. The troops dig in along the sunken road.

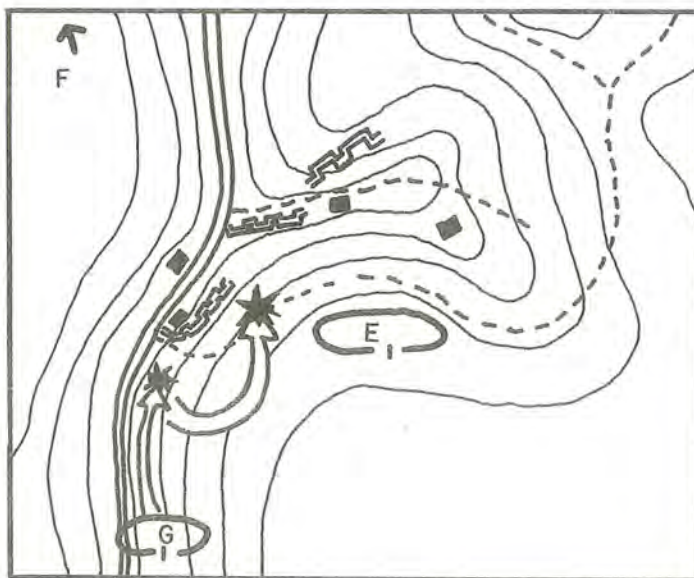
You now realize that taking The Spur will require the reduction of cleverly-concealed and well-constructed strongpoints along the crest. There are at least 4 strongpoints with an estimated 12 machineguns. Three of these are built into houses along the crest and the fourth is in a dugout between the two westernmost houses. In these covered fortifications, machineguns with overlapping fields of fire dominate the entire southern slope of The Spur. You cannot outflank The Spur to the east because MGs further back have this approach well covered. To the west, across the road, you can hear elements of Company F engaged with the enemy, but the company commander assures you that his main body is still moving toward this objective. You do not want to stop Foxtrot, but you must get Echo moving. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: The 2nd Bn/351st Inf. Regt. was led by LtCol Raymond E. Kendall in this fight which took place in southern Italy. LtCol Kendall had Echo fire all available weapons against the enemy strongpoints. He sent one squad, led by an officer, to take out the dugout at the western end of The Spur. As this squad came up over a terrace into view of the dugout, the Germans opened up furiously and killed 9 men instantly. Only the officer and two men got back alive.

Meanwhile, LtCol Kendall led a small group of men personally against the center strongpoint. Before rushing the machinegun nest, he personally fired every weapon he could lay hands on, emptying in succession a BAR, a carbine, an M-1 rifle and some antitank rifle grenades. He then grabbed a rocket launcher and fired three rockets, hitting the target with the third shot. He sent three men to envelop the position but machinegun fire quickly pinned them down. Calling on the rest of the men to follow him, LtCol Kendall then rushed the house. As he approached it, he stood up and threw two grenades which killed some of the enemy and drove the rest away. As he pulled the pin on a third grenade, another machinegun opened up from 75 meters away and hit him in the face. As he fell to the ground, the grenade exploded against his body. The time is 0300.

SITUATION 2: You are 2nd Battalion's XO, located in the vicinity of Hill 150. You have brought Company G forward to this position, ready to support Company E at The Spur. The tanks requested by the battalion commander have been stopped by mines on the road. Three tanks were destroyed, and the road is now blocked. Company E is scattered all over the general area of The Spur, and its attacks have apparently ceased for some reason. (It is 0300.) Company F reports now that it is pinned down in a culvert just west of Sante Marie Infante and unable to advance or retreat because the enemy has it surrounded. More tanks have been requested, but they will not arrive for several hours. At this moment, you receive word that the battalion commander was killed leading part of Company E in an attack on an enemy strongpoint. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: Actually, it was the regimental commander, Colonel Arthur S. Champeny, that took charge at this point. Company G was directed to move up on the left of Echo and seize the crest of The Spur. Apparently, once this position was overcome, he intended for Echo and Golf to push on to the north and relieve Foxtrot. Company F was in dire straits

SCENARIO 2

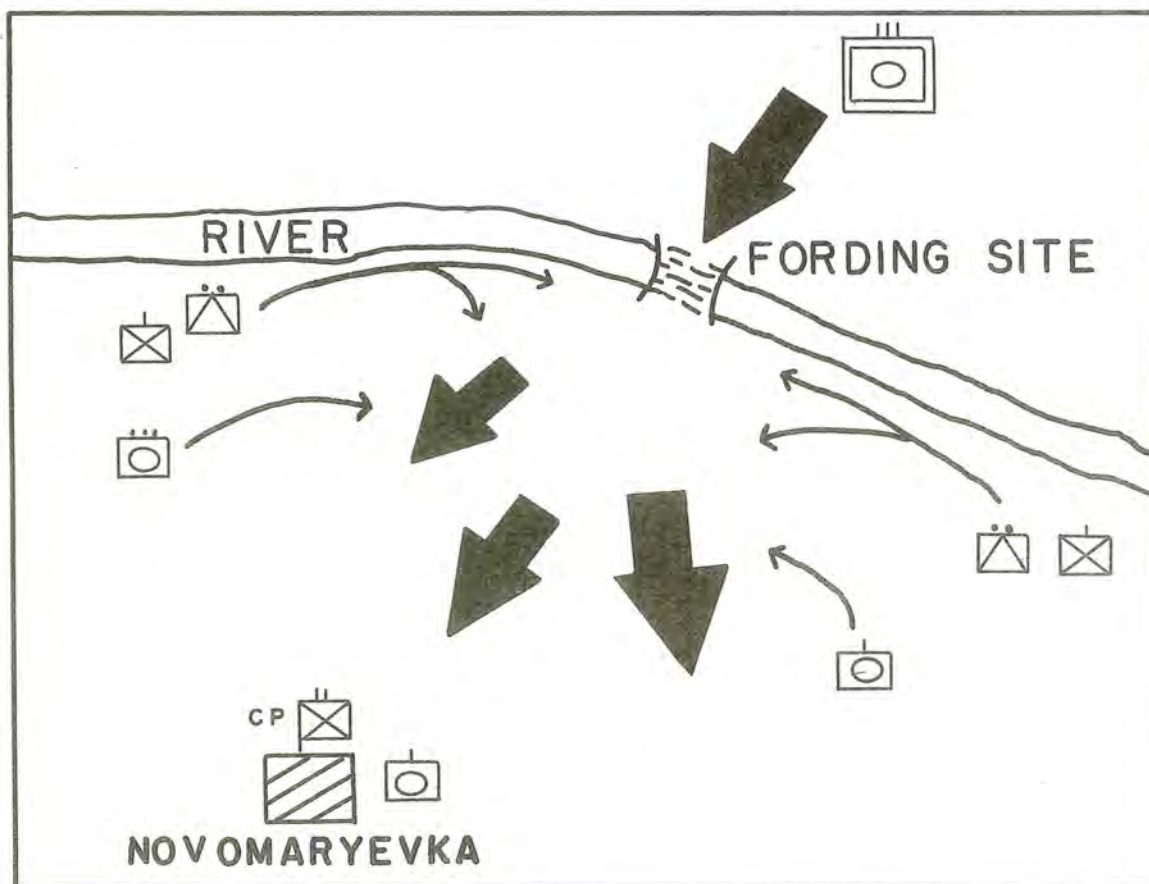
FROM: Paul Carell's Scorched Earth:
The Russian-German War 1943-
1944 Part II, Chapter 1
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction Dept
MCDEC

NOVOMARYEVKA

SITUATION 1: You are an infantry battalion commander fighting defensive battles against armor-heavy forces. Your mission is to hold a riverline along one flank of the Force Beachhead where things have been relatively quiet. You are glad of this since your companies were reduced to 50% in hard fighting last week. Morale remains good.

You have been reinforced by an M60A1 tank company (17 tanks), a full-strength TOW section (8 tubes), and you have an LVTC-7, which you are using as a mobile command post. Unfortunately, all other LVTs were withdrawn for use elsewhere.

Reconnaissance reports reach you at 2100 that 90 T-72 tanks are rapidly approaching your area with the apparent intention of crossing the river at a ford site in the middle of your position. They will be here in 2 hours. You have no mines, little artillery (1 battery 105's), regiment tells you no air support is available because of other on-going battles and your AT assets (other than the TOWs) are virtually non-existent. If the enemy gets past you, he will have a clear path into the landing forces rear areas, so destruction of this enemy tank force is critical to the survival of every Marine ashore. What do you do?



ICALLY: This action actually involved a much-battered Panzer Division during the later battles. The German commander decided to let the enemy over the river, sealing behind him, and fight a mobile battle in the dark. The Russians put out no reconnaissance and had no infantry at all with them.

ION 2: Your pleas to regiment have obtained the promise of additional armor and air support. You are ordered to conduct a strongpoint defense of Novomaryevka as a part of your proposed plan to let the enemy armor across the river. The regimental commander has agreed that your unit is too weak to attempt fighting such a powerful force alone. You set up in Novomaryevka with your tank company and a small reserve plus engineers.

The battle goes according to plan. Without any reconnaissance, the enemy is unaware you are anywhere near, much less that you have closed the ford behind him. As his tanks move forward with their headlights on, they are suddenly ambushed by your counterforce of tanks and TOWs. Almost 20 T-72S explode on the first volley! The enemy moved up frontally and attacked in front and rear. He continues to attack violently and soon the strongpoint is drawn into the battle. Your tanks begin to take losses. Around 0300, a group of enemy tanks (about 30) finally break into the village where you are. You are now down to 10 tanks. A tremendously confused tank vs tank battle ensues and the town begins to burn as you desperately try to keep your LVT out of the way. Finally, your forces are driven out of the village. When you rally in the dark, you find you are down to six tanks and engineers. You estimate there are 20 enemy tanks in the village. When it gets light in another hour, those 20 tanks are going to realize their numerical superiority and the situation becomes very ugly. What do you do?

ORICALLY: The German commander attacked. He reasoned that under what darkness he had left, he might be able to deceive the Russians as to his true strength. He arranged six tanks around the village, strung out the 25 men between them and fired a signal flare. Everyone yelled "Hurra" as loud as they could and charged, firing as fast as they could, worked. The Russians thought they were under a large-scale attack and fell back to the river. They were met there by the antitank units and wiped out. By the time day broke, the 2nd SS Tank Corps, 90 tanks, was burning on the battlefield.

SCENARIO 3

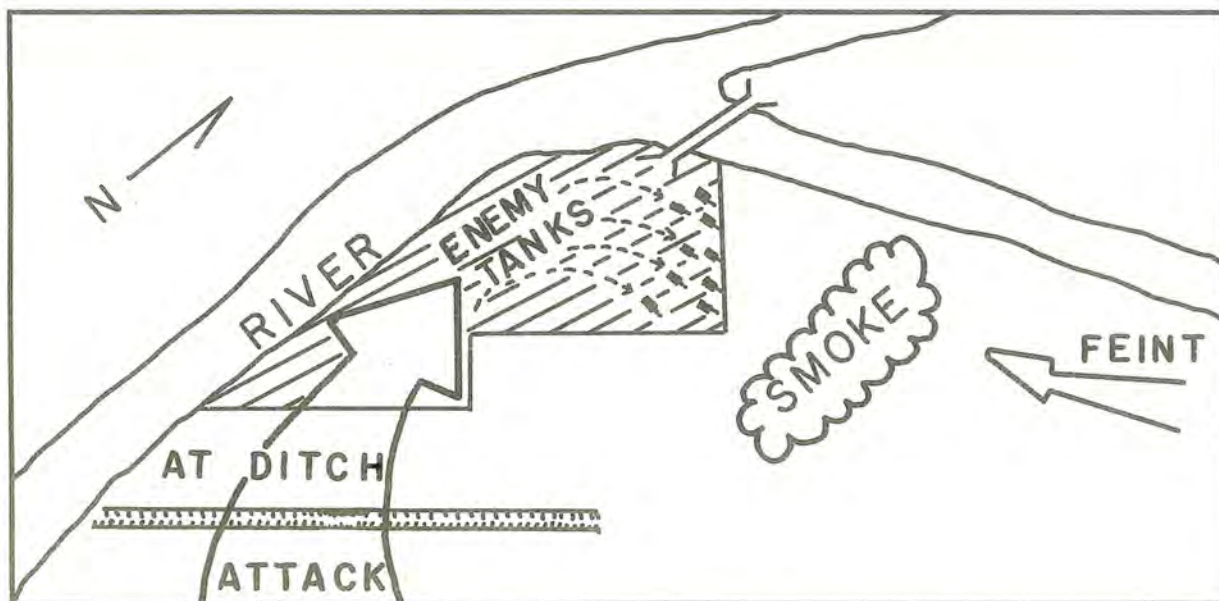
FROM: F. W. von Mellinthin's
Panzer Battles
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction Dept
MCDEC

THE BRIDGEHEAD

SITUATION 1: Your battalion has been given the mission of evicting an enemy force from its bridgehead and seizing the bridge behind them. The bridgehead is in a small town. There are numerous T-62s dug in between the houses (a difficult target) and many infantrymen supporting them. It is winter and about one foot of snow covers the ground.

You have enough LVTs to lift 2 companies, 2 TOW squads, a single tank company and you've been promised the support of 3 artillery batteries. Unfortunately, you have no air support at all.

Your first attempt to rush the town from the south with your tanks leading comes to grief on an antitank ditch that was concealed by the snow. Two of your tanks found a crossing and actually got into the town, but they were unsupported and quickly destroyed. One tank fell into the ditch and remains there. You now suspect there are at least 20 T-62s and several hundred infantrymen defending that town. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: The German commander resorted to deception. The following morning, he concentrated all his artillery on the northern end of the town and had smoke fired. A few armored cars and half-tracks moved forward cautiously, firing tracer wildly. The soviet commander believed this was a full-scale attack and fell for it. The unsuccessful attack from the south the day before made it much more believable and he ordered his tanks to concentrate in the north end of town.

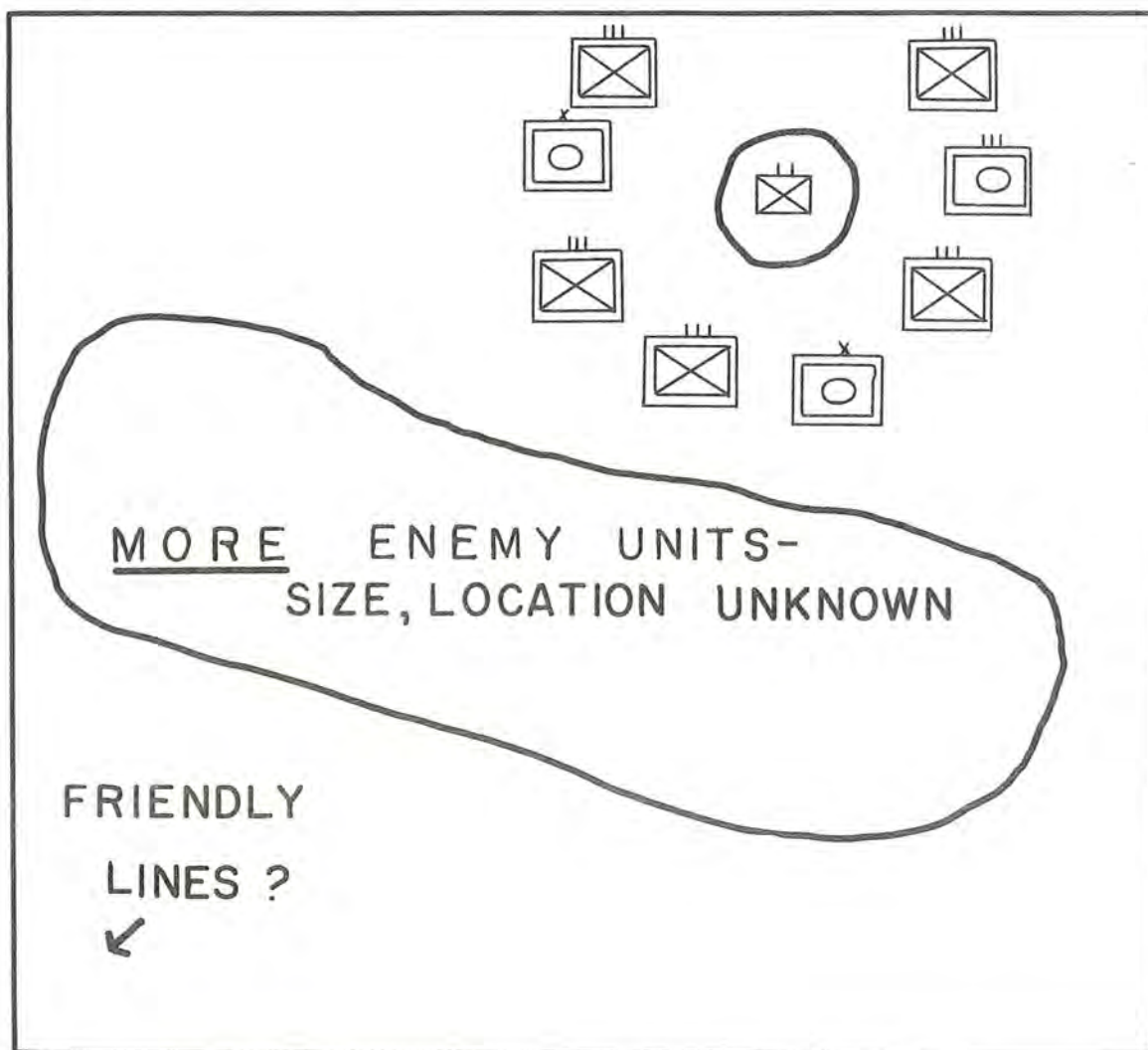
As soon as the Russian tanks got into their new positions, all the artillery switched fires to the southern end of the town except for one battery, which continued to fire smoke in support of the mock attack. The Germans then assaulted the same place they had attacked the day before. They burst into the town, smashed the infantry in their path, and attacked the massed defenses in the northern end from the rear. One group of infantrymen seized the bridge. German losses: one dead and 14 wounded. Russian losses: 20 tanks and over 600 dead.

SCENARIO 4

FROM: Paul Carell's Scorched Earth:
The Russian-German War 1943-
1944
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction Dept
MCDEC

ZIEGLER'S STRONGPOINT

SITUATION 1: Your battalion is occupying a strongpoint under heavy attack by massive enemy forces. You are well dug-in and amply equipped with mines and infantry-type antitank weapons. The attacks began on 12 January and by 1600 that day your battalion has beaten off five separate attacks by armor and infantry. That night, you learn that the enemy has pushed by on your flanks and cut your supply route. You are now surrounded. Your orders are to defend in place, but radio and land line communication with regiment abruptly ceased at the same time your supply line was cut. Fortunately, you have plenty of ammunition and food. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: Major Ziegler's battalion held in place. He succeeded in tying down the better part of two Soviet Rifle Divisions for 4 days and in so doing, was instrumental in averting a German disaster during this major Soviet offensive. (This battle took place near Leningrad in January 1942.)

SITUATION 2: Your battalion has been surrounded and completely out of contact with any higher headquarters for 4 days. You also have not received any resupply during this time. Enemy attacks have decreased in frequency but have increased in size and ferocity. Nonetheless, your battalion has fought off every attack successfully. At times the fighting has been hand-to-hand and your troops have had to destroy enemy tanks right in their positions with mines and demolitions.

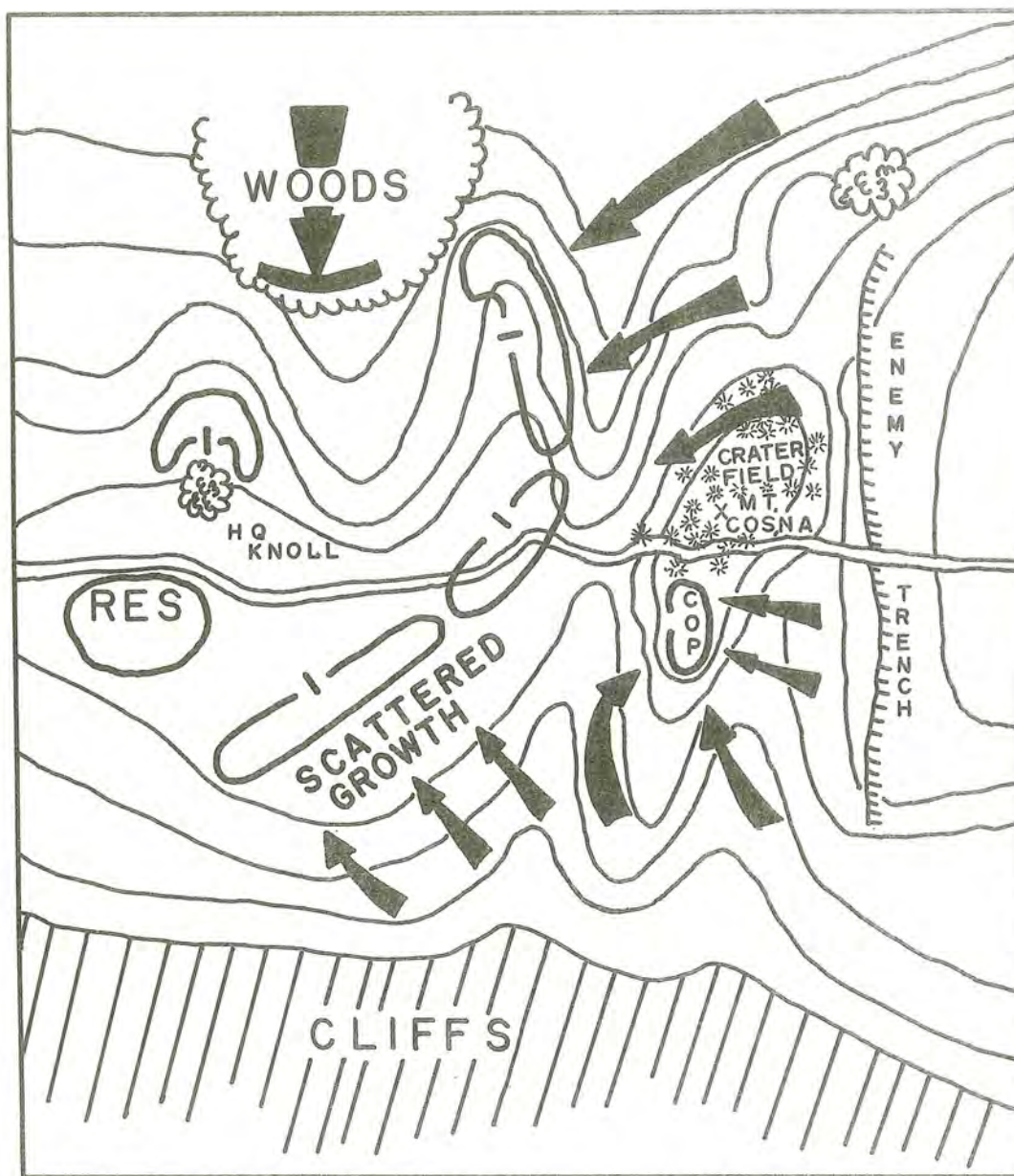
It is now late afternoon on the 15th. This morning you withstood the largest attack yet, but now your ammunition supply is critically low. You are positive that you cannot withstand another major attack. Lacking any communications, you have no idea how far it is to friendly lines and so far as you know, your orders are still to defend in place. You face three choices. Do you hold out until relieved? Do you surrender? Or do you break out and attempt to reach friendly forces? You are fairly certain the enemy will make another major attack in the morning. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Major Ziegler summoned his officers and put the choices to them. After discussing the alternatives, the major made the decision to break out and hope it wasn't too far to German lines. Thanks to a Russian-speaking member of the battalion, the Soviet password was obtained and used to pass safely through several successive Russian lines. The breakout was commenced at 2300 and ended at dawn when the battalion successfully reached German lines. This was cause for celebration at regimental HQ because the battalion had been written off as lost, and Major Ziegler's appearance with 500 men (including all the wounded) was a great surprise. The battalion covered about 3 miles through Russian-held territory to reach safety.



INFANTRY IN THE DEFENSE

SITUATION 1: You command a reinforced infantry battalion fighting in mountainous terrain. Casualties have been very light, morale is high and your troops have become well-seasoned during the last few weeks of combat. You are confident of your Marines' ability to carry out any mission. The mission you have just received is to defend a section of high ground against a strong enemy attack from the north and/or east. The enemy has strong infantry and artillery forces, but no armor at all. You also have no armor. The time is 0300.



Your battalion consists of:

1. Four rifle companies
2. The weapons company
3. Two engineer platoons
4. A detachment of 4 .50 cal machinegun teams
5. A detachment of 4 MK 19 40mm grenade launchers
6. Normal complement of FO's

You have two batteries of 105s in Direct Support (DS), and a 155 battery in general support. It is very unlikely that any air support will be available.

If you cannot hold your position, the entire regimental defense will probably collapse. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: For the defense of the Mt. Cosna position, Rommell issued the following order. . . "Combat outposts, a rifle platoon reinforced by machineguns occupy the south portion of Mt. Cosna. The crater field on the summit is not occupied. Reconnaissance to the southeast and east. A platoon and a heavy machinegun platoon occupy the Headquarters Knoll and prevent the enemy from occupying Mt. Cosna summit. A rifle company occupies each of the two ridges descending to the north between Mt. Cosna and (Hill) 674. Reconnaissance and security to the north. All remaining companies are assembled just southwest of Headquarters Knoll and held at the commanders disposal."

SITUATION 2: You have disposed your units as given in the historical case. Wire has been laid to all companies and the COP. As the sun rises, the enemy begins to stir. You have gone forward to the COP and from there, you can see at least a battalion coming into sight about 350 yards away. You call artillery fire on this enemy force, but just then you are informed that another strong enemy unit is climbing the ridge on the right flank of the COP. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Called back for reinforcements and requested artillery fire on new enemy force.

SITUATION 3: You have gone back to hurry the reinforcements forward. Enemy artillery is falling indiscriminately on the battalion's positions. You collect the reinforcements and head back to the COP. Halfway there, you encounter some Marines from the COP heading for the rear. You collect them and continue on. Just 100 meters from the COP, you see the entire platoon from the COP rushing back toward you. The platoon leader tells you that he was about to be overrun and strong fires had been hitting him in the right flank. If you accept the loss of the COP, the enemy will have gained a position commanding the center of your line. If he manages to get heavy machinegun up in time (if they're not already there) he may cut your reinforcements to pieces before you can get them back to friendly lines. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Rommell set up a base of fire with two heavy machinegun and immediately counterattacked. The enemy was surprised by this prompt action and thrown out of the COP area. A prolonged battle for the position ensued, lasting several hours. Land line communication was cut and ammunition began running low while casualties mounted. Rommell decided that reinforcements and resupply were needed to hold the COP and started back to expedite matters.

SITUATION 4: On reaching friendly lines, you find the following situation: The machineguns on Headquarters Knoll have used up almost all their ammunition against enemy troops trying to flank the COP through the crater field on Mt. Cosna. Your reserve has reinforced the line south of HQ Knoll because strong enemy forces are climbing up the ravines to threaten the line there. Before you can get reinforcements for the COP organized, you learn that enemy forces are approaching from north and south, the COP is retreating, another enemy force is in the woods northwest of your position and ammunition is getting critically short for the machineguns. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The battalion held on in place while Rommell pleaded with headquarters for reinforcement. "The worries of the next half hour were indescribable (battles were raging along the entire line), but at our eleventh hour the 11th and 12th Companies, 18th Bavarian Infantry Reserve Regiment, and a heavy machinegun platoon came to our assistance." This timely reinforcement proved sufficient to hold the line for the rest of the day against violent attacks. Liberal use was made of artillery firing final protective fires and time on target missions.



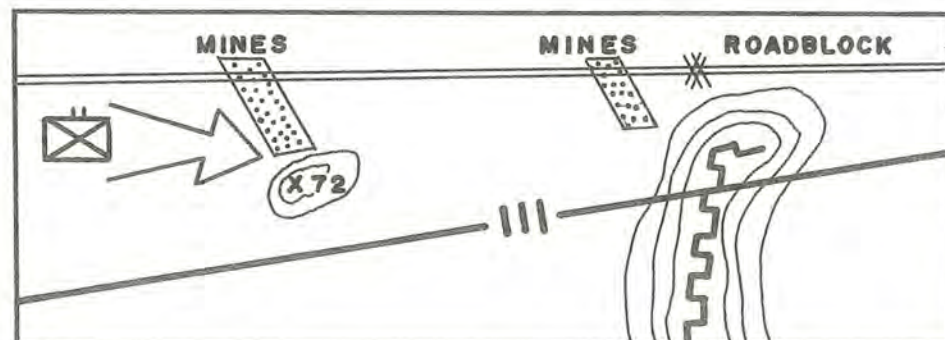
SCENARIO 6

FROM: Robert D. Heintz, Jr.
Victory at High Tide
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instructor
MCDEC

THE OPEN FLANK

SITUATION 1: The Marine infantry battalion you are commanding has been steadily advancing since landing 3 days ago. The uncoordinated manner in which the enemy has been attacking seems to confirm the landing was a great surprise. But the objective today is to be a different story; intelligence reports indicate the enemy will strongly defend hills covering an important town. Your regiment will attack with all three battalions simultaneously on a wide front. Your battalion is on the right. Your right flank will be covered by a U. S. Army regiment. You have had few casualties, so your companies are at full strength. A tank company is in DS, but you have no AAVs.

The advance up the highway began at 1030. For some reason, the Army moved and the regimental CO ordered you to move out anyway. With tanks leading, you cover a quarter of a mile uneventfully, but then the lead tank carelessly blew through a poorly-concealed minefield. The first explosion blasts a track off and when the tank is disabled, you can see the tank tilted over in the crater. Simultaneously, enemy small-arms, and mortar fire erupts from a small hill (Hill 72) to your right front. After bringing your companies on line, you attempt to work around this strongpoint, but it is too well-defended and your troops are soon pinned to the ground. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: LtCol Sutter, CO of 1st Battalion, 1st Marines (Col L. B. Puller) called in artillery and airstrikes on the North Korean position, and sent his tanks forward. The combination of supporting arms and infantry firepower began to break the enemy position, and the infantry companies began to move forward.

SITUATION 2: Your leading companies are pursuing the enemy force from Hill 72. After one mile, you are stopped by another enemy defensive position which you call the main defensive area. Your tanks are held up back at the minefield. To your left, the U. S. Army regiment is. There is a large roadblock across the road made of felled trees and rubble. Initial probing reveals the enemy troops are numerous, well dug-in and protected by "deadly accurate" mortar and artillery fire. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Requested permission to call fires out of boundary, which Col Puller instantly granted, as well as authorizing attacks on anything that threatened 1st Marines' flank. (The Army regiment never did get moving that day.) LtCol Sutter then established a base of fire with one company (F, 2/1) air and artillery support again and attacked with one company (D, 2/1). The air strikes (VMF-323) hit the ridge with bombs, napalm and strafing; 2/11 fired successive concentrations ahead of the advancing infantry; the tanks (C, 1st Tk Battalion) made it through the minefield and joined the fight and the battalion took the hill after a rough fight that lasted most of the afternoon. Note: USMC units continued to display such effective use of close air support throughout the Korean War that at least one Army general officer recommended all U. S. Army units adopt Marine procedures in this area. The employment of supporting arms in the Inchon-Seoul campaign by Marine units was consistently excellent. Many of the Marines participating in these battles were veterans of the Pacific campaign, and their expertise was a decisive factor. Fire support coordination was a subject they were intimately familiar with.

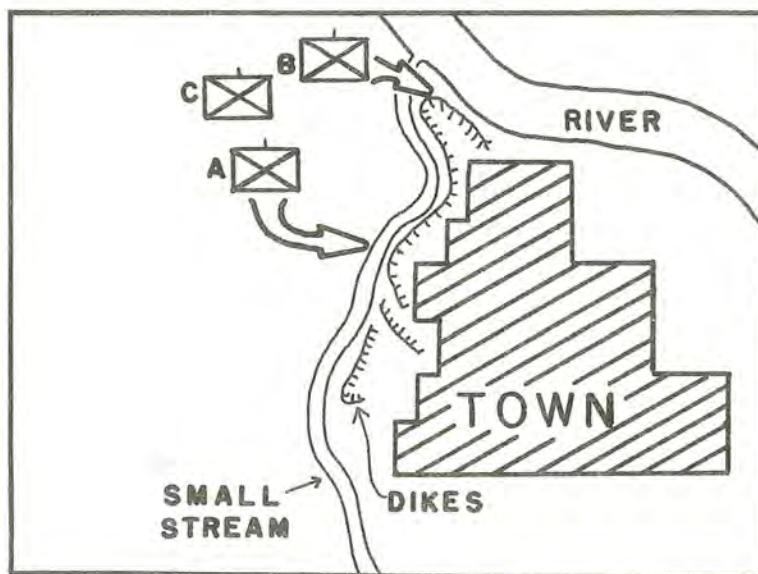


SCENARIO 7

FROM: Robert D. Heintz Jr.'s
Victory at High Tide
CWO2 Lavender
Amphibious Instruction
MCDEC

COMMIT YOUR RESERVE

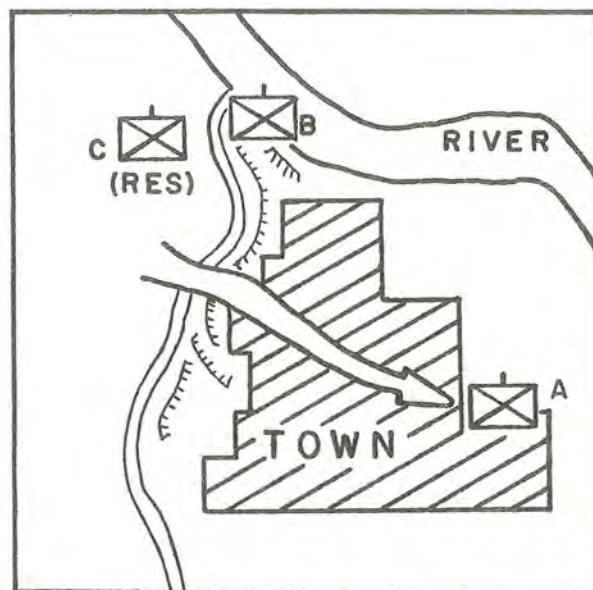
SITUATION: You command 1st Battalion, _____ Marines. You have been given the order of attacking over a small river and into the northern end of a strongly defended town. An enemy regiment defending the town is known to have armor, but nobody is sure exactly how much. You are attacking with two companies up (A on the right, B on the left) and in reserve, plus the weapons company. The two attacking companies will be separated by about 2 Km.



B Company crosses the small river on a ruined bridge strongly supported by machinegun and mortar fire. A Company moves south for its attempt to cross the river. B Company seizes a bridgehead and moves south down the levee along the larger river, gaining about a mile. During this move B Company begins to take moderate casualties. By late afternoon, the company commander reports he has about 40 wounded Marines in his position. He is securely dug in on the larger river levee deep in the enemy's flank and is reluctant to extend further south.

A Company has moved south, crossed the river and moved into the town. No shots have yet been fired. When the company commander called you on the radio, you told him to keep going.

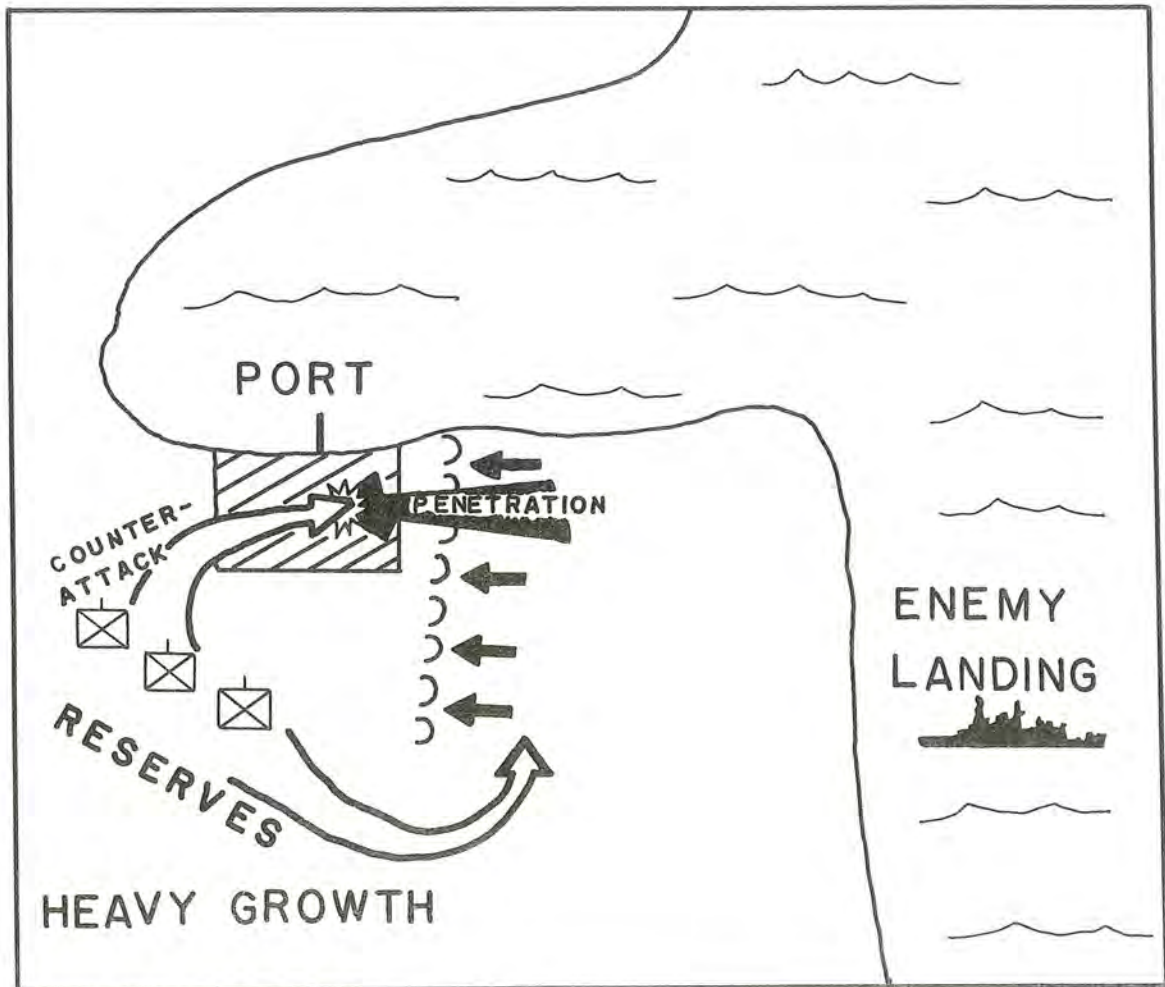
It is now dusk. A Company is deep in the town and finally made contact with B Company. B Company is holding on its levee and evacuating the wounded. You have not contacted C Company or the weapons platoon. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: The CO of 1/1 committed his reserve to reinforce B Company - totally ignoring the huge gap that A Company had discovered. Col Robert Heintz writes that his failure to reinforce the success of A Company "is one of the mysteries of the battle." Further, the battalion CO neglected to report the hole to regiment, which led to the regimental reserve (3/1) being committed to assist 2/1 in attempting to batter a way into town from the south and west. 3/1 was deployed west of town and uncommitted less than 500 meters from where A Company penetrated the town. A Company spent a long night isolated in the depths of the town because of these actions. (See SCENARIO 4 of "Tactical Problems for Plt Ldrs/Co Cmdrs" for details of Company A's action).

"THE ENEMY IS READY"

SITUATION 1: You command an air contingency battalion that has been flown to a remote area in the tropics. You lack close air support and armor. You do have a battery of artillery and all weapons organic to an infantry battalion. The host government has no regular military forces other than second-rate militia, which have been placed under your command. These total close to 600 riflemen, so your total line company strength is about 1,000 men in nine companies. Your immediate mission is to prevent an enemy amphibious landing at a small port on the coast. For various reasons, friendly naval forces are unable to prevent this landing.



Before you can reach the area, local officials report the enemy has already landed east of the town with several thousand troops (predominantly infantry) with strong naval support (destroyers and one cruiser armed with 8" guns). The enemy has no armor.

When you arrive on the evening of the first enemy landings, you find that the friendly militia have abandoned the town, but do not know if the enemy has yet occupied it.

Attacking an enemy force in the dark that outnumbers you, has strong Naval Gunfire (NGF) support and is in defensive positions that you haven't yet identified seems risky. But control of this port is critical because it is the best base of operations in the area. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The Battle of Tanga took place in November, 1914 in German East Africa. Gen. Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck commanded the defense forces. He pushed out patrols and went forward on a personal reconnaissance that took him all the way to the landing beach. The town proved to be unoccupied. Lettow-Vorbeck then decided to meet the enemy landing force on the east edge of town, and posted his companies accordingly.

SITUATION 2: You have not risked attacking the enemy beach because of his strong naval gunfire support. Troops continue to pour ashore until by noon, you estimate there are over 6,000 against your 1,000. None-the-less, you are going to fight. At 1500, a runner comes into your CP and reports, "The enemy is ready."

The battle opens along your entire front, but the enemy has massed his best troops directly against the town and quickly pushes his way in with 20 to 1 odds. Loss of the town will probably mean loss of the battle, with disastrous consequences for subsequent operations. What do you do?

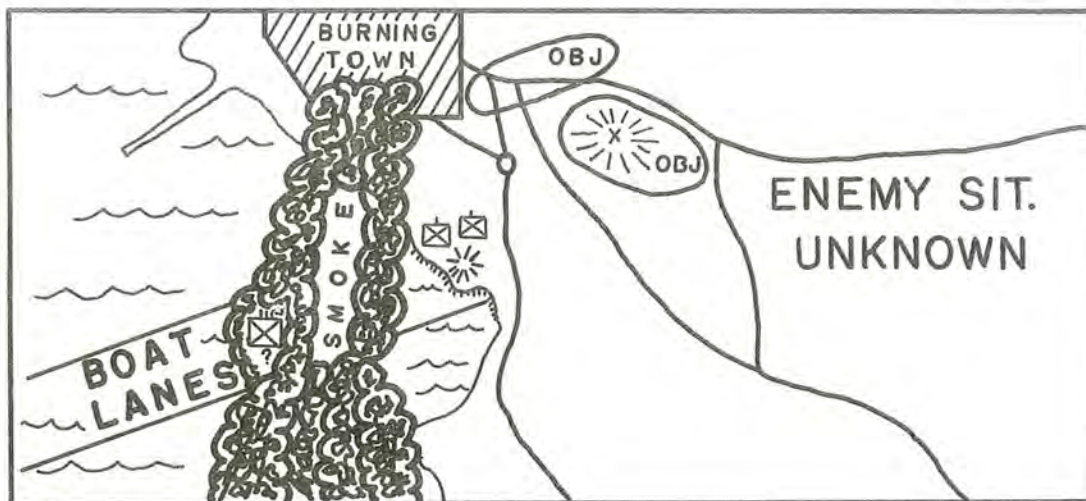
HISTORICALLY: Gen. von Lettow-Vorbeck committed most of his reserve (2 companies) to counterattack in the town. This move was successful.

SITUATION 3: Your counterattack restored the front to the east of town, but pressure on your entire front is becoming stronger with each passing minute. You have only one company of Marine infantry left in reserve. The critical moment is fast approaching. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Gen. von Lettow-Vorbeck committed his reserve on the enemy's left flank. This stroke proved decisive and the entire enemy line broke and ran for the beach. Darkness halted the action. The English backloaded the next day, having lost at least 2,000 men. Von Lettow-Vorbeck's losses were 16 Europeans and 48 native troops. Captured documents revealed he had beaten a landing force of 8,000 with his 1,000 men.

LOST IN THE SMOKE

SITUATION: You are commanding an infantry battalion making an amphibious assault against a defended beach. You feel confident in your battalion's ability to handle the assigned mission. Your objectives are as shown . . .

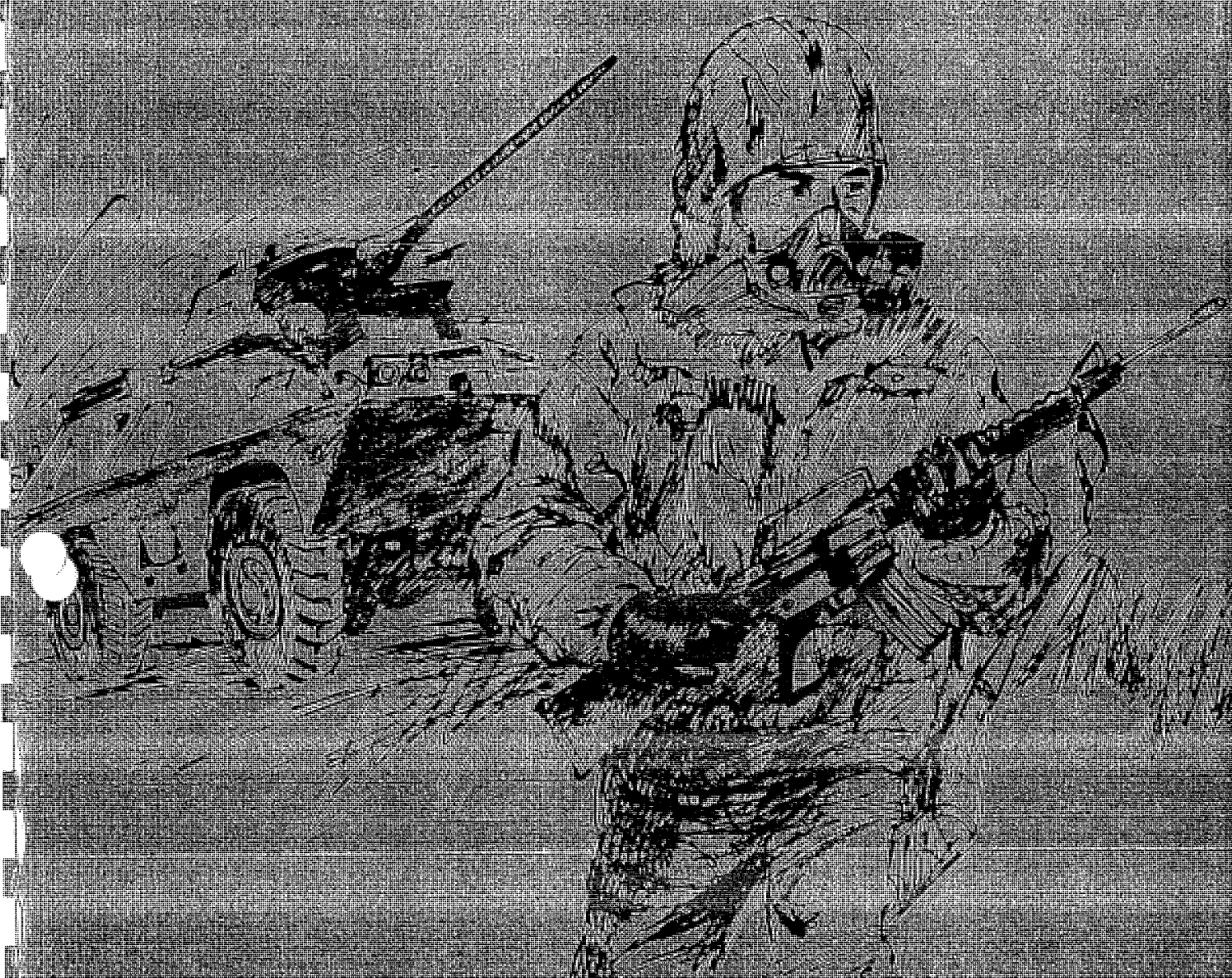


You are assaulting with two companies abreast, with the third company to follow in reserve along with most of your weapons company and headquarters elements. You have strong NGF and air support.

The pre-landing bombardment has set fire to a large town off to your left. Smoke is drifting across your boat lanes. You gain the beach, but find that exit is impossible for the AAVs so everyone dismounts. Your right-hand company quickly seizes a small hill overlooking the beach and you form a hasty defensive perimeter and wait for your other company. The smoke has gotten very heavy and you can't see any AAV's in the water. Thirty minutes later, you are still waiting. The following waves have gotten lost in the smoke and there is no telling when they will arrive, if ever. You have 600 men ashore, no reserve, night is falling, you have not secured your objectives and you are unsure of the enemy situation. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: LtCol Allan Sutter (CO, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines) realized he couldn't afford to wait any longer for his reserve and ordered the two companies he had ashore to attack and seize their objectives. As it turned out, enemy forces were almost non-existent and Company D and Company F of 2/1 accomplished their missions without problem. They took 15 prisoners and inflicted 50 casualties on the enemy while losing only one KIA and 19 WIA. Company E arrived later that night.

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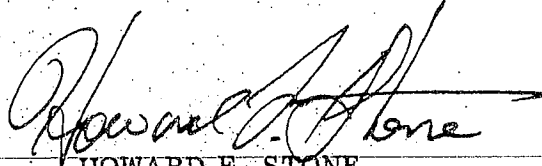
"What now Lieutenant?"



FOREWORD

"What Now, Lt?" is a simple concept with far-reaching results. I had it developed for the purpose of providing the junior officers and NCOs of the 9th Infantry Division a vehicle for exercising effective decision making. With the hindsight of history and the keen imagination of today's leaders, key lessons can be learned with minimum use of our valuable training time. This action-packed simulation is easy to set up and inexpensive to operate. It gives our junior leaders experience in tactical decision-making, small unit operations, and the vagaries of changing combat circumstances.

I enthusiastically commend this training tool to the commanders in the 9th Infantry Division as a realistic means to increase the readiness of the United States Army.



HOWARD F. STONE
Major General, USA
Commanding

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INTRODUCTION

You command a company of 70 men that is in hot pursuit of a retreating enemy. Your audacity has carried your company well ahead of the rest of the battalion, when your unit encounters about 100 meters of barbed wire entanglements. Thinking you can get behind the enemy via this route, you lead your soldiers in a crawl beneath the wire. On the other side you beat the enemy in a quick fire fight and occupy his trenches. The enemy counters with a battalion of light infantry. You call your battalion commander and request reinforcements and ammunition. However, he tells you that resupply and fire support, to include air and artillery, is impossible and orders you to withdraw to the battalion's position, about 3000 meters to your rear. You begin to follow his instructions, but are stopped at the wire when you find that the enemy has now covered that obstacle with machine gun fire. Barbed wire stretches out in both directions from the position under which you crawled, and that too is covered by fire. You estimate that you will lose at least 50% of your company by crawling under the wire. Nevertheless, the assaulting battalion is within 200 meters of your position and you have only ten minutes of ammunition remaining. What do you do?

The above paragraph is part of a war game called What Now Lt? which was developed at the 9th Division's Battle Simulation Center in order to prepare the division's company level leaders for combat. This training manual presents the initial scenarios written for use in the exercise. The introduction will explain the manner in which the game is played, the objectives which a commander can expect to accomplish with its use, and a method by which one may create his own version of the exercise.

What Now LT? is a simple game to set up and play. The original concept was conceived by MG Howard F. Stone, the Ft Lewis & 9th Division Commander. Briefly, the concept is to present junior leaders with some of the problems they may face in combat and force them to resolve those problems. A combat situation is portrayed on a sand table around which four to eight soldiers are standing. A discussion leader reads the scenario to the group and calls upon one of the soldiers to make a decision. The scenarios are written from historical accounts of small units operations in both World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, and the Israeli wars. When the captain or sergeant has made his decision, the real battle begins. For at that point, the discussion leader opens the floor for other opinions and an enthusiastic debate invariably ensues. A tactical decision depends upon the man on the spot. Each brings to that decision his own attitudes and perceptions. As a result, each handles the situation differently. The pros and cons of each man's thought is quickly dissented and thrown back in his face. When the discussion leader feels that no further learning will develop from the discussion, the decision made by the historical leader is read to the group. That decision is not the "right" solution; for in many cases that decision destroyed the leader's force or failed to accomplish his mission. The historical solution is merely a statement of what actually occurred, and is a vehicle for further discussion.

What objectives can a commander expect to gain through the use of What Now LT? First, he will confront his squad and platoon leaders and company commanders with problems they may face in combat. The vast majority of those soldiers currently in a division have never been to war. Most have a scanty knowledge, at best, as to what they are likely to encounter in a future American war. By presenting the tactical problem as

realistically as possible, the simulation can give those junior leaders a foresight of what may come. Moreover; it should be stressed that the problems presented here are not fictional; they were actually faced by some earlier soldier.

A second objective of What Now LT? is to stimulate a professional interest among a unit's junior officers and NCO's. Actual combat experiences of earlier platoon leaders or company commanders often awaken a desire within the soldier to know more about war. The result will hopefully be a trip to the library and the beginnings of professional study. In addition, the game awakens in leaders the realization that more time should be devoted to the training of his tactical sense. The result may be the increased use of Tactical Exercises Without Troops, a superb training vehicle when used properly. Moreover, the leaders who play the game come away from it still sparring; a commander may expect that his junior officers and NCO's will continue the discussion, and the resulting thought process, long after the sand table has been left behind for beer and pizza.

The key objective of the exercise is to generate thought upon tactical problems. There is no intent upon implying to the soldier-leader, that the same tactical problem calling for the same solution will reappear in some future war. The only intent is to develop reason. As a result, there are no "approved solutions" and, hopefully, no leader will emerge from the exercise believing that problem "A" calls for solution "B" in all cases. Similarly, the game is not designed as a tool by which a battalion commander, for example, may teach his company commanders the exact course of action he wishes them to pursue in a particular situation. Just as a subordinate commander cannot turn to his superior in the heat of battle and ask him to make the decision; so too, in this game, the junior leader cannot expect

his senior to provide him with an approved course of action for a given situation. By forcing the junior leader to use a rational thought process in solving his tactical problem, the game can prepare him for the same sort of thought process in combat.

A final objective which a commander can expect to gain from this war game is the development of creativity. The players are encouraged to express any solution to the tactical problem which they feel might work. As a result, extremely innovative ideas often emerge. Perhaps in some future war, one of the players will be faced with a tactical problem and one of those innovative ideas will awaken his memory, producing an original and successful solution.

Each of the scenarios are imaginary battles occurring in some future American war. Yet, each is a recreation of a small unit engagement occurring in an earlier war. The historical examples are used in order to give credence to what the discussion leader says. The result is that the individual leading the discussion or the one writing the scenarios need not be an infallible expert. If a totally fictitious scenario is used - an updated version of MG Sir Ernest Swinton's Defense of Duffer's Drift, for example - then the writer must have a great degree of experience and credibility. And even in that case, one can argue that his view is but a second opinion. Using the historical examples eliminates subjectivism; the discussion leader simply states what actually happened as a result of a leader's decision. Moreover, one quickly finds that truth is stranger than fiction and the resulting scenario is more challenging than that which the writer is likely to produce.

Such S.L.A. Marshall books as Pork Chop Hill, Men Against Fire, and The River and the Gauntlet; Rommel's Infantry Attacks; and a U.S. Army Historical study entitled Small Unit Actions During the German Campaign

in Russia, have been excellent sources for the scenarios. Unit histories have not been used, but would be ideal.

It is best to keep each group of players of similar rank or experience. The free expression of opinions and the heated arguments which generate so much enthusiasm usually flow best in such an environment. Similarly, the participants must understand that there are no right and wrong answers. If creativity is going to be developed and ideas freely tossed about, the men must be encouraged to speak forthrightly.

As one can imagine, the role of the discussion leader is all important. It falls upon his shoulders to generate thought. Until the other players begin to do so, he must second guess every decision and point out problems that the man expressing a decision failed to consider. Moreover, he must force the players to express their intentions in detail. Each step must be dissected to determine exactly that which the leader will do. It is not enough to claim that one would order his machine guns to open fire. One must determine how he is going to get those machine guns to open up when his commo has been shattered and there is fifty meters of open ground observed by the enemy between himself and his gunners. The best discussion leaders are intelligent soldiers with more experience than the players being trained. For example, a first sergeant might do a great job with platoon or squad leaders and an S-3 might be the man to use with company commanders.

Given the simplicity and inexpense with which What Now LT? can be put into operation and the tremendous training value and professional development which it can generate, this simulation exercise is a superb tool for a commander to use to develop his company level leaders. Its use is enthusiastically offered to all units.

Incidentally, returning to the opening paragraph, what would you do? In 1915, LT Erwin Rommel felt he had three choices: one, he could react according to orders and suffer 50% casualties; two, he could have his soldiers fire the remainder of their ammo and surrender; or three, he could attack. Rommel attacked. Under the cover of massed supporting fires from the rest of the company, a platoon penetrated on the French battalion's right flank and poured fire down the length of their line. The French attack broke and they fell back. The machine gunners on either side of the barbed wire fell back with the disorganized battalion. Rommel then broke contact and hustled his company through the wire. The French regrouped, and placed fire upon Rommel's force. But the company rejoined its battalion with five men wounded and nobody killed.

NOTE

Every scenario in this book is taken from an actual battle as recorded in a published book. Each tactical decision that the scenarios present was faced by some soldier in an earlier war. I wrote every scenario in this book and none of the tactical decision steps have been created. Some liberties have been taken in presenting the manner in which the tactical problem arose. For example, in many of the scenarios, the tactical decisions demanded of the player may not have been faced by one man; the problems occurring to several men in the unit - and, in some cases, men in totally different battles - have been combined. Also, the circumstances setting the stage for the decision are obviously created, since each of these scenarios are intended to portray some future American war. For that reason, the enemy and the weapons in the scenarios are often different from those described in the explanation of what occurred historically. Similarly, the maps provided to aid in building the terrain on the sandtable were copied from the book whenever the book provided maps. If no maps or pictures were provided, the terrain models were made as accurately as I could determine the land to be from the account of the action. Therefore, with the exception of the changes mentioned here, every tactical problem in this book was actually faced by some soldier in combat.

Frank Williams
CPT, INF
Directorate of Training Simulations and
Special Studies
Fort Lewis, Washington

WHAT NOW LT? SCENARIOS

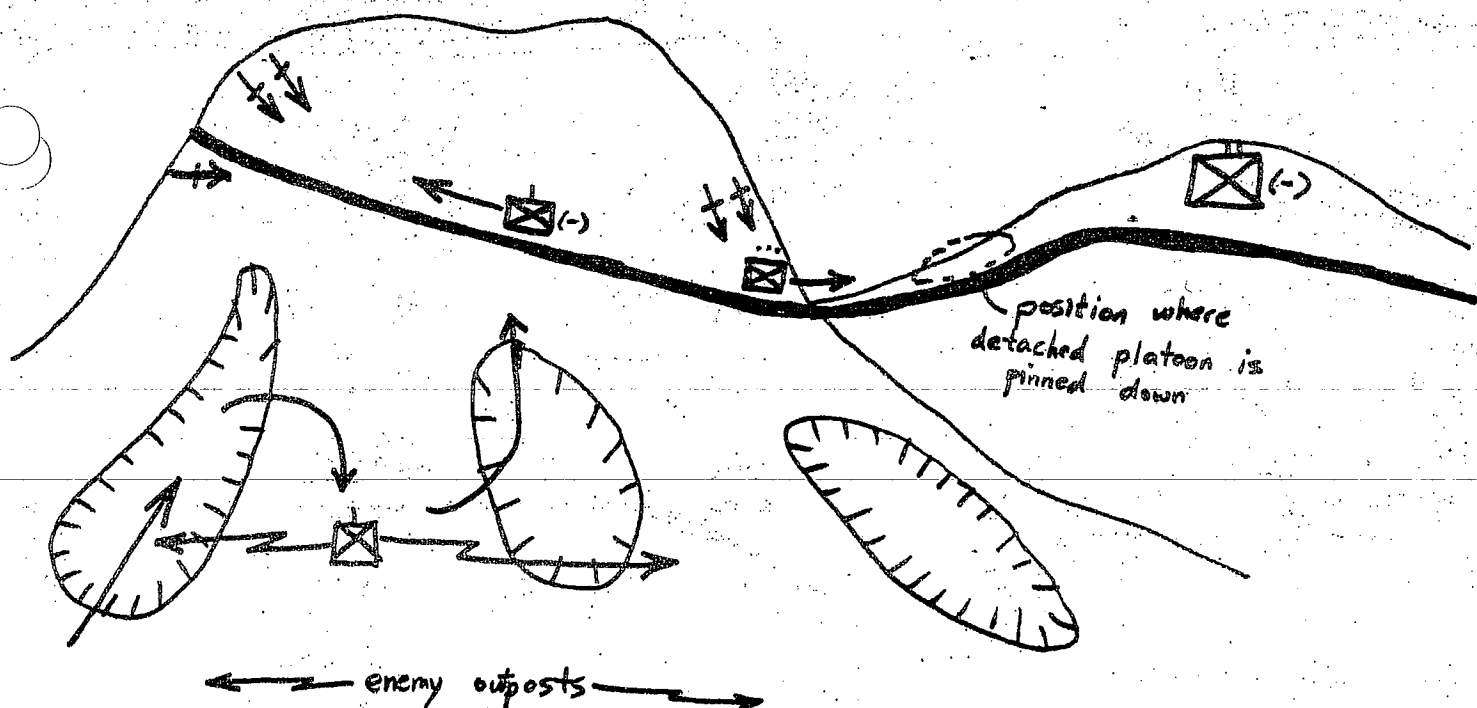
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SCENARIO 1

FROM: Infantry Attacks
By Erwin Rommel
CPT Williams/cw/5841

ATTACK IN THE MOUNTAINS

SITUATION 1: You are commanding a company that is attacking as part of a battalion assault to seize high ground occupied by enemy forces. The terrain is cut by deep ravines and washed out gullies, but is sparsely vegetated. Observation and fields of fire - except in the ravines - are excellent.



By working your way up a ravine, you cut off and capture several of the enemy's outposts and now have several hundred Russian prisoners to control. You elect to bring them up the hill trailing your company. Near the top, you encounter a road running to the key enemy positions on your

right. You send one platoon to fix the enemy while you take the rest of the company and the prisoners around the hill in order to attack from the rear. However, after a short distance your force encounters heavy machine gun fire and is pinned down. At the same time, you hear heavy fire coming from your rear, where your detached platoon has been engaged by the enemy's main body. You realize that you are up against at least an enemy battalion and that the success of your battalion's mission depends, for the moment, upon that platoon. Should the enemy succeed in overcoming that platoon, he will cut off your company, recapture the prisoners you now control, and ruin the battalion's mission of securing this high ground. In addition, you now learn that the road leading from your position to the detached platoon is covered by machine gun fire. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Rommel left several machine guns to block the route between his location and that of his detached platoon. He reasoned that if that platoon were overcome and the enemy attempted to cut him off, the machine guns would slow them down. Then he overcame the fires to his front, broke contact, and moved downhill into the gullies. He sent the prisoners, with only two men to guard them, to the foot of the hill and out of the battle area. Then he moved as fast as he could to reunite his company.

SITUATION 2: As you approach your detached platoon, you see that it is surrounded on three sides by a force 5 times its size. It is desperately returning fire, but will be overrun if the enemy mounts an all-out attack.

Before you can act, the enemy attacks the platoon on three sides. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Rommel detached his machine guns and sent them to a position where they could hastily support the detached platoon. Then he assaulted the enemy from the rear with his riflemen. The Romanians were caught between two fires, panicked, and broke off their attack. Rommel followed them and seized their positions, taking still more prisoners. He then moved along the high ground to aid the other companies in his battalion in their attacks.

SITUATION 3: Your attack has succeeded in driving the Russians away and clearing the high ground. The battalion commander joins you atop the hill

and hastily gives you the mission to continue the attack to take the small village of Marr, as part of a coordinated battalion attack. You will be supported on your right flank by a second company while the third company in the battalion will be held in reserve. As darkness approaches, you reach your LD/LC. From that point, you can see figures moving about the town and you guess that they are probably soldiers hastily preparing positions. You are ready to attack and know that the longer you wait, the better prepared will be the defenders. However, you have not established contact with either of the other companies and a quick recon reveals that they are not yet in place. The battalion commander has ordered complete radio silence for the attack, and you cannot send a messenger to him because-for the time being-the CP consists of just him and his S-3, and they are on foot somewhere in the mountains. Moreover, his order did not give an attack time, but vaguely ordered the attack to commence when ready. As you wait, you realize that this attack was not planned as a night attack, and that your company has made no preparations to conduct a night attack; but, if you wait much longer, you will have to do so. Finally, you also know that you have not had a chance to properly recon the objective, but from your position, you can see several enemy sentries alert and watching. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Rommel decided to await the arrival of the flank and supporting units before he launched his attack. He kept his company concealed in their jump-off positions until it became dark. Then, he formed a perimeter and set up security. He did not allow any reconnaissance forward of his present position because he did not want to give away his location to the enemy. His LP/OPs were instructed to alert the company as soon as the rest of the battalion came up. Meanwhile, he allowed his soldiers to sleep in place. Several hours later, the other companies arrived, the attack was made and the enemy was chased from the village.

SITUATION 4: The attack on Marr was successful and you suffered no casualties. Daylight arrives, but with it comes a heavy fog which limits visibility to fifty meters. Last night, you consolidated within the village and assumed a portion of the battalion defensive sector with two platoons established in hasty positions on the edge of town, and a third platoon in reserve within Marr. However, your positions were selected in the dark and are not tied in with the company on your right. Therefore, there is a 300 meter gap in the battalion position. One of your LP/OPs reports that two Soviet infantry battalions on foot are forming up almost on top of him. He wants to know if he can open fire. What do you do?

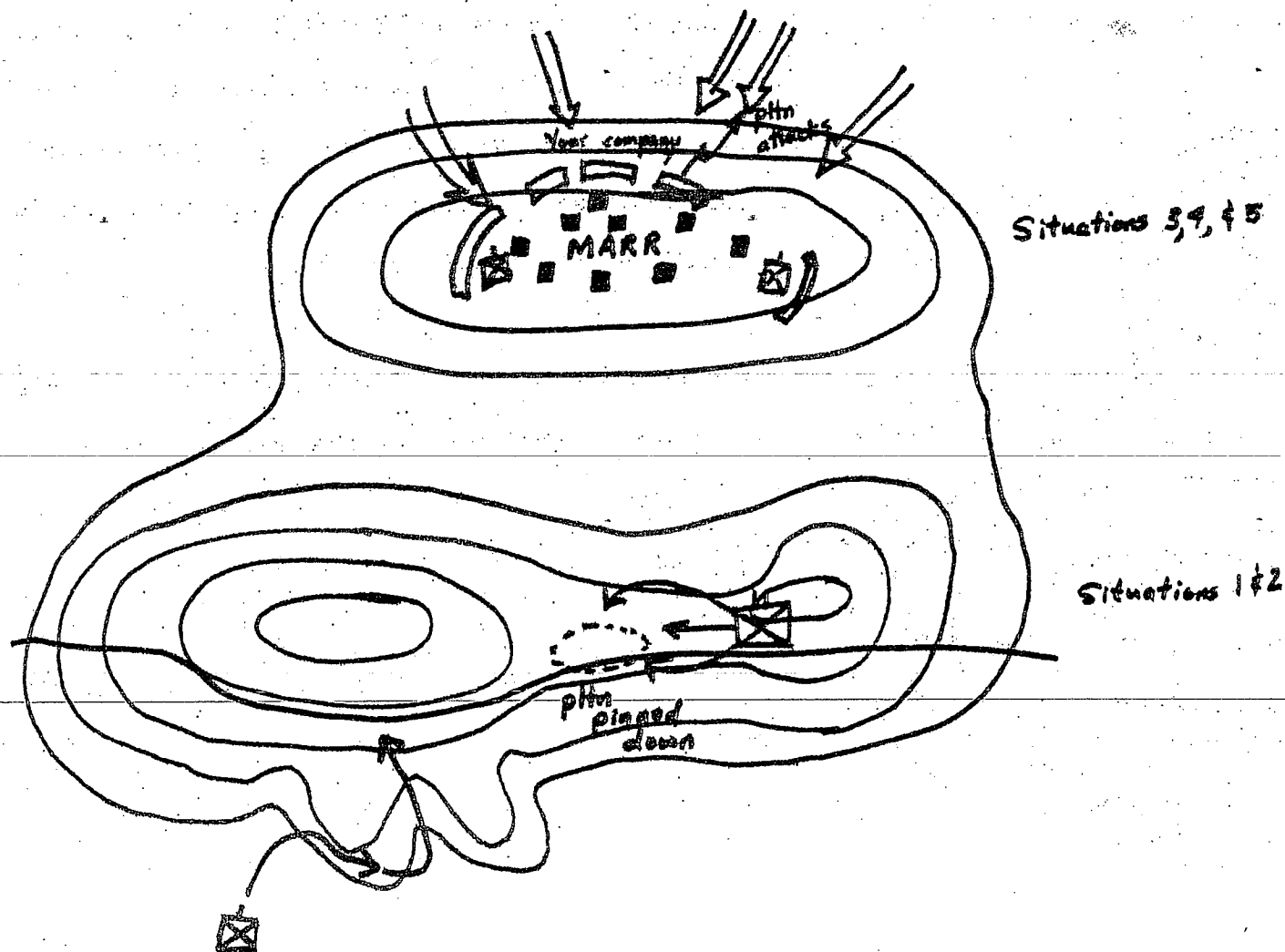
HISTORICALLY: Rommel brought up a machine gun and opened fire on the enemy, hoping to catch them while they were bunched together in the assembly area. Then, he ordered his platoons to hold in position at all costs while he ran over to the neighboring company to make coordination. He was pinned down by fire from the friendly company and no amount of arm waving and shouting would stop the fire. Under cover of the fog, he escaped and rejoined his company, as he now knew the limits of the company on his right. He also brought his reserve platoon forward and placed them behind the right platoon to protect their flank.

SITUATION 5: You left your company in order to coordinate with the company on your right and close the gap in the battalion defense. Before leaving, you ordered your first platoon to hold their position at all costs and you placed your second platoon behind the first in order to protect their flank. When you return, you find that the first platoon has disregarded your order and attacked the Russians. They have driven forward about 500 meters, but their success has created an even larger gap in the defense. You hustle forward to investigate and run into the platoon leader returning to find you. He tells you that the platoon has driven the Russians back and has captured several machine guns. However, he says, "the platoon's in close combat with a strong Russian force. We are nearly encircled and both of my machine guns are knocked out. I've got about ten men wounded.

If help doesn't come immediately, the platoon is finished." To make matters worse, the fog is lifting and no longer offers good concealment.

What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Although pleased with the aggressive initiative of his platoon leader, Rommel realized that the man's action had hurt his defense significantly. If he committed his last reserves to the aid of the platoon, the company could be outflanked and the enemy could have rushed into the gap between his company and the one on his right. That could have led to the destruction of the entire battalion. But could he allow a platoon to be destroyed? As much as he wished to aid them, Rommel had to order the platoon to fight their way out and return to their defensive positions. He did position his other platoons to provide covering fire and they put heavy fire into the Romanians. The remnants of the first platoon fought their way back to the company, but they had the enemy right on their trail, which made it difficult to provide covering fires. In addition, Rommel reported the situation to the battalion commander, who sent him some reinforcements. The Romanian attack was defeated, but the company lost three men killed and seventeen wounded.

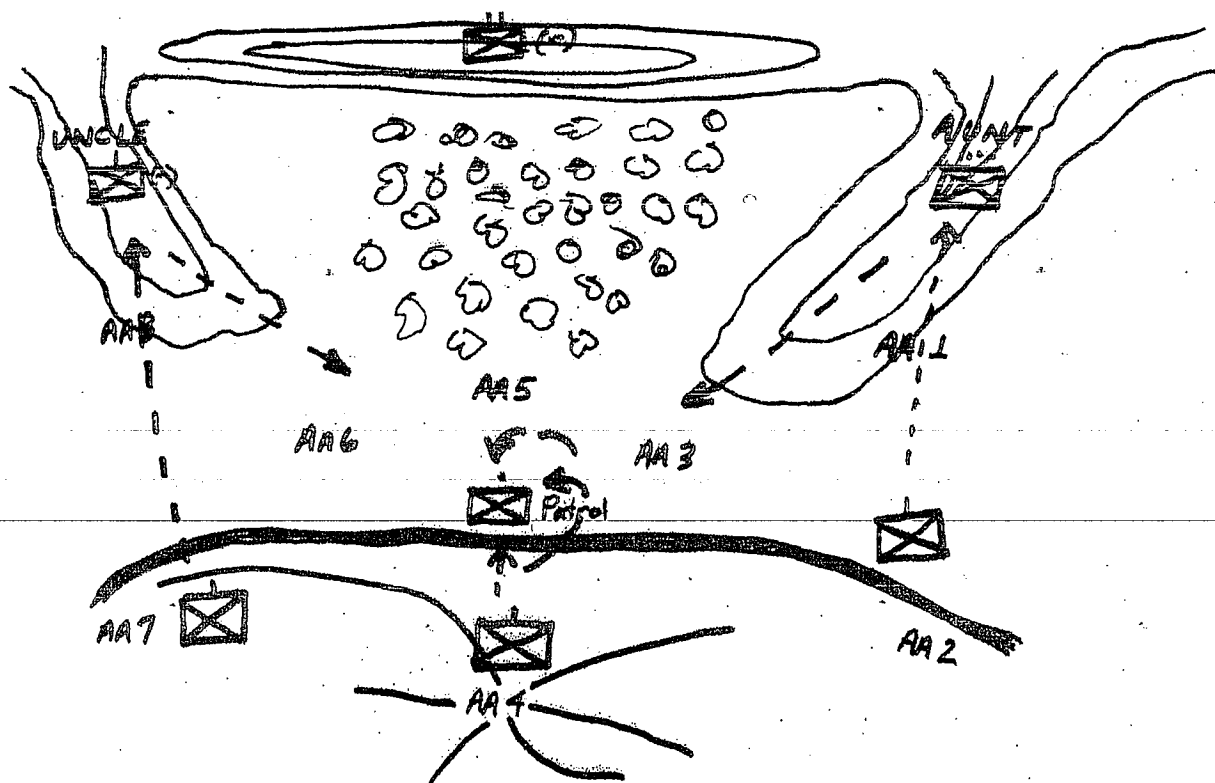


SCENARIO 2

FROM: S.L.A. Marshall's Pork Chop Hill
CPT Williams/dk/3845

THE INCREDIBLE PATROL

SITUATION 1: Your battalion is occupying defensive positions on a ridgeline. Jutting down from that ridgeline are two fingers on which your company has prepared two fortified positions called Aunt and Uncle. Below those fingers is a valley through which runs an irrigation ditch. About two hundred meters in front of that irrigation ditch lies the intersection of three trails.



You are leading fifteen men, with 2 M60 MGs, on a combat patrol forward of your company's positions. Your only indirect fire support is the 4.2 mortar platoon. The numbers on the board represent pre-planned targets for that platoon. Your mission is to ambush an enemy patrol and return with prisoners. It is nearly midnight. You select a position

9 behind the irrigation ditch overlooking the intersection of the trails. You are no sooner in position when an enemy soldier appears 300 meters to your front. He is quickly joined by more and more enemy forces until approximately a company has been assembled at that location. You try to call your company, but the radio will not break through. As the enemy company forms to your front, you spot another company about 500 meters to your left moving towards one of the fortified knobs your company defends (Aunt), and still another company moving towards Uncle on your right. In other words, you are in the middle of a battalion attack of two columns attacking Aunt and Uncle, connected by a reserve company in the center. By the time you have fooled with your radio for a while, one column is at the foot of Aunt and the other has crossed the irrigation ditch approaching Uncle. The enemy to your front is about 200 meters away and moving slowly towards your position. However, you have a well concealed route of withdrawal available to your rear. What do you do?

9 HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader crawled from man to man cautioning everyone to be silent and to hold fire until he opened up. He also tried his radio from different spots among his men to see if he could break through from another location. He made no attempt to send back messengers or retreat, presumably because the enemy was already behind him.

SITUATION 2: Still unable to cut through with your radio, you see that the enemy point is within 10 meters of your patrol's position. The company on your left is climbing the finger towards Aunt while the third company is approaching the finger of Uncle. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol opened up with everything they had. The enemy point element was cut down immediately, but the rest of the company hit the dirt and began returning fire.

SITUATION 3: Your patrol is under heavy fire from the company to your front. Finally, you are able to break through on the radio. The battalion S-3 answers your call. What do you tell him?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader said that he was surrounded, had killed some of the enemy, and wanted mortar fires on AAL. In other words, he ignored the threat to his immediate front, hoping to shatter the columns moving on Aunt.

SITUATION 4: Skirmishers from the company you have just engaged begin moving on your left flank. Illumination rounds landing over AAL reveal that the mortars are killing some of the forces moving on Aunt. However, they also reveal enemy figures swarming amidst the positions at Aunt. You report that the enemy is in Aunt's position and request VT directly on Aunt. Enemy artillery is now falling on the two fortified outposts and on the battalion's positions along the ridgeline. However, American mortar fire has, in your opinion, shattered the forces not yet in Aunt's position. You realize that you are probably the only man in your battalion who can see the whole picture of the battle. You alone know of the massed attacks on both outposts. However, you also realize that due to the slope of the fingers (which point towards your patrol's position) your location is the likely spot where the enemy battalion will converge if they fail in their attacks. You see the second enemy company in a draw just below Uncle, obviously massing for the attack. The company to your front has moved soldiers onto your left flank and is closing in on you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader shifted some of his men to the left to thwart the flanking movement. Then he shifted the mortar fire to AAB, right on top of the company massing to hit Uncle.

SITUATION 5: The enemy has shifted over 90 degrees and is on your left flank and rear. Stragglers from Aunt and Uncle are streaming back towards your location and join the attack on your patrol. You have about 30 rounds of ammo remaining in the entire patrol. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader called for fires on AA5. When he ran out of ammo, he simply kept up the fires all around his patrol's location,

gradually closing the ring. For two hours, the patrol remained in position without ammo, calling in mortars on every attack against them.

SITUATION 6: You have no ammo remaining. Daylight has arrived.

There are no signs of live enemy left in the area, but your patrol has been in combat for seven hours. Battalion orders you to search the battlefield, examine the dead bodies for documents, and capture any wounded. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Believe it or not, the patrol leader led his men about the battlefield for three hours, carrying out his latest orders, without ammunition, before he returned to his company's position. The patrol leader was a young Ethiopian lieutenant who had arrived in Korea only three days before he received this mission.

SCENARIO 3

FROM: DA Pam 20-269
Small Unit Actions During the
German Campaign in Russia
CPT Williams/cw/5841

A RIVER CROSSING

SITUATION 1: You command a combat engineer company during a war in Europe. Warsaw Pact forces in your sector are fleeing eastward after the success of a corps attack in your area. An armored division spearheads the rampaging American Army and is closing rapidly upon the Earlfort River. The retreating Communists have been blowing everything in site including all bridges across the Earlfort. You are given the mission to construct a bridge across the Earlfort by the following dawn (0300) and to provide all your own security. Your company is equipped with the ribbon bridge and its supporting trucks and bridge erection boats. In addition, you are reinforced with four 5-ton trucks mounted with 50 cal MG's, two APC's, a signal platoon and an assault boat company of infantry in 2 1/2 ton trucks. However, your company is scattered in march columns amidst the corps trains and there are numerous Russian stragglers between the river and the lead elements of the armored column. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Sent his XO back to the corps march column with orders to assemble the company in one location and requested orders to allow his unit special passage along the road to the site. He took his platoon leaders to reconnoiter the river, but was harassed by small arms fire from all directions, including the far side of the river.

SITUATION 2: You recon the Earlfort and learn that enemy stragglers are everywhere and are still fighting. Also, you find a small town with numerous swamps surrounding it at the site of the old bridge. The swamps are impassable to your equipment, requiring you to stick to the road. The old bridge, a three-arch span supported by two massive columns, is

demolished in such a way that the 50 meter center arch has been dropped into the water, but the columns are still standing and could be used to support an emergency bridge. However, the only substantial stores of lumber in the area are the buildings of the town. About 500 meters west of the bridge site is a former ferry site with a paved road suitable to support tanks. You cannot determine the condition of the road on the far side. The river banks rise sharply about 25 meters from both sides of the river. On your side the bank is about 20 feet above the water and negotiable only along the roads, while the opposite side appears to be steeper and is covered with thick vegetation. The only cover on your side is offered by the buildings in the town. The river itself is about 150 meters wide and its current is slow. What course of action do you recommend?

HISTORICALLY: Ordered the assault boat company forward to the vicinity of the village. Requested that division clear the road and give priority to his command so that he could quickly start construction. Used his most forward platoon as infantry and ordered them to clear the village. Within an hour they had cleared the town. He then ordered them to cross the river in assault boats, establish a bridgehead on the far bank and reconnoiter the exit route on the far side. He placed the APCs in the position on the near bank to provide supporting fires.

SITUATION 3: Since your infantry support has not arrived and time is critical, you send one of your platoons across the river to secure the far shore. They drive off the Russian snipers and establish the bridgehead. The rest of your force begins to assemble in the village. However, Russian planes attack and set the town on fire. Not only do the flames eliminate your cover overwatching the crossing site, but it also burns up your only readily available wood supply, which you need to construct a bridge. Wood, if used, will now have to be hauled from the rear. Only 1/2 of the force and equipment you need to construct the ribbon bridge has arrived in the village; the rest is still stuck somewhere down the road behind the armor and infantry, awaiting crossing of the river. Just as dusk is falling, and with only 10 hours re-

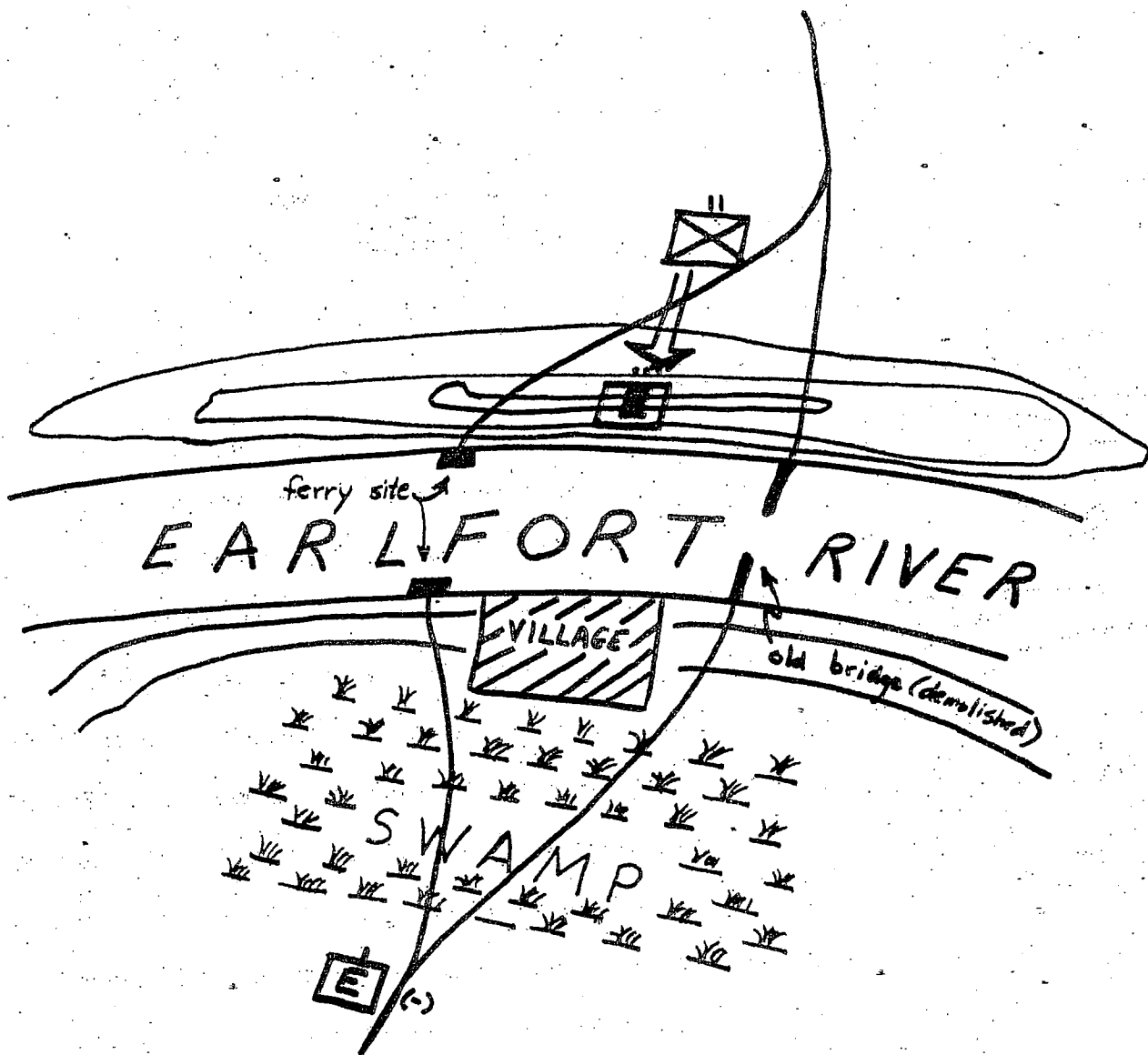
maintaining to complete your mission, Soviet planes swarm over the burning village and strafe your troops. A Vulcan crew rolls to the rescue, sets up, opens fire, and chases off the MIG's. At the same time, a Russian light infantry battalion attacks the platoon you sent across the river. Your platoon leader calls you with the grave report that he is engaged in hand to hand combat and is being pushed back on the river with no means of escape. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Sent his last available platoon, that of Engineers, across the river with flamethrowers. Ordered his anti-aircraft gun (the Vulcan) to provide covering fire on the far bank. However, the terrain obstructed the affect of the anti-air weapon and the Russians were only beaten off when a makeshift rocket launcher, firing 6 rockets, arrived and placed effective indirect (and psychological) fire on the far side. The commander gave up waiting for division to clear the road; so he walked back and found two of his delayed platoons and their bridging equipment, and personally led them forward.

SITUATION 4: The enemy attack has been beaten off, but 1/2 of your engineer force is now tied up in securing the far shore with no infantry units available to relieve them. The rest of your force arrives at the village by 2200, five hours before H-hour. You are doubtful that you can accomplish your mission on time. At this time of night, the river is so shallow that pontoons cannot be floated any closer than 40 meters from shore, and there is mud between the road and the water. Friendly air continues to be mysteriously absent while you are being frequently attacked by Russian MIG's.

What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander described his situation to headquarters and requested Engineer reinforcements. He received help rapidly from another division. Russian air hampered his efforts all night as his AA support proved ineffective at night. Began shuttling heavy weapons across the river to help the bridgehead (presumably using barges or the old ferry - the book does not say). Due to the mud and low river, all bridging equipment had to be carried into the river. The darkness, and sudden dropoffs in the river bank, as well as the 16 ton weight of each pontoon section, complicated the operation. The mission was finally completed by 0800, 5 hours after the original plan.



SCENARIO 4

FROM: Enemy at the Gates
by William Craig

CPT Williams/dk/3845

The Factory

SITUATION 1: You are leading a platoon of 35 soldiers fighting the Russians in East Germany. The fighting has carried your division into the center of an industrial city of about 250,000 people. Your battalion has the objective of capturing and holding the Belanger Factory Works: a large factory which controls access to two key bridges over a river dividing the city. Your company is making the initial assault and your platoon is given the mission to provide supporting fires. You have to secure the buildings facing the factory. You occupy them without incident, set up your CP in a four storey building, and scatter your crew served weapons and squads in positions amidst the other buildings. You have been in position for over an hour before you realize that no one has cleared your building from top to bottom. An investigation reveals that

there are 25 civilians, mostly wounded, in the basement. Then, the two man team sent to clear the upstairs returns wounded; there are armed Soviets on the third and fourth floors! You have five men with you. The rest of your platoon continues to prepare their positions in adjacent buildings while the rest of the company prepares for the assault. The building is made of stone masonry with oak wood floors. The only access to the upper floors is by way of the staircase. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The platoon leader sent a messenger back to headquarters to inform them of the wounded civilians. Presumably, he also cared for the wounded; but he had not the manpower or time to evacuate them. He could not

get anyone up the stairs at the Russians and occasionally, one of the Russians would rush to the top of the stairs and fire into the room at the group. Everyone in the CP was afraid to go up the stairway. Attempts to fire through the floor resulted in ricochets back into the room. Sniper positions were set up in nearby positions and one by one, over a period of over 24 hours, each Russian upstairs was shot. When the platoon leader finally led his men upstairs, he found 7 dead bodies.

SITUATION 2: The penetration has been made into the factory but the Russians cling to their positions tenaciously. You are occupying a series of rooms on the ground floor. The rooms are made of steel and concrete and are separated from another group of rooms by an open work area about 15 meters wide. A stalemate has ensued. Each side has tried to cross that open area and in so doing, each has suffered heavy losses. You estimate that they have about 100 men. Finally, both sides sit back and wait. For days, you continue this waiting game, hoping for some change in the circumstances so you can act. From time to time, you hear loud singing coming from the Russian rooms. All attempts to attack the Russian held positions from the flank have failed.

Friendly forces control the rooms above you, but Russian forces control those above them. Both are separated by the open area, which extends from the floor to the ceiling. The rest of the company is equally tied down in other sectors of the building, and battalion has no reserves to give you. Moreover, more men would be of no help in such cramped quarters. Indirect fires have been unsuccessful in destroying the troops in this huge building. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The platoon leader (a Russian, in this case) ordered picks, shovels and dynamite. He broke through the concrete floor and started a tunnel. For days he rotated his men on the job while maintaining security. He muffled the sounds of the digging by having his soldiers sing songs as loud as they could. Then he set and primed the dynamite. The explosion came a little too fast and two of his men were killed before they could escape. But the entire enemy stronghold was lifted into the air and engulfed in a huge ball of fire. In assessing the casualties he had inflicted,

the lieutenant lost interest after the body count reached 180.

SITUATION 3: Your unit has now gained control of the factory, crossed the river and is continuing the attack through the city. The company commander has been evacuated as a casualty and you take command. You are reenforced to 120 men, but the replacements are mostly in their late 30's, out of shape, and come from support units. Your mission is to attack and clear a building overlooking a central shopping plaza. You feel that your unit will be destroyed by such an attack because the assault is across the open plaza, which is covered with automatic weapons fire and heavy artillery concentrations. The enemy has good fields of fire from his position to both flanks, as well as to the front, and you cannot get in behind him. You suggest an air-mobile insertion, but aviators cannot support you. Likewise, your request for armor or APC support is turned down. Artillery fires directly on the building have proved ineffective in subduing the stronghold. It appears that your only choice is straight ahead across the open area. You suggest that the building be bypassed and its defenders starved into surrender; but your suggestion is rejected for no apparent reason. You

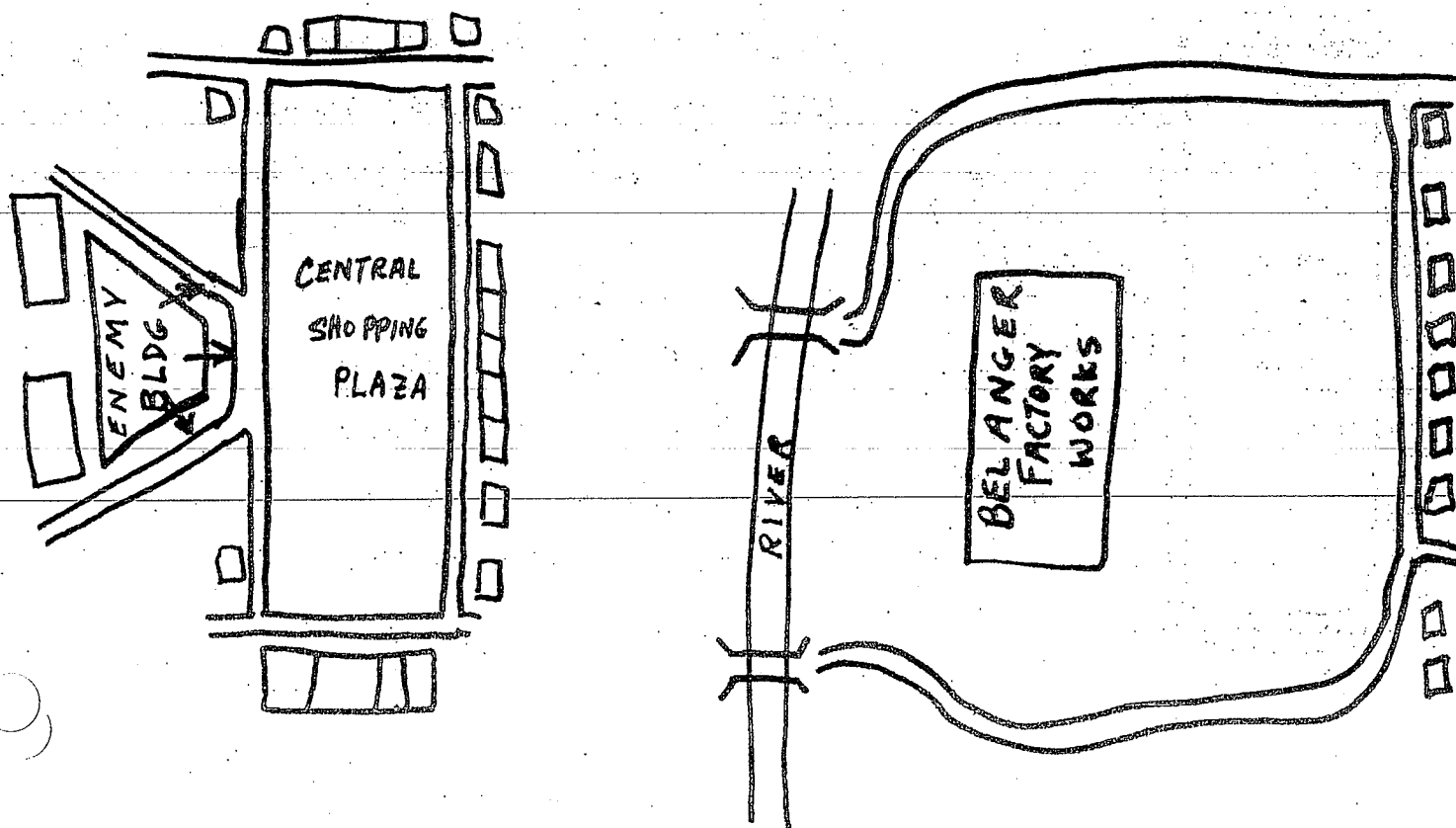
protest to your commander that this mission is suicide, but he angrily rebukes you and orders you to clear the building. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The German company commander led his men across the open area despite his serious misgivings. Russian planes attacked the company while it was in the open, and Russian machine guns strafed the ground with grazing fire. The company fell back. That night, the commander returned and carried off his wounded; but only 30 men lived.

SITUATION 4: You lead the remnants of your force to defensive positions in the city. A major Russian counterattack has cut off your division from the rest of the Army and all resupply attempts have failed. Daily you watch as airdrops miss your positions and land amidst the Russians. Your men

have been living on watery soup for 10 days; their clothing is insufficient for winter weather, and all are nearly out of ammo. Finally an air drop gets in. Although it has very little food and ammo, it does contain letters from home. One man gets a letter from his wife wanting to know why he must fight while several of his friends are still at home. This news so upsets the soldier that he reads it to the rest of the platoon and now the group is refusing to fight. You visit the platoon and find that it contains but six men and that what you had heard about their morale is true. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: In reality this happened to a battalion commander. He visited the "Platoon", found out the problem and removed them from the line. Taking them to his headquarters, he let them relax and get warm, then briefed them on the consequences of disobeying orders in combat. Although still rebellious, they agreed to fight so long as he remained fighting. When he left or was killed, however, they said they would no longer fight. The commander let it go at that.



SCENARIO 5

FROM: SLA Marshall's
Pork Chop Hill
CPT Williams/cw/5841

THE ROCK LIEUTENANT

SITUATION 1: You are a platoon leader in a light infantry company fighting in mountainous terrain. The key terrain in the area is Heller Hill, and its conquest has been assigned to your company. Your unit is in high morale, being part of a victorious army that has been rushing through a defeated enemy force offering only token resistance. Your company commander has decided to clear Heller Hill along two avenues of approach with your platoon making a movement to contact on the right and a second platoon moving on the left. Neither platoon is close enough to offer the other mutual support, but the last platoon is being held in reserve in case one gets into trouble. As your platoon reaches a small cliff at the foot of Heller Hill, a shower of grenades rains upon the lead squad and several soldiers are wounded. You pull back and assess the situation. The enemy soldiers are well covered behind boulders at the top of the cliff and concealed in a thicket of scrub pines and bushes. The ground on either side of the cliff is easily climbable, but offers poor cover and concealment near the enemy strongpoint. You maneuver a machine gun on the flank of the Communists, but four men are wounded just trying to set up the weapon. Their replacements cannot find a position to fire without being shot also. Your commander orders you to overcome the stronghold with your own force. The mortars fire a mission for you, but the steepness of the terrain makes adjustment difficult. Finally, the weapons platoon leader tells you that he cannot afford to waste any more rounds on that mission until he gets resupplied. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The platoon crawled within fifty meters of the stronghold, but could not eliminate it. Men with automatic weapons alternated popping up from cover and blindly firing clips amidst the boulders. That, however, did not stop the fire. Then ten men began crawling up closer, but were repelled by grenades. Finally, the enemy fire was eliminated when one man charged across an open area with his weapon on full automatic, and emptied several clips into the Chinese.

SITUATION 2: You continue moving past the thicket and again encounter heavy fire. Obviously, this is a different war from the one you have been fighting easily for two weeks. You maneuver your squads, suppress the enemy's fire, and close in for the kill. The enemy stops fighting, and several stand up with their hands overhead. One of your men tells them to come down to you if they wish to surrender. They do not seem to understand. They then signal for you to come up. More enemy soldiers now stand up beside the others and surrender. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The Americans argued with the Chinese for some time, but made no attempt to maneuver behind them. Suddenly, the Chinese reached inside their tunics, where they had grenades hidden, and lobbed the grenades downhill on the GIs. The Americans opened fire, killing several Chicombs and chasing away the rest.

SITUATION 3: After chasing away the grenade-hiding enemy soldiers, you get an order from your commander to move to a company assembly point. When you arrive, you learn that the enemy has been found in strength on the crest of Heller Hill. Your commander gives you a hasty FRAGORDER and orders you to move out. He gives you no time to reorganize or plan your attack. Darkness is rapidly falling as you reach the LD and you have not been able to do more than tell your squad leaders that the company is to attack and that the platoon will be on the right. At the LD, the CO

orders the company forward, though no one is ready. There is great confusion and you find that your platoon is mixed in with the members of other platoons. To make matters worse, it is now dark and you can no longer recognize the people around you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The leader did not stop the attack, but continued to move up the hill and hope that matters would sort themselves out as they went along. He trusted that these soldiers who now surrounded him, whoever they were, would follow him when he gave orders.

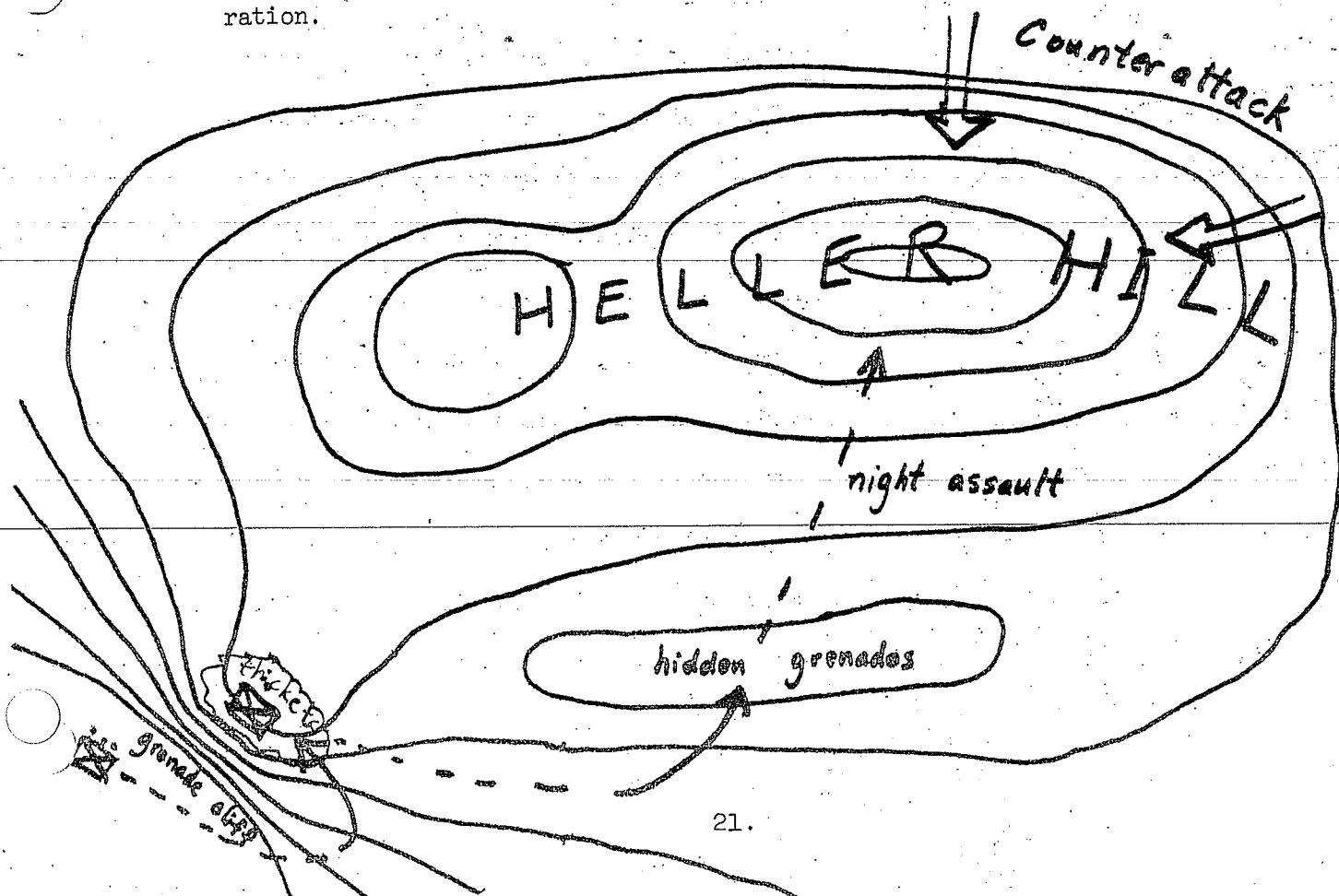
SITUATION 4: As you assault uphill, you find yourself amidst soldiers whom you do not know. You can only see 5 or 6 men around you in the dark, but you continue moving up the finger. Two machine guns on the finger open up with effective grazing fire. However, the finger is strewn with boulders which offer cover. You move from boulder to boulder. Farther up the hill, you find men entangled in barbed wire and several men dead or wounded. You can never see more than 5 or 6 men at any one time and you recognize none of them. Of the men you can see, some are firing wildly into the sky and not moving, while others are clutching the ground and neither firing or moving. You feel alone. It seems as though you are the only man moving uphill and firing your weapon. The machine guns have picked off a number of soldiers and their screams further unnerve the soldiers hugging the ground. 100 yards ahead of you, you can see the red muzzle flash of one of the machine guns. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander grabbed an anti-tank weapon from a nearby soldier who was not fighting, and blew the machine gun away. His example steadied the men around him. Another soldier then crawled within range of the second machine gun (over the ground previously covered by the first) and emptied his BAR into the crew.

SITUATION 5: The company has now seized Heller Hill and destroyed the enemy forces holding it. You have placed your platoon in the company perimeter and established a rotational sleep plan. Around midnight, you are shaken awake by one of your troops. The enemy is attacking. They have set up machine guns that pin down the company position from the east, while their main assault comes upon you from the north. For over an hour, the fight rages. Your company commander is unconscious from

a grenade wound and you now command about 40 men - all that is left in your company. The enemy fights his way into your positions. Your men are scooping up grenades as they roll into the foxholes and throwing them back. Your grenades are gone and the machine guns are useless due to melted barrels. Rifle ammo is almost gone and nearly all of your men who are still alive, are wounded. Your company mortars are located lower on the hill, but are nearly out of rounds. Battalion cannot help you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The LT ordered a breakout. Every squad carried out its non-walking wounded and rushed to the mortar position. The LT covered the breakout by gathering rocks and C-rat cans and attacking the Chinese so furiously with those, that their fire slackened. Although wounded, the LT also made it out alive when a mortarman came to his aid by firing his 60mm mortar in a direct fire mode at the Chinese. At the same time, another soldier rushed up and carried the wounded lieutenant back to the rally point. The Chinese elected to stop at Heller Hill and did not pursue the battered Americans. Incidentally, this action occurred in the days immediately after President Truman ordered integration of blacks into the Army. The lieutenant was a black officer, and such heroics did much to change the minds of many old soldiers about integration.



SCENARIO 6

FROM: Infantry Attacks
by Erwin Rommel
CPT Williams/cw/5841

THE ROMMEL DETACHMENT

SITUATION 1: You command a company fighting the Warsaw Pact in mountainous terrain. It is springtime and the snows have melted. The resulting mud has seriously hampered American resupply efforts. Your company has only the ammunition and equipment which it can carry on its back or on its 1/4 tons and gamma goats. The mountains are extremely steep and rocky. Movement has been slow and difficult, usually requiring ropes and the use of your hands, especially at night. There are foot paths on the mountains, but they force you to move in single file.

Your company has been fighting and marching for 36 straight hours in this terrain. You began with a movement to contact, ran into an enemy company, and had to pry them from their defensive positions. All night long, your force pursued and fought the enemy's rear detachment until you hit hastily prepared positions this morning. One of your platoon leaders got a squad behind the enemy position and forced them to fall back. Although you pursued energetically in the hopes of finishing them off, they skillfully fell back from position to position. At 2200 hours, you called a halt and put your exhausted unit in a perimeter.

It is midnight. Battalion calls you and orders you to attack an enemy position located on high ground overlooking a valley. They want you to make a night movement over rocky, steep terrain, move around the mountain, and attack the enemy positions from the rear at daylight. To the battalion commander looking at a map, that movement does not look

too difficult. But, from experience of fighting on this terrain and your knowledge of how hard you have pushed your troops for the past 36 hours, you do not feel your unit can make the proposed movement on time. The alternative is to attack frontally across the valley. Fortunately, you do not feel that the enemy has very good positions. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Rommel requested that his orders be changed so that he could attack up the valley. Although exhausted himself, he reconned the approach thoroughly (to the point that he came under fire). He also sent a platoon around the mountain.

SITUATION 2: You sent one platoon on the route suggested by battalion, but continued to rest the remainder of your force. It is now the next morning and your company is at least partially rested. The enemy is entrenched on sloping ground overlooking a road running up the valley. The valley is flat, offers no concealment, and its only cover is "microscopic folds in the earth". The enemy's individual positions look good; in fact, their positions look much more formidable than you had realized last night when you had assured the battalion commander that you could secure the pass from the front. Their main positions are protected with interlocking grazing fire from machine guns and their flanks are protected by barbed wire entanglements covered by fire. Attacks up either hill would be foolhardy as the terrain is so steep that the enemy could probably stop you by simply rolling rocks down on your head. It is too late to make the flanking movement around the mountain, while a flank movement around the smaller mountain would require scaling a sheer rock

wall. You have no helicopters or tac air and artillery support will not be available for several days, as the muddy roads have greatly slowed resupply. However, you do have an additional platoon and an additional machine gun in each platoon. The high ground from which you are conducting

your recon offers excellent fields of fire over the valley; however, the distance between it and the enemy positions is beyond the maximum effective range of your machine guns. The platoon you sent around the mountain is nowhere near being able to support you and will be unable to do so before dark. But the battalion commander is pressuring you to clear the pass as the position is holding up the battalion's mission.

What do you do?

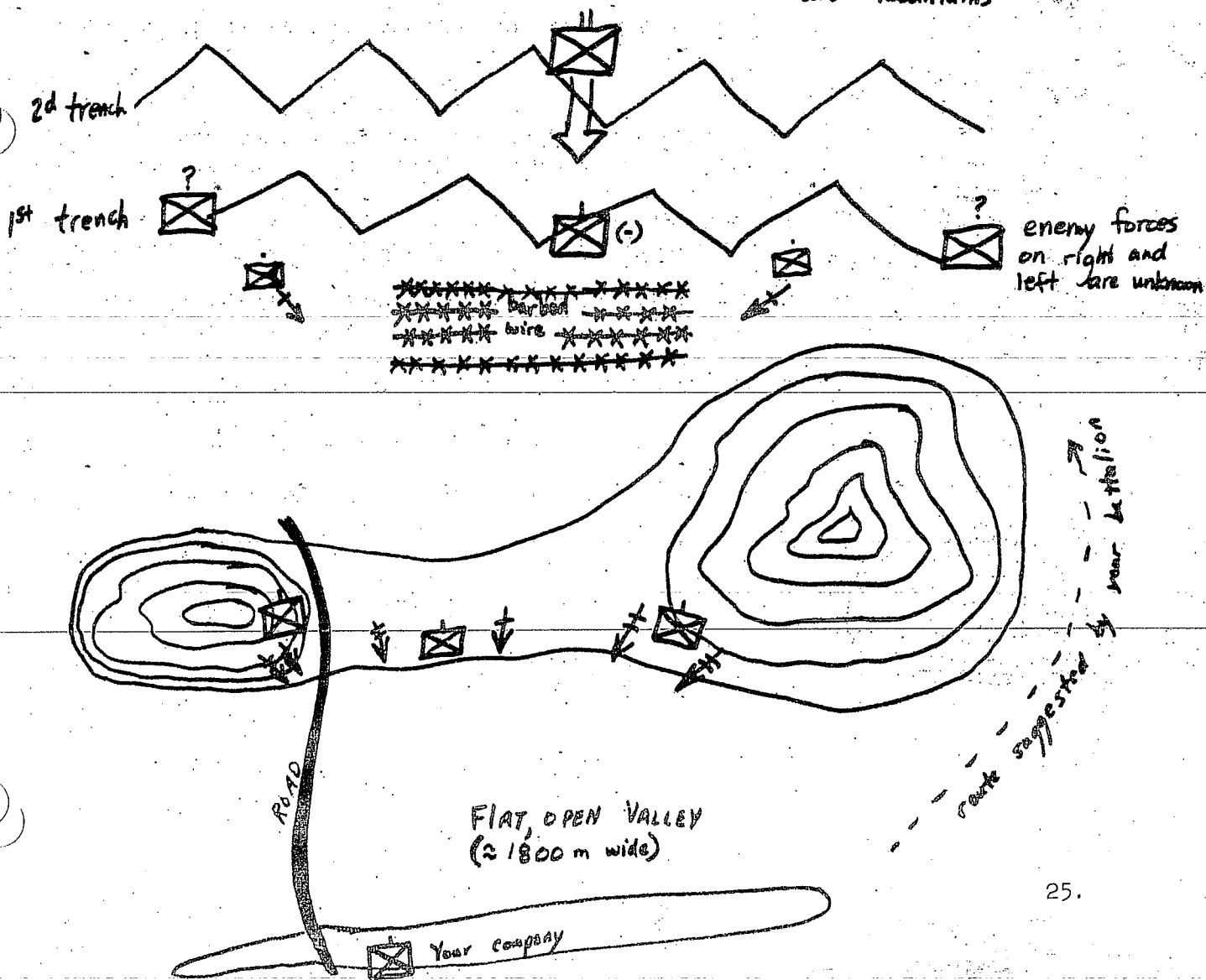
HISTORICALLY: Rommel placed his machine guns along the high ground and concentrated their fires on the enemy's left flank. Although outside the max effective range of his machine guns, they could still harass the enemy and keep his head down. Then he attacked up the valley astride the road with a squad. Although he had a platoon in position to exploit the squad's success, he actually attacked with the smallest force possible. The rest of the company provided supporting fires. (Rommel did not believe in the two up, one back approach to attacking). The harassing fires from long range caused the enemy to fall back to better positions higher up on the saddle. As they crowded together, the long range fire became more effective and the increased casualties caused panic. The Romanians then got out of their trenches and were exposed to machine gun fire which, even at that range, was effective against a bunched-up, unprotected force. Rommel's squad easily seized the pass and his exploitation force occupied the position.

SITUATION 3: It is now the next day. After clearing the pass, you are ordered to pursue the enemy. Your audacity has carried your company well ahead of the rest of the battalion when your unit encounters about 100 meters of barbed wire obstacles. Thinking you can get behind the enemy via this route, you lead your company in a crawl beneath the wire. On the other side, you beat the enemy in a quick fire fight and occupy his trenches. You have about 70 men with you when you are attacked by a battalion of Russian light infantry. You call your battalion commander and request reinforcements and ammunition. You are told that resupply and fire support, to include air and artillery, is impossible and you are ordered to withdraw to the battalion's position

about 3000 meters to your rear. However, the barbed wire through which you crawled is now covered by enemy machine gun fire from both flanks. You estimate that you will suffer 50% casualties by such a move. You have ten minutes of ammunition remaining, at best. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Lt Rommel felt he had 3 choices: 1) retreat according to orders and suffer 50% casualties; 2) fire the remainder of his ammo and surrender; or 3) attack, disorganize the enemy and then retreat. Rommel attacked. One of his platoons penetrated on the enemy's right flank and poured fire down the length of his line. The French broke and fell back, taking the machine guns covering the wire with them. Rommel then broke contact and hustled his company through the wire. The French eventually regrouped and put some fire on Rommel's force, but the company rejoined the battalion with only 5 men wounded and nobody killed.

note: trench line is several thousand meters beyond the two mountains



SCENARIO 7

SLA Marshall: Pork Chop Hill
CPT Williams/dk/3845

AMBUSHERS AMBUSHED

SITUATION 1: You are a patrol leader on your first combat mission of the war. Your task is to set up an ambush along a drainage ditch about 1500m in front of your company's position. Your ambush position cannot be supported by direct fire weapons from friendly lines, but you do have mortar and artillery support. There are 24 men in your patrol divided into two groups; the assault group, led by you, and the support group, led by your PSG. The two groups are about 100m apart. It is a dark night and your patrol is to stay in position from 1000 to 0200. The fighting has been quiet in this sector and you expect no action. You have been in position for four hours. Although your men are still awake, they are rather unalert; their senses dulled by the quiet night and the expectation that the enemy is not around.

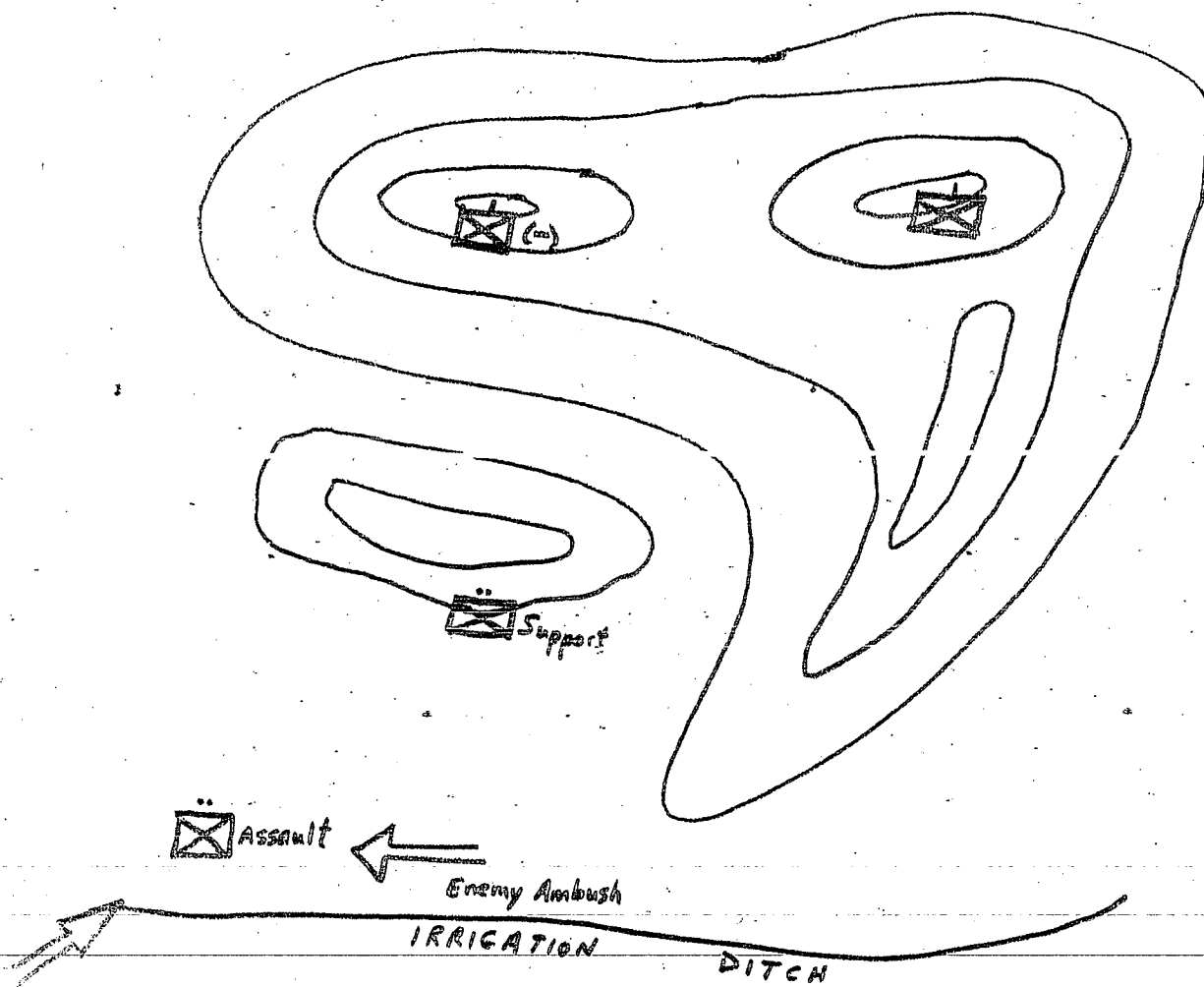
You are on the horn, telling your commander that you are returning to base, when suddenly the enemy opens fire on your assault element from both flanks. Your position is crisscrossed with rifle fire, but nobody is hit in the first fires because the enemy is firing high. You scream into your TA-312 to get fire from the support group, but cannot raise them because your Ratello, while diving for cover in the hail of bullets, ripped the wire from the phone. The radio is with your F.O. who is 75m from your location. Unfortunately, he is the only man in the force hit by the enemy fire. At the same time, the support element is illuminated for all the world to see by a misplaced mortar flare called by

a neighboring company. They are perfectly silhouetted against the sky by that light and are under effective enemy fire. The unexpected light has destroyed your visual purple and, as it disappears, you are blind. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader kept calling uselessly into his phone for help, while everyone else hugged the earth. Most soldiers did not return fire. The enemy did not close on either position because they were afraid of American firepower. One or two eventually charged. 1 NCO started to recover enough vision to "sense" someone approaching him and fired point blank into the enemy's face, then past him into another soldier. Nevertheless, there was very little fire from the US patrol.

SITUATION 2: Instead of providing you with supporting fires, the beleaguered support group panics, abandons their position, and rushes toward your location with the assault group. The enemy forces are also struggling with the effects of the blinding light and their fire slackens momentarily. At last, the soldiers with you in the assault group begin to use their weapons. Just then, you see soldiers running toward you calling your name and yelling "Don't shoot! Don't shoot! We're coming in." You recognize elements of your support group running right over top of the enemy who had been attacking you. But at the same time, you see several of the enemy soldiers leap up and follow the Americans into your ambush site, throwing grenades over their heads into your lines. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The patrol leader yelled to hold fire. His soldiers obeyed, but the Chinese kept firing and throwing grenades. The Americans frantically thrust aside grenades and finally two soldiers fired at anyone without a helmet, killing several. The action of those two soldiers saved everyone's life because it stopped the only Chinese who had taken action.



SITUATION 3: You are badly wounded by grenade fragments in one leg, momentarily unconscious, and thought to be dead by your soldiers. In the seconds that you were passed out, your patrol has grabbed the wounded and begun a fighting withdrawal towards friendly front lines. You do not know how you got there, but when you regain consciousness, you are crawling uphill. You crawl until you hit some wire which you recognize as a portion of the company's defense. You cross back into friendly lines and learn that your patrol has not yet returned. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Another Lieutenant organized a relief patrol and went to give support to any patrol members still in the valley.

SITUATION 4: You have organized a 10 man relief patrol and are leading it back to the ambush site to give support. You encounter the remnants of your patrol struggling up the hill carrying the wounded, but they have left the dead behind. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader left the relief patrol at that spot to protect the wounded patrol and went alone with a medic to certify that the soldiers left behind were really dead.

SITUATION 5: Setting up your relief patrol to provide cover, you and your medic go down to the dead bodies to see if they are actually dead.

They are all dead. At that point 4 to 5 enemy soldiers attack; you kill several. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader lead patrol back to the company perimeter as he did not want to risk more lives removing dead bodies. The bodies were picked up in the morning with a fresh patrol.

SCENARIO 8

SIA Marshall: Pork Chop Hill
CPT Williams/cw/5841

REINFORCING MAGGOT HILL

SITUATION 1: You are a rifle platoon leader given an order to reinforce Maggot Hill, which is held by an American company. That company is currently under attack and needs reinforcements badly. A second platoon is also given the same mission, but no attempt is made to coordinate the two platoons or with the company on the hill. Each are told to reinforce and each assumes that Maggot can be reinforced by simply walking up.

You believe that time is of the essence and that you must get up there rapidly or the hill will be lost. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Platoon leader made no attempt to coordinate with either the other platoon or the company he was going to reinforce. He simply formed his platoon and walked them rapidly up the road towards the hill. (Discussion should include: a) should you go ahead of your platoon on a leader's recon? b) do you maintain platoon integrity when you occupy the hill or do you simply rush your soldiers individually into any spot they are needed? c) should you select your own positions or use what is already being used by the company on the hill?)

SITUATION 2: You march up the road to Maggot and are within 50 meters of a bunker on the rear slope when two machine guns open up on you. You and several of your men immediately yell "Cease Fire" and the guns stop firing at you. Then a voice yells down, "Come on up!" You think the accent sounds strange, but then you have several soldiers in your platoon that speak English with a funny accent. Moreover, the company on the hilltop must be reinforced as rapidly as possible. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The platoon leader waited several minutes trying to make up his mind. When nothing happened, he decided to go on up. The machine gun opened up again, wounding one man. Lieutenant ordered everyone back down the hill into the safety of a ravine, then back to more secure ground, where he reorganized.

SITUATION 3: After reorganizing your platoon, you find that the second platoon taking part in the "reinforcement" started up the hill about the same time as you. It also ran into hostile fire and disintegrated. Elements of it are streaming by your position. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Stopped all that he could and attempted to find out what happened to them. He also kept them with him.

SITUATION 4: At about the same time you get word that the rest of the company was hit by artillery in its bivouac area and is scattered around the area. The company commander has been evacuated. The battalion commander calls and orders you to relieve Maggot Hill with all available elements of the company. You round up what you can, count noses, and find that you have 56 men of the 187 with which you started the day. Friendly and enemy artillery is now falling regularly in the valley between your present position and the spot on the rear side of Maggot Hill where you encountered machine gun fire. What do you do?

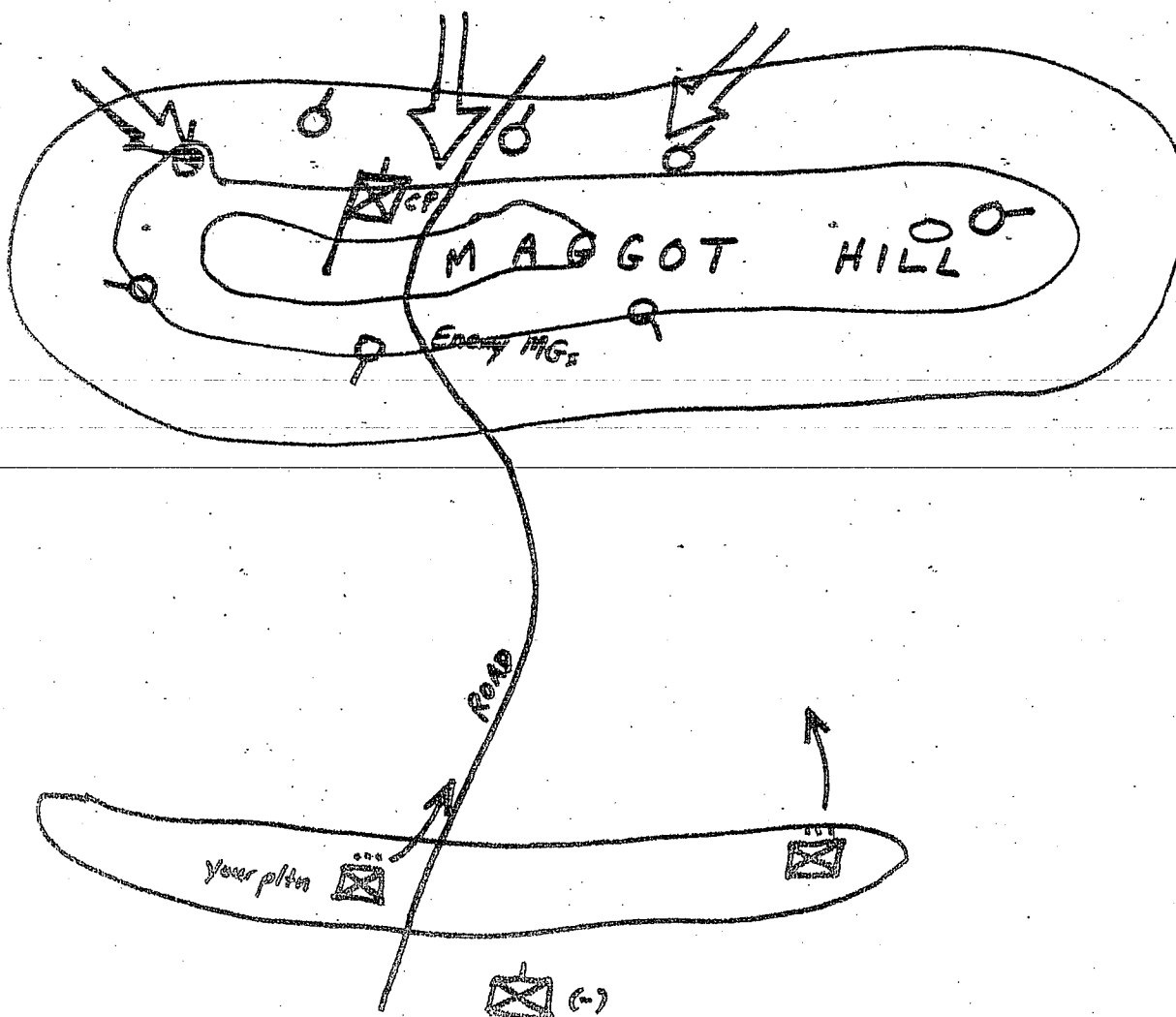
HISTORICALLY: Organized every man he could find into 3 platoons. He crossed the valley one man at a time to avoid artillery fire, and once more climbed the hill. This time he encountered no fire.

SITUATION 5: As you climb Maggot Hill, you find the company commander of the company you are to relieve in his bunker with 16 soldiers remaining in his command. You place two platoons forward in pre-dug foxholes. The third platoon is given the mission to secure the rear because the foxholes, trenches, and bunkers on the hilltop still contain enemy soldiers. There is sporadic fighting throughout the night and you take about 15 casualties.

In the morning, another company arrives to replace you. You send your men to the assembly area two at a time to avoid heavy casualties by artillery fire. During this withdrawal and replacement by the new company, the hill

is assaulted unexpectedly by a massive enemy attack. Soon the hill is overrun with enemy soldiers. Your CP bunker is crowded with 10-15 soldiers including 5 wounded. Enemy troops are on the roof, grenades occasionally roll into the bunker, the wounded are screaming in agony, and enemy soldiers appear from time to time at the door attempting to spray the inside with automatic fire. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Soldiers caught grenades as they rolled in and threw them back out. The lieutenant leaned out the door and shot several enemy soldiers climbing on the bunker roof. Then he placed a wounded soldier with a rifle facing the door and ordered him to shoot anyone who appeared. The bunker eventually collapsed when it took a direct hit from an artillery round. However, the Chinese ignored the bunker from then on, and many of the soldiers under the wreckage survived. They were rescued when another company attacked the Chinese from the rear and drove them off the hill.



SCENARIO 9

FROM: Battles in the Monsoon
By SLA Marshall
CPT Williams/cw/5841

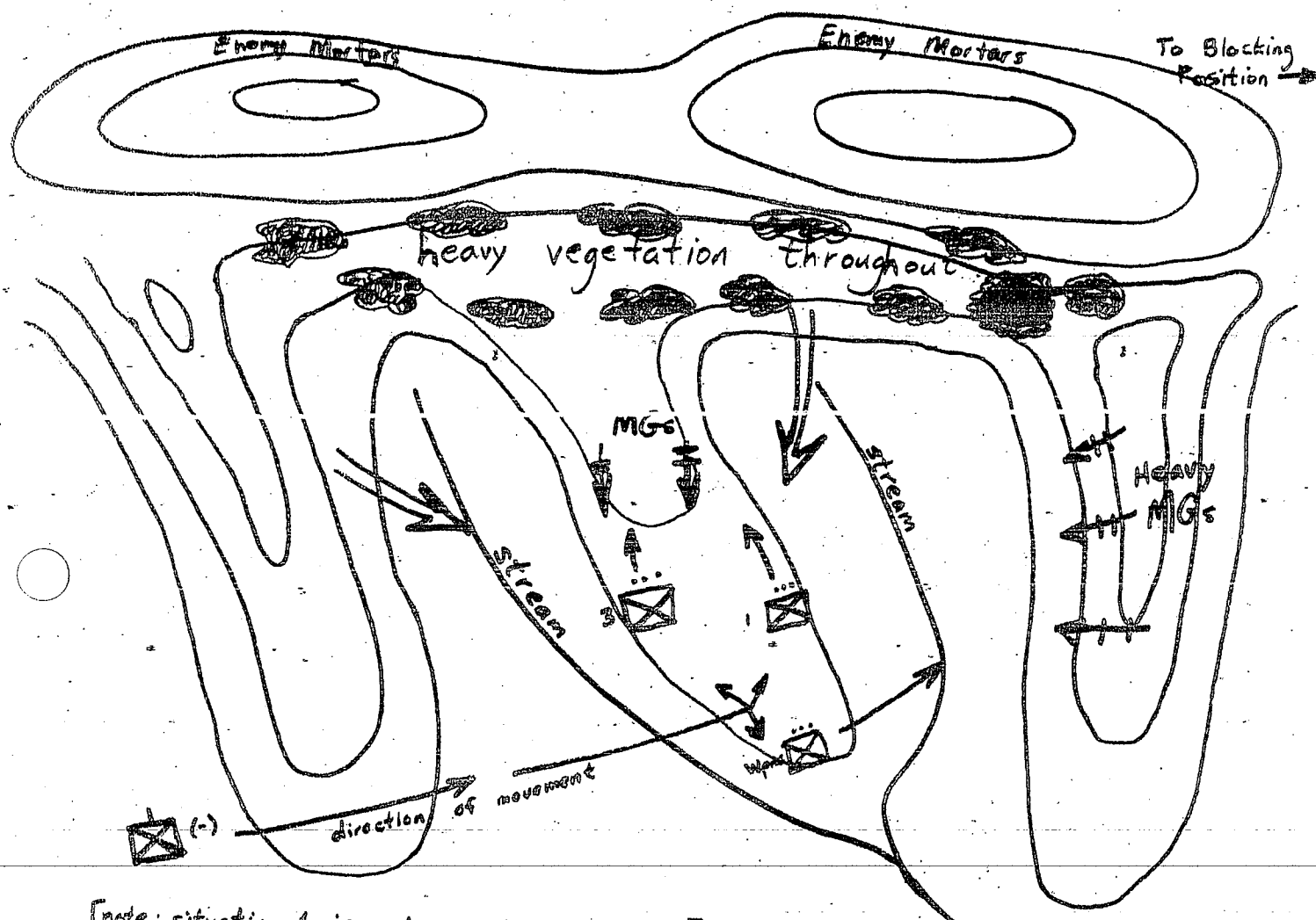
THE FIGHT ON THE FINGER

SITUATION 1: You are commanding a company of three rifle platoons in steeply sloped, heavily jungled terrain. You have no mortars, artillery, or TAC Air in direct support of your unit. You are opposed by an unknown-sized enemy force of light infantry. Your battalion is searching for those enemy forces throughout an area about the size of an American County. You have been directed to spread out your unit by squads over an area which separates each squad by 500-1000 meters and battalion has consistently discouraged you from bringing your squads closer together. Your platoon leaders are calling you with reports of finding large caches of rice, commo wire, medical supplies, and clothing of the type used by the enemy. One of your platoon leaders tells you that his second squad found several bicycles, which are used by messengers in the enemy's battalion and regimental headquarters. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Company commander decided that the enemy was nearby and in strength. Therefore, he brought his three platoons together and moved as a company force, despite the reluctance by battalion for him to do so.

SITUATION 2: You have brought your squads together and are moving as a company. Your new mission is to establish a blocking position on a ridgeline. A sister battalion will be attacking towards that ridge and your Bn CO wants your company in a position to destroy any enemy forces retreating from that attack. Your force must move through thick bamboo

growth and up and down steep ridges to get to the objective. You have been enroute for six hours under an equatorial sun when you arrive at a series of three fingers jutting down from a ridgeline.



[note: situation 1 is not on the sand table]

Your platoons are in file, each about 200 meters apart. Your lead platoon leader informs you that he can hear enemy voices about 300 meters to his left front. He wants to know if you want him to orient on those voices or continue on azimuth to your blocking position. What are your orders?

HISTORICALLY: Commander held up his lead platoon while he brought up the rear platoons to his location. Then he ordered the lead platoon to deploy in a line formation and move towards the voices. If contact was made, one platoon would join the lead platoon on its left flank

while the last platoon would position itself so that it would support or reinforce the others.

SITUATION 3: As the lead platoon moves slowly forward, 10-15 enemy soldiers are spotted beside a stream washing and cooking. Your lead squad engages them, killing or wounding them all, and moves up the finger against considerably more enemy forces which now appear. After 5 minutes, the completely surprised enemy begins to recover and your lead platoon is pinned down. You deploy a second platoon on their left flank, but when it is about 50 meters beyond the first platoon, it receives extremely accurate small arms and automatic weapons fire. That platoon continues to move forward but the heavy bamboo makes fire and movement difficult. Most of the members of that platoon are in front of the lead platoon attempting to out-flank the enemy forces, when they receive a heavy volume of automatic fire from their left and are pinned down. At that point, Soviet-made 51 cal. MGs begin firing into both platoons and your command group from the ridgeline on your right. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Commander committed his last platoon, a weapons platoon carrying infantry weapons, on the right flank of the platoon which originally led. He instructed them to reach the high ground, then clear it of the automatic weapons harassing his lead platoons.

SITUATION 4: Your last platoon is about 1/3 of the way up the ridgeline on the right when it receives intense small arms fire and is unable to advance farther. The left-most platoon has moved within 30 meters of the enemy's small arms fire coming from the front. However, enemy forces are now maneuvering to the left, and are within handgrenade range.

There is a large explosion from their direction. Then a terrified voice comes over the radio screaming, "The lieutenant's dead, platoon sergeant's dead, everybody's dead. I'm the only one left. We're overrun!" The radio then dies and you cannot reach them further. The bamboo is so thick

that you cannot see them despite your close proximity and the fire is so heavy that a messenger would probably not reach them. Now your first platoon leader comes on the phone to say that the enemy is assaulting his position in force. You can see many enemy soldiers to your front and can hear grenades going off all over the place. You have been using artillery fires but the thickness of the vegetation precludes observation and forces your Sp4 F.O. to adjust by sound. Air cover has been diverted to your A.O. Some soldiers from your first platoon are falling back on your location. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Commander had to assume that his third platoon (on the left) had been overrun. The other platoon leaders felt they were in eminent danger of being overrun. The commander popped a smoke grenade and threw it about fifteen meters to his front, then called an air strike on that location. He did not know what armament the aircraft was carrying. It turned out to be napalm, which landed just forward of his 1st and weapons platoons.

SITUATION 5: Two airstrikes deliver napalm just forward of your troops. All fire from the flanks and fronts ceases almost immediately. Your two right-most platoons extract their casualties and equipment and pull back to the edge of the finger where you form a perimeter. You maintain artillery fires on suspected enemy positions. About an hour later the enemy probes your position but is beaten back. As darkness falls, more and more soldiers from your left platoon drift into your perimeter until all but 3 soldiers are accounted for. You have suffered 11 KIAs and about 40 litter cases from an original force of less than 100 men. You realize that you have been fighting at least a battalion and perhaps the better part of a regiment; but you feel that you are not surrounded and an escape route exists to your rear. There are no clearings in the area of sufficient size to handle medivac, but your force needs medical attention badly, despite the heroic efforts of your medics. A man lying on a stretcher

near your C.P. is groaning silently, skin on his leg has been burned away to the bone. The night is so dark that you cannot see your hand in front of your face. Sounds from the jungle reveal that the enemy is massing for another attack about 75 meters to your front. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Commander knew he did not have sufficient personnel to carry out his litter cases. He called in artillery on the forces massing to his front and notified his battalion commander that he was staying. Claymore mines were placed in front and illumination was maintained throughout the night. Early the next morning a second company fought through to the company's perimeter and reinforced them. Other attempts to reach them were unsuccessful as the enemy was attempting to surround the unit. Helicopters brought in additional medical supplies and litters, but could not land. The following morning, the company withdrew successfully and reached a useable PZ.

SCENARIO 10

FROM: SIA Marshall's The River
and the Quantlet
CPT Williams/cw/5841

THE BIVOUAC AREA

SITUATION 1: You are the XO of a company in Korea setting up in an informal bivouac along a river prior to moving forward to the front lines. Intelligence expects the North Koreans to retreat. Your commander has two platoons forward in a V position, one parallel and one perpendicular to the river. To the latter's front is an artillery battery layed in to support the battalions across the river. The third platoon is about 300m to the rear. You are relaxing in the mess tent talking to your cooks when one of them asks you if you hear fire. You don't. Then someone says he hears bugles blowing. You feel that it comes from far away, but decide to walk out anyway to talk to the platoons. As you approach the first platoon, you are nearly bowled over by most of the platoon which has panicked and is running to the rear. On their heels are a bunch of naked North Koreans (they took off their clothes to cross the river and were fired upon before they could redress) firing in all directions. One of your machine guns on the extreme left flank holds fast, however, and pours effective fire into the Koreans. Nevertheless, swarms of Koreans rush by you and into the company rear. You do not know where your company commander is located. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The XO ran back to the kitchen area and placed his KP's and cooks in a defensive line near the mess area. Then he raced to the third platoon and told the platoon leader to take his platoon, gather up any stragglers he could find and retake the first platoon's position.

SITUATION 2: You have ordered the third platoon to counterattack towards the river. As they prepare to move forward on their mission, enemy mortar rounds begin falling around your position at the mess tent. From the direction of the second platoon you hear cries of panic and see that the artillery men have abandoned their guns and are streaming through that platoon's positions. Some members of that platoon throw down their weapons and join the panic. There is complete confusion in the camp. The North Koreans are as confused as you. Most of them are mingling around, shivering in their nakedness or scrounging food from the kitchen area. The third platoon is standing amidst the Koreans, seemingly mesmerized by all the enemy in their midst, by the exploding mortar rounds, and by the panic-stricken artillery men. Your commander is still missing. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The XO got the troops moving by setting the example; he attacked the Koreans and yelled at the troops to follow him. Then he ordered the third platoon to grab the fleeing Americans and attack towards first platoon's positions.

SITUATION 3: You got the third platoon moving. They attack energetically, firing and moving perfectly while yelling and screaming like crazy men.

The machine gun still in position on the left flank mows down the better

part of a Korean company attacking over first platoon's old position.

However, the third platoon's weapons are jamming due to cold weather and they must attack using their rifles as clubs. They retake the position, but are no sooner there than their platoon leader is killed. There are

hundreds of Koreans in the river wading toward your position. Looking toward your second platoon (through which the artillery men had run), you see that they are heavily engaged by what appears to be the main Korean attack. The 6 artillery howitzers have been captured by the

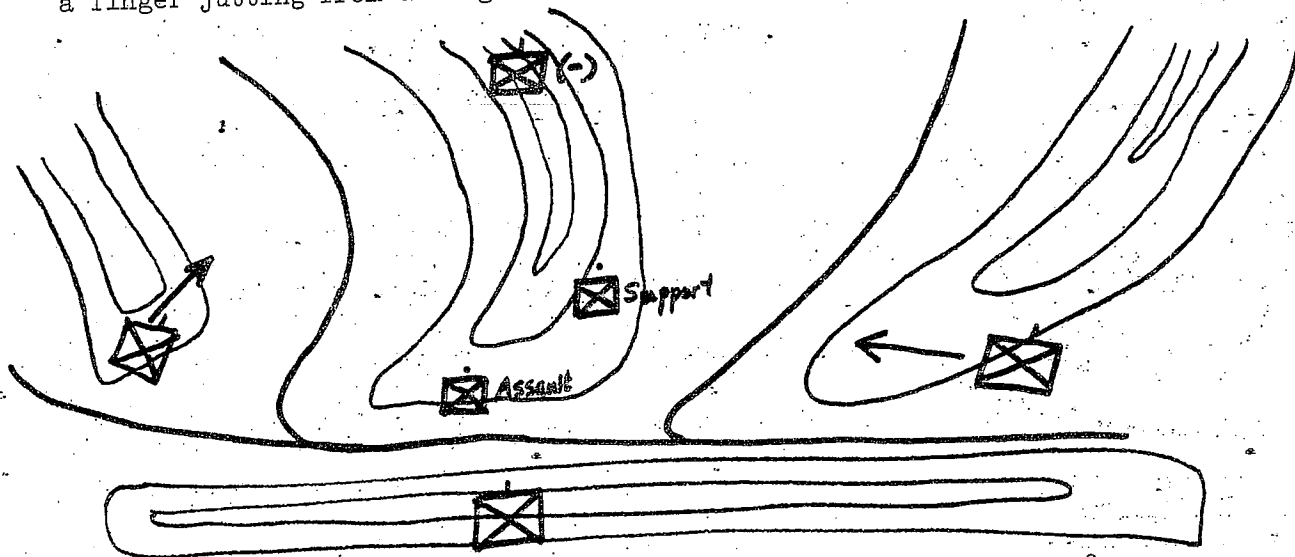


SCENARIO 11

FROM: SLA Marshall's Pork Chop Hill
CPT Williams/cw/5841

THE PATROL TO THE VALLEY

SITUATION 1: You are the leader of a 10 man patrol operating on rocky, lightly vegetated terrain. Your company occupies a defensive position on a finger jutting from a ridgeline, along which your battalion is located.



It is nighttime and visibility is poor. Your mission is to move from your company position down the finger to a valley below, ambush any enemy forces and attempt to capture prisoners. You have your company mortars and the 4.2 platoon available to you. You position your patrol so that a five man assault team is on the valley floor and a five man support force is on slightly higher ground. The teams are close enough to provide mutual support. However, in the darkness, they cannot see each other.

You are with the assault team. After being in position for several hours, you spot a force of about 50 light infantry enemy soldiers moving towards you. At the same time, silhouetted against the evening sky, you can see

enemy forces swarming over the high ground to your right and left. The enemy is obviously making a full scale attack upon your company's position. You try to call your company, but the radio cannot raise them. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: In real life, the assault team fired at the 50 Chinese and attempted to fall back on the support element and return to the company perimeter. The support team, seeing the enemy all around them, attempted to link up with their patrol leader and return to the company. The teams missed each other in the dark.

SITUATION 2: While moving uphill towards your support element, you and the assault team are caught in heavy mortar fire from your own battalion's mortars. You order everyone to race to a cluster of boulders about 100m to your front. Once there, you find that two men are missing. The enemy can be seen in great numbers on the high ground all around you, but you still cannot talk to anyone on the radio. After waiting awhile, you hear the groans of the two missing men. You investigate and find them alive, but unable to move. The mortar fire is now coming in heavier than before; most of it from your own 4.2 platoon. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader ordered his men into a shell hole and had them dig it as deep as they could while he attempted to carry the wounded men to the hole. One of the wounded died in the attempt.

SITUATION 3: You attempt to make it back to friendly front lines. However, of your ten man patrol, 5 are still missing, one man is dead and another is unconscious. In the retreat up the hill, more mortar fires land in your group. The unconscious man is killed and a second man has his legs shattered so that he cannot walk. Although conscious, he gives up and pleads with you to kill him. The other man with you is now a bundle of nerves and is urging the two of you to make a break for it. At that moment, 8 enemy aid men, carrying stretchers and kit bags, come out of the dark towards your location.

They have not yet seen you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Patrol leader fired on the enemy soldiers and scattered them. Then he and the other man picked up the badly wounded man and continued heading towards friendly lines. The patrol leader attempted to convince the man with the shattered leg to keep fighting for his life. Eventually, the three of them made it back to their company, which had successfully fought off the Chinese attack. One man from the support team also made it back.

SCENARIO 12

Dept of the Army Pamphlet No. 20-269
Small Unit Actions During the German
Campaign in Russia
CPT Williams/cw/58)11

THE FIGHT IN THE SNOW

SITUATION 1: You command a company occupying hill 747 somewhere in Russia.

It is November and temperatures have dropped to 15°F. Hill 747 commands

good fields of fire into the rear of your battalion's positions and dominates

the ground held on either side by neighboring companies. The American Army

is on the offensive and you receive orders for an attack through another

battalion's sector. You and your platoon leaders are several clicks away on

a recon when a heavy snowstorm hits. The Russians take advantage of the

snowstorm to launch a surprise attack on Hill 747 without an artillery or

mortar prep. You return from your recon to find your company in hasty defensive

positions behind Hill 747, the Russians occupying the key terrain, and your

battalion commander ordering you to recapture the hill in a surprise attack

at 2200 that night. You have one battery of 105's in D.S., as well as your

company mortars. Your recon indicates that the Russians have at least 5 machine

guns in position. Based on information from your soldiers, you know the enemy

has plenty of indirect fire support. The frozen ground prevents digging in.

What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander asked the company on the right to cause a diversion in front of their positions. He divided his company into 3 groups. Two groups were instructed to bypass the enemy strongpoints (machine guns) and slip around to the rear. The third group was to creep as close as possible to the Russian sentries without being detected. Preplanned targets were assigned to the artillery and mortars and signal flares coordinated.

SITUATION 2: You have divided your company as did the commander historically.

You are moving with your center group and are within 35m of the Russian

sentries. Your assault groups (the two groups bypassing the enemy strong-points) are not yet in position. The sentries are dressed in summer uniforms and are obviously freezing and unalert. Suddenly, two machine guns open fire on your men and three of your people are hit instantly. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Commander led an immediate assault straight ahead which overran the sentries and struck the Russian fighting positions.

SITUATION 3: Struck by machine gun fire, you launch an immediate assault into the Russian positions. There you find sleds loaded with furs and felt boots which were being issued to the Russians, but which your men badly need. Most of the enemy is falling back in a panic, but two machine guns continue to put out effective fire and most of your soldiers have dropped out of the attack to grab furs and boots. You have heard nothing from either of your assault groups and cannot raise them on the radio. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Commander physically pushed his men away from the furs and directed them towards the machine guns. It took hand to hand fighting to stop the guns. He could not suppress them with fire, so he placed most of his group in supporting positions and attacked with a fire team. The two elements sent into the Russian rear cut off a large portion of the fleeing Russians. The Russian furs and boots were issued to his soldiers after the hill was secured.

SITUATION 4: You remain on Hill 747 overnight. The storm continues, leaving 3 feet of snow on the ground, and your original mission is postponed. The next day you are ordered to provide protection against Soviet partisan raids on the division's resupply route. You begin by clearing the road. About 10km down the road, you encounter a group of 25 soldiers in American uniform standing by the road beckoning to you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander allowed only his point element to move forward. They were fired upon and fell back under covering fire. The commander set up a company perimeter in a small village at that location and tried to determine the strength and disposition of the Russians by sending out patrols.

SITUATION 5: You have placed your company in a hasty defense in front of a small village and established a vantage point from which you can see the

Soviets. A Soviet battalion has moved into position in front of you and is building snow positions. They place 4 heavy anti-tank weapons in front of you. Battalion reinforces your company by attaching two 50 cal MG crews and two additional TOWs to your command. The Soviets probe your positions and exchange fires with your troops; but there is no indication of an impending attack. That night, around 0400, a 50 man Russian ski patrol approaches your positions. They are about 400m away. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The ski patrol was detected early, but was allowed to come very close before being engaged. About 40 men from the patrol were killed or captured. Those captured were interrogated on the spot.

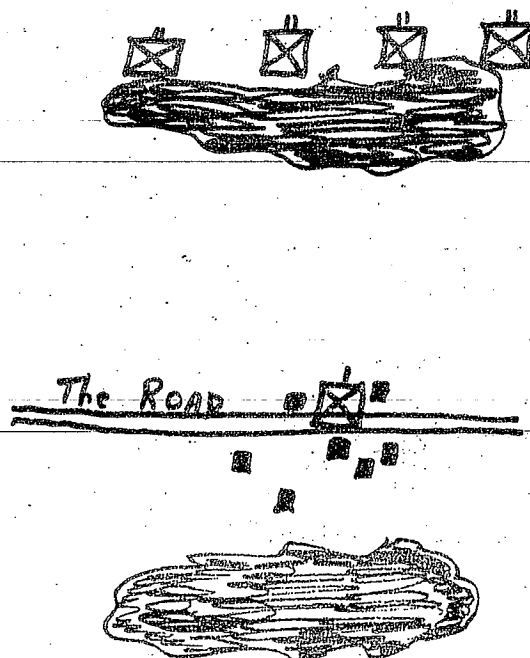
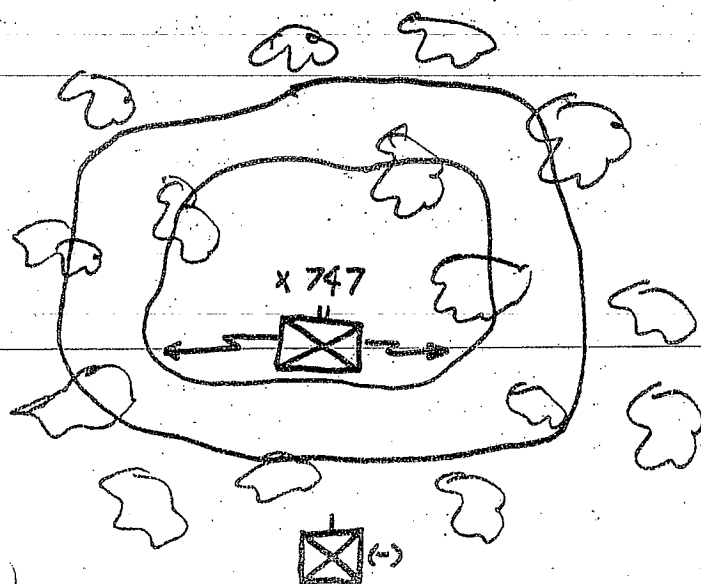
SITUATION 6: Prisoners have informed you that two Soviet light infantry divisions are moving south to seize the village you occupy. The Russians in the snow positions to your front remain passive. You notify battalion of your information and are told to defend to the north, but they move no other force to support you. The deep snow prevents you from obtaining grazing fire with your machine guns, and the frozen ground precludes digging in. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Platforms for the MG's were improvised; in this case, placed on anti-aircraft tripods. Snow and ice positions were built. (4 ft. of frozen snow and water will stop small arms fire and artillery shell fragments. If reinforced with wood, scrap metal, or sand, it is even more effective.)

SITUATION 7: Early the next morning, three Soviet columns are observed moving in your direction. They appear to be carrying no heavy weapons. An infantry force of about 400 men emerges from the woods and attacks on a broad front. The 3 feet of snow combined with your automatic weapons stops them about 700m from your position. Immediately, a second force, slightly larger, attacks over the bodies and packed-down snow of the first wave. They advance to about 400m of your position before they too melt in your fire. A third Soviet wave begins its attack without weapons; arming itself from the hands of their dead comrades to your front. Two of your

machine guns were knocked out in the 2nd assault and now your company is forced to constantly fire and move its machine guns, then fire again from a new location. This 3rd assault reaches into your right platoon's position before it is beaten back. Now you see a 4th and larger assault forming in the woods to your front. The snow between you and them has been largely beaten down and is no longer an obstacle. There is a vast forest about 400m to the rear of the village, but there is deep snow between you and it. You have about one magazine per rifle remaining and no machine gun has even 200 rounds. All mortar ammo is expended. You have no artillery within range and battalion is involved in a fight elsewhere and cannot help. You have 30 soldiers dead, 15 litter cases and 60 soldiers who are walking wounded or injured. Neither you or the enemy has any air support. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander ordered a withdrawal to the forest. He sent the walking wounded to the woods to beat down a path and ordered the mortars and AT crews to destroy their weapons and follow carrying the litter cases. Then he left a light covering force to cover the withdrawal. That covering force delayed the Russians and withdrew to the forest without loss. For 3 days, the company marched through the deep snow within the forest before it could rejoin its regiment.



SCENARIO 13

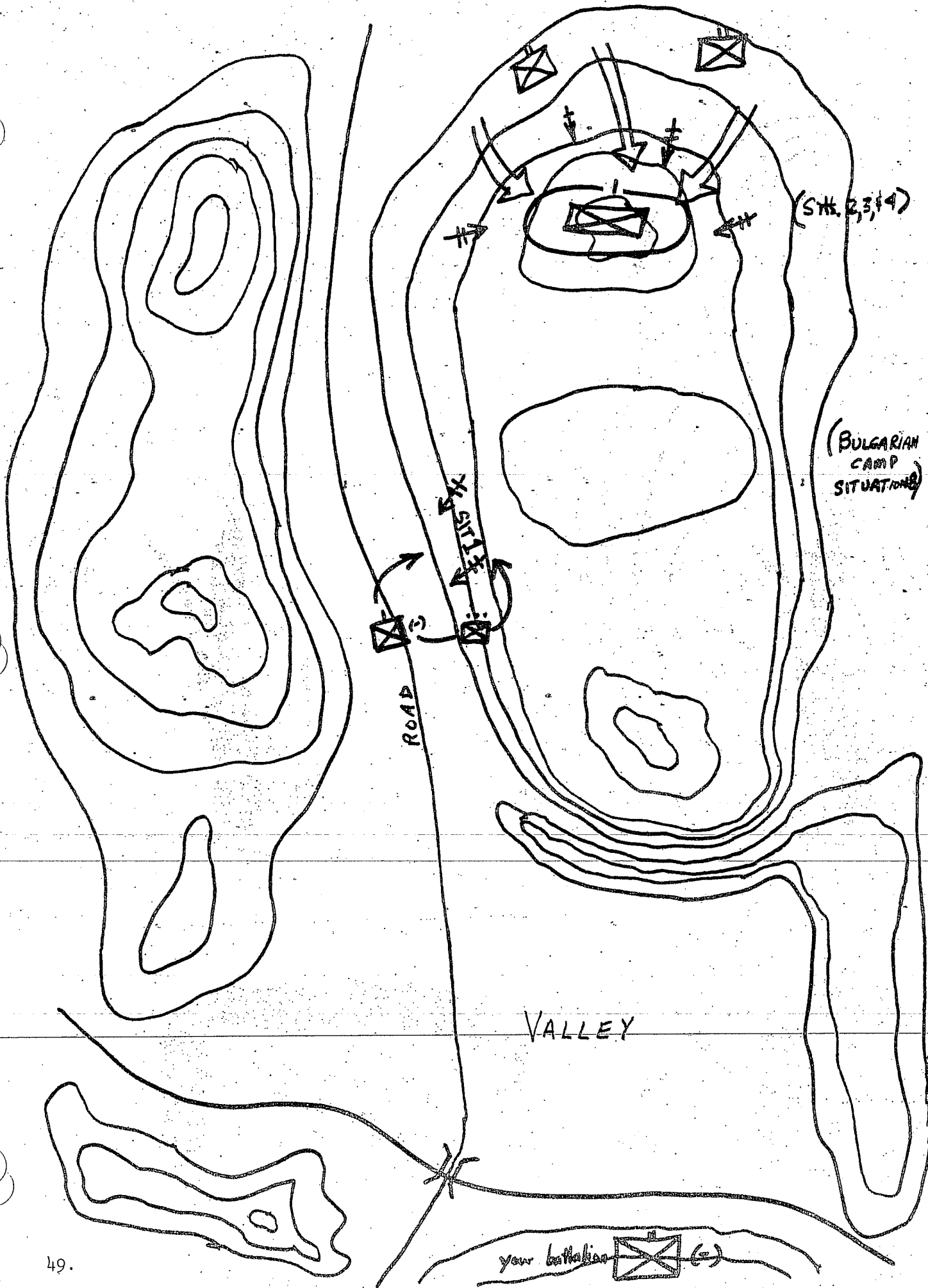
FROM: SLA Marshall's The River
and the Gauntlet
CPT Williams/cw/5841

A NEVER ENDING PATROL

SITUATION 1: You command a company fighting Communist Bulgarian forces in mountainous terrain. After weeks of fighting guerilla groups and phantom patrols, your brigade receives reports of a massed enemy force to its front. You are given the mission to make a company movement to contact to locate the enemy forces. Your company is moving in a defile with steep high ground on either side. Supposedly, friendly forces occupy that high ground. Your lead platoon comes under heavy fire from the right; but the fire sounds like American weapons. The entire company is down and you have several men wounded. The fire continues and still more men are hurt. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: CO decided he had to stop the fire whether it came from friend or foe. He moved his lead platoon forward into a draw to provide cover and moved his rear platoon up another draw towards the high ground in order to find the firing force and identify it as friend or foe. After continued casualties, he assumed the fires were enemy, set up machine guns and suppressed the enemy fire.

SITUATION 2: You have set up your company in a perimeter on a hill to bivouac for the night. Due to the steepness of the terrain, you realize you are isolated and that no aid can get to you for many hours should you run into trouble. Around midnight, shadowy figures are reported by your sentinels, but each vanish before they can be engaged. An hour later, all hell breaks loose as machine guns and automatic weapons open up on your company from 200 yards away. However, no one can see any targets. What do you do?



HISTORICALLY: CO maintained his security posture after initial sightings. When the enemy fire opened up, he ordered his men to fire at muzzle flashes if they could see no targets or to simply fire to their front if they saw no muzzle flash. But he insisted that they return fire.

SITUATION 3: A tracer round starts a fire in the grass between you and the Bulgarian force to your front. Soon it is a bright blaze, but it does not illuminate the enemy positions. However, scores of Bulgarians rush out of the darkness and try to stamp out the blaze. Your machine gunners mow down one group after another. But no sooner does one group get chopped down than another springs up attempting to stamp out the fire. Within an hour, the ground is so thick with enemy dead that a man can cross the burned out area by stepping from body to body without once touching the ground. Your platoon leader on that flank reports that several of his men are getting sick with battle fatigue due to the amount of enemy dying in front of them. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander ordered the platoon leader to go from man to man and attempt to calm those who were really sick and to make sure that he kept strong men on the key weapons.

SITUATION 4: Another attack appears to be building in front of your third platoon. The terrain here is thick with bushes and scrub pines and interspersed with boulders. The enemy is very close and soon you can hear a weird chanting as the enemy tries to unnerve you. Although no targets appear, you order your men to fire into the thickets. Despite this, hand grenades begin falling in your positions; yet none of your people can detect the location of the throwers. The platoon leader and platoon sergeant are out of action. The weapons squad of the platoon has been killed or wounded. From a hill behind the enemy positions, three additional machine guns open up on that platoon and mortar rounds quickly

follow. You realize that with the amount of dead and wounded you now have, that with any more of this, retreat - should it become necessary -

will be impossible. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The CO called his battalion and requested permission to withdraw. He withdrew two platoons through a third which established a strong point rearguard. CO used his weapons platoon to carry the wounded. The enemy stopped to loot the C-rats and sleeping bags left behind. That helped the company get away. The company fell back to another hill where it linked in with a friendly company's outpost. Also, called in artillery fire on their positions and caught the looting enemy soldiers in the open.

SITUATION 5: Your company has moved back to a hill in front of friendly front lines. You call a halt here even though you will be exposed to enemy fires because you feel your men are too exhausted to continue. You go into a defensive perimeter on the hill, but are soon attacked again and suffer more casualties. The Battalion XO, now at your location, recommends that you fall back to the battalion's positions. But there is steep ground behind you and the route will take you into a valley surrounded by high ground. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The company commander left one platoon in position to hold off the enemy and started the rest down hill into the valley. The platoon left in contact did not wait for another attack, but fired all out at the enemy positions for ten minutes, then withdrew. Each time the enemy came close, the platoon would set up and pour concentrated fire at them, then fall back again.

SITUATION 6: You fall back with the wounded, leaving one platoon behind to cover the company. As your group moves through the valley, they hear the tramp of moving men a short distance away in the dark. You have about sixty men with you, including the wounded. You see an enemy battalion moving by you, but they do not see you. They move into a flat, open area; ideal for ambush. You have 3 M60's with you, but your force is not deployed. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The leader let the enemy pass and followed behind them, hoping to find friendly troops, and not get further engaged.

SITUATION 7: You follow the enemy over a bridge. You are helping to carry the wounded and your group falls well behind the lead security element. Suddenly your point element runs into some Bulgarians heading back towards you. Your point man challenges them, then opens fire. Those figures scatter, but more come up and begin firing. Half of your force breaks and runs to high ground behind you. You have ten healthy men around you and there is at least an enemy company coming at you. Your non-walking wounded are lying about 100 meters to your rear. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: This action actually occurred in the Korean War and the enemy were Chinese, not Bulgarians. A group of about ten men stood their ground and fired at hundreds of charging Chinese. As a result of the action of those ten soldiers, the enemy fell back and allowed the group to continue their retreat.

SITUATION 8: Daylight has arrived. Most of your men are now within friendly lines, but you are moving with one other man in the valley, looking for your missing soldiers. The rearguard platoon reaches you and you send them after the company. You climb to a small hill, see a Bulgarian camp of about 500 men and decide to observe it. While doing so, you see an American soldier stand up and begin limping towards a first aid tent. Then a Bulgarian levels his rifle at him and fires. The American pitches forward on his face. Angry,

the man with you says: "Let's attack those sons of bitches." What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Fell back to American lines.

SCENARIO 14

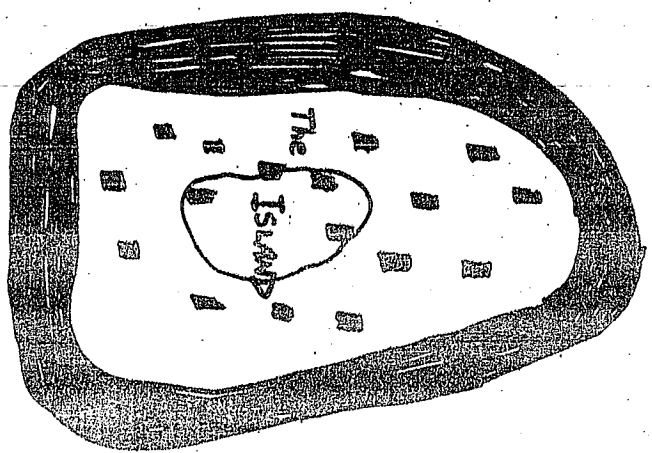
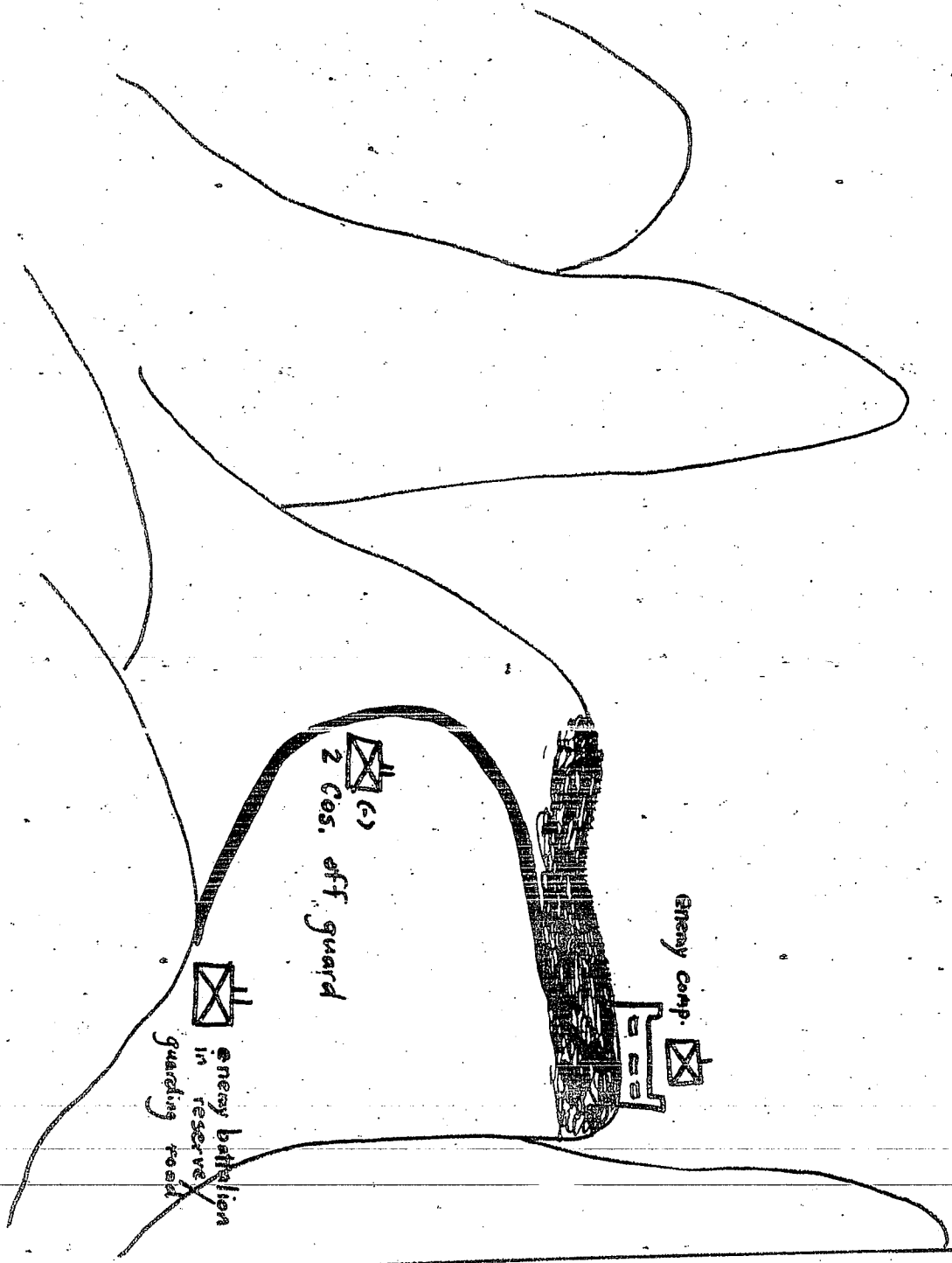
FROM: Charles Foley's
Commando Extraordinaire
CPT Williams/cw/5841

TO THE RESCUE

SITUATION 1: The U.S. is at war in Europe and has driven the Communists to the Polish border. During a conference of NATO foreign secretaries, America's Secretary of State is kidnapped by members of the German Socialist Worker's Party, who are trying to negotiate an end to the war. He is being held somewhere in Germany. Although Germany is in NATO hands, fighting continues and Warsaw Pact sympathizers persist. You are the commander of a special commando unit of Rangers/Special Forces, (choose one) assigned directly to U.S. Army HQ's which has been given the mission to rescue the Secretary. You have eighty personnel under your command, all of which are presently in hiding, while you, Army Intelligence, and the CIA attempt to locate the Secretary. You gain information that the Secretary is being held on a small island in the North Sea. A hasty investigation by you confirms the rumor. The streets of the island are patrolled by armed men. You cross over to the island disguised as a drunk sailor on shore leave. In talking with off duty guards on the island, you insist that the Secretary is dead and one of them grows impatient and blurts out that he saw the Secretary just that day. That night, you begin to gather your men to launch the mission when you receive orders from U.S. Army Headquarters, stating that the Secretary is being held in a small farming village 200 miles away and that you must attack immediately. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Commander flew directly to Army HQ's and showed them all the facts he had gathered which indicated that High Command was wrong. He outlined a plan and was given permission to disregard the orders and go on with his plan.

Note: Two completely different types of terrain must go on the same table.



SITUATION 2: You are convinced that the Secretary is on the island and have orders to lead the rescue attempt. The island is firmly in the Socialist Worker's Party's hands and the home containing the Secretary is patrolled by 20-25 armed men, while another 60-70 are in the town, rotating on and off guard duty. The town is small, with perhaps 400 families or so. The house is situated on a small hill in the center of town. It is surrounded by a low brick wall and is richly planted in gardens. The cooperation of all the Armed Services have been promised to you for this mission, including jump aircraft, helicopters, submarines, Navy warships, SCUBA teams, HALO detachments, and whatever else you need. When the Chief of Staff of the Army asks you how you intend to rescue the Secretary, what do you tell him?

HISTORICALLY: The commander placed his men aboard a ship and had the ship pay a navy courtesy visit to the town. Anti-aircraft guns, which could be used against personnel, and the ship's cannons would be used as fire support. The commandos would march peacefully right into the center of town and up to the house holding the captive. The idea was that if they acted as though they were supposed to be there, then no one would question their actions. But the plan could not be carried out, because the captive was moved the day the Commander returned from his interview with the High Command.

SITUATION 3: The Secretary has been turned over to the Warsaw Pact. Spies report that he has been spotted in the Transylvanian Alps of Rumania. American codebreakers intercept a message from Bucharest to Moscow which pinpoints the

Secretary's location in a castle straight out of a Dracula movie. The mountain ranges in this area tower to 10,000 ft. An aerial photograph reveals an ancient building dating from the days of Vlad Tepes, the model for the famous vampire. The walls are of stone and masonry brick. To its front is a gently rolling grass lawn perhaps 80 meters long, in front of which sheer rock cliffs drop off abruptly. There is but one road leading to the castle. Agents in the area inform you that at least one Romanian battalion guards the road, while a second

Battalion has responsibility for the guard on the castle itself. A company rotates on guard for 24 hours and then goes into reserve. The communists have no idea that we know of the Secretary's location. Moreover, they are confident that the castle is impregnable. You have all the support you desire. Helicopters can reach the mountaintop with one refuel stop. Parachutists could land on the lawn, but they would need high performance canopies to do so. What would you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander felt that the air was too thin for parachutists. He took about 120 men with him in glider planes so that their approach would be silent. His scheme was to crash land on the grassy knoll, rush into the castle and reach the captive within 3 minutes, before the guards could shoot him. He would use about 15 men on the attack on the building. The others were to block the road and maintain the landing strip in friendly hands.

SITUATION 4: You are at the head of eight gliders silently dropping towards your objective. Your orders are to abandon the mission and glide safely into the valley below if you cannot make a safe landing. Two of your gliders were broken on takeoff and another two were lost enroute. As you drop towards the castle you see that the supposedly grassy landing strip is strewn with boulders. Rescue helicopters are available in the valley below. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander disobeyed orders and ordered his pilot to crash land as near the hotel as he could.

SITUATION 5: You leap from your glider. A guard at the door to the castle stares dumbfounded at you. You have but 10 men with you, one of whom speaks Rumanian. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander rushed by the guard and into the building. He smashed the radio transmitter with his weapon and rushed through the building until he found the Secretary. He placed the captive in the care of one man and used the others to secure the building and hold the prisoners. Then, he called for the commander of the unit and gave him one minute to surrender or fight. The commander surrendered.

SITUATION 6: You return outdoors with the Secretary. About 60 of your men have made it to the objective alive. Most of them are set up in fighting positions at the lower end of the open area blocking the road. You run the stars and stripes up the flagpole as the signal for the rescue helicopters to come in. For ten minutes you wait, but there are no helicopters. Although you have captured the Secretary without firing a single shot nor killing a single Rumanian, you fear that the enemy battalion guarding the road and the battalion in reserve will soon grow suspicious of what is happening at the castle. Time is critical. You have radio contact with a small 2 seat spotter plane overhead. Although there is no airstrip, you think there is a chance that the plane could land and take off from the 80 meters of grass to the front of the castle. You put your troops to work clearing a strip of boulders and call in the plane. It makes the dangerous landing and you explain your plan to its pilot. You do not know if the helicopters will come to rescue your men. Furthermore, the pilot tells you that the plane will just barely clear your runway with the weight of him and the Secretary. However, the President of the United States has personally charged you with the responsibility for the safe return of the Secretary of State and you feel that you must accompany him until he is firmly in safe hands. Do you climb on or stay?

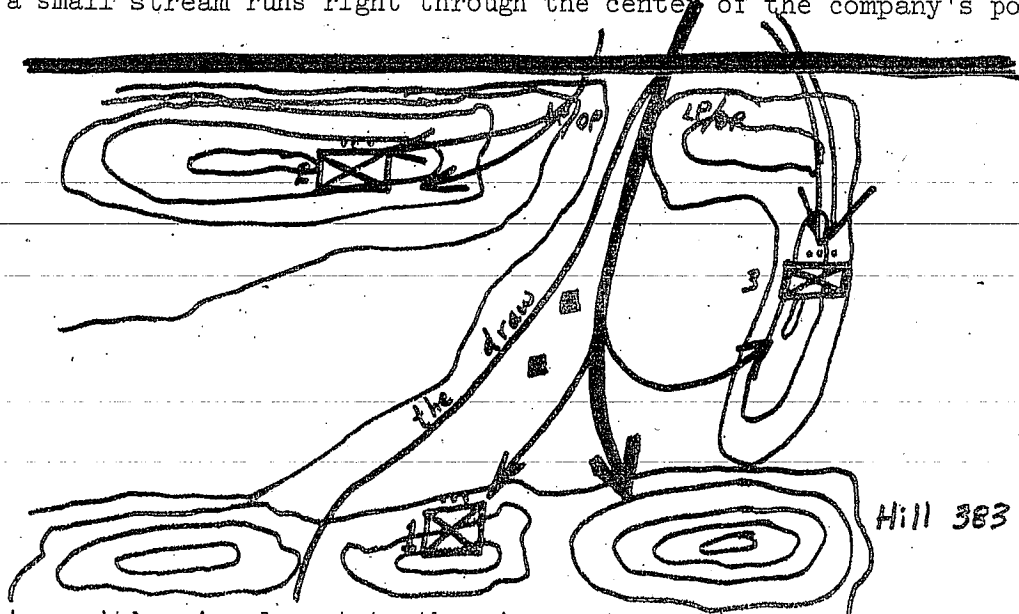
HISTORICALLY: The commander was a German Commando named Major Otto Skorzeny, and the captive was Mussolini. Skorzeny gambled on the ability of the pilot. He flew out with Mussolini and made it. His soldiers also got out, but the book does not say how.

SCENARIO 15

FROM: SLA Marshall's The River and
the Gauntlet
CPT Williams/cw/5841

THE RIVER AND THE HILL

SITUATION 1: You are the second platoon leader in a company fighting in mountainous terrain against a huge army of light infantry. Your battalion has been cut off by a strong Communist offensive which has left it several miles ahead of the location where American forces are regrouping for the defense. Your men are well rested and well supplied with ammunition. Your company has occupied positions on a series of short ridges and low hills overlooking a small river. The key position is Hill 383 on the company's right flank. The ridges are extremely rocky with several steep dropoffs. The area to your front is covered with scrub oak, stunted pines, and briar thickets. There is both cover and concealment for enemy forces to your front. A draw with a small stream runs right through the center of the company's positions.



Your platoon's position is closest to the river, atop a hill facing the river with a rocky cliff too steep to climb. You have a one man LP/OP near the

intersection of the draw and the river. Around 2100 that night, that man opens up on forces to his front. He reports that he has seen four or five enemy soldiers and requests permission to fall back. The man is not particularly reliable and you note that there has been no other fire from his direction aside from the short burst from his weapons. What do you tell him?

HISTORICALLY: Platoon leader told him to stay put and report on the enemy's action.

SITUATION 2: You send a second man to the LP/OP. After about 30 minutes, they open fire and keep up the fire. You can get no information from them over the phone. Mortar rounds begin falling directly on their location. Friendly fire from that location then stops, but the men from the LP/OP do not reenter your lines. Before you can react to their aid, handgrenades begin to fall amidst your positions. The enemy forces are obviously within 15 meters of your positions, yet you can see nothing of them. At this point, you realize that your positions are not as good as you might wish them to be. The fires of two of your machine guns are masked in the direction you wish them to fire by the positions of two of your squads. Your men are firing into the bushes to their front and lobbing back grenades upon the Commies. You have suffered no casualties. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The LP/OP escaped up the draw and linked up with another platoon. The platoon leader withdrew his men to the crest of the hill, even with the machine guns, and continued to fight. However, this left the draw uncovered by fire.

SITUATION 3: You have withdrawn your men to the crest of the hill, set up in new positions and found that you have 16 men still fighting. The Commies are working their way through the rocks toward your new line. But you have good fields of fire; so good, in fact, that your troops are soon running low on ammo. You send a runner to the company to bring back more and redistribute what you

In the lull, the enemy works up onto your flanks and begins lobbing grenades into your positions. You have 10 men remaining; with 2 dead soldiers and three too badly wounded to walk. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The platoon leader pulled back farther using some of his men to carry the wounded and the rest to cover their withdrawal. He suffered more casualties and soon was forced to abandon the entire hill.

(EXERCISE 4): You have fallen back with 7 men and linked in with the first platoon in the center of your company's position. You are occupying positions in the draw overlooking several thatched farm huts. You stay with the one machine gun you have left in a good position with excellent fields of fire into the draw. The other four men of your "platoon" are placed in supporting positions to protect the machine gun. However, you do not know if everyone coming up the draw will be enemy. There are very likely several of your soldiers still alive and still attempting to reach friendly forces. Shadowy figures are moving in the draw. At 25 meters, you challenge them, receive no reply, and open fire. More figures bob and weave to your front, rushing from cover to cover. About 100 meters to your front is a thatched hut. Near it a machine gun opens up on your position and seriously hinders the fire from your positions. Moreover, you cannot pinpoint its position. You can get no illumination or mortar support

and still cannot determine if all the figures to your front are the enemy. The thatched hut beside the enemy machine gun is now becoming a serious problem as it actively blocks your fire from behind it. Now an enemy mortar sets up behind

and rounds begin to fall closer and closer to your location. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The problem of no illumination, as well as the problem with the house blocking fires, was solved by firing right into its roof and setting it afire with the tracer rounds. The heat and light drove away the enemy. The problem with the mortar was solved by firing a recoilless rifle right at the gun, thus wiping out it and its crew.

SITUATION 5: You assume command of the company. You have 70 men remaining in your company and that includes all the reinforcements which battalion can spare. Your position is being fired upon by light weapons from Hill 383. Now mortars begin falling on your positions and on the battalion C.P. from that hill. It is the linchpin of the battalion position as it covers your company's lines as well as the company on your right and the battalion rear. But you still have enemy forces in the draw and on 3d platoon's hill. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Tried to recapture the hill, but was repulsed. The next morning, the Chinese unexpectedly withdrew across the river, despite having won the key terrain. That was all that saved the American regiment.

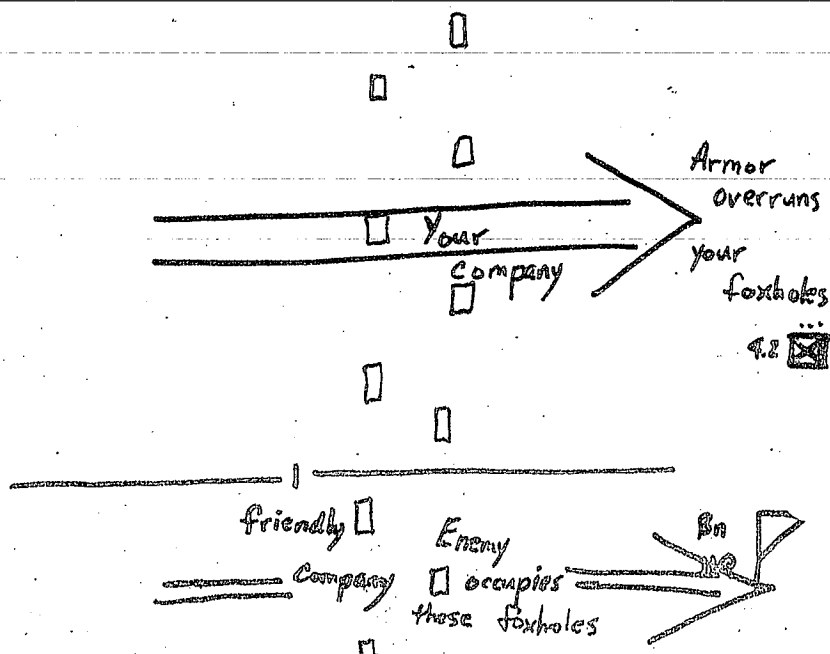
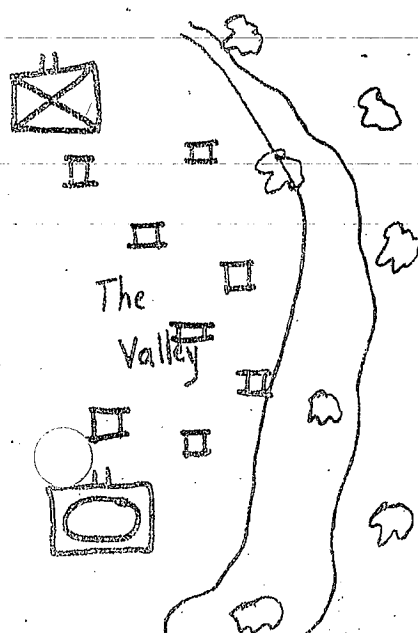
SCENARIO 16

FROM: DA PAM 20-269 Small Unit Actions
During the German Campaign in Russia
 CPT Williams/cw/5841

OVERRUN BY ARMOR

SITUATION 1: You command a company of about 80 men who have been fighting in Russia for several weeks straight. It is early December. The terrain on which you are situated is level, with no trees, shrubs, or buildings which could provide cover or concealment. However, you have excellent observation and fields of fire. You are on the battalion's right flank, defending a 500m sector. Your foxholes are as solid as concrete due to the freezing ground. You have six M60 MG's, six Dragons, and some LAWS and DEMO. However, both of your TOWs have been destroyed. Although you have your basic load of ammunition, no resupply will be possible for several days. Ammunition shortage has also hampered your artillery support and you must be sparing of its use. On the night of 3 December, you hear engines betraying the presence of tanks in a valley 2000m to your front. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Commander sent out patrols, checked his positions to steady the troops, notified battalion, and waited. (The discussion should include talk on the composition of the patrol, its weapons and personnel, action on enemy contact, mission, etc.).



SITUATION 2: At dawn, a heavy fog settles over the ground severely limiting your observation. 40 T72 tanks, followed by dismounted infantry, come into view. They are spread across the battalion's frontage, but the 10 tanks in your sector are suddenly through your positions and beyond your foxholes. The company on your left flank has been driven from its position and Russian infantry has now occupied their foxholes. They are firing into your left flank, while enemy infantry to your front makes a frontal attack. You can see the T72s overrunning the battalion mortar position and the battalion CP behind the company on your left. Your foxholes are being crisscrossed with enemy fire. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Despite the precarious situation, the company held its ground. The frozen foxholes did not collapse under the weight of the tanks rolling overhead, and the Russian infantry to the front was pinned down by machine gun fire. The commander also called for artillery on the infantry to his front. Several of the Russian tanks were destroyed by shaped charges after they passed over the foxholes.

SITUATION 3: You are still in your fighting positions. Darkness is falling. The Russian tanks, leary of your positions after their losses in the morning, have fallen back to the valley from whence they began their attack. The bodies of the Soviet dead infantrymen are scattered across your front. However, Soviet soldiers still occupy the foxholes of the company on your left. But a truce seems to have been established as neither group fires on the other. You cannot talk to battalion and do not know where they are. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The left wing platoon of the German company attacked the Russian held foxholes and captured them without firing a shot. The Russians were taken by surprise because their soldiers had been drinking vodka to "keep warm" and maintain "courage".

SITUATION 4: Your battalion counterattacks and regains all its positions, capturing several hundred Soviet prisoners in the process. As the German account of the fight states, "once again an experienced infantry unit had demonstrated that a seemingly hopeless situation can be mastered, provided the men do not

the way to panic". However, you have only 50 men remaining and many of those

are wounded. You are concerned about the mental strain imposed on your

soldiers. The next day, the Russians launch another assault. Your positions

are exposed to a one hour artillery barrage. That is followed by an assault

of Russian tanks with the infantry riding in on top. Once more, your positions

are penetrated. But this time you have Russian infantry, as well as armor, in

your rear. Your force is completely cut off from the rest of the battalion.

Your 50 man company is severely short of ammo. In addition, among the wounded,

you have some soldiers in real need of medical attention, which you cannot give

them. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander held in position. He felt his mission was to defend,

and since his positions were strong, he felt he could best do it where he was.

The next morning, his battalion counterattacked yet again, drove the Russians
from the site, and extracted his wounded.

SCENARIO 17

FROM: Small Unit Actions During the
German Campaign in Russia
CPT Williams/cw/5841

CITY FIGHT AT ENGLER

SITUATION 1: You are leading a platoon fighting in an industrial area in Poland. It is January and the temperature drops to -50°F at night. Snow is 3 feet deep. Soviet forces are believed to be weak and incapable of launching an offensive; but then, so too are American forces. Your battalion has the mission to defend the town of Engler and block Russian advances along the road to Lodz. The battalion has dug snow positions amidst the houses on the edge of town because it is impossible to dig into the frozen ground. To the east lies about 2000 meters of open ground which rises into a forested ridge on which Soviet forces are massing.

Your platoon occupies one section of the town and is responsible for patrolling to its front. Due to high winds from the east which churn the snow into the air, you have to post sentries every 20 meters to your front. In addition, you have to relieve them every 30 minutes due to the cold. During the day your positions are struck on several occasions by extremely accurate mortar fire. That night, your sentries report at least an enemy company on skies moving towards your sector. You order the sentries back and have the machine guns open fire. But the guns will not fire; they are frozen shut. About 25 Russian ski troops succeed in seizing a building in your sector. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Brought the machine guns in doors in order to melt sufficiently so they could function later. Immediately attacked the Russian held building so that he could clear them out of his sector. Also, called for mortar fire on the ridgeline to his front to hit any other forces before they could attack his positions.

SITUATION 2: You have cleared the Russian occupied building in your sector and placed your machine guns in buildings with warming fires. That night you hear loud cries and shouting from the forest. From experience, you know that the Russian commissars are "reorganizing" their units by shooting un-cooperative soldiers and leaders. An attack the next morning is beaten back and you are surprised to see 20 Russians, while retreating to the woods, shot down by fire from the woods. After the attack, hundreds of Russian soldiers move to the edge of the forest and build solid snow positions with overhead cover made of wood and packed with ice. That night, while you are touring your OP's, several figures appear out of the dark and say in good English, "Hello, 9th Division. Don't fire. We're American." Your sentry calls out the password, but they claim they are from the 7th Division and don't know your password. They come closer and you see they are in American uniforms. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Sentries allowed them to get within 20 feet, at which time the Russians (dressed as German soldiers) hurled handgrenades at them and killed or wounded the two sentries in that area. Then they rushed into the nearest house, followed by other Russians, and chased the occupants back to their alternate position.

SITUATION 3: The enemy has penetrated your positions again and occupied one of your squad's buildings. Now they are attacking that squad's alternate position. From the first building, where they have set up 2 machine guns, they beat off a squad you sent to regain the building. Now they fire rifle grenades into the second house (alternate position) which catches fire.

The squad then rushes out of that building and completely opens up that sector of your defense. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Organized another relief squad, reinforced it with personnel from platoon headquarters, and picked up some more forces from company headquarters. In addition, he grabbed the squad which had abandoned both of its positions and led the combined force on a counterattack. Throwing handgrenades and firing their weapons on the run, they drove the Russians

out of Engler. However, a Russian commissar and 8 soldiers defended the building to the last man and all had to be killed.

SITUATION 4: You have counterattacked and regained the positions you lost, killing a fanatical group of Russians to the last man in order to do so. You find some sophisticated commo gear left in that building by the Russians. It is of the type used at their regimental headquarters. What do you do?

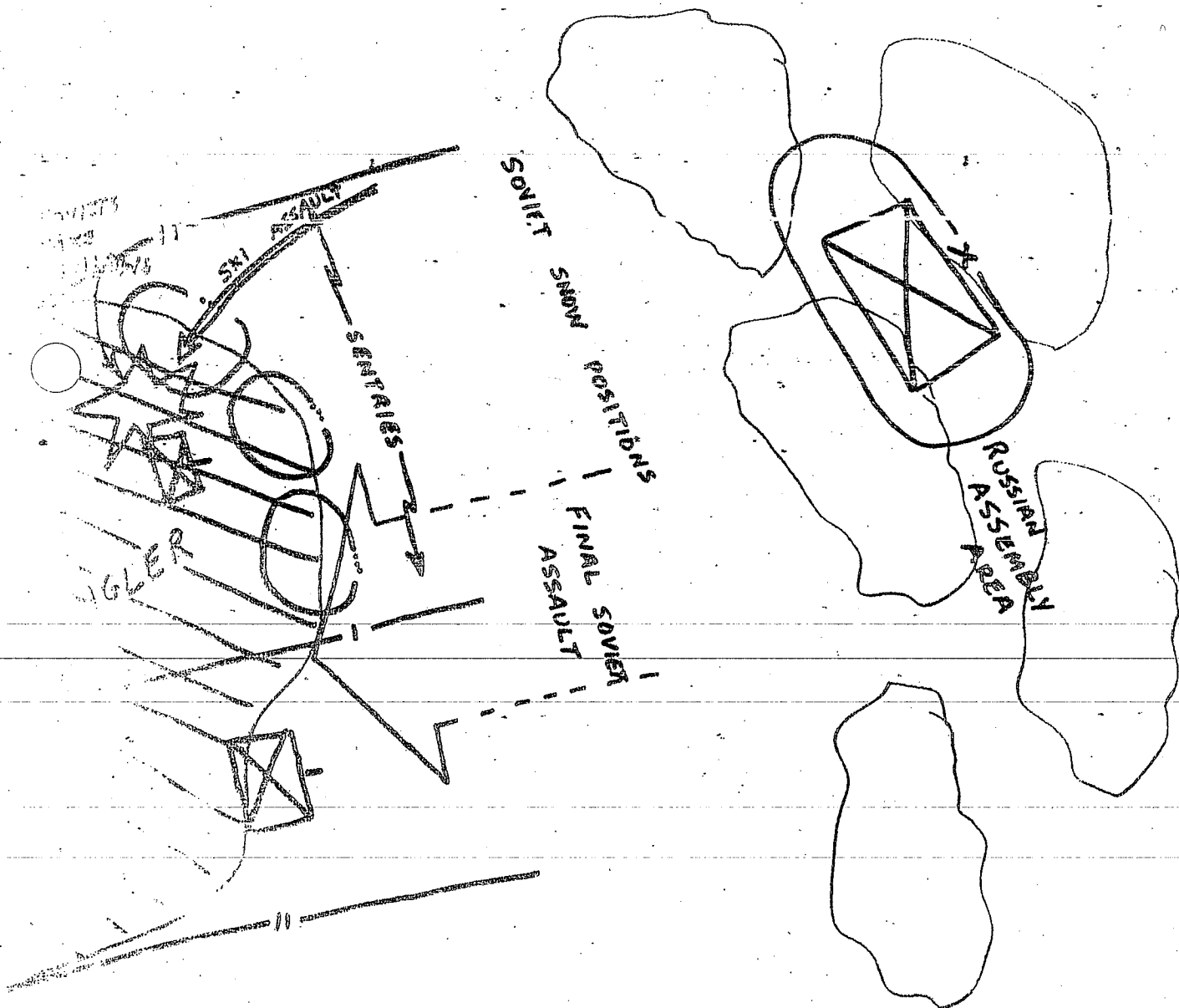
HISTORICALLY: Commander reasoned that such equipment indicated that a sizeable Soviet force was in the area and probably waiting to exploit any advantage gained. So he called for artillery on the woodline on the ridge, assuming that that would be the Russian jumpoff point for such an attack. The fires probably stopped an attack because the rest of the night passed quietly.

SITUATION 5: Just before lunch, Russian artillery opens up on Engler and continues heavily for 4 hours. One of your sentries reports that there are a large number of small piles of snow in his sector that were not there the day before. Since the corpses from the day before are gone, you tell him that the snow piles probably contain those bodies. Nevertheless, you feel uneasy and go take a look. Sure enough, there are a large number of snow piles, yet the only movement you can detect comes from the woodline. But your sentries swear that the snow piles move. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Lieutenant told his sentries to fire into each snow pile. After doing so, they reported no further movement. Russian prisoners later reported that 40 men had been ordered to move under cover of darkness as close to the town as possible, to dig into the snow and wait until nightfall, when they were to launch a surprise attack. Most of those soldiers were killed by the German fire, but those that survived spent 10 more hours in the snow without being able to even shift their bodies. Yet not one suffered frostbite.

SITUATION 6: That night, at 0330, you suddenly hear wild screaming from just beyond your positions on the edge of the town. Rushing from your CP, you see hundreds of Russians, shoulder to shoulder, assaulting your buildings. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Fortunately for the German platoon leader, his men were awake and their weapons were warm. The Russians attacked in column with no gaps between units or men. They marched to within 50 meters of the German lines without a word, then assaulted wildly. But only a few were able to make it into the German positions. They were raked by fire and destroyed in a half hour of fighting. Row after row of soldiers were mowed down, yet repeated waves kept coming. Within 2 or 3 yards of German positions, Russian dead were piled to a height of several feet. The town held because the men were alert and had learned to take proper care of their weapons.



SCENARIO 18

FROM: Combat Actions in Korea
Chapter 3
CPT Williams/cw/5841

DEFEND THE GUNS

SITUATION 1: You are the 1SG of a battery of 105's in direct support of an infantry battalion. Your battery is part of an American force which has been rushed to Korea in response to a North Korean invasion of the South. The powerful enemy drive has blasted through the South Koreans and the U.S. 2nd and 82nd Divisions which were first on the scene. The 9th Division replaces the battered 2nd Division on the new defensive line. You move into a position within a shallow bowl formed by a low ridge. A railroad track runs through the front edge of that bowl and since the bowl is too small to accomodate all your guns, you place one gun to the north edge of the tracks. Your FDC is dug in on the south side of the tracks but your signal personnel and your headquarters men are set up in several Korean houses north of the tracks. Due to North Korean infiltrators, you have kept your battery as close together as possible and have set up ten defensive positions around your guns, including four 50 cal's and 3 M60 machine guns. In addition, 2 quad 50's are in your sector, but they are not assigned to your commander. There

are several American infantry companies scattered around the area, but you have not coordinated with them and you have had little contact with their soldiers. Your battery is alert and firing a mission in support of the infantry around 0230 one night. You are checking your positions and have reached the commo people when you see three figures walking down the road dragging something. What do you do?

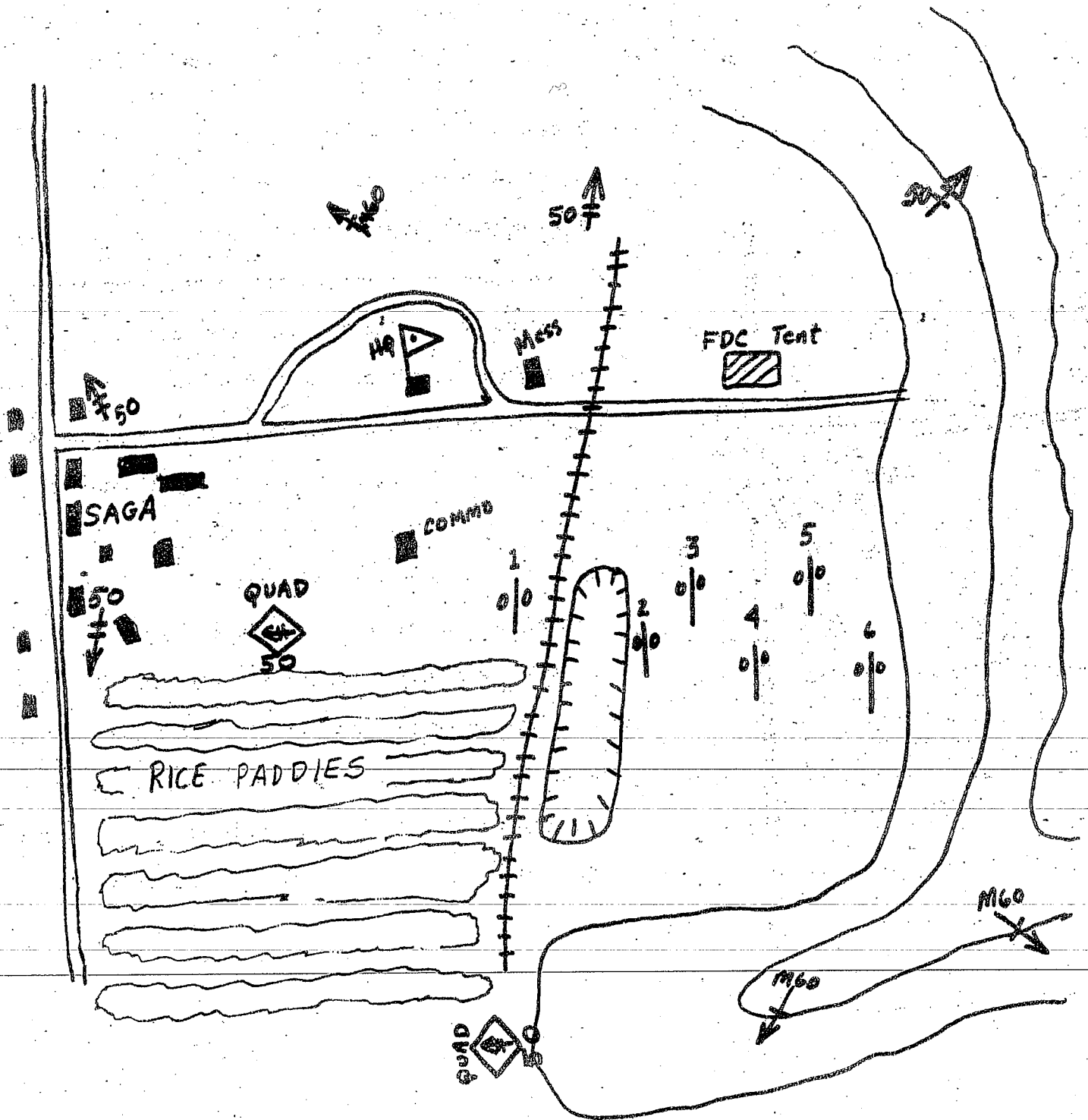
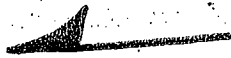
HISTORICALLY: LSG asked "Who's there?" When he got no response, he ordered the figures to halt. They continued walking. Then they pulled the thing they were dragging into a position along the road. The dragged object proved to be a heavy machine gun and the three figures were North Koreans. They opened fire on the battery and killed several people immediately.

SITUATION 2: You see the three figures on the road open fire with a heavy machine gun. At the same time, three MG's on the ridge open fire on the gunners in their pits and still another heavy machine gun opens up from the town of Saga. A North Korean soldier suddenly appears beside you and empties an AK47 into your commo sergeant and CBR NCO who are standing a few feet in front of you. The Korean then throws a grenade into the hut and disappears behind the building. You race towards the guns and run into one of the 50 cal positions, but it is manned by only one man. As you reach him, a North Korean team comes within 30 meters of you and begins to set up their MG pointing at you. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Tried to fire the MG, but the gun failed to function. The sergeant (actually this situation happened to another NCO) ran across the rice paddies in the direction of an American infantry company where he had seen a tank earlier in the day. He eventually returned with help.

SITUATION 3: You run to the mess tent to organize a force to protect the CP. You find four men in the building and order them to grab their weapons and set up in a perimeter to the north and east of the CP. They rush out the door and right in the middle of 15-20 North Koreans mingling around. The lead man is shot and you pull him back into the building. What do you do?

N



HISTORICALLY: This actually happened to several PFC's. They pulled the wounded man back into the building and tried to get out another door but ran into more North Koreans. They hid in the corner of the room. They did not prepare nasty positions or make any other effort to escape or fight.

SITUATION 4: All of the above action occurred in the first 4 or 5 minutes of the fight. But you know that already your commo section is either dead or cut off and that the mission has been stopped as your crews lie in cover in the gun pits. Tracer rounds from Saga and the ridgeline crisscross over your gun positions. With the enemy already inside your defensive perimeter, you know that all the firepower positioned around your guns is useless since friendly machine gun fire would probably now hit friendly troops. Battalion is on the radio wanting to know why the mission has been stopped. Cries for medics ring out from the gun positions. Suddenly there is a flash and explosion; gun #5's ammo pile has been hit! From the blaze of its light, you can see North Koreans rushing towards your guns. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: This actually happened to the battery XO, who ran to gun #3 and had them lower their tubes and fire against the ridgeline. He also figured that the crew of gun #5 must be dead or gone, so he fired on that position. The two howitzers fired about 18 rounds against the ridge and the runners on #3 fired their small arms and grenades at #5 for 10 minutes. Then the XO ordered the crew to fall back to the gully by the tracks. Supporting fire was given by the two soldiers who crawled behind a 50 cal and poured 1300 rounds into the North Koreans. The battery commander attempted to make certain that all his people were out of the gun pits by rushing from gun to gun.

SITUATION 5: The battery has regrouped in the gully beside the tracks. The medics are working feverishly to handle the wounded. The enemy is reluctant to attack this stronghold and fire slackens. You have battalion on the phone. What do you tell them?

HISTORICALLY: Called for fire on the ridgeline and on the hill in front of the guns. The fires were right on target. Then the tank which one of the soldiers had run to get came rolling up. The tank helped chase off the North Koreans, but scattered rifle fire continued until daylight when the enemy retreated and the battery could return to its guns. Seven men were dead and 12 wounded. The guns were undamaged and the battery continued its mission.

THOUGHTS:

1. Batteries must select positions which can both accomplish the mission and be defended without interrupting the mission.
2. All-around defense:
 - a. Primary and secondary sectors of fire assigned to each tube.
 - b. Complete cannon coverage of perimeter.
 - c. Fire planned on all avenues of approach.
 - d. Integrate battery's automatic weapons, small arms, and rocket launchers.
 - e. Individual fighting positions assigned.
 - f. Reserve force established.
3. Security:
 - a. Alarm system established
 - b. OPs/LPs
 - c. Contact with friendly units
4. Check all weapons.

SCENARIO 19

FROM: Small Unit Actions During
the German Campaign in Russia.
CPT Williams/cw/5841

ARMORED DUPLICITY

SITUATION 1: You command a company of 17 tanks fighting Czech forces in Germany. It is a warm, sunny day. The terrain on which you fight is gently rolling grassland with patches of swamp. A railroad track on top of a steep embankment slices across the center of the fields towards the small town of Wilder. A light infantry battalion attacked Wilder yesterday but has encountered strong Czech resistance and is bogged down a mile southwest of Wilder. The roads in Wilder lead to bridges over a river which are critical to the division's mission. The Czechs you have been fighting in recent weeks have been poorly armed with anti-tank weapons; but you do not know the size force that occupies the town, nor its weapons and equipment. You are given the mission to relieve the bogged down infantry battalion so that it can break into the town and capture the bridges. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander decided to attack from two directions. One force assaulted directly towards the town. The second force crossed the railroad tracks and swung south and east in order to attack south of the town. However, the unit did not conduct a good reconnaissance, had no infantry with them in support, and made no coordination with the bogged down infantry to provide support.

SITUATION 2: You have divided your company into two forces for the attack on Wilder. Team JACK DANIELS led by your XO - is made up of eight tanks from first and second platoon. Team JOHNNY WALKER - led by you - has the remaining tanks. JACK DANIELS is ordered to attack straight on Wilder while JOHNNY WALKER will swing south over the railroad tracks, turn east and attack the Czech forces holding up the infantry. You expect that the Czechs are dug

in south of the town. You are unable to coordinate with the infantry unit which is bogged down and have no accompanying infantry with you. Team JACK DANIELS assaults through weak resistance, overruns some Czech infantry and bypasses an artillery battery which is set up facing west. Suddenly, about 800 meters from town, that team receives devastating fire from Czech tanks which have been cleverly concealed among houses, farmyards, and barns on the edge of town. The Czechs held their fire until the last moment before springing the ambush. As team JACK DANIELS veers to escape the onslaught, they receive point-blank fire from the artillery battery they had bypassed. You are enroute on your attack when you receive desperate calls for help and the news that JACK DANIELS has already lost five tanks. However, the steep railroad embankment obstructs your path to their position. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The German commander continued east, bypassed the enemy positions and swung north into town hitting the Russian tanks from the rear. The Russians had not expected an attack from this direction and lost 25 to 30 tanks, while the German force lost none. The Russians were inferior in equipment and training, but their discipline and craftiness enabled them to pull off an excellent ambush which eliminated more than half of a German tank battalion.

(Points to consider: 1) Reconnaissance. 2) The use of accompanying infantry. Could infantry have captured that Russian battery before it caught the tanks in a cross-fire? 3) Should the force be split as it was when the enemy situation is obscure? Had the two units been employed in depth instead of in parallel, perhaps the second force could have neutralized the artillery battery or otherwise come directly to the aid of the first unit.)

SITUATION 3: You have 12 tanks remaining in your company and have succeeded in destroying about twenty Czech tanks by an attack into their rear by JOHNNY WALKER. The bogged down infantry battalion is now clearing Wilder when you receive word that a large number of Czechs are escaping north of town. Your

battalion is engaged elsewhere and you have had no word from them for hours.

But angry over the loss of five tanks, you determine to end all Czech resistance in and around Wilder. Skirting the northern edge of town, your company is

heading towards the fleeing Czechs when you find yourself in a semi-circle of six anti-tank guns firing at you. The Czech guns fire a high velocity, 120 mm round, but you see no Sappers or guided missiles. Several of your lead tanks receive direct hits that knock off their tracks. They continue to fire, but cannot move. What do you do?

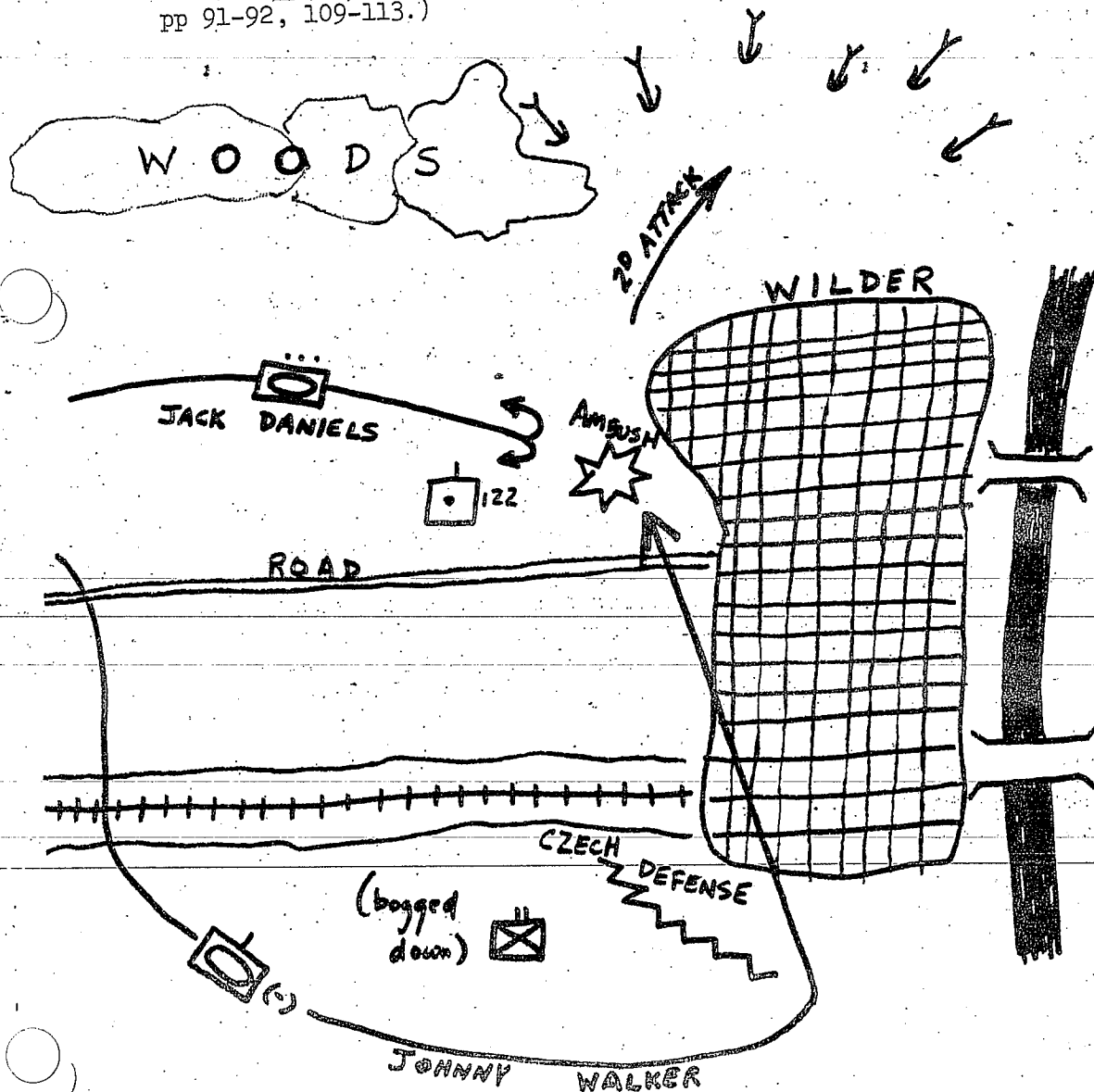
HISTORICALLY: The Germans returned fire, knocked out the guns quickly, but continued to take hits from anti-tank guns. The Russians were emplaced in defilade positions so that the muzzles of their weapons were just above the ground. Between each gun, they had placed a dummy gun and partially concealed it. It was the dummy guns that the Germans brought under fire originally. Moreover, the Russians had placed their weapons so that whenever a German tank turned to engage a dummy gun, it would expose its flanks and tracks to a real gun, which would then engage it. The Germans lost a number of tanks before they realized their error. (Points to consider: 1) Attack immediately or call for artillery? 2) Formation for the attack? 3) Supporting fires? 4) Should you tell the crews from the disabled tanks to continue to fight? 5) Route of attack? 6) Should you ask for artillery support?)

SITUATION 4: You have destroyed the Czech forces around Wilder and the infantry has seized the bridges over the river. However, you now have only nine tanks in your company. A brigade of light infantry was being moved by trucks to Wilder when the convoy was ambushed by Czech T-62 tanks operating from the woods flanking the road. Battalion orders your company to move to that brigade and escort it to Wilder. To accomplish this mission

you are given a platoon of five tanks. Just after you link up with the brigade, ten T-62s emerge from hide positions in gullies on either side of the trucks and open fire from 2000 meters. You use the cover of the ground to protect your tanks and maneuver toward those tanks. However, the Communists slip into the woods. As they do so, you begin to receive anti-tank fire from dug in positions to your right and left. You no longer blow them away, then the elusive T-62s appear again to your front and open fire on the convoy. The same tactic is employed again; the T-62s slip into the woods and anti-tank guns open up on you from your flank. You

call in artillery fire, but it does not stop the effective harassment. You have already lost two more tanks, as well as three trucks from the convoy, and with more than five miles to Wilder, you realize that you must stop these elusive tactics. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The Germans used air reconnaissance to notify their tanks of the movement of the Russian tanks. They kept a recon plane in the air at all times and reported the hideouts of the Russian tanks by radio and flares. Also, when the Germans committed their tanks in the woods to attack the tanks and guns, they sent infantry and engineers with them because the tank crews were unable to see or hear enough on their own to move safely. The result of the air-ground teamwork with the tanks was that the Russian armor was driven away with heavy losses. (SOURCES: DA Pam 20-269. Historical study: Small Unit Actions During the German Campaign in Russia. Jul 53. pp 91-92, 109-113.)



SCENARIO 20

FROM: DA Pam 20-269, Small Unit
Actions During the German Campaign
in Russia.

CFT Williams/cw/5841

TANK ASSAULT ON ALLENFELDT

SITUATION 1: You are a platoon leader in an armored company. Your battalion has been in a rear area for two weeks repairing its equipment, training its new replacements, and resting its veterans. However, a massive Russian attack has broken through American positions in Germany and is heading west. Today, your division has been rushed to the crisis area and given the mission to stop the Russian advance so that a fresh defensive position can be formed. Around 1900, your company is formed into a tank heavy team consisting of two tank platoons, a mech platoon, and a self-propelled artillery battery. Your commander is given the mission to launch a surprise attack on the village of Allenfeldt, about twenty miles away, in order to seize and hold two bridges over a small river, prior to the division's advance. The company is to attack at dawn the next morning. The team commander calls you to his CP and tells you that he cannot organize, move and refuel his team to attack by dawn. Therefore, he orders your platoon-reinforced with two APCs - to form an advance guard that will drive along a road to a wooded area just short of Allenfeldt, refuel, conduct a surprise attack, and hold the bridges until the rest of the team can join you by 0800. The C.O. wants to send a fuel truck with you to top off your tanks because he feels that tanks going into combat must carry sufficient fuel to assure their mobility throughout a day's fighting. You have one hour to issue your orders and move out. First light will arrive about 0500 and the Russians are thought to have about a company of light infantry in

and around the town. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The book does not cover the leader's hasty planning duties. However, the following ought to be considered: a) formations and order of movement b) refueling plan c) Reconnaissance d) security during refueling and reconnaissance e) immediate actions in the event of ambushes, incoming artillery, hasty engagements f) use of blackout drive g) buttoned up vs. hatches open h) security for the gasoline truck i) use of the infantry j) security on far side of bridges k) counter-attack plan if driven off of bridges. The movement to the refueling point was made without incident. The tanks drove without lights and the driver and TC kept their hatches open. Sentries were posted at 50 meter intervals around the refuel point while the refuel truck drove up and down two rows of tanks dropping off cans of fuel. Vehicles and weapons were checked and coffee delivered. Battalion was informed of the situation by the returning fuel truck.

SITUATION 2: You have made the movement to the refueling point undetected.

The APC you sent ahead to secure the woods reports that there are no Russians in the area. Two German citizens have been captured and inform you that there are Russians in Allenfeldt. From their story you guess that there is now a motorized rifle company in the town. While your tanks are refueling, you conduct a reconnaissance on the APC. Between the woods and the town are open fields planted with grain and interspersed with isolated trees and a small hill to the south. Observation is good to about 1,000 meters. You plan to cross the fields quickly and set up three tanks south of Allenfeldt to provide covering fire while the two remaining tanks and the APCs race into the town and capture the two bridges. Your platoon moves out, but near Allenfeldt you are suddenly hit by flanking fire from Russian tanks and anti-tank guns. Your lead tank is immediately disabled.

What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander ordered a withdrawal. Since the element of surprise no longer existed, he abandoned the attack and waited for the arrival of the main body. He reported the failure of his mission immediately. The main body arrived shortly thereafter and its commander decided to attack immediately before the Russians could receive reinforcements.

SITUATION 3: You retreat to the woods and await the arrival of the re-

remainder of the team. Your company commander and the entire team arrives on the spot and he decides to conduct an immediate assault. He orders the 2d platoon to conduct a feint attack along the same route that you took and to fire on targets of opportunity across the river. Meanwhile, your platoon (without the APCs) is to lead the main attack around the small hill south of Allenfeldt. You are to attack straight across the Gary Bridge, drive into the village, turn east, and capture the Jenny Bridge. The mech infantry will follow you over the Gary Bridge and then secure the Jenny Bridge while you pursue the enemy. The artillery battery will set up on the edge of the woods and provide supporting fire, including a smoke screen. Under no circumstances are you to allow your platoon to get bogged down in the village; you must seize the Jenny Bridge fast. Ten minutes after second platoon begins the attack, you lead your force out of the woods, heading for the hill. 500 meters from the hill, machine gun and anti-tank fire opens up on you from the top of the hill. Their first shots miss. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Platoon commander slowed down and asked for instructions (in the middle of the attack!). His commander radioed him to continue the attack around the hill and engage only those Russians obstructing his attack. The platoon spread out and neutralized the enemy forces, then signaled to the commander that it was ready for the bridge assault.

SITUATION 4: You eliminated the enemy fire from the hill and crossed the Gary Bridge. Russian infantry were arrayed in front of the Jenny Bridge, but you broke through their resistance and seized the bridge. The mech infantry relieves your platoon on the Jenny Bridge and your force pursues the Russians into the woods for a while before returning and going into reserve. While your platoon is pulling maintenance on your tracks in Allenfeldt, a single T-72 tank emerges from the woods where you refueled

and opens fire on the artillery battery. The arty unit struggles to drag its guns into the cover of the woods and comes into town after losing two tubes and a half-dozen soldiers. The tank then sets up in the woods with excellent cover. It commands the road, destroying or chasing off twelve resupply trucks which are trying to resupply the company. A patrol sent out finds no evidence of a general Russian attack. There appears only to be the one tank, although there are Russian infantrymen in the woods supporting it. Attempts to evacuate the company's wounded are stopped by the tank. Several attempts to bypass it resulted in the trucks getting stuck in the mud or being chased off by the infantry. The company commander sends two TOWs to destroy the tank. You lead your platoon to the top of the hill to watch the action. The TOWs open fire from 1500 meters with your boys cheering them on. But the first shots bounce off the cover, and others cannot penetrate the tank's frontal armor. Eight shots fail to knock out the T-72. Finally, the tank locates the position of the TOWs and with two shots blows them both into the sky. The commander calls you and orders you to clear the road. After what you have seen, what do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The Germans moved cautiously forward. Well concealed, they crept to within 900 meters and were about ready to open fire when the Russian heavy tank beat them to the punch and blew away the weapon system (in reality, an 88MM flank gun with armor piercing shells).

SITUATION 5: You attempted a coordinated attack up the road and through the woods. Due to the superiority of the T-72's armor and its additional cover, the tanks you sent up the road were beaten back, leaving one destroyed. ~~The two tanks you sent into the woods were also turned back because they ran~~ into dug-in infantry with AT weapons and you had no infantry support with them. Supplies in Allenfeldt are beginning to run low due to this one tank. A request for TAC AIR support is turned down. You still have the mission to

clear the road. What now?

HISTORICALLY: It was decided to send a demo team to blow up the tank under cover of darkness. The company was so enthusiastic to succeed after so many failures that every man in the unit volunteered to go. The commander randomly selected 12 men and personally led the attack. But it failed also. Demo was attached to the tank's main gun and tracks. But the results of the demo explosion were a damaged track and a slight dent in the gun barrel.

SITUATION 6: You sent a 12 man demo team at night to blow up the tank.

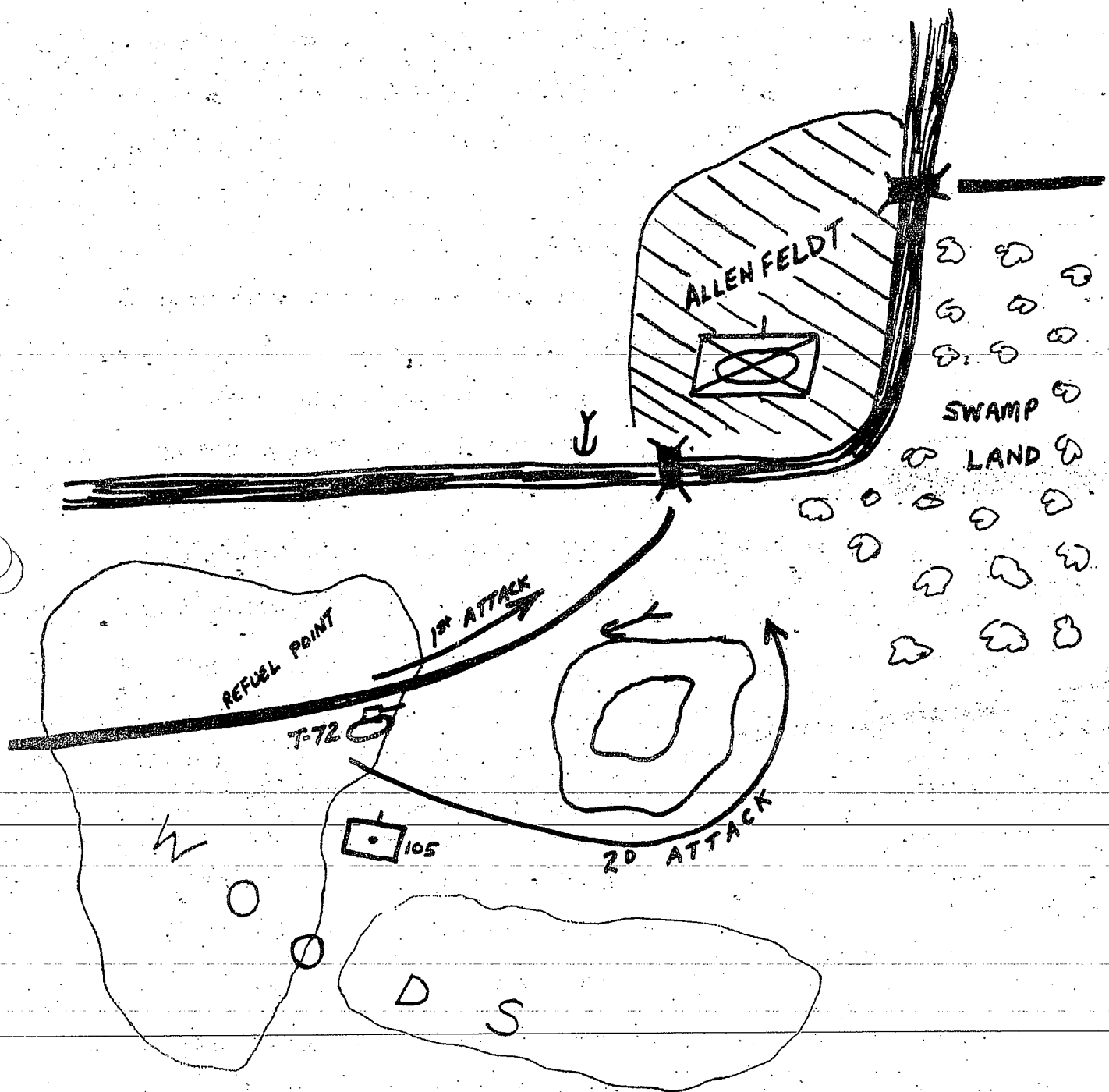
They failed. The TOWs have failed, your frontal attack with tanks has failed, and now, your night demo mission has failed. You resolve

to try an attack through the woods. Several infantrymen with DRAGONS move into covered positions along the road and open fire. That diverts the tank's attention so that you can get your tanks to the woods.

This time you send infantry with them and those soldiers succeed in protecting the tanks so that they can attack the T-72 from the rear.

Three shots from each of three tanks blast into the tank. The T-72 is now a smoking wreck. As you approach close to it, you are amazed to see that only three of your rounds penetrated despite nine direct hits! You dismount and walk toward the tank to investigate. Suddenly, the turret spins and the machine gun begins spitting rounds. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: Everyone jumped for cover. Two soldiers leaped aboard and dropped grenades into the holes. An explosion followed, blowing off the turret hatch. Inside were found the mutilated bodies of the crew. However, that one tank had blocked a supply route for 48 hours.



SCENARIO 21

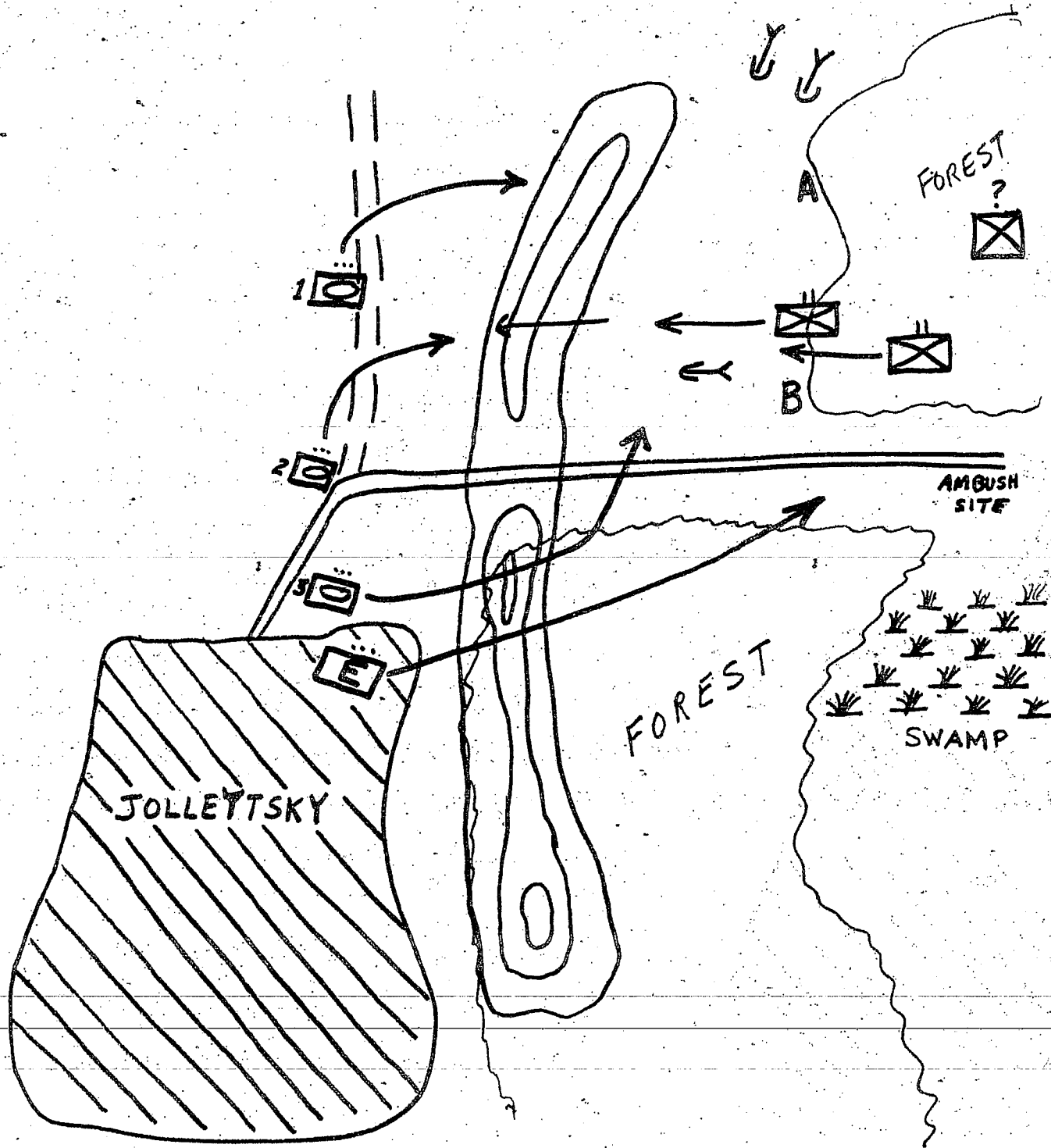
FROM: Small Unit Actions During
the German Campaign in Russia
CPT Williams/cw/5841

ARMOR TO THE RESCUE

SITUATION 1: You command a company of M60 tanks fighting in Poland. Your company is part of a division marching to the liberation of Warsaw. The division has been held up in heavy fighting about 60KM to your front. Your mission is to attack the Russian forces in their rear so that the division can continue to advance. You have been given a platoon of engineers in support. The terrain through which you are to advance is swampy forest land. It is primarily flat, but a few minor elevations provide excellent observation and fields of fire over the surrounding countryside. All roads are passable to vehicular traffic and you will be followed on the road by the Division's support elements. After several hours of travel, you call a short halt in the village of Jolleytsky. After a few minutes, you hear machine gun and anti-tank fire coming from the northeast. A supply truck from an infantry unit races into town and the driver reports that his convoy has been ambushed about 1 1/2 miles down the road. While the other trucks accelerated and attempted to get through the ambush, he had turned around and come back for help. He does not know the status of the vehicles caught in the ambush.

What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The company commander ordered two platoons to a road junction a couple of hundred meters away, placed the third platoon between Jolleytsky and the junction, and ordered the engineers to take positions in the outskirts of "Jolleytsky". He advanced to the high ground south of the road to recon. Points to consider: a) should you send out patrols? If so, what size? on foot? what weapons? b) how should you dispose your forces? to defend? to attack up the road? to cut off the ambushers? c) do you await the results of a reconnaissance? what if the truck column is still caught in ambush?



SITUATION 2: You have deployed your company with two platoons around the fork in the road, slightly south of them, and the engineers in positions in Jolleytsky. You climb to the high ground east of the village and spot about 300 Russian infantrymen emerging from the woods about a mile from the road fork (B). They are headed for the ridgeline across the road from where you stand. You also notice that there are a couple of machine guns and anti-tank weapons positioned in the woodline overlooking the road. Just past their location, and in the ditch alongside the road, are two burning trucks. Small arms ammunition is exploding in one. You can see no live Americans, but there are several dead bodies on the ground which may or may not be dead. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander decided that the Russians were attempting to cut off the units to his front and recapture "Jolleytsky". He felt he must act quickly, so he returned to his platoons and ordered a hasty attack. The company mission he assigned them was to destroy the Russian forces moving towards the ridge and to prevent any other Russian forces from striking at the road. He ordered one platoon to attack towards point A on the map and to protect the company's left flank. He ordered a second platoon to attack towards point B. A third platoon would fire covering fires into the woodline at A and B from the ridgeline, then attack up the open space between the ridge and the forest. The engineers would secure the company's right flank on foot and clear the southern edge of the forest after the attack. One squad from that third platoon would be left behind as the company's reserve. Rocket launchers on the third platoon's tanks were to lay down a smoke screen for the two attacking platoons.

SITUATION 3: Your company attacks as the company commander did in history.

As your platoons are moving to their attack positions, you move back to the high ground to observe the attack. As you do, you see the 300 riflemen (about a battalion) that you saw earlier, with light anti-tank weapons, moving down the west side of the ridge towards your jump-off points. In the open area between the woods and the ridgeline, you see a half-dozen Russian heavy anti-tank guided missiles driving towards the ridge, while - at the same time - emerging from the forest, you see another light infantry battalion.

Battalion approved your planned attack, but that was when they (and you) thought you were up against only a light infantry battalion. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The company commander attacked anyway. Under cover of smoke the tanks disappeared from the commander's view as they moved towards the infantry battalion. A heavy fire fight could be heard from both sides. When the smoke lifted, the tanks could be seen cresting the ridge and pinning down the Russians. The Russians bunched together and were mowed down by machine gun fire. The anti-tank guns were abandoned by their crews in the middle of the field. Isolated groups made stands, but their fire was ineffective against the German assault. The engineers mopped up behind the tanks, rounding up prisoners.

SITUATION 4: Your company attacked and dispersed the Russian battalions at great loss to them and very little to yourself. There are only scattered groups of resistance remaining when suddenly your first platoon leader reports that his left flank has been struck by heavy anti-tank fire and that infantry is attacking him in company strength. You do not know how many tanks he lost to the missile attack. Your second and third platoons are scattered in the woods chasing the enemy and the engineers are rounding up prisoners. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander committed his reserve squad plus a tank from his headquarters section. Their route and attack formation is not covered by the book. Again, rockets mounted on the tanks were used against the infantry as supporting fires. The counterattack was successful and the road was reopened to traffic.

SCENARIO 22

FROM: Gugeler's Combat Actions
in Korea
CPT Williams/cw/5841

PERIMETER DEFENSE

SITUATION 1: You command a battery of 155s (TOWED) during a campaign for the liberation of Czechoslovakia. Your battalion is put in direct support of an infantry brigade that has been attacking, winning, and moving ahead rapidly against a division of the Rumanian Army. After a successful drive which has driven deep into enemy lines, the 9th Division is taken completely by surprise when the Rumanians launch an offensive of their own. The division was overextended and individual units were smashed in detail by the overwhelming communist offensive. Your battery is in the process of displacing forward when you get word of the collapsed offensive and of the oncoming Rumanians. You decide that the retreating infantrymen are going to need all the help they can get; so you order your battery to pull off the road and go into action. You place your howitzers on the reverse slope of an incline and order an immediate perimeter defense. Although your men are plenty excited by the tense tactical situation that has been

developed on the division, you are worried by the knowledge that they have been firing missions and had little sleep for thirty-six hours. It is late evening and you have perhaps two hours of daylight remaining. What tasks

must be accomplished? What tasks would you like to have

put lower on the priority of tasks?

REMARKS: The unit did manage to get out LP/OPs with trip flares forward of the positions. It also laid wire from the outposts and through the battery. FM radio was used as the back-up commo system. Machine gun positions were partially dug and fully manned, sectors of fire assigned

and fields of fire partially cleared. Also, a reserve force was assigned and kept at HQs to react to problems. In addition, the troops were fed, the battery fired some missions, and coordination was made with an infantry regiment to the front. However, no patrols were sent forward to recon the immediate terrain, no barbed wire or other barrier materials were im- placed by darkness, and no demolitions were laid (Claymore mines were not yet an item of issue). The FDC and the C.P. had not been dug in or sand- bagged. The only movement permitted within the battery position after dark was by leaders in order to inspect the positions. No movement was allowed forward of the fighting positions and to the outposts.

SITUATION 2: You fire missions throughout the night, but the ranges are getting closer and closer. At 0130, you are told by battalion that the infantry brigade is falling back. You are ordered to displace to a new position at 0530, but to maintain fires until then. You send your XO to recon for the new position because - due to the likelihood of attack on your guns- you feel your place is with the battery. You have your men awake and preparing to move when the Rumanians attack. It is a full scale deliberate attack from all across your front and it comes just as dawn begins to light the sky. The Rumanians have massed at least two dozen machine guns which leave the air thick with their rounds. You race to the B.O.C. yelling at your folks to man their battle positions. Rucks and equipment are tossed aside as your people scatter for their fighting positions. Soon the entire battery is in position and you can see their tracer rounds racing against the morning sky all around your position. Then, the thought dawns on you that your small arms rounds are limited and that resupply will be long in coming; but you know that many of your men are firing indiscriminately. Instead of firing in short bursts at specific targets, machine gunners are clipping off entire belts at the ground in front of them.

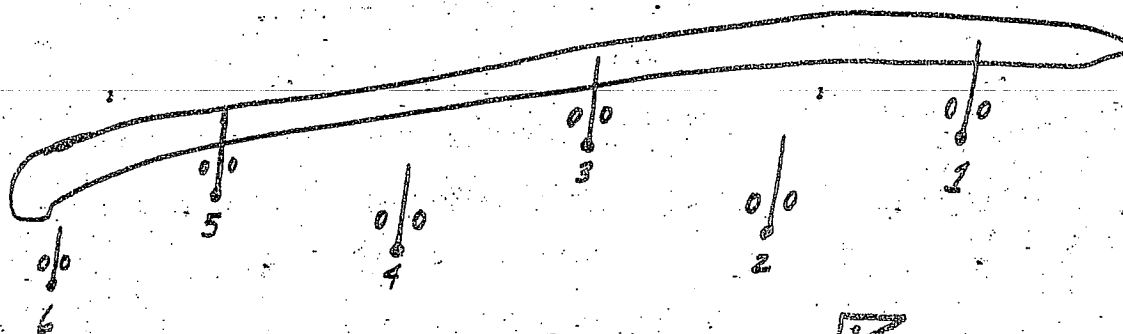
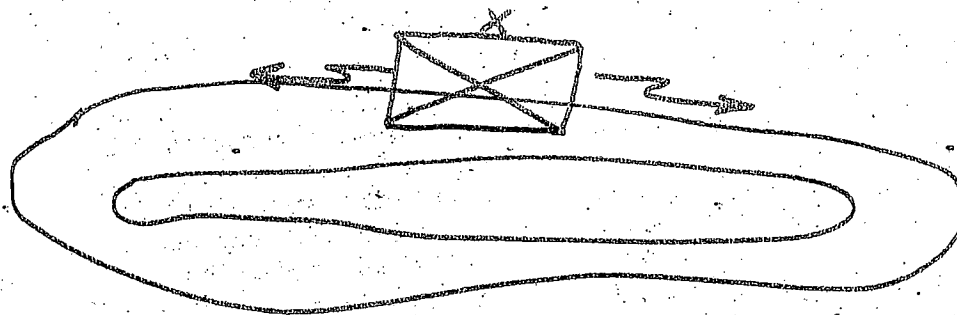
However, at that moment, your battalion commander comes on the line wanting to know your situation and your XO calls at the same time to inform you of the coordinates of the new position he has selected. TA 312s are ringing

off the hook with reports of enemy attacks on different sectors of your perimeter, the need of reinforcement and resupply, requests from LP/OPs to fall back, a message from your Fire Direction Officer that the battery is down to 1/4 of its basic load of HE, and reports on the wounded throughout the battery. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The key decision that the commander had to make was that of staying in his BOC or of moving about the battery position. Obviously, there were key decisions that had to be made in the BOC. But he also felt that the commander needed to be seen by his soldiers during the heat of the battle. Also, he felt he had to steady his machine gunners so that they would fire in short bursts at specific targets. So he brought his AXO into the BOC to run the battery and he went from gun to gun and to each fighting position so that "he could see for himself the trend in the action, could be seen by the men for whatever effect that might have on their morale, and to persuade them to stop aimless and unnecessary firing."

SITUATION 3: You are inspecting your positions during the attack. No. 5 howitzer is the farthest forward on the left and is under the heaviest attack. Using the cover of a gully, the Rumanians have reached a small rise in the ground in front of gun No. 5, driven off the machine gun crew at that spot, and brought six machine guns of their own into action on that high ground. Their fire is so intense that it has everyone in that sector of the position pinned down. Rumanian assault troops can be seen inching their way along the ground under the cover of that intense machine gun fire in an attempt to seize gun No. 5. You figure that if they succeed in reaching that howitzer and blowing up its ammo, the psychological effect on your battery could be decisive and cause your entire defense to fail. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The battery commander ordered gun No. 5 to be drawn back even with Nos. 4 and 6. Later he had another howitzer lower its tube and fire directly on the six machine guns. Before the gun could be drawn back however, enemy soldiers reached the position and chased off the gun crew. A lieutenant standing behind a 50 cal. MG opened fire on the position, killing a half dozen enemy soldiers. The chief of the gun section then ran back to his gun and pulled it back to the other two howitzers. He crushed an enemy soldier hiding beneath the vehicle in the process.



FOC



SITUATION 4: No. 5 howitzer is now back even with the other pieces and you have stopped much of the threat from that direction by firing directly on the six enemy machine guns with one of your tubes. You race to another one of your defensive positions and find no one manning the .50 cal. There are three soldiers huddled on the floor of their hole, afraid to move. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander told them to get up behind the gun and help the battery. He told them that he was scared too, and that there was nothing wrong with being scared "as long as you do your part." Ashamed, the soldiers returned to their weapon and joined the fight.

SITUATION 5: You return to the BOC and are told that some colonel wants to speak to you. It is the commander of the brigade which your battalion is supporting. His troops are still fighting to your front and he objects to the excessive firing coming from your battery and tells you that you are firing on friendly troops. He orders you to cease fire. Nevertheless, you are still under attack. What do you do?

HISTORICALLY: The commander told the regimental commander that those "friendly troops" were inflicting casualties on his unit and told him that his men were not firing blindly - but only at definite enemy positions. He said he could not cease fire without having his unit destroyed and therefore would continue firing. By this point, the artillerymen had lost their initial fright and were beginning to enjoy themselves. They no longer feared exposing themselves in order to use their weapons effectively, and their earlier fear was replaced by cockiness. They had beaten off all attacks on their perimeter and now they became aggressive. Several of the soldiers left their positions to go "looking for Chinks" (this action took place in the Korean War) and others went forward of the positions cleaning out any suspected Chinese hold-outs. The regimental commander who had complained about their fire sent some tanks to clear out the area in front of the howitzers and they joined in the hunt. The cannon cockers proudly returned with trophies and reports of getting more of the retreating enemy. A spotter plane flew after the Chinese Communists and called the battery for fires which caught two groups of 30 enemy soldiers in mountain draws and destroyed them both. 179 enemy dead were found around the perimeter and the unit continued to fire missions throughout its defense.

DESIGN & DELIVERY

of

Tactical Decision Games Sand Table Exercises



LEADERSHIP TOOLBOX REFERENCE
TDGS/STEX Workbook
March 2003

Preface

The intent of this workbook is to assist facilitators in the design and delivery of Tactical Decision Games (TDGS) and Sand Table Exercises (STEX). The first part of this workbook focuses on the design of specific exercises, while the second part focuses on delivery techniques that will enhance the success and effectiveness of the exercises. TDGS/STEX properly designed and delivered, will allow firefighters on your unit to practice situational assessment, to consider and select courses of action, and to practice communicating those decisions.

This is a product of an ongoing training and information exchange between the National Interagency Fire Center and the U.S. Marine Corps University. The Leadership Committee of the NWCG Training Working Team sponsored this project. Project team members were:

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Based on “The How To of Tactical Decision Games” by Major John F. Schmitt, United States Marine Corps, 1994. Marine Corps University publications.

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Introduction: Why Play When There's Work To Do?

Time: July 10, 1530 hours

Place: West facing, brush and grass covered slope in the foothill country near Prescott, Arizona.

Weather: Temperature 92°; Winds are up-slope 5 to 8 mph; Sky is mostly clear with some developing cumulus clouds.

Situation: You are the leader of a six-person squad tasked with patrolling and holding a lined section of a 150 acre wildland fire that started three hours ago. Your Crew Boss has expressed confidence in your ability to hold that section. Squad members are hot and tired but remain enthusiastic after two hours of initial attack hotline activity. The Squad has reassembled after containing spot fires generated by embers from reburn activity within the original containment line. You observe continued reburn activity. Your lookout reports two and possibly three new spot fires 100' and 150' directly down slope from your position.

What is your selected course of action? Make a decision within the next 10 seconds.

Did you make the call? Did you want more information? Did you look for the right answers in the following paragraphs? Did you dismiss this as just another paper fire that isn't the real thing because you've seen the real thing and you know what to do here?

Analytical Decision-making

Most of us are familiar and comfortable with the concept of making a well-reasoned decision based on carefully gathered facts balanced with assigned values and weighed against expected outcomes. We gain certainty that through methodical analysis we have arrived at the best possible decision. This analytical decision-making model should work well if the facts are not variable, the decision-making environment is held constant, there are no time constraints, and human factors are limited to our personal values. The essential factors in analytical decision-making are careful analysis and reasoning power. If only you could get everyone to be quiet and you could get away for a while to make that 10 second decision.

Intuitive Decision-making

If you were able to make a 10 second decision in the scenario presented above, chances are you exercised your experience gained on the fireline and the skill of intuitive decision-making. The essential factor in intuitive decision-making is experience. That experience allows recognition of similarities to previous situations. A pattern of typical

cause and effect develops to allow a decision that does not require analysis or reason. You simply know what to do. The more experience gained in applying a variety of patterns, the more likely you'll know what to do, even if you've never seen the real thing.

Tactical Decision Games

There is no substitute for experience of the real thing, but it can be hard to come by and tragically unforgiving. Fortunately there exists a supplement to the school of hard knocks. Pattern recognition skills can be improved, and tactical decision-making can be practiced and refined. Tactical decision games (TDGS) are basically role-playing paper exercises and in the case of sand table exercises (STEX- see below) can incorporate three dimensional terrain models. The reason for doing TDGS is to provide firefighters with an opportunity to 1) practice the decision-making process, and 2) practice communicating that decision to others. TDGS provide a simple, adaptable, and effective method of repeatedly challenging a firefighter with tactical situations that include limitations of time and information. By requiring a solution to the situation and the ability to communicate it in the form of clear instructions, the firefighter will gain precious experience and skill in actual tactical decision-making.

Recent course development for wildland firefighter training has included, Lessons Learned: Fatality Fire Case Studies, Human Factors on the Fireline, Followership to Leadership, and Fireline Leadership. These courses have appropriately focused attention on the variable that traditional fire suppression courses have overlooked and the one variable that will always determine the outcomes of fire suppression activity; human factors and the decisions they influence. TDGS are a logical step in blending the skills and tactics taught in conventional wildland fire courses and lessons learned from the newest body of human factors coursework.

Because the purpose of TDGS is to build breadth of experience in decision-making and communication, it is important to employ this process frequently at the crew level. In addition to developing individual decision-making skills, the practice will allow crewmembers to learn from each other and to gain an understanding of how each crewmember makes decisions. Each game played, like every fire experienced, will add to the collective reservoir of experience in the wildland fire community.

The Sand Table Exercise

The Sand Table Exercise (STEX) is a tactical decision game that employs a three-dimensional terrain model with various props to represent either assets or liabilities. Advantages of the STEX over the two-dimensional maps other exercises employ include: enabling the learners to "experience" the terrain features of their problem; engaging learners by engineering a learning environment that fosters proximity; eye contact; free

movement and presents the learner an almost irresistible attraction to get their hands on the problem. Another benefit is the lesson of perspective that many fireline firefighters don't have the opportunity to experience or learn. The sand table impresses the importance of "top-sight", the ability to see how individual pieces of the problem fit into and affect the whole, thus preparing squad and crew level firefighters for tactical and strategic command. The sand table presents some challenge of portability but when conditions and logistics allow, it is the medium of choice for TDGS.

PART I

Designing Tactical Decision Games

How TDGS Work

1. TDGS are Simple...Keep them Simple.

- **Role-Playing.** The players are put in the role of a leader of a given unit in a given situation with given resources and a given scenario.
- **Limited Information.** The players will not have as much information about the scenario as they might like. This is an important feature of TDGS; uncertainty, confusion and complications are basic characteristics of tactical decision-making.
- **Limited Time.** The players will have limited time to make a decision, since this is also a feature of making tactical decisions.
- **Face a Dilemma.** The scenario puts the players in a tactical situation requiring some sort of decision; a problem requiring a solution. Despite the above limitations, the players must come up with a workable solution.
- **After Action Review (AAR).** The players analyze or discuss their solution as a means of drawing out the lesson of the experience.

2. The Primary Objectives of TDGS

- **Exercise decision-making skills in a tactical context.** This is the fundamental objective!
- **Practice communicating decisions.** Players must communicate decisions by giving clear text instructions, and using all the appropriate elements listed in the standard briefing checklist outlined in the Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG).
- **Provide vicarious experience to develop pattern recognition skills.** Experience is the only way to develop the pattern recognition skills that are essential for effective decision-making. Since actual fire experience may be limited and involves certain risk, TDGS provide a substitute.

3. Additional Benefits

In addition to the primary objectives, TDGS offer several secondary benefits:

- **Illustrate tactical concepts.** Effective use of fire suppression methods and techniques, resource capabilities and resource deployment, etc. can be explained as part of the post scenario discussion.

- **Develop implicit understanding.** By building a sense of teamwork and a shared way of thinking among members of a unit, TDGS become a way of working out informal SOP's or contingencies.

4. The "Rules" of TDGS

There are only three Rules:

- **Time Limit.** Since fireline tactics are usually a time-compressed activity, a time limit is essential. Players should feel as though they have less time than they need to make a decision.
- **Decisions as Instructions.** Briefings and clear text instructions are the correct way to express tactical decisions, so TDGS solutions should take the same form. Players must communicate decisions by giving clear text instructions, and using all the appropriate elements listed in the standard briefing checklist outlined in the Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG). It is not essential that the students strictly adhere to the briefing checklist format in the IRPG. It is important that all the appropriate elements are mentioned. There is a difference between a briefing and tactical instructions. Tactical instructions may be given as an element of a briefing or as a supplement to a previous briefing. Players will be expected to explain their decision afterward, but the rule is “decide first, then discuss.” The objective is to encourage decisiveness and have the decision maker communicate the decision using real life communication methods
- **No School or Facilitator Solutions.** There are a number of ways to solve any tactical problem, so there should not be any "school" answers. What decision a player made is less important than why they made it. In fact, since creativity is a prized trait in tacticians, unusual solutions should be encouraged and recognized.

5. Ways to Play TDGS

Three basic methods may be used:

- **Solitaire.** The player solves the problem like solving a crossword puzzle or brainteaser.
- **Seminar.** A group of players, led by a designated facilitator, solve the problem (as individuals) and then discuss and compare solutions. The ideal group is anywhere from 4-12 players.
- **Dynamic, Multi-Resource.** A more advanced version where a fire situation evolves along a timeline. Players represent adjoining forces and must respond to changing situations. The facilitator uses their judgment to assess outcomes of individual solutions and coordination of solutions. Facilitator controls evolution with the purpose of generating new tactical challenges.

6. Workbook focus is on the Seminar Format

There are several advantages to using TDGS in a seminar format:

- **Interactive.** The seminar format allows the opportunity for discussions about tactical issues and concepts. Players get an immediate feedback on their solutions from the facilitator and from peers.
- **Sitting in the Hot Seat.** Players feel the pressure of having their tactical skills on public display. Most people are naturally competitive and will be motivated to perform well in a group setting.
- **Learn from Others.** There are a number of ways to solve any tactical problem. Players have the opportunity to see how others solved the same problem and can incorporate those lessons into their own tactical repertoire.
- **Practice Giving Instructions.** During TDGS, as in real-life situations, tactical decisions must be expressed in the form of clear instructions. Giving clear, concise instructions is a skill that improves with practice. The seminar provides a setting for practicing that skill under time pressure.
- **More Fun.** The seminar, if done properly, is simply a more interesting and satisfying experience. The more interesting the experience, the better the learning.

7. Limitations

TDGS are a very useful training and education tool, but they have limitations to be aware of:

- **One Move.** Except in the Dynamic version, TDGS represent a single "snapshot in time" and require the players to make only one move. Therefore TDGS do not capture the on-going interactive nature of tactics.
- **Don't Have to Execute.** TDGS and STEX are paper or sand box fires. What matters in the end is execution, which is something TDGS don't require. It is important to keep this in mind, because execution is one of the things that make tactics so difficult.
- **Works best at the Initial Attack/Extended Attack/Division level:** That is not to say they don't work above or below those levels, but they are more difficult to design. At higher levels, decision cycles tend to be longer, thus the scenario must describe a situation developing over a long period of time. At lower levels, maps tend to require micro-terrain details.
- **Special Operations.** Intricate firing plans, jump/rappel site selection, extensive water shows, etc. generally require a lot of detailed, technical information and are consequently difficult to design.

How to Design a TDGS

1. TDGS as a Story

- **Think of TDGS as short action stories.** Set the stage, introduce the characters, add more and more info (some of it confusing) and build to a problem that begs for a solution. Instead of telling how the story turns out, stop right at the climactic moment and require the player to finish the story.
- **Explore Different Techniques.** There is no single best way to design good TDGS. The trick is to find a technique that works for you as a facilitator.

2. Format the TDGS

- **Tell the players who they are.** When they read or hear the scenario, they'll know what point of view to take. For example: "You are an Engine Captain assigned to Strike Team 1721 with the Structure Protection Group."
- **Describe the Scenario.** Provide information on terrain, weather, fuels, fire behavior (intensity, rate and direction of spread), and overall strategy set by incident commander or other management guidance. Go from general to specific. It is important to model good briefing procedures. For example: If the TDGS is a squad leader level problem, describe the division situation, then the crew situation, and then the squad's situation. Utilize the briefing checklist in the IRPG but omit the information regarding the specific tactical mission and contingency plans. Tell the players what resources they have available. Give the players the information needed to make the necessary decisions for the given situation, but don't make their decision for them.
- **Describe Events Chronologically.** The last event described should be the event that puts the finishing touches on the dilemma; it should be the thing that makes clear that a decision should be made.

3. Potential Sources for TDGS

- **History.** Use historical fire case studies found in available training courses. Use Incident Action Plans from previous fires. Use local fire history or evidence of local fire scars as a basis for development.
- **Own Experience.** Caveat: with this and the above source, don't fall into the trap that historical ending or personal solutions are the "right" solutions. Be prepared to learn as much as the players. Remember the third rule of TDGS – “No School or Facilitator Solutions”

- **Create a Dilemma.** Start with a basic problem common to fire operations. Fill in the situational details.
- **Random Topographic Selection.** Select a piece of terrain from local surroundings or from topographical maps that represents a typical local fire suppression challenge. Apply a situation to your chosen terrain. This can be effective in familiarizing initial attack forces with local response areas, initial attack SOP's, and pre-attack planning.

4. Basic Types of TDGS

- **"Here is the Mission."** Format the TDGS. Provide the situational factors. The object then becomes to come up with a plan for accomplishing the mission. This is the simpler form of TDGS.
- **"Now What?"** This type of TDGS involves the above, plus more. As the player begins to execute the plan some unforeseen event occurs which changes the whole scenario. The object is to react to the new situation in a way that is consistent with the higher commander's intent or established policy. One way to create a "Now What?" TDGS is to create a "Here's the Mission" TDGS, solve it yourself, and then have something go wrong with the execution of the solution.

5. Design a Problem, Not a Solution

- **Start with a Problem in Mind.** It is usually better to start with a problem and allow the players to create solutions than it is to start with a solution and work backward to create a scenario to support it. In the latter case, the scenario usually turns out to be obvious and contrived - almost like a leading question for which there is only one "right" answer. The problem you start with must lead players directly to the decision-making and communication training objectives you have identified for your TDGS session.
- **Create Uncertainty.**
 - **Lack of information.** Some information is simply missing.
 - **Ambiguity.** Information is unclear, inconclusive, or even contradictory.
- **Create Friction.** Things don't always go as planned or expected. Challenging TDGS incorporate a healthy dose of Murphy's Law. Units get lost, communications break down, equipment fails, and/or fire behavior changes dramatically. Consider the experience level of players when designing complexities so that you don't set players up for failure.

6. Review and Evaluate

- **Design Evaluation into TDGS.** In addition to the After Action Review (AAR) players use to analyze their solutions and draw tactical decision-making lessons, consider an AAR of the TDGS process itself to derive lessons for designing and facilitating future games.

PART II

Delivering Tactical Decision Games

The Facilitator Role

1. The Facilitator's Responsibilities

- **Prepare for the Exercise.** The facilitator must have a thorough knowledge of the scenario being presented and be prepared to address a variety of possible decisions made by the players.
- **Present the Scenario.** First, the facilitator presents the scenario to the group. Orient the group to the map or sand table and explain the scenario. Answer questions the players may have about the situation. The facilitator should answer questions about the scenario which the players would reasonably have knowledge of, but the facilitator should not eliminate all uncertainties. "Sorry, I don't know the answer to that" is a reasonable answer to many questions.
- **Choose Player(s) to Present Solutions.** Generally, it is better to select a player to present solutions than to ask for volunteers. Players should not feel like they can escape the challenge by simply not volunteering. They should feel like they have as much chance as anybody else does, since this adds to the stress. The facilitator should attempt to identify players who try to make excuses or actively try to avoid presenting a solution and ensure their involvement.
- **Enforce the "Time Limit" rule.** Time compression creates stress.
- **Enforce the "Decisions as Instructions" rule.** Assign other players roles as the recipients of instructions or communications. Players must simulate giving their instructions either face-to-face or over the radio. Do not allow "I would have done this..." statements. Encourage the use of the Briefing Checklist format found in the IRPG as a guide to when communicating their decisions and giving instructions. It is not essential that the students strictly adhere to the briefing checklist format in the IRPG. It is important that all the appropriate elements are mentioned.
- **Question the Thought Process.** One of the most important things the facilitator does is probe the player's thought process in order to get the player to explain their rationale. Useful questions include:
 - "Why did you do this or that?"
 - "What was your overall assessment of the situation?"
 - "What would you have done if...?"
 - "What were your assumptions about the situation?"
 - "What is your biggest concern about your plan?"
 - "What information from the briefing was critical to you and why?"

- “What risks are you taking? Explain your Risk vs. Benefit analysis?”
- **Draw-out Lessons.** Finally, the facilitator should summarize the lessons that the session has illustrated. Use the After Action Review format found in the IRPG to increase player familiarity with that reference.

2. The Traits of a Good Facilitator

- **Enthusiastic Delivery.** This is perhaps the most important trait. If the facilitator is enthusiastic about the subject, enjoys TDGS, and believes in the value of TDGS as a learning tool, their feelings will be contagious to the players.
- **Prepared and Tactically Knowledgeable.** In order to lead the discussion and provide a useful review, the facilitator must know the subject matter. This skill is especially important since there is no single correct “school” solution to these problems. The facilitator should be familiar with the particular scenario and be able to discuss it intelligently. Usually, the best ways to gain that familiarity are to have designed the scenario or to have played it. The facilitator should not have a “correct” tactical answer to the problem in mind. There should, in fact, be no real right answer. By the facilitator endorsing one tactic over another, we run the risk of inadvertently giving the players a “school” solution to a problem. This may lead the player into thinking that given a similar situation, certain tactics are the only possible solution for that particular scenario. The facilitator needs to remember that we are not teaching tactics but rather a decision making process. The facilitator needs to reinforce the process, not the tactics, so the players will gain ownership in the process. While recognizing that there may be several right answers that could actually work on the ground, facilitators must be able to identify plans that would obviously fail or are not safe or tactically sound. Preparing discussion points for common solutions and for obviously unsound or unsafe solutions is recommended.
- **Adapt to the Unexpected.** Since there is no “school” solution to TDGS, the facilitator must be able to think on his/her feet. No two seminars (even using the same TDGS) will turn out remotely the same. Players will invariably come up with unexpected questions or solutions. The discussion will present unexpected opportunities to provide impromptu lessons about key tactical concepts. The facilitator must be able to adapt quickly to unforeseen circumstances resulting from player developed plans or contingencies. For example, in an initial attack scenario the player IC resolves the scenario by calling for retardant instead of calling for additional engines identified in the scenario briefing. The facilitator must be prepared to provide additional inputs (either constraints or additional objectives) if necessary to involve these additional resources.
- **Keep it Interesting.** The facilitator keeps the session interesting by keeping the discussion moving briskly, by involving as many of the players as possible, and by

making relevant and useful points. Without trivializing the subject matter, it is generally a good idea to "leave them wanting more". In other words, not to beat each point to death but to break off discussion before saturation point. A good sign is when the players are still debating as they leave the TDGS.

- **Don't Dominate the Discussion.** A good facilitator does not lecture, but has the ability to help the players recognize the lessons themselves, facilitating learning rather than trying to impart it. In general, the less talking the facilitator must do the better the session is going.
- **Review Without Being Critical.** Offering constructive criticism is essential. While there may be no absolute right or wrong answers, some solutions have more merit than others and the facilitator must be able to make those judgments. At the same time, the facilitator should offer reviews in ways that do not embarrass any player in front of the group. A blend of candor and tact is required.
- **Manage the Group.** This means the ability to get as many people involved in the discussion as possible. The facilitator should prevent individuals from dominating the discussion. This is especially important when the group consists of widely different experience levels. It is important to set a tone of open candor, regardless of seniority.

Facilitation Techniques

1. The Art of Asking Questions

- **Active Listening.** It is important that a facilitator knows when to ask questions, how to ask and answer questions, and how to defer questions or bounce them off the rest of the group. In essence the facilitator must combine appropriate questions with active listening.
- **Socratic Teaching Method.** The Socratic method of teaching is an effective technique to consider when delivering TDGS/STEX. This method is effective because one of the most important things the facilitator does is probe the player's thought process in order to get the player to explain their rationale. The Webster's Dictionary defines Socratic as:

Socratic: of or relating to Socrates, his followers, or his philosophical method of systematic doubt and questioning of another to elicit a clear expression of something supposed to be implicitly known by all rational beings.

- **Avoid Leading Questions.** This will cause the player to believe there is a “textbook” answer you are looking for. Examples of questions to avoid:
 - "Wouldn't this have been a more effective course of action?"
Suggested change: “Did you evaluate any other alternatives?”
 - "Do you really think that will work?"
Suggested change: “On a scale of 1 to 10, what do you think is your probability of success? Explain?”
 - “So by using air tankers, you really think you can still use direct attack on this flank?”
Suggested change: “What would you do if the airtanker drops missed the target?”
 - “Don't you think that hill is too steep for a dozer?”
Suggested change: “What information did you use in choosing a dozer for this assignment? Is there anything else you should consider before using a dozer?”
- **It's About Decision-making.** Remember that TDGS are exercises in decision-making, not an academic test on choosing a predetermined “correct” tactic from a list of alternatives. Your questions should help the players focus on their decision-making thought process. They should help the players clarify what information inputs are consciously and subconsciously important to them and how that information was used in the decision-making process.

2. Teaching to the Objective

- **Training Objectives.** It is essential that TDGS are set-up with specific training objectives in mind. Remember that the primary objective for TDGS is to have the students practice making decisions and then communicate their decisions in real life instructional context to subordinates. It is the facilitator's responsibility to ensure that the exercise and discussions do not stray away from the purpose of the training. The facilitator should refrain from lecturing and allow the participants to teach each other. Be prepared to ask thought provoking questions when the discussion slows down and to cut discussion when the point has been made and requires no additional discussion. Guide the discussion, keeping the focus on the objectives in a logical sequence. Avoid detailed examination of events not directly related to major training objectives.
- **Tactical Objectives.** Not to be confused with training objectives the tactical objectives relate to the implementation of the decided course of action by the group leader. The tactical objectives should be given to the subordinates by the decision maker as tactical instructions in the crew briefing. The facilitator should note that

the students may be accomplishing the training objectives even though their chosen tactical objectives are ineffective.

- **For example:** The training objective may be for the student to decide between an offensive or defensive suppression tactic on a fire given a certain scenario and communicate the decision to subordinates. The student may effectively make a decision and communicate it to his/her crew despite the fact that it is not the most effective tactic for this given scenario. In this case the facilitator may want to comment by saying, “You were very decisive and your communication of the decision was good, but could you explain what information you used in choosing your offensive tactic in this scenario? Is there anything else you may want to consider before making your decision?”

3. Briefing & Clear Instructions

- **Communication Using the Briefing Checklist.** The briefing format outlined in the IRPG and clear text instructions are a good way for fireline leaders to convey their decisions to others. Although this standard format helps to organize information, the content and substance are what is important in giving clear instructions. It is not essential to strictly adhere to the briefing checklist format but clear instructions should convey the following essential information:
 - Overview of the situation including elements or anticipated changes in the situation that could significantly influence the actions of the unit.
 - The mission and commander’s intent – what the task is, why it needs to be done, how to do it, and what the intended end result of the action is.
 - Coordinating instructions – what each unit is to do and when. State the “tactical objective.”
 - Communication methods to be used between individuals and between adjoining forces.
 - Identification of known hazards and planned controls for those hazards

There is a difference between a briefing and tactical instructions. Tactical instructions may be given as an element of a briefing or as a supplement to a previous briefing. Obviously, the decision maker does not need to reiterate known situational information every time a tactical instruction is given.

Appendix A

EXAMPLE TDGS/STEX #1

TRAINING OBJECTIVE:

Given the scenario below, the players will practice the decision-making process by deciding how the fire can be safely approached and then verbally communicate their decision to the appropriate individuals. **(Do not read this objective to the players before the exercise. It helps if this objective is not revealed to experienced players).**

SCENARIO:

You are the leader of an initial attack module (SELECT: Engine, IHC squad, Helitack crew, SMJ Stick, etc.) being ordered for a dry lightning storm that has ignited several fires in your response area. The module has not worked together for very long but you know they have been trained well...you did it yourself. This is the module's first fire and everyone is excited about getting out and fighting some fire. The module consists of four firefighters – yourself, one second season firefighter, and two rookie firefighters. You are equipped with one chainsaw, two backpack pumps, a full compliment of hand tools, and a two-way radio.

The Fire Management Officer is swamped; several of the new fires appear to be growing larger. He calls you in and gives you the specific location information for the fire. His instructions are to “Keep this one small, I’ll try to get you some help if you need it, but for now you are on your own. Call the dispatcher with a size-up and keep me posted. Hey! Let’s be careful out there.”

As you travel to the fire (SELECT: Mode of travel consistent with module type) you note the weather and fuel conditions (DESCRIBE: Typical local conditions for mid-season and map distance scale). Also during your travel out to the fire you hear the Aerial Recon tell dispatch that your fire looks to be about a ½ acre in size with some flame showing. After walking about ½ mile from your drop off point traveling south through a saddle, you and your module are finally able to see the smoke from the fire, it is below you and to your right (DESCRIBE: How the smoke column looks). The time is 1000, what instructions will you give?

EXECUTION:

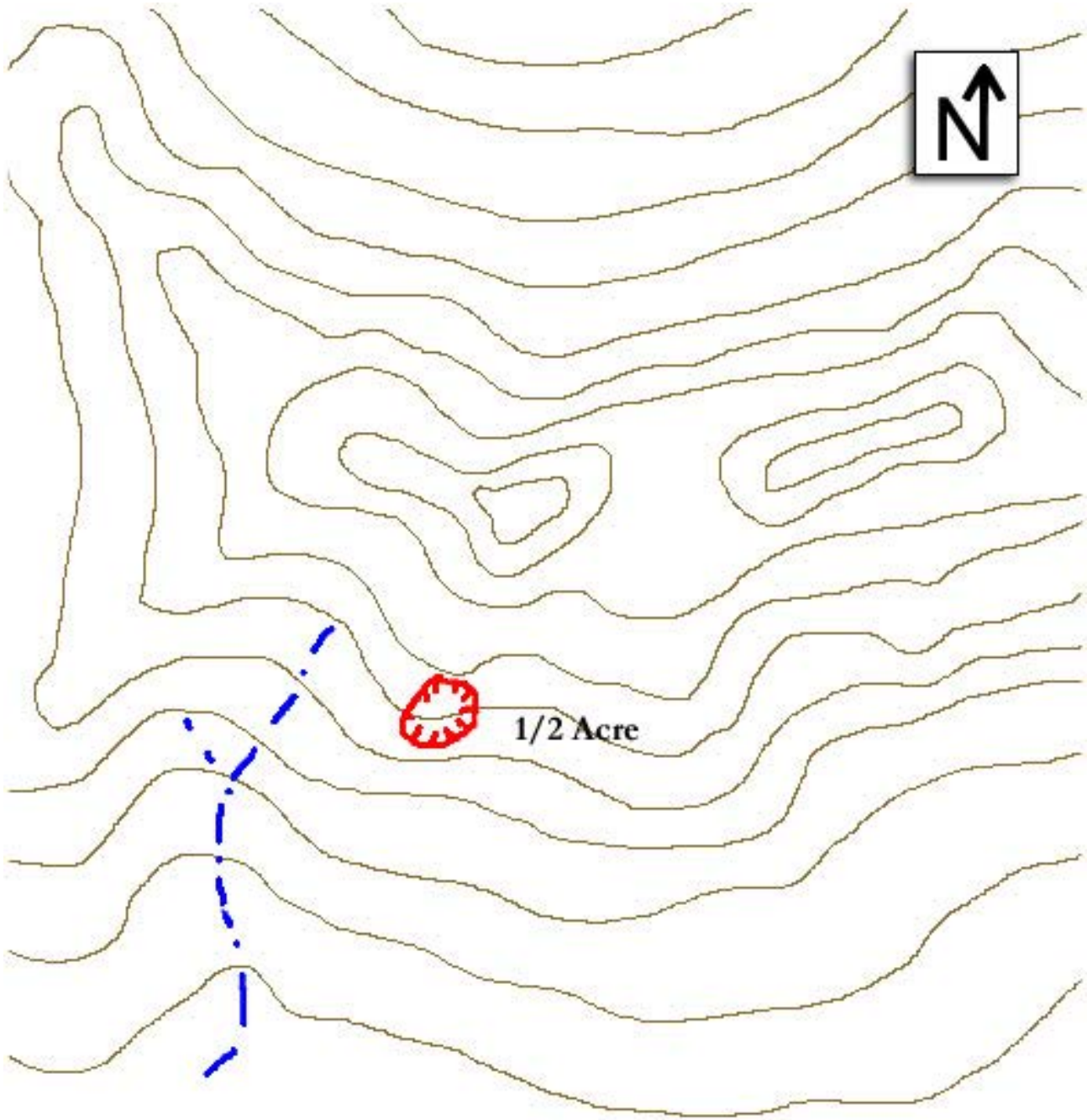
Allow 5 minutes for the players to decide on their course of action.

Select player(s) to communicate their decisions to their subordinates (other players assuming the roles of crewmembers).

The “Murphy’s Law Suggestions” listed below can be added as “What Ifs” at any time during the scenario to raise the stress level of the leader or use one of your own:

- The fuels make foot travel difficult or fuels are continuous cured grass
- Time of day is late in the burning period
- Cannot see any sign of the fire during the approach
- Wind shifts or increases
- Other crewmembers voice differing opinions
- The facilitator role plays a concerned Dispatcher or FMO demanding feedback

AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR): Conduct AAR with focus on the training objective



TDGS/STEX
#1

--- Fire Perimeter
-.- Wet Drainage

EXAMPLE TDGS/STEX #2

TRAINING OBJECTIVE: Given the scenario below, the players will practice the decision-making process by deciding between an offensive strategy or a defensive strategy and how to assign their resources...and then verbally communicate their decisions to the appropriate individuals. **(Do not read this objective to the players before the exercise. It helps if this objective is not revealed to experienced players).**

SCENARIO:

You are a Task Force Leader in charge of severity Task Force Alpha. The task force was formed yesterday and is a real mixed bag of experience. These resources have never worked together before and you think this may be a tough assignment. The task force is made up of three Type 3 Engines; one Type 2 Water Tender; one Hotshot Crew; and one Type 2 Handcrew.

The ordering unit has been experiencing new fire starts from lightning over the previous two days. The local FMO meets you first thing in the morning giving you travel and communication instructions and the run down on the fire situation: “My I.A. forces are shot. I had to pull my folks off the Fish Creek Fire due to fatigue. I want to turn it over to you as the Incident Commander with Task Force Alpha as your resources. We caught several of the new starts last night but this Fish Creek Fire worries me. I’m getting concerned about those structures. I’ve ordered air tankers but who knows when we’ll see them. I’ll try to get out to the fire this afternoon, keep me informed on your progress and good luck.”

As you travel to the fire you note the weather and fuel conditions (DESCRIBE: Typical local conditions for mid-season and map distance scale). As you get near the location given to you by the FMO you see smoke at the top of a hill south of the road (DESCRIBE: How the smoke column looks). An individual alongside the road flags you down. It is the Initial Attack IC. She tells you the following: the fire is about 30 acres with a couple of small spot fires; the fire settled down real well after midnight; they got line around about 25% of the fire’s edge; the fuels in front of the fire provide good spread potential; and there is a small community north of the fire. Your task force has followed you out to the fire and they are impatiently awaiting your orders. The time is 1000, what instructions will you give?

EXECUTION:

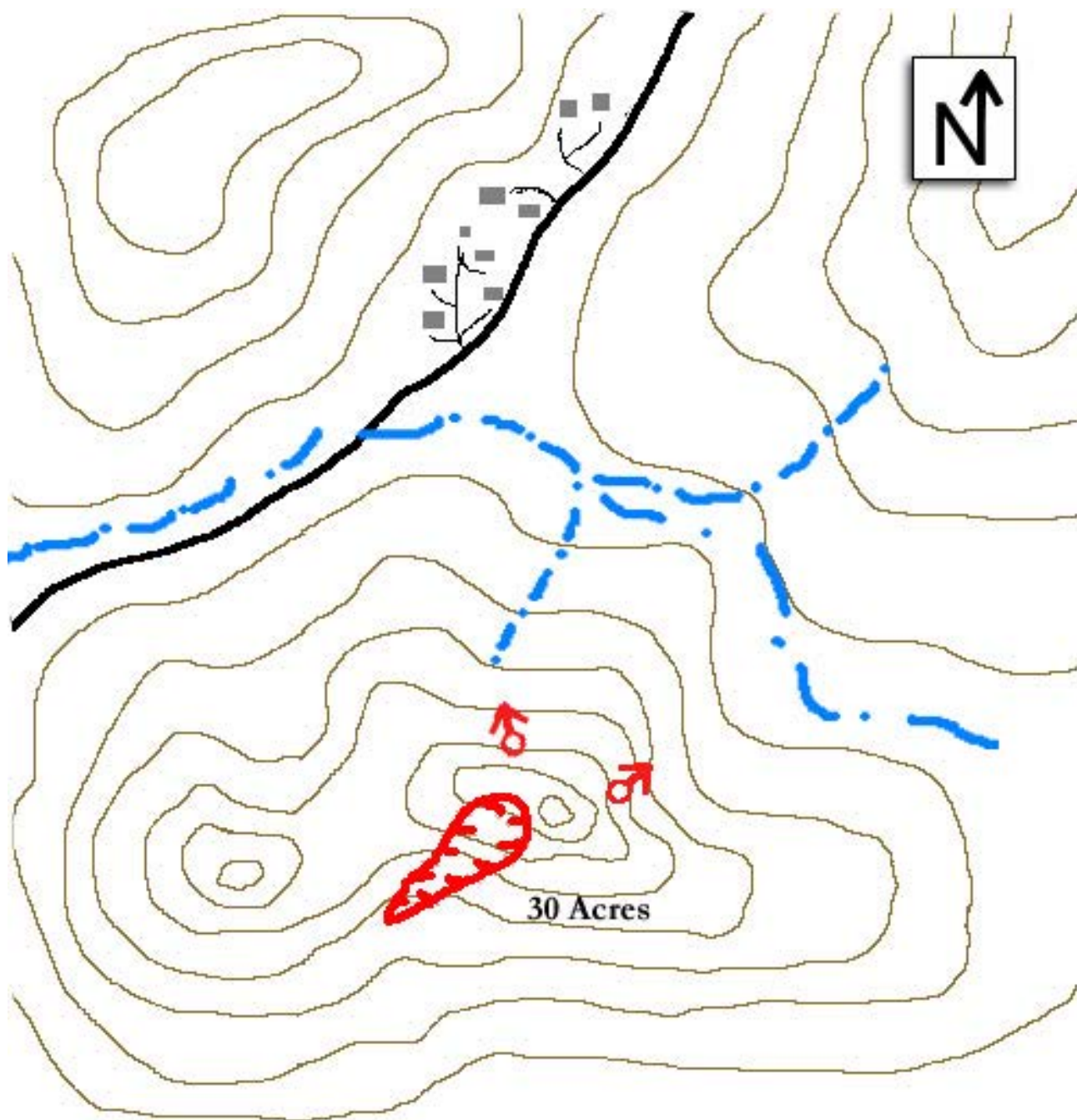
Allow 5 minutes for the players to decide on their course of action.

Select player(s) to communicate their decisions to their subordinates (other players assuming the roles of crewmembers).

The “Murphy’s Law Suggestions” listed below can be added as “What Ifs” at any time during the scenario to raise the stress level of the leader or use one of your own:

- Engine breaks down
- Time of day is later in the burning period
- A new fire start is discovered nearby
- Wind shifts or increases
- Two of the engine crews are very inexperienced
- Hotshot Superintendent is adamant about burning out the road immediately

AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR): Conduct AAR with focus on the training objective



TDGS/STEX
#2

-  Fire Perimeter
-  Spot Fire
-  Structure
-  Road
-  Wet Drainage

EXAMPLE TDGS/STEX #3

TRAINING OBJECTIVE: Given the scenario below, the players will practice the decision-making process by deciding if the situation is defensible and how to assign their resources...and then verbally communicate their decisions to the appropriate individuals. **(Do not read this objective to the players before the exercise. It helps if this objective is not revealed to experienced players).**

SCENARIO:

You are a Division/Group Supervisor assigned to Division A of the Fish Creek Fire. Your division has the following resources assigned: one Strike Team of Type 3 Engines with a Strike Team Leader; two Type 2 Water Tenders; one Hotshot crew; one Type 2 Handcrew without chainsaws; one Type 2 Dozer; a Safety Officer; a Field Observer; and your division has been given top priority for a Type 1 Helicopter.

Several large fires have resulted from last week's lightning storm. The Fish Creek Fire is one of those fires. The fire is threatening a small community and resources are stretched thin throughout the region. The Operations Section Chief picked you up for a recon flight. It was quick and Ops seemed very concerned about your division, "You've got to hold Division A! We've got some strong south winds predicted today. If we lose that road...well I don't think I need to say anything more. I'm really counting on you to hold that road and protect those structures and the community farther to the north. I can get you a little time with the air tankers but we have to release them to initial attack at 1200. That Type I helicopter is yours to use." Ops looked you in the eye and said, "You and your folks are the only chance we have to hold this thing, I will try to get you whatever resources you need."

As you travel to the fire in your vehicle you note the weather and fuel conditions (DESCRIBE: Typical local conditions for mid-season and map distance scale). From the transition meeting you know the fire is 3000 acres. It is 10% contained with good spread potential as Red Flag conditions are forecast for that afternoon for winds exceeding 25 M.P.H. out of the south. The fire is threatening the small community just north of your division and another large and affluent community, two miles north of the fire (INDICATE LOCATION: Off table/map). You have just arrived in the vicinity of the small community just north of the fire about 10 minutes ahead of the rest of your division resources. You can see the fire edge south and upslope from your location (DESCRIBE: How the smoke column looks). As far as you can tell, you are the only one around. The time is 1000, what instructions will you give?

EXECUTION:

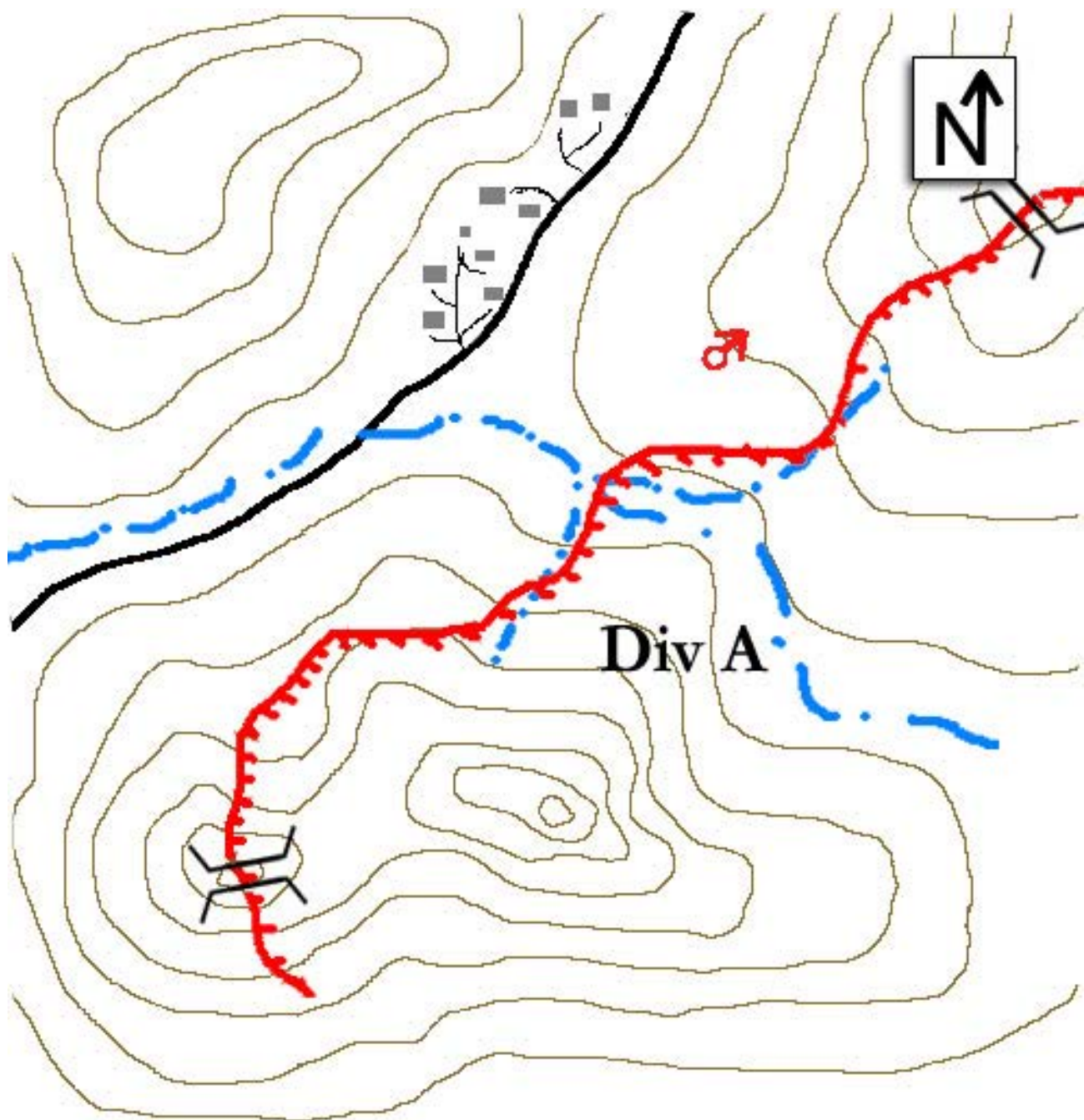
Allow 5 minutes for the players to decide on their course of action.

Select player(s) to communicate their decisions to their subordinates (other players assuming the roles of crewmembers).

The "Murphy's Law Suggestions" listed below can be added as "What Ifs" at any time during the scenario to raise the stress level of the leader or use one of your own:

- You get a flat tire and cannot drive around
- The Red Flag Warning is canceled
- Water tender operators have no PPE
- Nervous homeowner

AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR): Conduct AAR with focus on the training objective



TDGS/STEX
#3

-  Fire Perimeter
-  Spot Fire
-  Structure
-  Road
-  Wet Drainage

EXAMPLE TDGS/STEX #4

TRAINING OBJECTIVE: Given the scenario below, the players will practice the decision-making process by deciding if they should manage the entire incident or initiate immediate suppression action...and then verbally communicate their decision to the appropriate individuals. **(Do not read this objective to the players before the exercise. It helps if this objective is not revealed to experienced players).**

SCENARIO:

You are an Incident Commander Type 3 responding to the Round Mountain Fire. This is a new fire start in your local response area. The fire is 7 miles southwest of a small town. You are enroute in an agency contract helicopter and have two other helitack firefighters on board. You fly toward the fire along a dirt road that departs the main highway near the town and leads to the southwest into the bottom of a valley below where the fire is located. The road continues on past the fire. A Strike Team of Type 4 Engines has been ordered and is on the way, E.T.A. is 15 minutes to the main highway turnoff. From the air you see there is a narrow bridge on the dirt road between the main highway and the fire. You have questions about the bridge's load limit and its ability to support fire engines loaded with water.

As you approach the fire you see there is a wide valley bottom with ample safe places to land the helicopter. Being a local firefighter, you are aware of the weather and fuel conditions (DESCRIBE: Typical local conditions for mid-season and map distance scale). In your recon over the fire, you estimate the fire to be about 10 acres. You can see an active flame front on about half of the fire perimeter (DESCRIBE: How the smoke column looks). You see there is a Rural Fire Department engine company on-scene; two of the individuals from this engine company are wearing short pants and no boots. They are fighting the fire. You also notice what appear to be soldiers attempting to put out the fire. Various military vehicles are parked near the fire. You are circling over the fire and have no radio communication with anyone currently on the fire. The time is 1000, what instructions will you give?

EXECUTION:

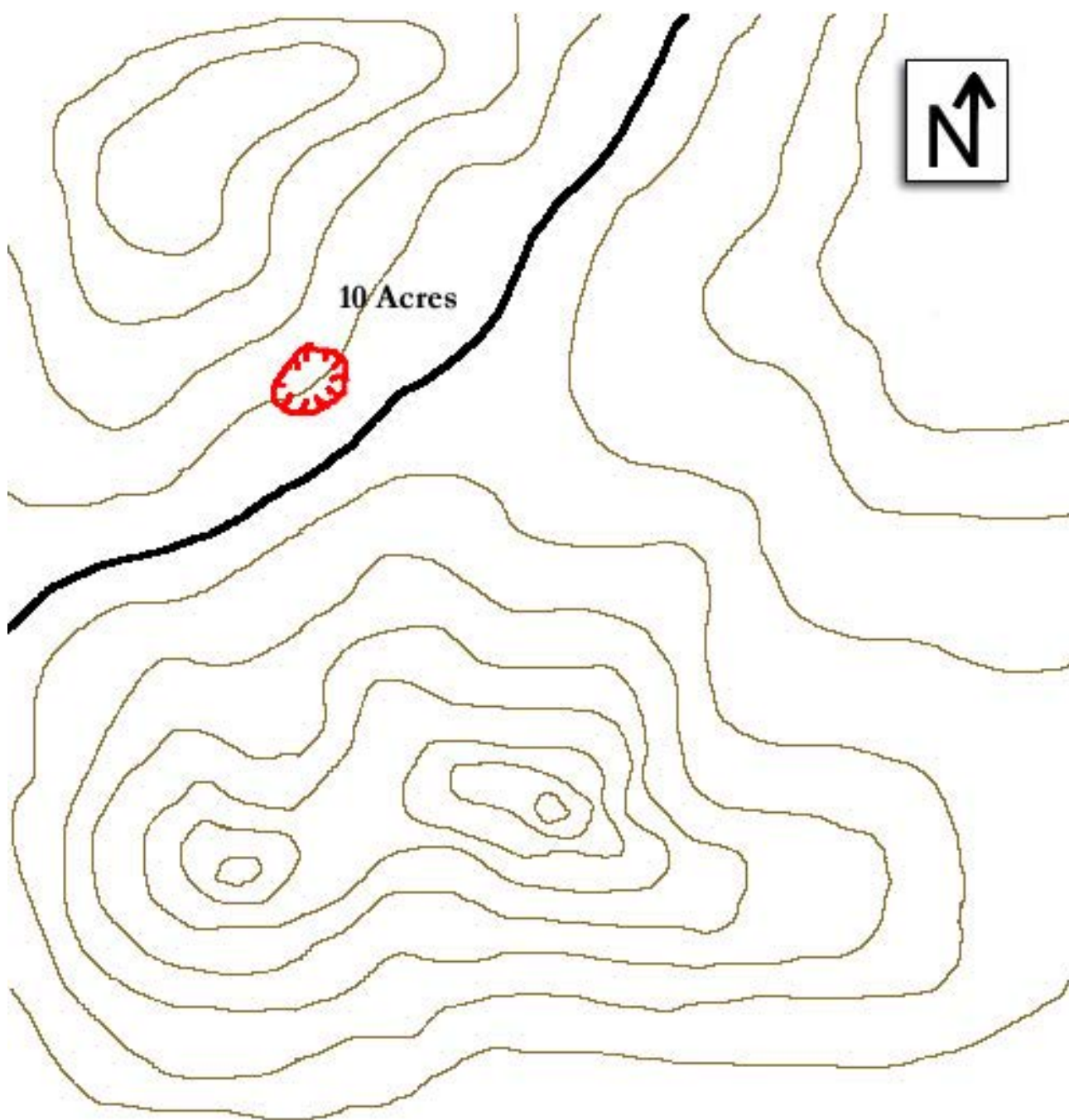
Allow 5 minutes for the players to decide on their course of action.

Select player(s) to communicate their decisions to various fire personnel (other players assuming the roles of crewmembers and/or other personnel on the fire).

The "Murphy's Law Suggestions" listed below can be added as "What Ifs" at any time during the scenario to raise the stress level of the leader or use one of your own:

- You are advised by the locals that the bridge can barely support a pickup truck
- Time of day is later in the burning period
- An ambulance appears on-scene with lights and siren running
- There are no air tankers available
- A squad of soldiers is working directly upslope of an active spot fire
- A civilian vehicle is scene driving rapidly away from the fire area

AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR): Conduct AAR with focus on the training objective



TDGS/STEX
#4

 Fire Perimeter
 Road

EXAMPLE TDGS/STEX #5

TRAINING OBJECTIVE: Given the scenario below, the players will practice the decision-making process by deciding how to handle a downhill line construction assignment and how to assign their resources...and then verbally communicate their decisions to the appropriate individuals. **(Do not read this objective to the players before the exercise. It helps if this objective is not revealed to experienced players).**

SCENARIO:

You are the Strike Team Leader for two Type 1 Handcrews, made up of two crews that frequently work together and you are the Crew Superintendent of one of the crews. You have been dispatched to the Peak Fire. When your Strike Team arrived at the ICP you were sent directly out to the fireline with instructions to report to Division A at Drop Point 3. The fire escaped initial attack yesterday afternoon and this is the first operational period on the incident for both your Strike Team and the Incident Management Team that has taken over the fire. When you link up with the Division "A" Supervisor, you find out that the fire is about 1500 acres and broken into four divisions. At this time you also get a briefing on the weather and fuel conditions (DESCRIBE: Typical local conditions for mid-season and map distance scale). Your instructions from Division "A" are as follows: "Division A is the priority on the fire. By holding this side of the fire we think we can keep it out of some country where it would become very difficult to catch the fire. I need you to drive your crews up to the top of the Division, tie into the end of the completed dozer line on the ridgetop, and start punching handline down the ridge from the radio tower site. Only handcrews can work that upper section below the main ridge. There are two dozers due here anytime now at Drop Point 3. When they arrive I will have them start working up from the bottom, it is good dozer ground there. There is plenty of parking at the radio tower site and it should be a good safety zone. I'd like to have this line tied together by the end of the shift; I think the fire will allow us that much time. Give me a call when you start in on your line construction."

As you drive up toward the radio tower site you see the fire has laid down (DESCRIBE: How the smoke column looks). Arriving at the radio tower site, you get the vehicles parked and size up the area as a safety zone. You walk over and locate the ridge and looking down you are unable to see any fire activity, but visibility is very obscured by lots of drift smoke. The time is 1000, what instructions will you give?

EXECUTION:

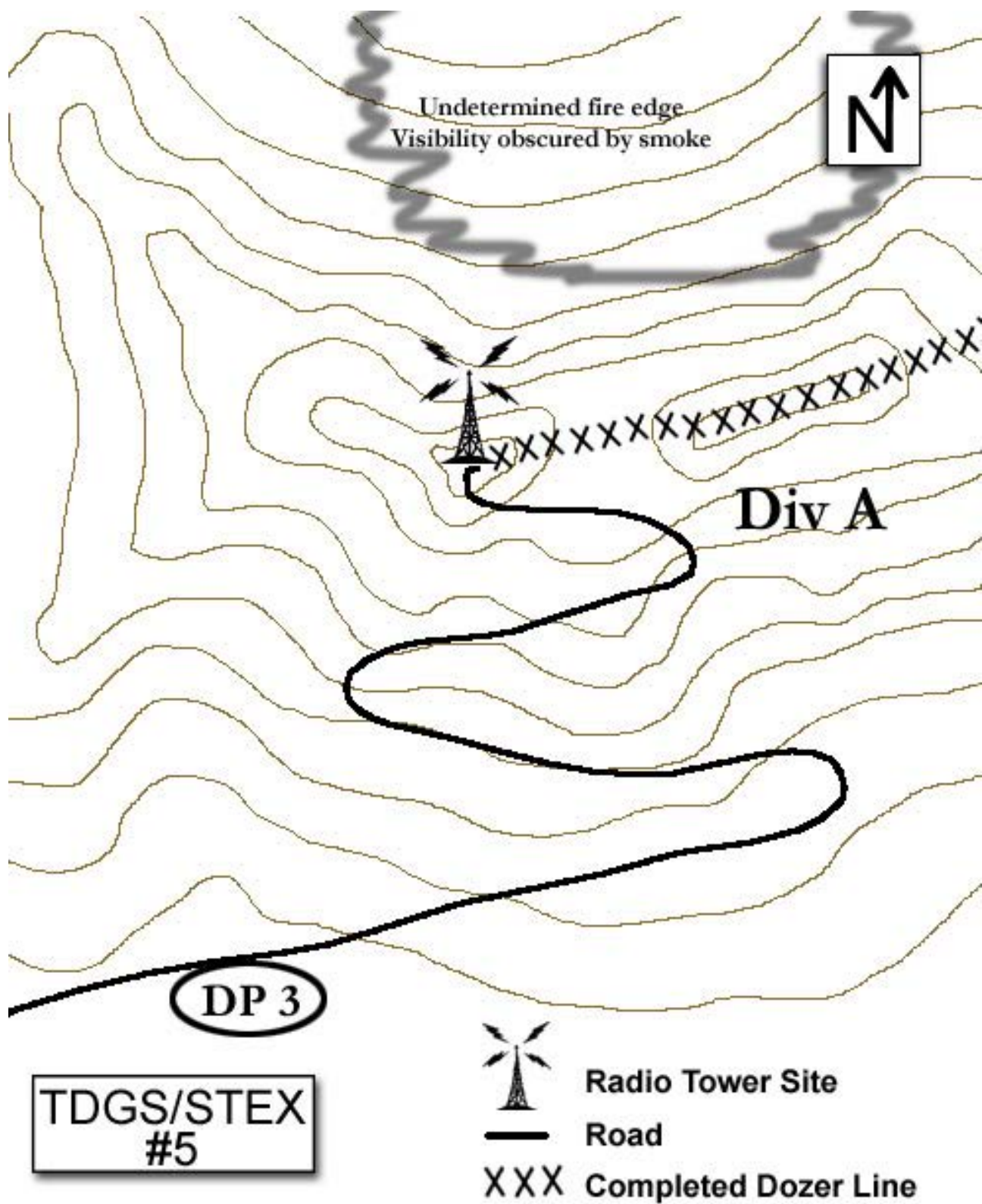
Allow 5 minutes for the players to decide on their course of action.

Select player(s) to communicate their decisions to various fire personnel (other players assuming the roles of crewmembers and/or other personnel on the fire).

The "Murphy's Law Suggestions" listed below can be added as "What Ifs" at any time during the scenario to raise the stress level of the leader or use one of your own:

- The parking area is small and marginal for a safety zone
- The fire approaches Division A faster than expected
- The dozers never arrive on Division A
- Technicians for one of the radio stations are on-site a very anxious about the fire
- Loss of radio communication with Division A Supervisor

AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR): Conduct AAR with focus on the training objective



Appendix B

STEX Facilitator Guide

(Print and laminate this guide)

Prior to Exercise

- ✓ Design STEX with clear objectives in mind.
 - ✓ Develop and prepare STEX scenario briefing.
 - ✓ Prepare Sand Table with desired terrain features, oriented to actual compass points. Designate directions and the scale of the table width and length.
 - ✓ Provide sufficient props to represent scenario and allow players to demonstrate solutions through resource movement.
- ✓ Ensure players have note taking materials and the Incident Response Pocket Guide
- ✓ Introduce players to STEX objectives and format.
- ✓ Define "Rules" of the STEX
 - Time Limit
 - Decisions issued as clear instructions (briefings, radio comms, etc)
 - No "School" Solution

During Exercise

- ✓ Introduce the scenario. Avoid reading, issue as a briefing. Maintain eye contact with players.
 - ✓ Anticipate and answer reasonable additional questions, but do not prolong scenario briefing.
 - ✓ Signal start of time limit.
- ✓ Are you still answering questions or "coaching"? Stop it!
- ✓ Signal time is up.
 - ✓ Select a player to provide a solution, do not rely on volunteers.
 - ✓ Direct selected player to issue decision as instructions to other players assigned to "subordinate roles".
- ✓ Is the decision being delivered as instructions? No theoretical "would have" "should have" or "could have" discussions allowed!
- ✓ After instructions have been issued, check role-playing subordinates' feedback to ensure instructions were understood.
 - ✓ Select players for additional solutions, repeating process.

After Action Review

- ✓ **Question the players thought process:**
 - **Why did you do this or that?**
 - **What was your situational assessment?**
 - **What would you have done if...?**
 - **What were your assumptions about the situation?**
 - **What is your biggest concern about your plan?**
- ✓ **Are you dominating the discussion? Stop it!**
 - ✓ **Are you managing the entire group? Make sure all players are engaged!**
- ✓ **Draw out lessons. Summarize and accentuate them. Facilitate and moderate constructive criticism and encourage debate.**
 - ✓ **Resist offering “Your Solution” unless that is the best avenue for a positive lesson. Your influence could wrongly infer there is only one right answer and inhibit independent solutions.**

Post Exercise

- ✓ **Review the intent of TDGS and STEx:**
 - **Exercise decision-making skills in a tactical context.**
 - **Practice communicating decisions.**
 - **Provide experience to develop pattern recognition skills.**
 - **Illustrate tactical concepts.**
 - **Develop implicit understanding within the group.**
- ✓ **Reinforce lessons learned by offering an historical account of a similar scenario.**
- ✓ **Encourage evaluation of your performance as facilitator.**
- ✓ **Solicit suggestions for future STEx.**
- ✓ **Encourage continued debate and re-play. Make the Sand Table accessible for free-play.**

Appendix C

STEX Props & Accessories

A number of props and accessories may be used for Sand Table Exercises. The possibilities are unlimited. The short list provided below will get you started:

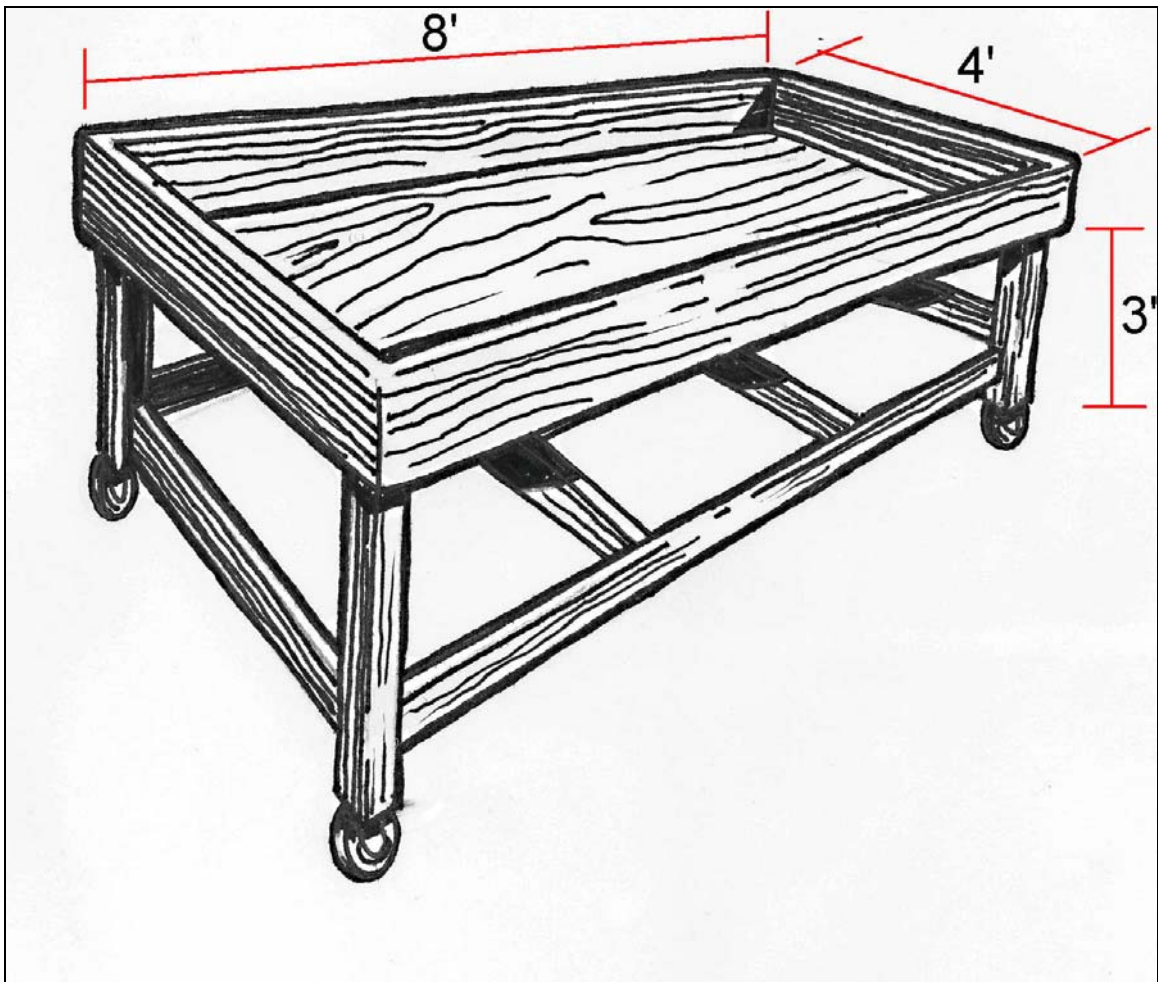
- Spray paint (various colors to represent fuel types, water, roads, fire edges, etc - blue, black, brown, yellow, green, red) 6 cans
- Small wood blocks (to represent structures) 6
- Polyester or cotton batting (to represent smoke) Small bag
- Toy plastic figures (to represent firefighters/crews) 12
- Toy fire trucks (matchbox size or maybe a little bigger) 3-5
- Toy dozers (matchbox size or maybe a little bigger) 1-2
- Toy helicopters and airplanes 1-2 of each
- Yarn or Pcord (white, red, black) 10 ft.
- Will-be-back” clock (to show time elapsing) 1
- 12” x 3” Arrow (to indicate wind direction) 1
- Spotlight (to show solar heating on various slope aspects) 1
- Tarp (to cover sand from varmint/cat use during storage) 1
- String or cord to create map grid overlay 15 ft.

Another option is to develop icons for various resources and write or paste them to a set of poker chips using various colors of the chips to denote air, personnel, and fire equipment type resources.

Appendix D

Sandtable Table Example

The sand table illustration below is an example of the basic design currently being used. You are encouraged to build a table to suit your unit's specific needs. It is important to understand that the table must be built to support approximately 500 pounds of sand; therefore, it is critical that you consult a qualified carpenter.



For more table designs and variations: www.fireleadership.gov/toolbox/toolbox.html

Appendix E

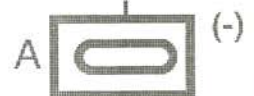
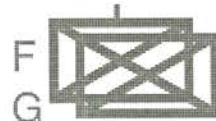
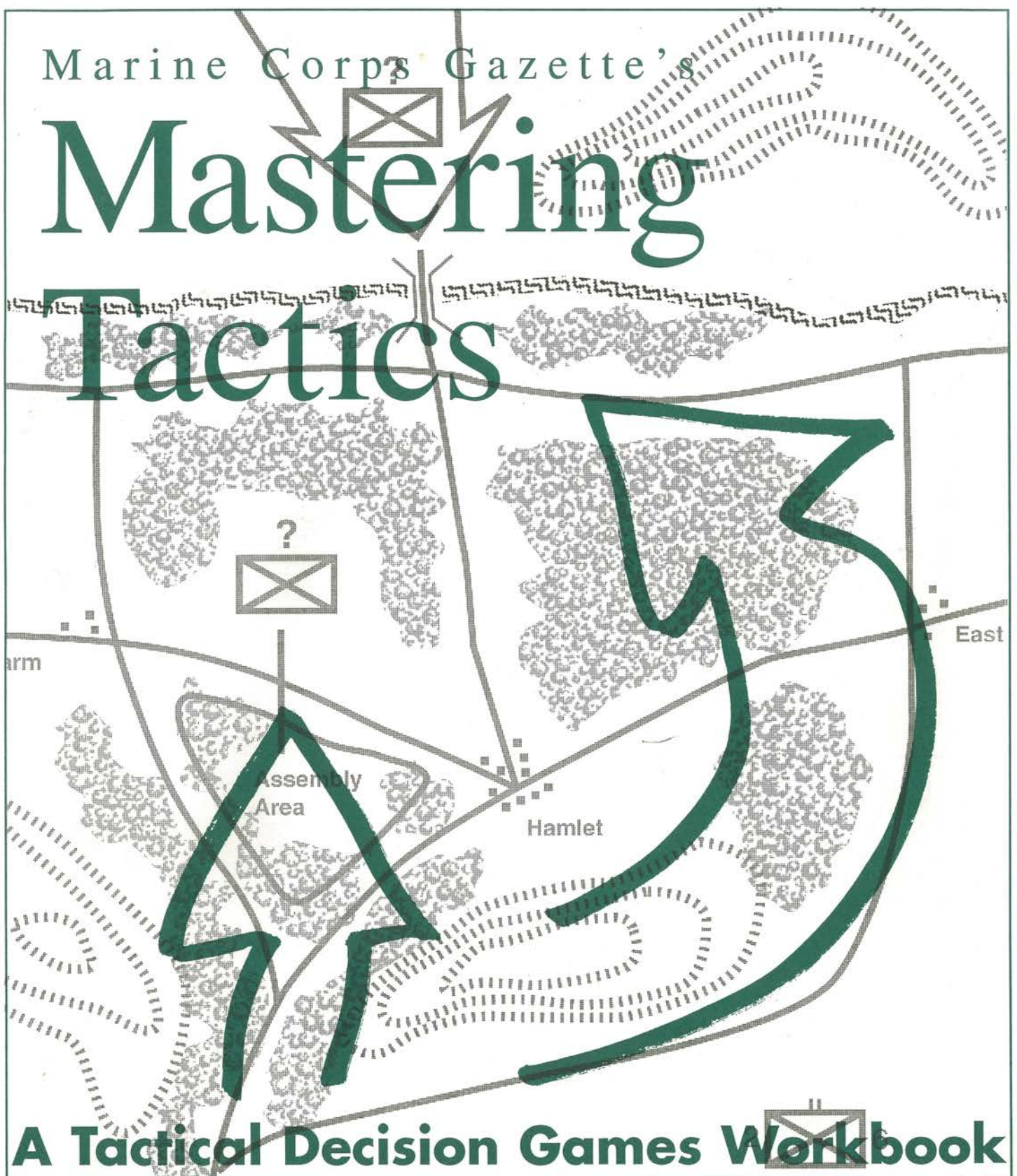
TDGS/STEX Train the Facilitator Classroom Agenda (Example)

		Unit	Instructor
0800-0830	0.5	Introduction to TDGS/STEX Use the STEX video to explain basic concepts of TDGS and STEX	
0830-0930	1.0	Decision Making Presentation Present Part I of the PowerPoint	
0930-1000	0.5	TDGS/STEX Development and Delivery Present Part II of the PowerPoint	
1000-1030	0.5	Demonstration from Cadre Develop a scenario to the local area. The cadre facilitates scenario to group. Remember the After Action Review.	
1030-1200	1.5	Small Group Design and Presentation Divide the class into groups of five. Have each member facilitate one of the five examples in the STEX workbook. The students should concentrate on facilitation styles, communications and objectives.	
1200-1300	1.0	Lunch	
1300-1430	1.5	Group Design Each group will design their own scenario and facilitate to the other groups.	
1430-1530	1.0	Presentation of Group designs	
1530-1630	1.0	Course Closeout / After Action Review	

PowerPoint presentation is available at www.fireleadership.gov/toolbox/toolbox.html

Marine Corps Gazette's

Mastering Tactics



MASTERING TACTICS

MASTERING TACTICS

A Tactical Decision Game Workbook

JOHN F. SCHMITT

Marine Corps Association
Quantico, Virginia

Credits

Maj John F. Schmitt authored, coauthored, or inspired all game scenarios used in this workbook and wrote all game discussions. SSgt Henry E. Johnson collaborated with Scenarios #1 and #12; Maj Bruce I. Gudmundsson, with Scenarios #3 and #5; and Col John E. Greenwood developed #11 as a direct follow-on to #10 "to insert a word of caution about the difficulty of identifying gaps."

Many people contributed to the preparation of this material for printing: Bonnie J. Martin did the typesetting; Anne H. Wood, much of the proofreading; Robert F. Fleischauer, the layout; and Richard H. Westbrook, the final preparation on the maps.

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John F. Schmitt

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Printed and bound in the United States of America

This book is dedicated
to the tacticians at the
tip of the spear—to the
Marine NCOs and officers
who lead our combat units
in the Fleet Marine Force.

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Foreword

I first met John Schmitt in February 1988 at Quantico, Virginia, during a conference on Marine Corps doctrine. Though he was then a captain and one of the youngest and most junior Marines attending the meeting, he displayed considerable knowledge and unusual insight throughout the discussions. I later learned that his exceptional tactical wisdom was the result of a number of years of intense and dedicated study, which he had successfully synthesized with his own experiences as an infantry and light armored infantry commander in the 2d Marine Division.

When I returned to Quantico as the director of the Command and Staff College the following summer, my association with Capt Schmitt was renewed. We soon found ourselves engaged with others in long conversations on military matters. He was always able to hold his own in these talks and frequently brought new approaches to the understanding of complex issues. It seemed natural, therefore, to turn to him for assistance when I was looking for a better way to prepare instructors to explain the relationships between tactics and operations, and operations and strategy. His answer was to develop a three-level decision game that instructors could practice on and then use with students in the classroom.

Not surprisingly, there was among the dozen experienced colonels and lieutenant colonels some skepticism that a young captain could teach them much about tactics or operations, let alone strategy. Any doubt faded shortly after John described the historical origins of the concept of "levels of war" and launched into the game. Interest rose and understanding came quickly through his simple device. John refined the game into a powerful instructional tool, variations of which are still in use in Quantico's schools.

When the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen A. M. Gray, announced that he wanted to have a capstone manual written on warfighting, Capt Schmitt was detailed to the project. His knowledge of tactical doctrine and his superb intellect and writing skills soon became so evident that he was assigned as the primary author and began working in close association with Gen Gray. That the Commandant, a four-star general, was collaborating with a Marine captain on the Corps' fundamental doctrinal publication surprised many a traditionalist. The book they produced, *Fleet Marine Force Manual 1 (FMFM 1), Warfighting*, alleviated any concern, for it was rapidly and widely acknowledged inside and outside the Corps for the clarity and understanding it brought to a complicated subject.

Promulgation of *FMFM 1* proved to be a watershed event for professional military education within the Marine Corps. The manual was soon in demand by officers and noncommissioned officers alike. Though the material was complex Capt Schmitt's writing style made it easy to read and grasp. Capt Schmitt soon followed up with a similar and equally successful work on campaigning. The value of his unique approach to presenting doctrinal ideas in short simple prose was further evidenced by the decision of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1992 to use the same techniques and format in *Joint Pub 1, Joint Warfare of the U.S. Armed Forces*.

Throughout his research and writing efforts Capt Schmitt continued to create "decision games" as a means to learn and to enhance his understanding of military concepts. He seemed to always have a new battlefield situation available to challenge as-

sociates. Some were historical battles disguised in modern settings and others were original. My favorite was a game which merely inverted the situation British Gen Allenby faced in his 1918 campaign through Palestine. This game had the added advantage that after a player's solution was analyzed a "mirror" comparison could be made with Gen Allenby's actual operation. I am pleased he included an updated version of this game in his book.

It was not long before the value of Maj Schmitt's informal sessions was recognized. In April 1990 the *Marine Corps Gazette* began to publish a series of tactical decision games, and the games became a formal part of the scheduled elective courses at the Marine Corps University. By then the games were most frequently referred to as "T-D-Gs." Their educational value was obvious, and commanders throughout the Marine Corps started including them in training programs for unit leaders. The inherent value in playing such games was clearly understood.

Military leaders are members of a profession that does not routinely practice its skills. Only constant war, a condition too abhorrent to even contemplate, would allow such practice. Thus, the honing and developing of military skills must be achieved in other ways. Field exercises, manual and computer-aided wargames, reading, and more recently simulators provide vicarious experience. Tactical decision games perform the same function, but at less cost in terms of time and resources. Their ease of use allows them to be employed in those odd minutes that are too often wasted. By design they are equally effective for corporals and generals. Used correctly they can reinforce other methods of education and training. Most importantly, they enable leaders and future leaders to gain experience that otherwise could not be gained. Only those who have challenged themselves with countless tactical situations in peacetime, only those who have refined their ability to make decisions and communicate clearly with subordinates, are prepared to command in war.

Maj John F. Schmitt and the Marine Corps Association have made an important contribution to professional military education with the publication of this workbook. I predict it will be in great demand with Marine leaders around the world and that that demand will soon make this edition the first volume of a multivolume set. When Marines next go ashore in defense of our Nation's interest those leaders who have worked their way through the 15 decision games will be far better prepared for the unknowns of combat.

Paul K. Van Riper
Major General, U.S. Marine Corps

April 1994
Washington, DC

Preface

This book contains 15 tactical decision games, designed to improve tactical skill and decisionmaking ability. Most of the scenarios have appeared previously in the *Marine Corps Gazette* between 1990–1993; several have never been published before. The introductory article, “Are You the Next Napoleon?” describes the intent behind the games and offers suggestions on how to get the most out of them. The second introductory article, “Observations on Decisionmaking in Battle,” analyzes the problems of tactical decisionmaking in greater detail. The scenarios themselves range in scope from the rifle squad to the Marine expeditionary brigade, with the majority being designed at the company and battalion levels. The level at which the scenarios are designed is not the significant thing, however. The objective here is to exercise decision-making skill and to illustrate key tactical principles, both of which are generally independent of the level of command. Moreover, the reader will find that one of the prevailing themes of this book is that the effective functioning of military organizations depends on shared understanding by all commanders up and down the chain. It is important for colonels to appreciate the problems of squad leaders and for sergeants to appreciate the problems of regimental commanders. The scenarios are designed to be done sequentially; the “Discussions” that apply to each scenario are progressive, becoming generally more advanced and each building on the previous ones.

The discussions should in no way be construed as the only “right” answer. Nor should the different options discussed be construed as meant to be conclusive or exhaustive. They are intended instead as food for thought—to identify key considerations and possibilities. I have tried to make frequent use of insightful solutions submitted by readers to the original problems as they appeared in the *MCG*. Where appropriate, I have used scenarios to illustrate important tactical concepts. But this book is not a systematic analysis or presentation of tactical theory. Tactics are very much a practical discipline, and thus the focus is on the practical application of these concepts to solving likely battlefield problems.

The appendixes at the end of the book provide practical information useful in preparing orders and overlays.

Except where I have cited Marine Corps doctrine, the opinions expressed are my own and should not be construed as reflecting the views of the U.S. Marine Corps. Some readers may find certain of the discussions controversial and may disagree with certain of my tactical assessments. If that is the case, so much the better. Another theme central to this book is that, in the words of Gen George S. Patton, Jr., “There is no approved solution to any tactical situation.” If after careful consideration you disagree with any of the ideas contained in these pages, I will consider this work a success. The ultimate object is to generate serious interest and study in the field of tactics.

I owe thanks to SSgt Henry E. Johnson, USMC, and 2dLt Christopher A. Mikucki, USA, for reading and commenting on the manuscript; to Capt John D. Kuntz, USMCR, for his contribution to “Are You the Next Napoleon?”; and especially to Col John E. Greenwood, USMC(Ret), who edited the manuscript and without whose support and vision this book would not have been possible.

Each monthly issue of the *Marine Corps Gazette* includes a new TDG as well as solutions that readers have submitted to previous TDGs. To subscribe call 1-800-336-0291.

Articles

Nine-tenths of tactics are certain and taught in books: but the irrational tenth is like the kingfisher flashing across the pool, and that is the test of generals. It can only be ensured by instinct, sharpened by thought practicing the stroke so often that at the crisis it is as natural as a reflex.

—T.E. Lawrence (“Lawrence of Arabia”)

Are You The Next Napoleon?

A general should say to himself many times a day: If the hostile army were to make its appearance in front, on my right, or on my left, what should I do?

—Napoleon

In war there is no substitute for experience, no substitute for the intuitive skill that comes from repeated practice. Tactical decision games are a practice field for the tactical leader. This article explains why and how.

Think of the Great Captains of military history—Alexander, Hannibal, Frederick the Great, Napoleon, Genghis Khan. We hold these men in high regard because we recognize them as military geniuses, as true masters of the art of war whose mastery of the art form clearly eclipses the mass of the merely competent. Clearly, the art of war places high demands on the intellect of military commanders, and any professional continually strives toward mastery.

The “Mystery of Mastery”

But how are such masters made? Are they born geniuses or the product of training? Napoleon’s quote makes it clear that he believed intellectual preparation was an essential factor. While natural abilities are certainly a contributing factor, psychological studies show that Napoleon was right. The pioneering work to uncover the “mystery of mastery” was done by cognitive psychologists in the 1960s and 1970s, using chess players as the subject. According to Robert J. Trotter in “The Mystery of Mastery,” *Psychology Today*, July 1986:

It had been assumed that the ability to think many moves ahead and consider the implications of each move was what separated the expert from the novice chess player. But in the mid 1960s, psychologist Adriaan de Groot showed that neither experts nor novices think more than a few moves ahead.

Instead:

... findings suggest that a chess master is someone who, after years of experience, can recognize as many as 100,000 meaningful board positions and make the best response to each. So instead of being a deep thinker who can see many moves ahead, the master chess player is now seen as someone with a superior ability to take in large chunks of information, recognize problem situations and respond appropriately. This explains how a chess master is able to defeat dozens of weaker players in simultaneous play. For the most part, the master relies on pattern-recognition abilities, or so-called “chess intuition,” to generate potentially good moves.

According to Robert Glaser and Michelene Chi of the University of Pittsburgh’s Learning Research

and Development Center in the same *Psychology Today* article:

The most important principle of skill performance is that skill depends on the knowledge base. In general, the more practice one has had in some domain, the better the performance, and from all indications, this increase in expertise is due to improvements in the knowledge base.

The same principle applies to tactics—which have obvious similarities to chess—and to tacticians. And that is where tactical decision games come in.

Tactical decision games (TDGs) are a simple, fun, and effective way to improve your decisionmaking ability and tactical acumen—to improve your mastery of the art of war. Like most skills, you can improve tactical decisionmaking ability through practice. The idea behind TDGs is to put you in the role of a commander facing a tactical problem, give you a limited amount of time and information, and require you to develop a plan to solve the problem. By repeatedly working through problems like these you

“ . . . the art of war places high demands on the intellect of military commanders, and any professional continually strives toward mastery.”

will learn not only to make better decisions, but you will also learn to make decisions better—that is, more quickly and efficiently. You will learn to look at a situation and instantly take in its essential features, to cut right to the heart of the problem.

Coup D’oeil

In short you will develop the skill Frederick the Great called *coup d’oeil* (pronounced “koo dwee”). *Coup d’oeil* means literally “strike of the eye,” and Frederick described it as:

the talent which great men have of conceiving in a moment all the advantages of the terrain and the use they can make of it with their army. . . . The clever general perceives the advantages of the terrain instantly; he gains advantage from the slightest hillock, from a tiny marsh; he advances or withdraws a wing to gain superiority; he strengthens either his right or his left, moves ahead or to the rear, and profits from the merest bagatelles. . . . Whoever has the best *coup d'oeil* will perceive at first glance the weak spot of the enemy and attack him there. . . . The judgment that is exercised about the capacity of the enemy at the commencement of a battle is also called *coup d'oeil*. This latter is the result only of experience.

Just as the chess master immediately sees patterns and opportunities on a chess board where others see a disarray of pieces, the tactician gifted with *coup d'oeil* sees patterns and opportunities on the battlefield where others see chaos and confusion. While no two battlefield situations will ever be identical, the master tactician can recognize patterns on the tactical "chess board."

Improved Tactics

Not only will you improve your ability to make decisions quickly and effectively through TDGs, but your appreciation and mastery of tactics will improve also. An understanding of tactical theory is an important foundation for tactical mastery, but theory will only take you so far. Frankly, the basic concepts behind good tactics are not all that complex, nor are they particularly hard for the average Marine to

“ A plan does not have to be more complex to exhibit a greater understanding of tactical principles, greater flexibility, a greater appreciation for the use of terrain, a greater sense of timing, or a greater range of options. ”

comprehend. The difficult thing is in *applying* those concepts to specific tactical situations—that is where true genius and the development of *coup d'oeil* come in.

As *coup d'oeil* improves you begin to make sense of situations that made no sense before, you begin to see patterns, and in those patterns you spot opportunities and options that previously did not exist for you. As you become more experienced you become more comfortable with a variety of different situations. You have the opportunity to experiment with different tactical ideas without having to worry about paying the price in terms of casualties. Your tactics become more ambitious. Where before an enemy movement appeared threatening, now you see it as an opportunity to strike him in the flank. Your tactics become more advanced. Where before your tactics involved simply trying to attack your enemy, now

you think of ways to get him to expose himself first. By "more advanced" I do not necessarily mean more complex. A plan does not have to be more complex to exhibit a greater understanding of tactical principles, greater flexibility, a greater appreciation for the use of terrain, a greater sense of timing, or a greater range of options. Often the simplest plans are the most inspired precisely because they are the most economical.

A valuable fringe benefit of TDGs is that you become more familiar with weapons capabilities and employment techniques, the use of control measures and map symbols, and other technical details.

Tactical Decision Games Group

I say all of this out of personal experience. I was part of a group of Marines and civilians that met at the Marine Corps University late every Thursday afternoon for a couple of years to play and develop TDGs. The makeup of the group ranged from corporals to brigadier generals, from clerks and drivers to the editor of the *Marine Corps Gazette*, a Marine Corps University librarian, and Command and Staff College instructors in operational art. Some members came and went, but a devoted cadre remained. Those of us who participated regularly unanimously agreed that our tactical skills had improved significantly as the result of the TDGs. Not only could we reach tactical decisions—that is, formulate plans—more quickly and efficiently, but we found we could communicate those plans more clearly and concisely to the group and in general the standard of our tactical plans was higher. Each of the members benefited from seeing how others handled the same tactical problems and from being critiqued by the others—and in the atmosphere of professional fraternity the group consciously refused to "sugar coat" the critiques. The TDGs generated serious discussions on tactical concepts and created a heightened interest in tactics in general. While we may not have developed any new Napoleons, all who participated felt much more confident of their abilities as a result of the experience.

How the Games Work

Playing a tactical decision game is very simple. Putting yourself in the role of the commander, you read (or have described to you) the situation; within an established time limit you decide what plan to adopt and communicate that plan in the form of the orders you would issue to your unit if the situation were "for real." You provide an overlay of your plan. Then—and this is an important part of the process—you *explain* the plan as a means of analyzing *why* you did what you did: What options did you have? What factors or considerations were foremost in your mind? On what tactical principles or concepts was your plan based? What assumptions did you make about the situation?

Drawing an overlay of your plan is an important part of the process. It is much easier to be vague in words, hiding the fact that you haven't thought the problem all the way through, than in a diagram. Diagrams are precise. In order to be able to draw a diagram of your concept, you must have thought the

concept through clearly; the overlay is a good way to ensure this. But by the same token, it is equally important to develop a verbal order as well (whether written or oral), because words are the primary means by which we communicate our plans, and we should practice using the same tools we will use in combat.

One advantage of TDGs is that just as in "real life," there are no absolute right or wrong answers—no "schoolbook solutions." Tactics are concerned only with what works. There are countless ways to solve any tactical problem. However, some plans reflect a truer understanding of tactical principles than others. The whole objective of TDGs is to arrive at a truer understanding that eventually results in mastery.

Normally the scenario is fairly simple and the information about it is far from complete, requiring us to make certain assumptions as the basis for decision—just as in combat. Unlike board games or their computer versions, TDGs have very few rules or mechanics to learn. In fact, there are really only two "rules." They are (1) the imposed time limit and (2) the requirement to give the solution in the form of a combat order. Both are worth discussing briefly.

There are two reasons for the time limit. First, it introduces a certain amount of friction, in the form of stress, to the decision process. The idea is to give the player less time and information than he thinks he needs to formulate a good plan and yet require him to come up with one anyway. This is the reality of war and precisely one of the abilities that makes for a successful commander. Second, the game imposes a time limit because combat is time competitive. Speed relative to your opponent is essential. Not only must you make good decisions, but you must make them quickly. If not, your decisions, no matter how sound, will be irrelevant because you will be too late. For a more detailed discussion of the effects of time on decisionmaking, see the article "Observations on Decisionmaking in Battle" that follows.

The reasons for requiring the solution in the form of a combat order are also two-fold. First, communications skills improve with practice. The means that commanders use to communicate instructions to subordinates is through combat orders, either full operations orders or fragmentary orders. The ability to communicate clearly a plan involving the participation of hundreds or thousands of men and pieces of equipment in an atmosphere of fog and friction is no mean skill. A brilliant plan muddled in the issuing is a bad plan. Effective communication means not only clarity, but also forcefulness and, due to the need for speed, conciseness. It is no coincidence that so many of the great military leaders were also inspiring communicators. Second, tactics demand action, not an academic discussion of the merits of this or that scheme: Decision, not debate. "The essential thing is action," wrote Hans von Seeckt, once chief of staff of the German army. "Action has three stages: the decision born of thought, the order or preparation for execution, and the execution itself." The third, and really meaningful, stage—execution—cannot happen without the first two stages. The TDGs printed here and in the *Gazette* ask players to submit explanations of their plans, but only *after* they have

issued their orders. So the rule is: "Orders first, then discussion."

Solitaire Play

There are a couple of ways to play the games. The first is solitaire play, working the scenarios just like you would solve a brain teaser or crossword puzzle. This is the form the TDGs take in these pages. The time commitment is usually no more than 15 minutes to a half hour. This method exercises the decisionmaking process but lacks certain advantages of the second method.

Group Play

The second method is to play the game in an interactive group, with one player (usually the senior or most experienced member) acting as moderator. The moderator describes the scenario to the players, answers questions (some, but not all) about the situation, enforces the time limit, selects different players to brief their plans to the group, and moderates the critique of each plan. The moderator plays devil's advocate, introducing "What ifs" and asking

“The ability to communicate clearly a plan involving the participation of hundreds or thousands of men and pieces of equipment in an atmosphere of fog and friction is no mean skill. A brilliant plan muddled in the issuing is a bad plan.”

"Why did you do that?" The advantages of group play are:

- A built-in sense of pressure and competition. Players' abilities are on display for others to see.
- Immediate feedback. Each player gets a critique of his plan from the moderator and other players.
- Practice giving orders. Each player must actually issue his order to the group.
- See other solutions. Players can see how others approached the same problem, gaining insights that they can add to their own repertoire.
- Teamwork. Especially within operating units, these group sessions can help develop intuitive understanding among members.
- Generates discussion in tactics. As happened in the Quantico group, the TDGs become a catalyst for sharing tactical ideas. Of Scenario #9, "The Enemy Over the Bridge," MCG, Jun90, Cpl J. R. Murphy wrote:

I have shown your article to three other Marines, and have been involved in three heated conversations regarding the scenario and what course of action the frag order should initiate. This simple tool that you've published has the demonstrated ability to really turn on some minds.

This method is ideally suited to officers' or NCOs' calls or professional development sessions within units. (In fact, Scenario #7, "Securing Cam-Pljuna," was specifically developed for the 2d Bat-

talion, 2d Marines PME program.) The group method works best using an overhead projector so players can project an overlay of their plan for their briefing.

Two-Sided or "Double-Blind" Play

A third, more involved, method is two-sided play. Two-sided play involves a controller and two opposing teams. The teams solve the same problem, but from opposing sides. The controller compares the two solutions and makes judgments about the result: Blue's tanks platoon is ambushed by TOWs at the clearing; Red's LAI company has reached the bridge with no enemy contact; a Blue rifle company has broken through Red lines in the woods with moderate casualties. The controller then separately presents each team with the updated situation—i.e., a new problem to solve. Each team "sees" only those enemy forces it has been able to locate by its own means. Now, instead of allowing the teams to

“ In reality units get lost, orders get misunderstood, subordinates make bad decisions, important intelligence reports get misplaced, communications break down, and nothing happens as fast as it should. ”

develop deliberate plans, the controller requires commanders to issue fragmentary orders "on the spot": "Alpha Company, attack north to seize the bridge in order to deny its use to the enemy." The controller then compares the new fragmentary orders, generates another updated situation, and the game continues. After four or five turns the teams have fought out an engagement.

This version more resembles a conventional war game than the others and takes up to a couple of hours to play. But rather than relying on movement ratings, casualty tables, and dice rolls like a board game, the two-sided TDG relies on the judgment of the controller for its results. The actual results are not as important as the fact that they create new tactical problems for the players to solve. This version works best if each team includes several players, a senior commander, and several subordinates to lead the different units.

Friction

Clausewitz wrote that "friction is the only concept that more or less corresponds to the factors that distinguish real war from war on paper." TDGs are, quite literally, war on paper and so are not subject to the countless difficulties that distinguish real war. In reality units get lost, orders get misunderstood, subordinates make bad decisions, important intelligence reports get misplaced, communications break down, and nothing happens as fast as it should. A plan that seems simple in conception can be extremely difficult in execution. A plan brilliant in conception that is impossi-

ble to execute given the circumstances is not brilliant at all, but foolish. Commanders' responsibilities do not stop when they issue their orders, of course; they must also supervise the execution of their plans. But TDGs stop short of execution. You should keep this in mind when playing TDGs so as not to get the impression this whole business is much easier than it really is. In the group version, the moderator should serve as a "reality check" by questioning the feasibility of the various plans: "Do you really expect to make a 12-mile forced march through the woods at night?"

Solve the Problem, Don't Critique It

In order to keep the scenarios from getting too complicated and unwieldy, the situation descriptions are intentionally short and simple. This also adds an element of the uncertainty that is present in any tactical situation. In any situation, a commander could identify countless pieces of information he wishes he had, as well as countless inconsistencies in the information he does have. Since this is so, he must make certain assumptions. Dealing with uncertainty is one of the fundamental challenges of tactical decisionmaking. It is easy and tempting to pick apart a simplified scenario and call it unrealistic, inconsistent, or impossible. But that is simply avoiding the challenge. The fact is, war is full of unrealistic, inconsistent, and apparently impossible happenings. It is important to take the scenarios on their own terms.

One captain's response to Scenario #1, "Ambush At Dusk," MCG, Nov91, was not to offer a solution but to question how the unit in question got into the situation it did—probably a reasonable criticism. But in fact, the scenario was based on an actual incident in Vietnam, and a more detailed account could have explained more fully why the unit was where it was. More important, whether or not the unit should ever have gotten into that predicament in the first place, it did and Marines had to find a way out.

The person whose first response to a problem scenario is to complain, "This would never happen," is probably the same person who has trouble dealing with unexpected situations. As with any problem, the best advice is to solve it first and *then* figure out how it could have happened.

In Closing

Experience is the great teacher. Unfortunately, ours is a field in which experience can cost dearly. As Field Marshal Sir William Slim wrote of taking over British forces in Burma in 1942: "Experience taught a good deal, but with the Japanese as instructors it was an expensive way of learning." We are professionally obligated to do whatever we can to gain whatever experience we can without paying full price. That is precisely why we study past campaigns, and precisely why we should play tactical decision games.

Now, it's time for your first mission. Good luck!



Observations on Decisionmaking in Battle

This article first appeared in the Marine Corps Gazette in March 1988. It is included here because it has exactly the same intent as TDGs—to improve tactical decisionmaking ability. This article goes a long way toward explaining certain of the design features of TDGs, such as the strict and demanding time limit and the intentional lack of scenario information.

Decisionmaking is the essence of command in battle. By this I do not mean to diminish the importance of execution, for in battle the final accounting is based on results, not intentions, and even the best decision executed poorly is a sure means for defeat. Nor do I mean to exclude the other numerous challenges and responsibilities of command. But the responsibility for making decisions is the domain of the commander and no one else. While the commander may solicit advice and suggestions from any of his subordinates, the decision on a specific course of action is his alone.

All military operations are based on decisions. Command and staff actions are merely implements for reaching and executing decisions. Victory is a reflection of sound decisions skillfully executed.

War being a conflict between opposing wills, battlefield decisions are not made in a vacuum. While the commander is trying to impose his will upon the enemy, the enemy is trying to do the same to him. As a result, decisionmaking becomes a competitive process with the goal being to make and execute those decisions more quickly than the enemy. Clearly, the combatant who establishes a tempo that is faster than his opponent's gains a significant advantage. He retains the initiative. The focus of this article is to look at the factors that give the commander this advantage—at the factors that enable him to make sound and timely tactical decisions.

Observations

The first observation is that decisionmaking as a skill fits in the realm of the art of war rather than the science. The 1962 edition of the U.S. Army's *FM 100-5, Operations*, stated that:

Although arrived at through an analytical and orderly process, the commander's decision is not merely a mathematical computation. It is an intuitive and creative act based on consideration of all the factors involved. Its soundness is a reflection of the commander's professional competence, experience, intelligence, perception, boldness, and strength of character.

Our institution has developed command and staff actions to help standardize and formalize the procedures for reaching and implementing decisions: estimates of the situation, estimates of supportability, and courses of action are a few examples. At the

same time, commanders are expected to demonstrate an understanding of enemy doctrine, tactics, and techniques; a knowledge of the characteristics and relative capabilities of weapons and equipment; and a keen appreciation for time-distance factors. While these are all useful tools, they are not a scientific equation for success and must not dictate tactical decisions. They provide a foundation for applying experience and judgment, but they cannot negate the artistic element that is the heart of decisionmaking. To seek cover behind them is to deny the moral responsibility of command.

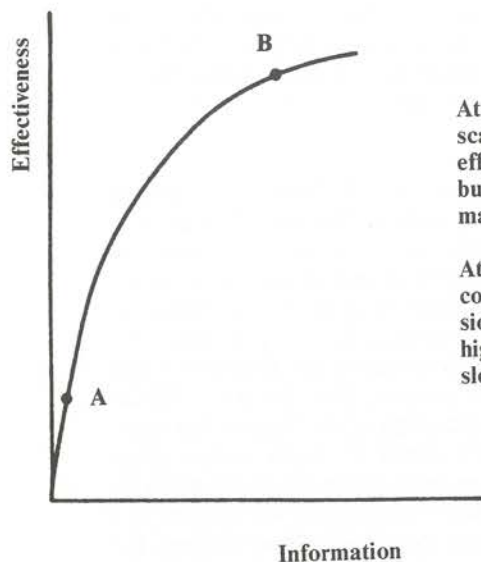
The second observation is that, as discussed in the quotation above, decisionmaking is a process requiring two distinct skills. The commander must be a master of both. First, he must have the intuitive skill to recognize the essence of a given problem. Second,

“First, the commander must have the moral courage to make tough decisions in the face of uncertainty—and to accept full responsibility for those decisions—when the natural inclination is to put off the decision pending complete information.”

he must have the creative ability to devise a practical solution to it.

The third observation is that the lower the echelon of command, the simpler, faster, and more direct is the decision process. A small-unit leader's decisions are based on a relatively few factors that he usually observes firsthand. At successively higher echelons of command, circumstances become more numerous and complex, and the commander is further removed from events by time and distance.

There are various factors that weigh on the art of decisionmaking. By these I do not mean the commonly understood factors that affect the decision itself—the mission, friendly and enemy capabilities, terrain, and weather—but those that affect the decision process. Among others, these include *certainty, information, time, and risk.*



The Effect of Information on the Potential Effectiveness of a Decision.

Figure 1

Certainty

In *Command in War*, historian Martin Van Creveld describes command as:

An endless quest for certainty—about the state and intentions of the enemy's forces; certainty about the manifold factors that together constitute the environment in which the war is to be fought, from the weather and the terrain to radioactivity and the presence of chemical warfare agents; and last, but definitely not least, certainty about the state, intentions, and activities of one's own forces.

The more the commander knows of these factors, the more specific he can make his plan.

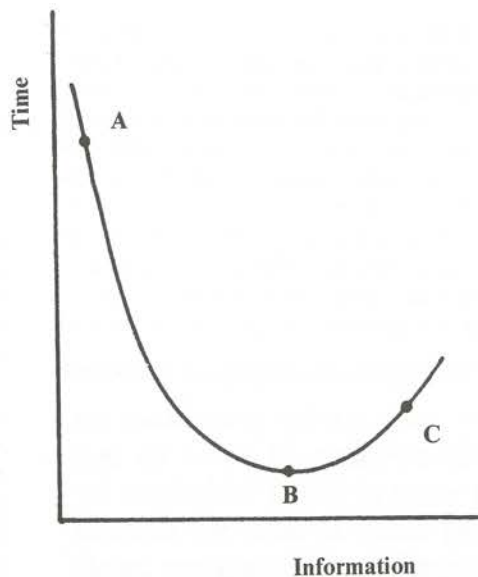
While the desire for certainty is a natural human trait, the very nature of battle makes absolute certainty an impossibility. The commander must not become enslaved to its pursuit. Referred to as the "fog of war," uncertainty pervades the battlefield. The commander must accept a degree of uncertainty, which he compensates for by developing flexible plans, planning for contingencies, developing standing operating procedures (SOPs), developing initiative in his subordinates, issuing mission-type orders, and making his intent clearly understood.

The moral courage to make decisions in the face of uncertainty is an essential trait in a commander.

Information

The second factor is information. Certainty is largely a function of information. In general, the more information a commander has at his disposal, the more effective his decisions. The commander attempts to reduce uncertainty by seeking information about the enemy, the environment, and his own situation as well. However, in the heat of battle, perhaps the only certainty is that available information will always be incomplete, will usually be inaccurate, and will sometimes even be contradictory.

Early in the decision process, when information is



The Effect of Information on the Time Needed to Reach a Decision.

Figure 2

scarce, the effectiveness of a decision increases dramatically as information increases. However, at some point in the process, when basic information has been obtained and the effort concentrates on details, the commander reaches a point of diminishing returns—when the potential effectiveness of his decision does not improve in proportion to the information obtained or the time and effort needed to obtain it. See

“Second, the commander must have the moral courage to make bold decisions and accept the necessary degree of risk when the natural inclination is to choose a less ambitious task.”

Figure 1. The commander who delays his decision beyond this point risks surrendering the initiative.

Time

Time is an essential consideration in the decision-making process. The 1954 edition of *FM 100-5* stated that “timeliness of decision is the essence of command action.” Timely decisions require rapid thinking, with consideration often limited to essential factors.

The commander should spare no effort to streamline his information-gathering and decisionmaking procedures to promote rapid decisionmaking. Toward this end, he can decentralize decisionmaking by promoting initiative among his subordinates. This is possible through the use of mission-type orders and the clear expression of intent but requires qualified subordinates. The commander can also locate himself closer to the critical events that will influence the

situation so that he can observe them directly and circumvent the delays and inaccuracies that result from passing information up the chain of command.

As the amount of information increases to a point, the time necessary to make an effective decision decreases. Beyond this point, however, additional information has the opposite effect; it only serves to cloud the situation, causing the commander to require longer to reach the same effective decision that he could have reached sooner with less information. The commander has more information than he can

“Third, the commander must have an intuitive understanding of when he has reached the point at which additional information only serves to delay the decision or when additional certainty will not justify the time and effort spent gaining it. ”

digest quickly, and he has difficulty focusing on key factors. See Figure 2. Consequently, the commander must be careful to limit the amount of information he considers to those essential elements that allow him to make his decision quickly and with reasonable certainty. He must be able to identify and focus on the central circumstances influencing a given decision, and elsewhere he must exercise economy of thought. Focus of effort applies to decisionmaking as well as combat power.

Risk

A commander's decision invariably involves the estimation and acceptance of risk. Risk is inherent in war and is involved in every mission. Part of risk is the uncontrollable element of chance. Risk is also related to gain; normally, greater potential gain requires greater risk. Further, risk is equally common to both action and inaction.

The practice of concentrating combat power at the focus of effort and economizing elsewhere by its nature requires risk. Willingness to accept risk is another element of the moral courage of command.

It is human nature to try to minimize risk by choosing a less ambitious course. But Napoleon advised that “in audacity and obstinacy will be found safety.” I do not propose recklessness, but I suggest that more decisions suffer from attempting too little than from attempting too much. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel wrote:

Bold decisions give the best promise of success. But one must differentiate between strategical or tactical boldness and a military gamble. A bold operation is one in which success is not a certainty but which in the case of failure leaves one with sufficient forces in hand to cope with whatever situation may arise. A gamble, on the other hand, is an operation which can lead either to victory or to the complete destruction of one's force.

Although the commander avoids unnecessary risks, the accomplishment of the mission is the most

important consideration. The commander must evaluate each possible course of action in terms of relative risk. If the degree of risk is unacceptable, he must seek another solution.

The Decision

The complex interaction of these basic factors poses the commander with a dilemma. His task is to select a course of action with reasonable certainty of success and an acceptable degree of risk and to reach his decision more quickly than his foe. As stated at the outset, there is no formula for this process; it is a complex and often subconscious act. It is also a skill which improves with practice; thus the use of TDGs. An improved understanding of the factors that work on the commander's ability to make tactical decisions will help him to make those decisions more effectively. Below, I have summarized the lessons as I see them. Keep them in mind when playing the TDGs.

First, the commander must have the moral courage to make tough decisions in the face of uncertainty—and to accept full responsibility for those decisions—when the natural inclination is to put off the decision pending complete information. To delay action in an emergency because of incomplete information shows a lack of energetic leadership and courage.

Second, the commander must have the moral courage to make bold decisions and accept the nec-

“ . . . in the heat of battle, perhaps the only certainty is that available information will always be incomplete, will usually be inaccurate, and will sometimes even be contradictory. ”

essary degree of risk when the natural inclination is to choose a less ambitious tack.

Third, the commander must have an intuitive understanding of when he has reached the point at which additional information only serves to delay the decision or when additional certainty will not justify the time and effort spent gaining it. On one hand, the commander should not make rash decisions based on insufficient information. Gen A.A. Vandegrift warned: “Never allow yourself to be unduly rushed or stampeded. There is usually ample time for considered judgment, even during battle.” But, on the other hand, the commander must not squander opportunities while trying to gain more complete information.

And finally, since all decisions in battle must be made in the face of uncertainty and since every situation is unique, there is no perfect solution to any battlefield problem. Therefore, the commander should not agonize over one. He should arrive at a reasonable decision quickly and execute it swiftly and aggressively. To quote Gen George S. Patton, Jr.: “A good plan violently executed *now* is better than a perfect plan executed next week.”

Scenarios

The problem is to grasp, in innumerable special cases, the actual situation which is covered by the mists of uncertainty, to appraise the facts correctly and to guess the unknown elements, to reach a decision quickly, and then to carry it out forcefully and relentlessly.

–Helmuth von Moltke

Ambush at Dusk

SITUATION

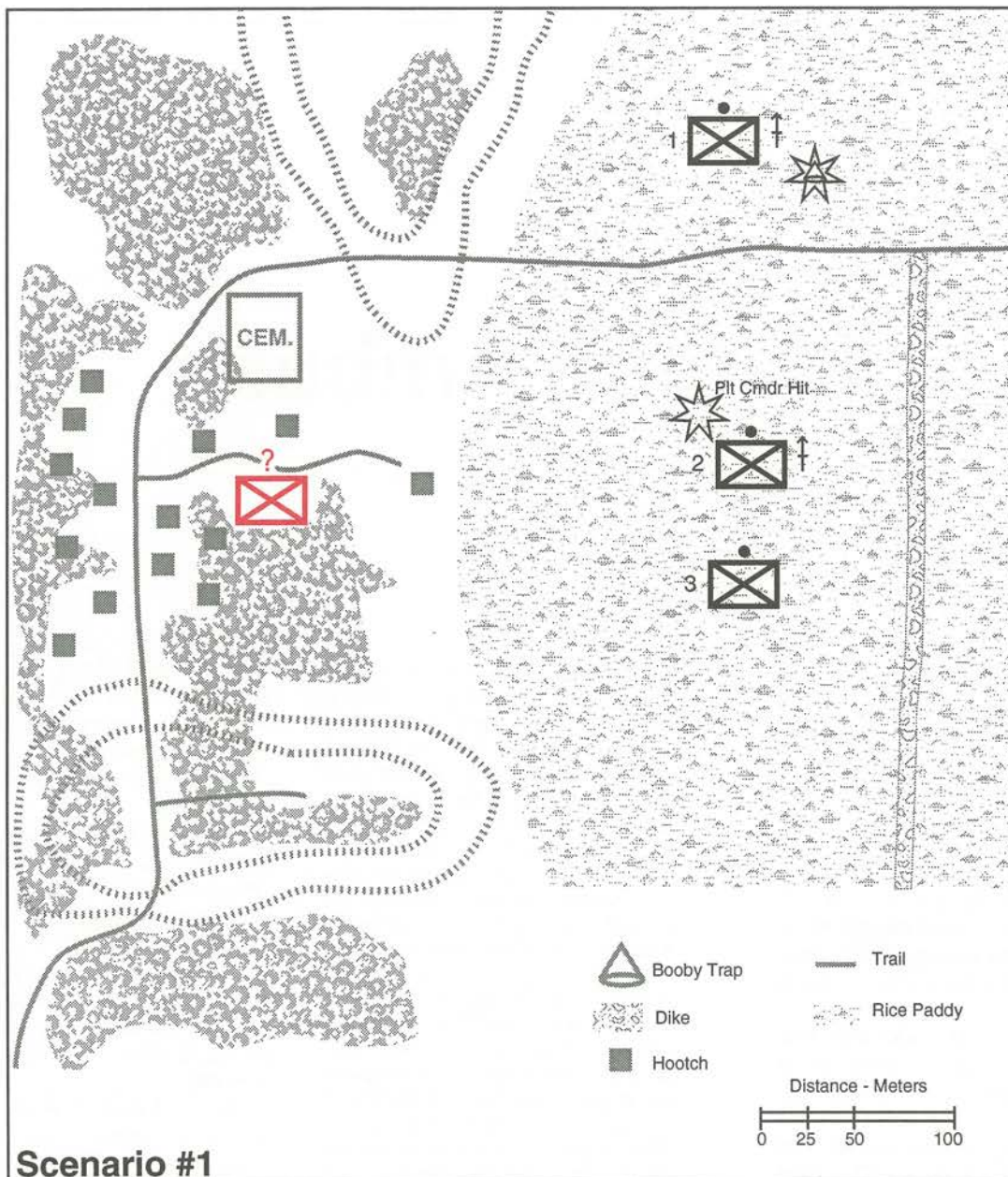
You are the squad leader of 1st Squad, 1st Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. You are fighting in a tropical area against guerrilla forces armed with small arms, light machineguns, and sometimes mortars and rocket-propelled grenades. Recently, Company C has been conducting patrols in a populated region to counter increased insurgent activity. Today, your platoon with a machinegun squad attached is running a security patrol along a designated route. You are to attack and destroy any enemy forces you locate. Dusk is approaching within the hour. Your squad is the point of the platoon patrol column, some 200 yards forward of the platoon's main body, advancing north through a rice paddy, paralleling a 2-foot-high dike to your right. You have learned from experience not to walk on the dikes or trails because they are frequently booby-trapped; although uncomfortable, the rice paddies are generally the safest places to move. To your west is a village. East of the dike is another rice paddy and another small village.

As your squad crosses a trail at the northern edge of the paddy, one of

your Marines trips a booby trap, suffering a severe leg wound. Suddenly, the enemy opens fire with automatic weapons from the village to the west, and the platoon commander is hit. The steady volume of fire from the village has 2d and 3d squads pinned down in the rice paddy. After tending to the lieutenant, the corpsman courageously makes his way forward under fire to your position, followed shortly by one machinegun team. The corpsman tells you the lieutenant is in a bad way. You wish you had a radio, but the platoon's radioman is pinned down near the lieutenant. The enemy fire against your position is sporadic; the two squads in the paddy are returning fire but appear unable to move. You estimate that the sun will disappear within a half hour. You have no communications with your platoon sergeant. What do you do?

REQUIREMENT

In a time limit of five minutes, draft the frag order you would issue to your team leaders and describe any additional actions you would take. Include an overlay sketch and provide a brief explanation of the rationale behind your action.



Scenario #1

For discussion, see pp. 42-44.

Game appeared in *Marine Corps Gazette*, Nov91; solutions, Jan92

Platoon Ambush

SITUATION

You are the second squad leader of 1st Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines. You have been fighting enemy infantry forces in wooded, rolling terrain. Your platoon commander tells you that the platoon has been given the mission to conduct a patrol behind enemy lines to establish an ambush along a main supply route frequently used by enemy supply convoys to move supplies forward (west) from Depot, which is located about 5 kilometers east of the ambush site. The convoys usually consist of a machinegun jeep in front followed by a half-dozen or so covered trucks. There is a strong enemy garrison of motorized forces at Depot. The lieutenant plans to set in an L-shaped ambush with two squads and two attached machinegun squads at a bend in the road just east of Beaver Dam Run. "It'll be like shooting fish in a barrel," he says. He plans to blow the log bridge to the west, detonating it when he springs the ambush. Your squad, with one 60mm mortar team attached, will protect the other flank of the ambush from a position on the high ground to the east of the ambush site. You will be linked to the ambush by landline. In his patrol order under "Tasks," the lieutenant gives you the following instructions:

When we get to the ORP [objective rallying point], you will move out first to your position to provide security for the rest of the platoon while it sets in the ambush. The platoon will move

out 30 minutes later. You'll take a phone and LCpl Cooley [the platoon runner] with you. He'll run the wire from your position back to the ambush site. Find a position that gives you a good view of the road toward Depot so you can provide early warning and information of the convoy's approach. When you get in position, stay concealed and stay put. Once the ambush is sprung you will isolate the objective area by engaging any enemy forces trying to get in or out. You will provide protection for the platoon as it withdraws to the ORP. It's especially important that you delay any react forces coming from the Depot garrison. A green-star cluster is the signal that you can withdraw back to the ORP. Surprise is essential, so it's imperative, under all circumstances, that you stay concealed and not open fire until the ambush has been sprung, got it?

Before departing on the patrol you draw one AT4 per fire team. In addition, each of your squad members is carrying one 60mm mortar round.

Everything goes as planned to the ORP. From the ORP you move out to your position. En route you cross a narrow animal track not on your map. You reach your destination and find a good position from which you can cover the Depot Road. You set in the mortar to cover the road to the east by direct lay. You hook up the landline, but the connection is bad; neither party can understand what the other is saying. Meanwhile, something attracts your attention to the southeast. Movement of some kind? You send 1st Fire

Team to check it out, and return to supervising the defensive preparations.

Fifteen minutes later, 1st Fire Team returns, out of breath.

"What have you got, Cpl Turner?" you ask.

"An enemy foot patrol, 20-25 men, moving west through the woods about 200 yards south, auto weapons and light machineguns," he replies.

"Did they see you?"

"Hell no," he says with a grin. "Who do you think you're talking to?"

You try to get through to the platoon on the landline, but the connection is very bad.

"Roger, I copy that the convoy's on the way," comes the reply. "We're ready for 'em. Remember, don't engage until after the ambush goes."

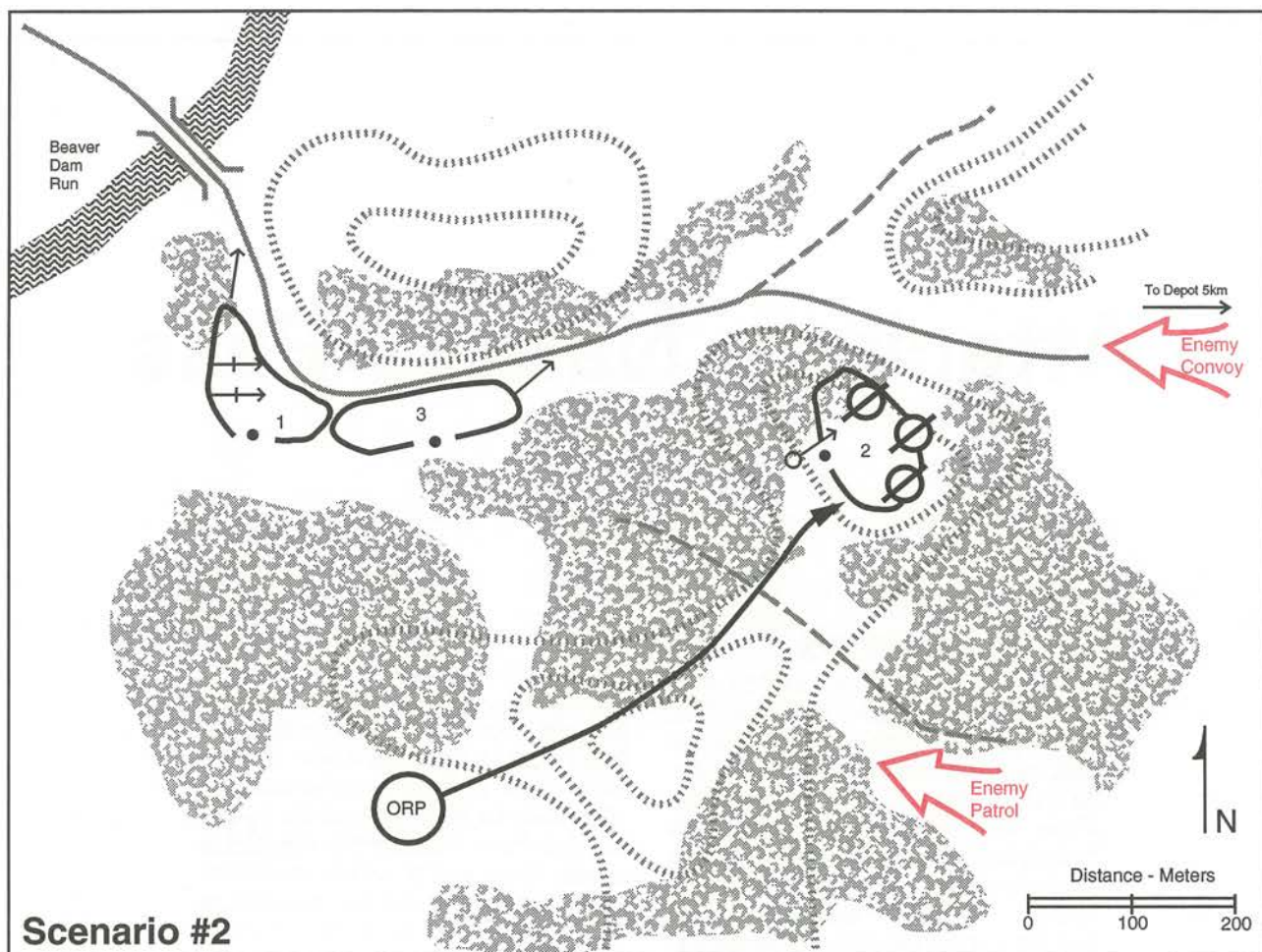
"Negative," you say. As you try to repeat your message, Cpl Turner taps you on the arm and points down the road to the east. The convoy approaches around a bend, about 300-400 yards away: two machinegun jeeps followed by at least seven trucks, and more coming into view, moving about 15-25 miles per hour.

In a couple of minutes, things are going to get interesting.

What do you do?

REQUIREMENT

In a time limit of 5 minutes, describe your actions and issue the frag order you will give to your subordinates. Make sure to include the intent of your plan. Provide a sketch of your actions and an explanation.



For discussion see pp. 45-47

Attack on Narrow Pass

SITUATION

You are the commander of 1st Platoon, Company I, 3d Battalion, 6th Marines. 6th Marines have been attacking north with the intention of destroying enemy forces in Sanctuary Plain and have already landed a helicopterborne company in the plain near Sanctuary City. The helicopterborne force has become besieged, and 3/6 has the mission of launching a relief attack into the plain to reinforce the helicopterborne force and continue the offensive. Implied in this mission is forcing passage onto the plain. The terrain south of Sanctuary Ridge is generally rugged and undeveloped with thick vegetation and severe relief. The enemy you have been fighting is primarily infantry with small numbers of tanks. It is 2015; there is a full moon.

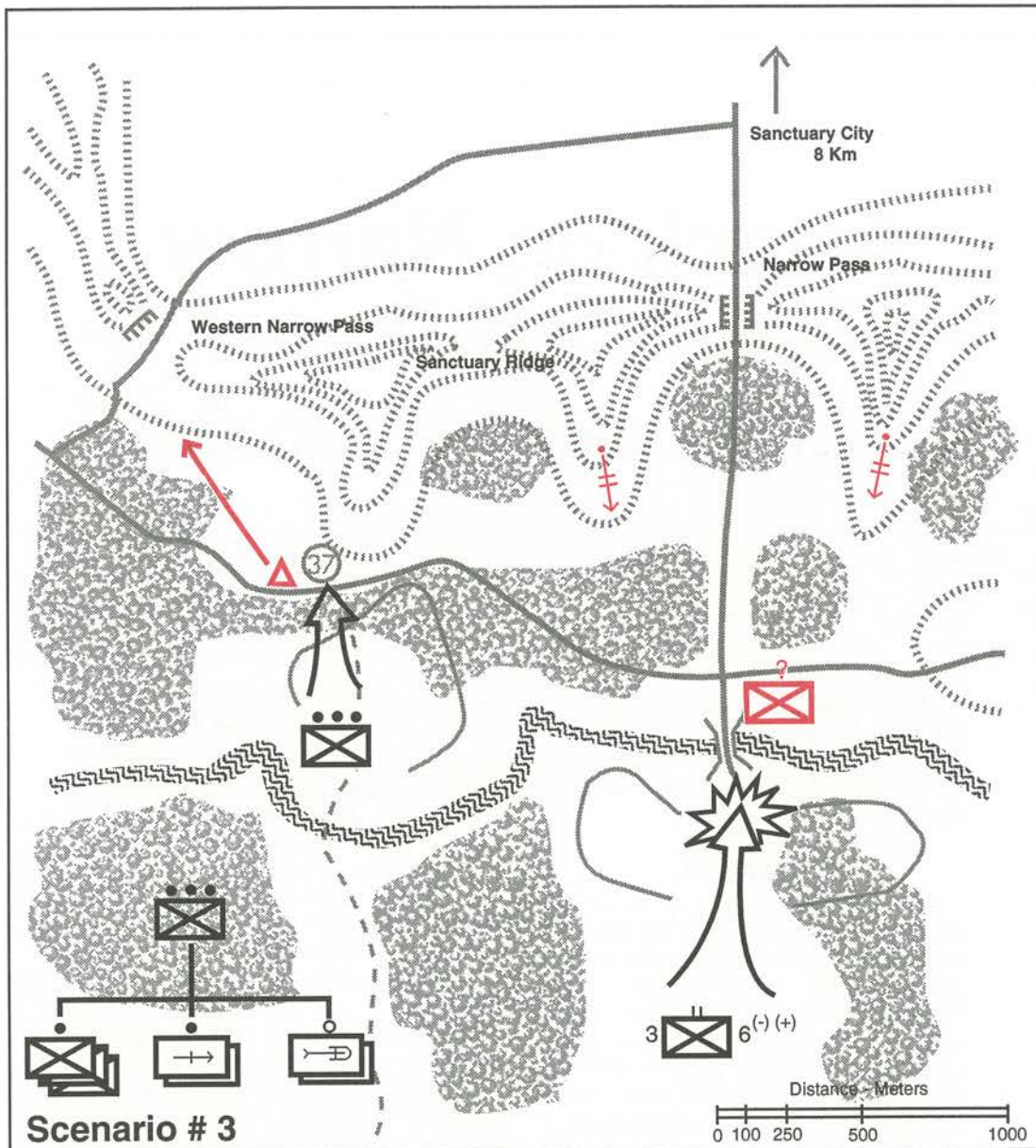
Your platoon—reinforced with two machinegun squads from weapons platoon and two Dragon teams (with night trackers) from weapons company—advances along the battalion's left flank with instructions to guard that flank. Moving parallel to a narrow foot trail—but not on it—you cross a dry, rocky gully about 3 to 4 feet deep and 20 meters wide without making contact. But as you approach Checkpoint 37 your point squad makes contact with what appears to be a lis-

tening post that immediately flees northwest toward the Western Narrow Pass. Moments later a major firefight breaks out in the thick woods to your east. From radio transmissions it is clear that the main body of the battalion has been halted by a significant enemy force and is taking casualties. Your best guess is that the engagement is taking place near the Narrow Bridge. From your position you can see several enemy machineguns on the ridge to your northeast opening up in support of the firefight. On the conduct of fire net you hear the battalion directing supporting arms onto the enemy position at the bridge. Transmissions on the tactical net are somewhat unclear, but it appears the battalion is attempting a right flanking movement against the enemy position. Except for the listening post that fled, there is no sign of enemy activity in your area. What do you do?

REQUIREMENT

Within a 10-minute time limit, prepare any frag orders you would issue to your squad leaders and attachments, including your intent. Include any plans for the use of supporting arms, an overlay of your scheme, and any communications you would make with higher headquarters.

Acting with initiative does not mean being a "loose cannon." It's important to coordinate up and down the chain and laterally. What reports will you make to higher headquarters?



For discussion, see pp. 48-50.
 Game appeared in *Marine Corps Gazette*, Mar91; solutions, May91.

Attack on Narrow Pass, Continued: From Bad to Worse

This scenario is the continuation of Scenario #3 and is based on a common solution for that problem submitted by several *Marine Corps Gazette* readers.

SITUATION

Based on the situation in Scenario #3, you contemplate moving into a position to assist battalion, but you decide that your orders to guard the flank are explicit and that you had best stay put. You set your three rifle squads in a blocking position in the trees along the east-west road near Checkpoint 37, preparing to repel any enemy approaching from the west. You decide to try to suppress the western enemy gun position with an attached machinegun squad, and you let battalion know that you can adjust supporting arms on the eastern enemy gun position. You also can't resist sending your platoon sergeant due north with a small reconnaissance patrol to check out the situation along the ridge.

The enemy machineguns fall silent as you suppress with supporting arms and your own machineguns. Battalion has successfully outflanked the enemy and is advancing north again. At about 2130 your platoon engages an enemy patrol of about squad size approaching from the northwest; the enemy patrol withdraws hurriedly whence it came. Checking the scene of the fire-fight, you recover two enemy corpses. Artillery impacts several hundred me-

ters west of your position. That was about a half hour ago; you have had no enemy activity since then. Your platoon sergeant returns to report that he reached the ridge and reconnoitered a couple hundred meters each direction. The only contact he made was an enemy LP which fled west. He also reports the sound of enemy armor—a platoon or company at most, he estimates—revving up north of the ridge.

Suddenly, battalion comes under heavy fire as it nears Narrow Pass. The enemy machineguns that you engaged open up on the battalion again, this time from either flank. It is apparent that the enemy has a sizable force at the pass. From the radio traffic you discern that battalion has been hit hard: two companies are unable to advance and are taking casualties. Anxious to help, you contact battalion to offer your services. "Just wait out," the S-3 snaps agitatedly. "We've got other things to worry about now." The time is now 2200. What do you do?

REQUIREMENT

Within a 5-minute time limit, prepare the frag order (if any) you would issue to your squad leaders and attachments, including the intent of your plan. Include any plans for the use of supporting arms, an overlay of any scheme of maneuver, and any further communications you would make with battalion. Then give a brief explanation of your rationale.

'Film at Eleven'

SITUATION

You are the commanding officer of Company F, 2d Battalion, 3d Marines, fighting in an arid desert environment that offers exceptional mobility for wheeled and tracked vehicles. You are supported by a platoon of assault amphibious vehicles (AAVs), enough to mount your entire company. After intense fighting at the front for several weeks, the battalion commander has assigned your company to rear duty providing security for a mobile combat service support detachment (MCSSD). As the ground combat element (GCE) advances north, the MCSSD plans to move in that direction and establish a forward supply point at Oasis, some 25 kilometers north but still another 25 kilometers south of the front. While the front is generally to the north, there is no clear delineation between friendly and enemy territory; as a result, you long ago learned the importance of all-round security. Irregular enemy forces mounted on small trucks and equipped with heavy machineguns are known to operate in the area.

Oasis is the only source of water in the region. The local population lives in adobe dwellings, which will not normally withstand anything larger than small arms. The only masonry structures are the two-story communi-

ty center and the pump house. In the center of town is a large plaza. Surrounding the buildings are irrigated fields of "short" crops that meet the needs of the local people. The local population is of the same ethnic group as the enemy, although their actual support for the enemy is sometimes less than enthusiastic.

The time is 1400. The MCSSD commander tells you he wants to occupy Oasis by 1200 tomorrow, and he expects you to have the settlement completely secured by that time. From experience you know that each oasis town has a small militia force consisting of the adult males of the settlement, equipped with small arms, rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), machineguns, and possibly light mortars. The fighting skills of these units vary greatly. Some are looking for any excuse to lay down their arms; many fire off a few rounds to satisfy their sense of honor before surrendering; only a few fight tenaciously. However, there seems to be no way of anticipating how the forces will act from one settlement to the next. In the case of Oasis, the S-2 estimates the militia to be between 100-150 strong. He can tell you nothing more than that.

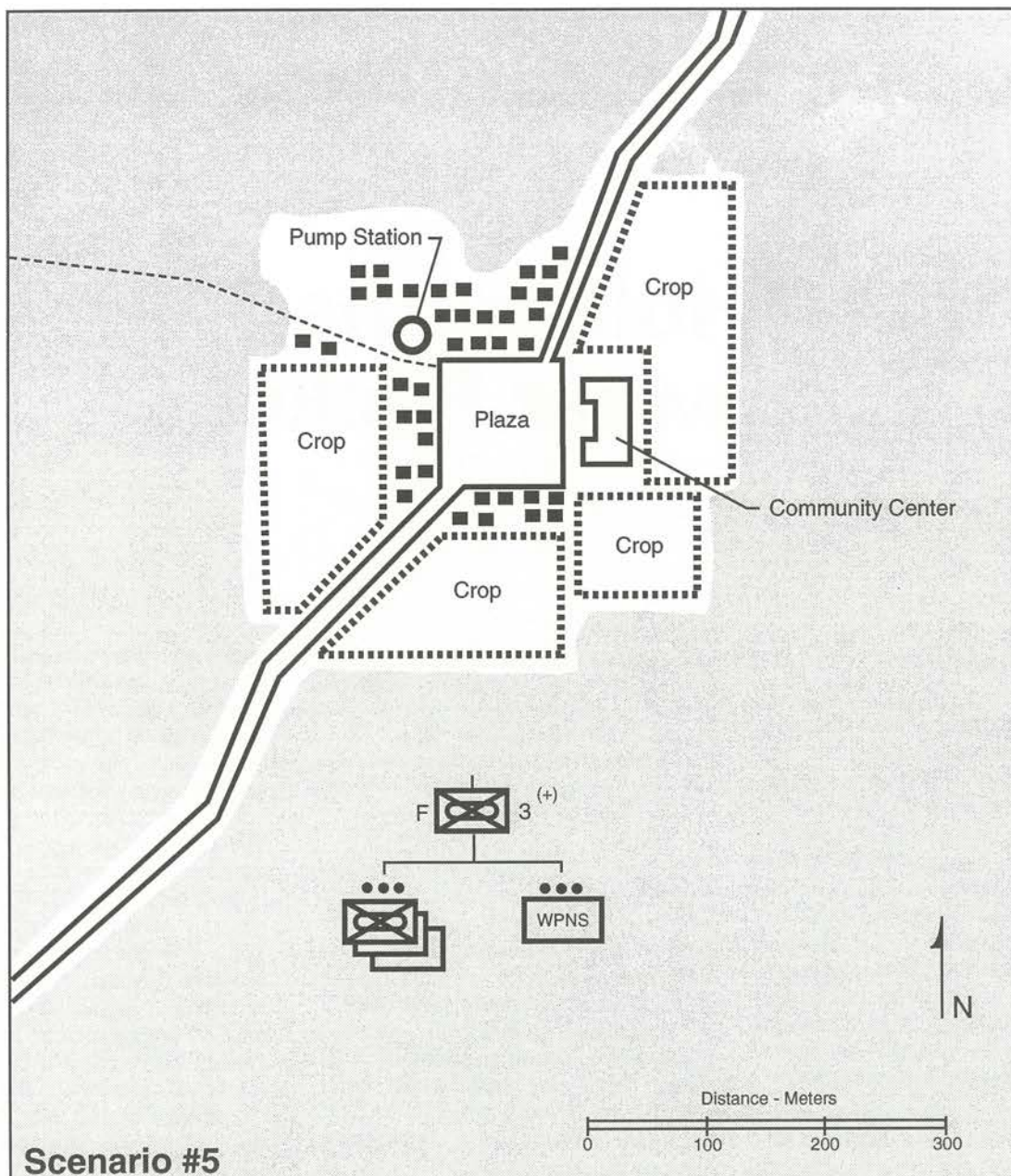
As you are grumbling about the lineage of the S-2, the MCSSD commander comes up to you and says: "One

more thing; there's a cable TV news team covering our operation that's looking for a little action. I've told them they can accompany you as you secure the Oasis. Cooperate with them, but keep them out of trouble." The news team comes equipped with its own recognizable camera van. You are introduced to the correspondent, whose smug, mustachioed face you recognize. He says: "Let's get something straight, Captain. The public has a right to know what's going on over here. I want to be right where the action is. If you try to keep me from doing my job, it could be embarrassing for you."

REQUIREMENT

You do not feel particularly friendly toward the news team, but you have other things to worry about. How will you approach the problem of securing Oasis? You're glad that for once you've got a little time to plan your operation, so take 20 minutes. Write the order you will issue to your rifle platoons and weapons sections and your instructions for the camera crew. Include a statement of your intent, a focus of efforts, any plans for supporting fires, and an overlay of your plan. Then provide an explanation of the rationale for your plan.

Does the enemy have a critical vulnerability you can exploit?



For discussion see pp. 53-55.
 Game appeared in *Marine Corps Gazette*, Jun90; solutions, Aug90

Hole in the Trowzer Pocket

SITUATION

You are the commander of Company K, 3d Battalion, 24th Marines, fighting in rolling, wooded terrain against enemy foot infantry forces. Regiment has been attacking generally south for over 2 weeks. A sizable enemy force has managed to hold out, creating a salient in the vicinity of the town of Trowzer. You are called to the battalion command post for instructions, where you learn that regiment plans to destroy the enemy pocket by an encircling attack. The battalion commander gives you the following warning order on the regimental plan:

The main enemy force is holed up in Trowzer to the south. Regiment intends to move one company around each of the enemy flanks under cover of darkness to occupy a blocking position on the low ridge south of Trowzer. At 0400, the other four companies [one battalion is in reserve] will attack south through Trowzer to crush the enemy against the BP. A classic hammer-and-anvil operation.

Kilo, you will be part of the anvil. Commencing at 2100, you will infiltrate by Route Red around the eastern flank of the enemy to establish a BP in the vicinity of Hills 88 and 82, oriented north. Your left boundary is Trowzer Road exclusive. Coordinate on your left with Fox/2/24, who will be the other half of the anvil in the vicinity of Hill 81. Fox will be coming in

from the west. Make face-to-face contact at the Inseam Creek Bridge. As the senior commander, the Fox CO is in overall command of the BP. Commencing 0300, destroy enemy forces in your sector trying to escape south out of the pocket. The detailed plan will follow.

Using the "Half Rule," you brief you platoon commanders and give them ample time to prepare. After the operations order arrives, you make minor adjustments to your plan and move out. You are able to move your company undetected around the enemy's flank and arrive in position by 0130. Using the established brevity code, you contact Fox Company by radio to let them know you are in position. "Roger that, same here," comes the reply. After giving your executive officer and artillery forward observer guidance to supervise the defensive fire-planning, you move to the bridge to coordinate with Fox, arriving at 0200. You wait 15 minutes but the Fox commander does not show up. You contact him again by radio and he replies: "Roger, I'm in position waiting for you." To the west you can see and hear Fox moving around in the vicinity of Hill 81. "Pretty poor noise and light discipline," you think to yourself. You decide to walk up to Hill 81 to find the company commander, but as you approach you decide the situation doesn't

look right. The activity is not Fox at all; it is enemy infantry forces moving south in a steady flow out of the pocket. Fox Company is nowhere to be found. You're lucky to escape back toward your company without being detected.

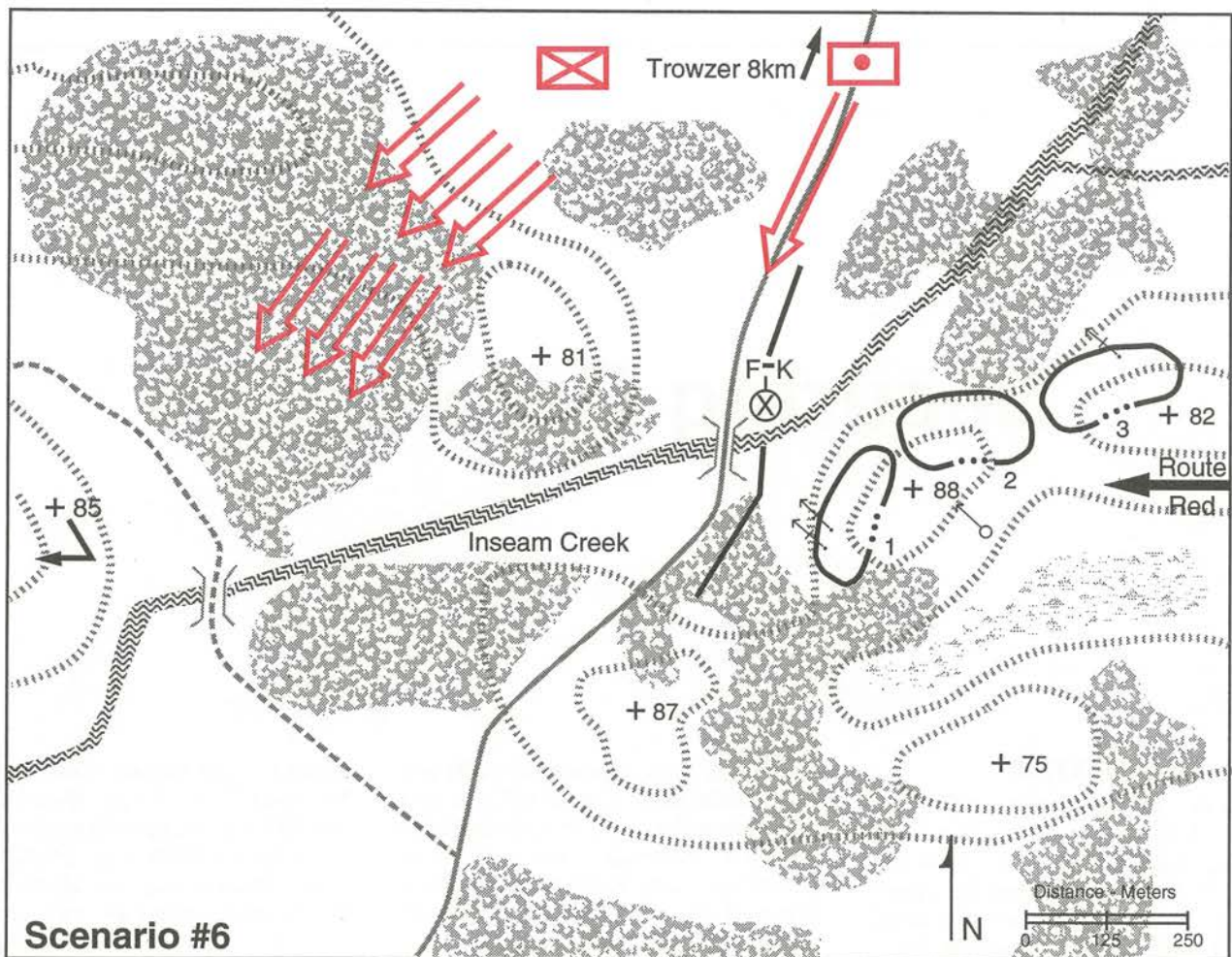
You are positive of your location. You call up Fox again, but the commander insists that he also is in the correct location on Hill 81. He reports no sign of enemy activity. It is now 0245. The enemy is by now moving south in increasing numbers just west of Hill 81; it is clear to you that this is part of an organized withdrawal. You explain the problem to battalion, which relays to regiment. But since Fox Company insists it is in the right position, about all regiment can say is: "Straighten it out. The attack goes on as scheduled."

About this time, your 1st Platoon reports an artillery unit heading south on the road from Trowzer, approaching the bridge. What do you do?

REQUIREMENT

In a time limit of 5 minutes, give the orders you would pass to your subordinates, to include the intent of your plan and your focus of efforts. Provide a sketch of your plan, any guidance for supporting arms, and a brief explanation of your plan.

Remember to keep in mind the intent of your higher commanders.



For discussion, see pp. 56-58

Securing Cam-Pljuna

SITUATION

You are the commander of Company E, 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, conducting peacekeeping operations in a Third World country torn by ethnic civil war. The terrain is mountainous, rugged, and thickly vegetated. Most roads are vulnerable to ambush from the nearby high ground. Vehicles are restricted to roads; foot forces can move anywhere (though slowly and sometimes with difficulty) except the steepest terrain. Your region is controlled by a faction known as the Early Retirists, who are opposed to the majority local population and who are prone to mistreat the locals and to harass peacekeeping forces. The mountain city of Cam-Pljuna some 10–12 kilometers to your northwest is strategically important because it is a gateway to the mountainous interior and controls the main roads to the cities of Pendjetan and Bensjkula. All three cities have been cut off for a couple weeks and are in need of food and medical supplies. Cam-Pljuna is important also because it is one of the few places with enough open flatland for a large helicopter landing zone, through which relief supplies can be introduced into the interior. Cam-Pljuna is accessible to vehicles only by way of the narrow switchback road from the southeast.

The battalion commander calls you to the command post to tell you that battalion will undertake operations intended to relieve the cities under control of the Early Retirists. As the first phase of this campaign, he gives your company the following mission:

In the next 48 hours, capture and secure the town of Cam-Pljuna in order to facilitate immediate relief operations by helicopter and/or vehicle and to facilitate subsequent operations to relieve Pendjetan and Bensjkula. You are the battalion's main effort.

The S-2 tells you that Cam-Pljuna normally has a population of several thousand, but it is unclear how many have fled the city in recent weeks. The local population is not expected to cause trouble but cannot be counted on for much assistance either. The permanent garrison of Early Retirist forces at Cam-Pljuna is estimated between 50–75. Their training and morale are estimated at poor-to-average. They are equipped with small arms, light machineguns and mortars. Their night-vision capability is limited. A motorized machinegun unit of four or five vehicles based at Pendjetan regularly patrols the route Pendjetan—Cam-Pljuna—Bensjkula. Any enemy reinforcements will come from Pendjetan. A flyover within the last 24

hours located antiair positions (twin-barrelled 23mm AA guns) on Hills 425 and 307, a mortar position on the western edge of town and prepared defenses (which may not all be permanently occupied) east and south of town. The Early Retirists regularly locate their positions among the local dwellings.

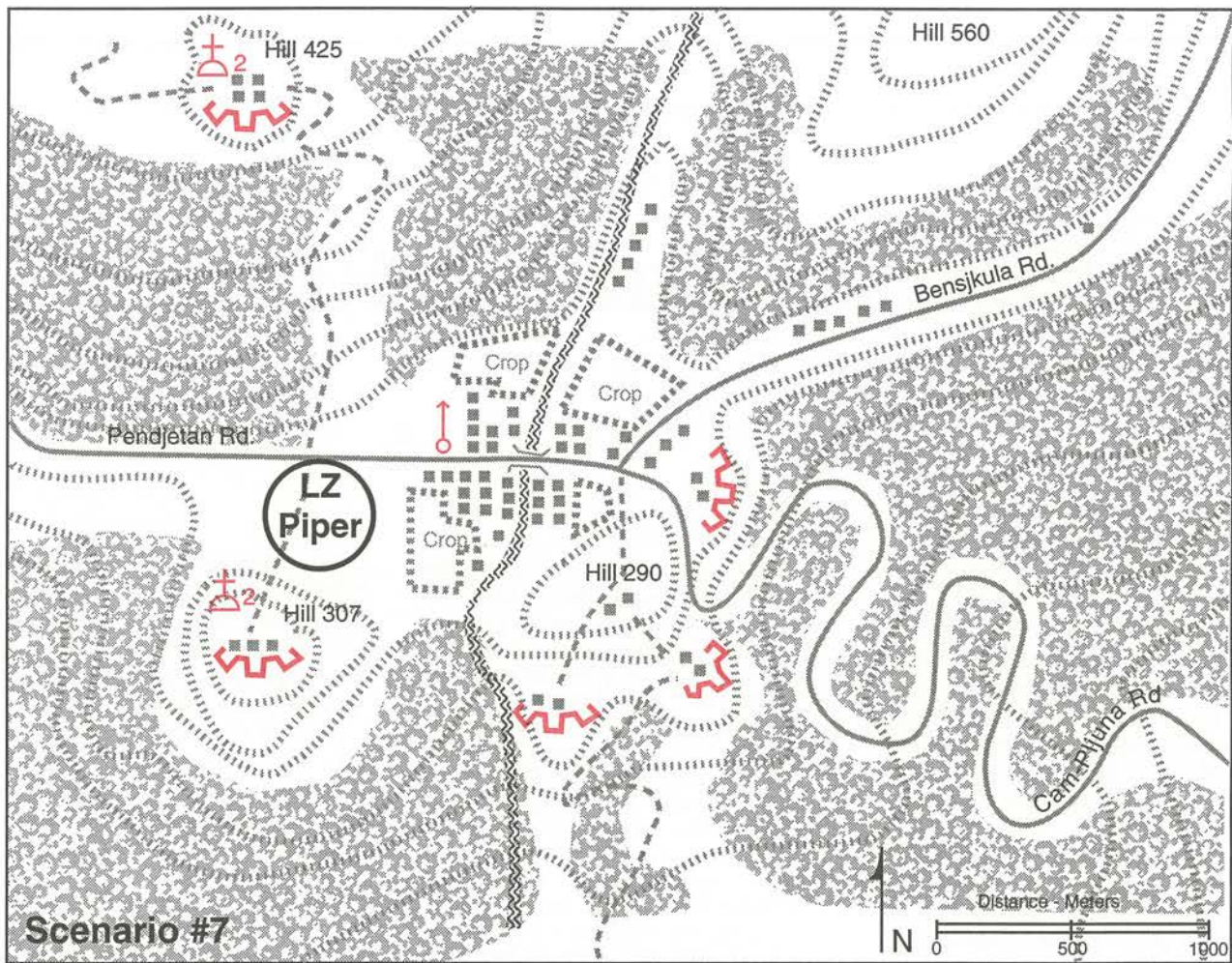
The battalion commander gives you this additional guidance:

- Minimize collateral damage to locals, their homes, and crops.
- It is not necessary to clear the Cam-Pljuna Road; follow-on forces will be responsible for their own route security.
- If you can secure the landing zone (LZ), battalion can reinforce with one company by helicopter within 3 hours.
- Any weapons company assets you require are available.

REQUIREMENT

In a time limit of 30 minutes, develop the plan you would use to accomplish your mission. Remember to include your intent, focus of efforts, any plans for the use of supporting arms, and any coordinating instructions. Decide what weapons company assets you need. Then provide a sketch and give a brief explanation of your plan.

What weapons company assets do you need, and why?



For discussion, see pp. 59-60.

Raid on Gazebo Ridge

SITUATION

It is predawn, after a typically chaotic and bloody desert battle during Operation HOLY WARRIOR. You are the first sergeant of Company A, 2d Light Armored Infantry Battalion. The company's last remaining commissioned officer was killed in the opening moment's of yesterday's battle; since then you have commanded the company. As of this morning, Alfa Company consists of six light armored vehicles with 25mm chain guns (LAV-25s) each carrying only two or three scouts; two assault gun variants (LAV-AGs); two TOW variants (LAV-ATs); and an air-defense variant with Stinger and a 25mm gun (LAV-AD). The 25mm chain gun on the LAV-25 fires high explosive (HE) and armor piercing (AP) rounds with a maximum effective range (in your practical experience) of about 1,500 meters. The 105mm LAV-AG has an effective range of about 2,500 meters. The battalion has been in intense combat for 5 days running, and you are hoping for a day off to pull maintenance. No such luck; as your gunner heats up the coffee, a messenger arrives with instructions to report to the battalion command post immediately.

You arrive at the command vehicle in the dark; the battalion commander, a captain who began the campaign as your company commander, says with a smile, "Good morning, skipper." You don't like the way he is grinning at you; something must be up. Lucky he put you through all those tactical decision games, you muse. He gets down to business:

We're here. [Pointing on the map with a pencil.] The Indigenous Division is here. [Another jab some 25 miles to the east.] The enemy is here on

Gazebo ridge, in between, giving the Indigenous boys a beating. Our division has orders to relieve the pressure on the Indigenous Division. Unfortunately, fuel is low. Division has enough for a limited operation, which naturally will be us. We will make a raid directly into the enemy rear while the rest of the division pulls back for replenishment. First sergeant, your boys will be on the right; I can give you a section of two TOW Cobras in direct support. Bravo on the left; Charlie and Delta are reserves, on the right and left respectively. Initial main effort is Alfa. We'll have one battery of self-propelled arty in direct support.

I can't give you any instructions about what to do until we meet the enemy. If in doubt, raise as much havoc as you can—mindful of the fuel situation—but do not get committed to a set battle. If the enemy strikes back in force, pull back; use your superior speed to break contact. But it's imperative that you act boldly to take some pressure off our friends in the east. We move out in one hour. Any questions?

You arrange with the Cobras to hover out of sight to your rear until called and organize your force as shown on the sketch. Uncertain as to what you will encounter, you remind vehicle commanders of the company's "Do as I do; follow the leader" standing operating procedure.

In the approaching dawn, you approach the rear of the enemy position—a low, crescent-shaped escarpment—apparently unnoticed. You are less than 4 miles away. In the distance to your left you can see the vehicles of Bravo Company advancing in dispersed formation toward the enemy positions farther north. You see an enemy tank detach itself from a small cluster on the extreme left of the ene-

my position and move directly across your front to the other flank. Through your binoculars you see the enemy tank commander look over at you, apparently without recognition, and wave. You return the greeting.

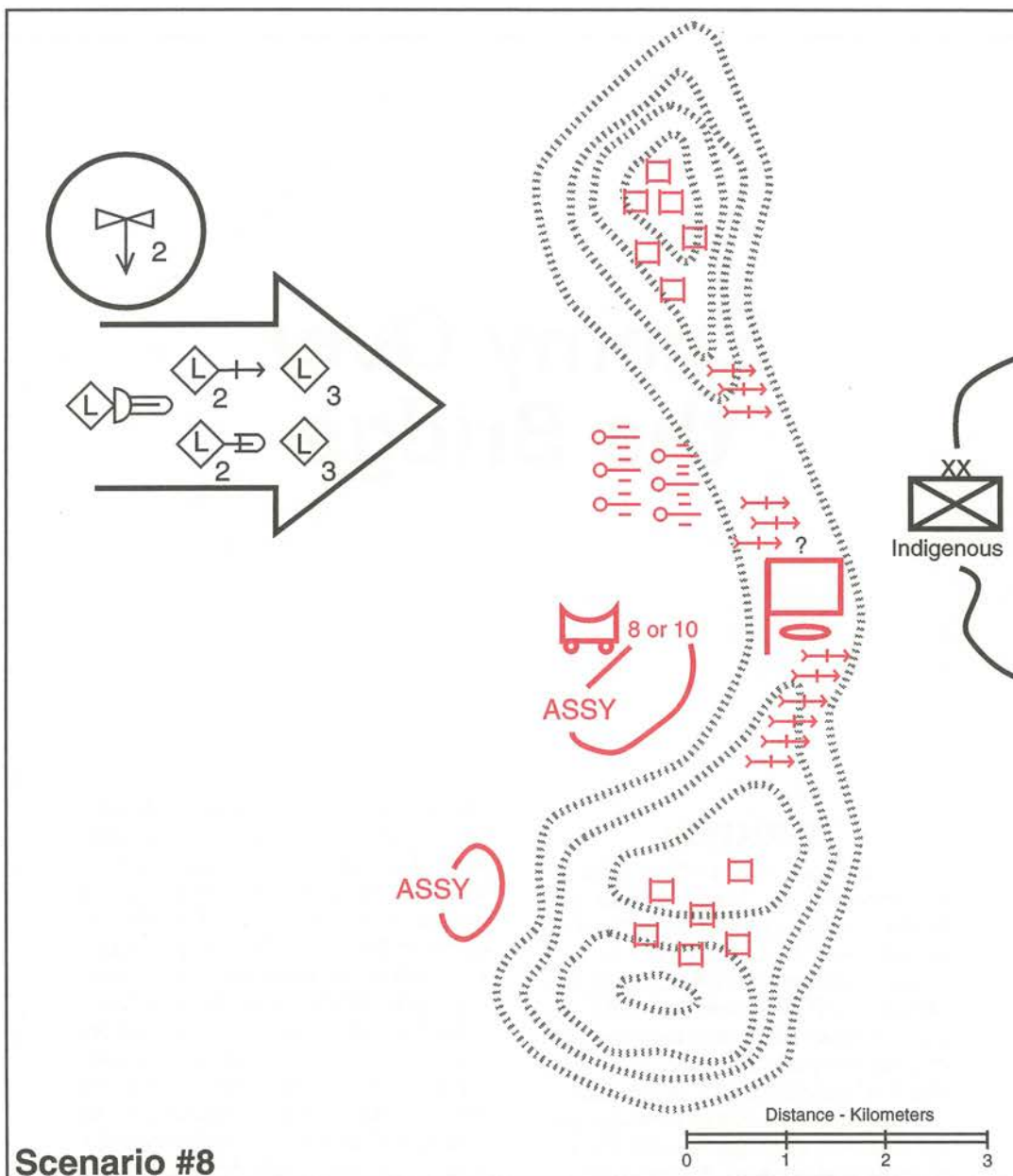
You try to raise battalion on the radio, but comm is dead. The Charlie Company commander tells you he will relay messages to battalion.

You see an artillery battery position in the hollow of the crescent pounding away at the friendly forces to the east. You see trucks and clusters of troops going disinterestedly about their morning chores. You see clusters of five or six tanks on either flank of the position, the crews milling about dismounted, and field guns lining the escarpment, also firing to the east. At the center of the crescent, among a cluster of smaller vehicles, you spot an enormous, two-story command vehicle, which you recognize as a captured U.S. model. Amazingly, the enemy seems unaware of, or at least unconcerned about, your approach.

You are now nearly within the horns of the crescent. The cluster of enemy tanks on the far left starts to show signs of life; one by one you see the diesel signatures of the engines revving up. There is a sudden flurry of activity around the tanks. You sense it is the moment of truth. . . .

REQUIREMENT

In a time limit of 5 minutes, describe the action you will take in the form of the fragmentary order you will issue to your subordinates. Make sure to describe your intent and designate your focus of efforts. Include an overlay and a brief explanation of your plan.



For discussion, see pp. 61-63.
 Game appeared in *Marine Corps Gazette*, Sep90; solution, Nov90.

Enemy Over the Bridge

SITUATION

You are the commanding officer of 2d Battalion, 6th Marines. Your battalion consists of two rifle companies on foot, one rifle company on trucks, a weapons company, a tank company (minus), and a TOW section on HMMWVs. The Dragons and heavy machineguns of your weapons company have been attached out to the rifle companies.

Friendly forces hold the bridge and the riverline. (You understand the river to be unfordable.) Reconnaissance elements are operating north of the river. Tomorrow morning the division begins a major offensive north across the river, with the division's focus of efforts in 6th Marines' zone. Your battalion will spearhead the regiment's attack, and as such will be the initial regimental focus of effort.

You are to occupy the assembly area shown on the map west of Hamlet in preparation for the morning attack across the river commencing at 0400. You are moving north toward the assembly area as shown. At 2000, your surveillance and target acquisition (STA) platoon, which is forward reconnoitering the route, reports enemy

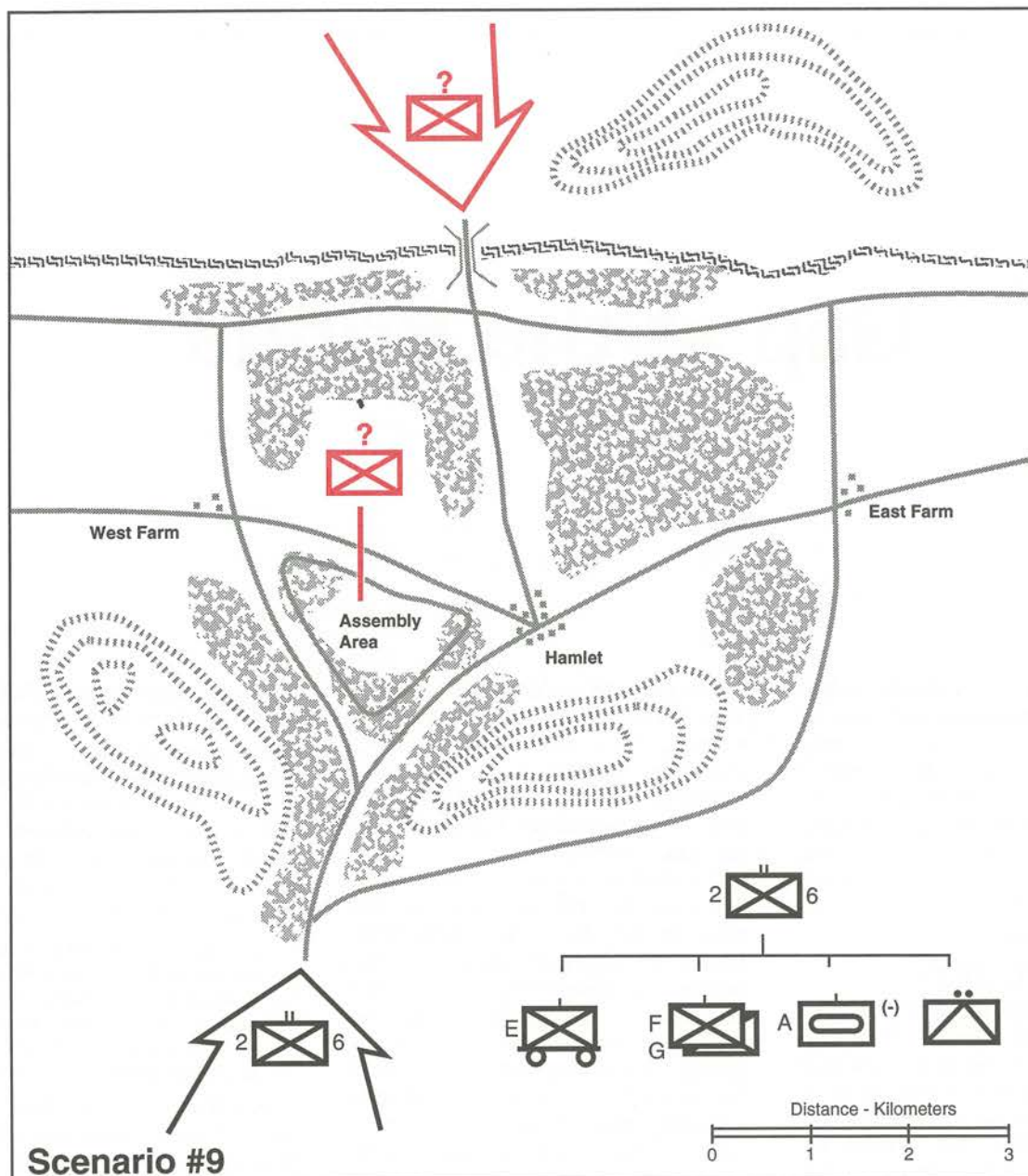
infantry occupying your assembly area in strength and continuing to reinforce. The size of these enemy units is unknown but estimated to be at least a company. Further, the STA platoon commander reports he has just met a reconnaissance team that was operating north of the river but has been forced south across the river under fire. The reconnaissance team leader reports there is no sign of friendly forces holding the riverline or the bridge and that enemy infantry units with some light vehicles have been moving across the bridge for at least 30 minutes. This is all the information the STA and reconnaissance Marines can tell you.

As the battalion commander, what will you do?

REQUIREMENT

Within a 5-minute time limit, give your solution in the form of the fragmentary order you would issue to your subordinates—to include the intent behind your plan, your focus of efforts and any use of supporting arms—and support it with an overlay sketch. Then give a brief explanation of the reasons behind your decision.

Ask yourself, "What is the critical element in this situation?"



For discussion, see pp. 64-67.

Game appeared in *Marine Corps Gazette*, Apr90; solutions, Jun90.

Gap at the Bridge

Knowing your enemy means understanding his capabilities and general intentions. But it also means seeing things the way he sees them, thinking the way he thinks, with the aim of anticipating his actions and thereby gaining the upper hand. This situation is the same as in Scenario #9 with one very significant difference: This time you are the enemy.

SITUATION

You are the commanding officer of 1st Battalion, 5th Marines. Your battalion consists of one reinforced rifle company on trucks, two reinforced rifle companies on foot, a tank platoon and an antitank (TOW) section on HMMWVs. The Dragons and heavy machineguns of your weapons company are attached out to the companies. The division is temporarily halted, but the division commander plans to resume the offensive toward the south as soon as logistics can be brought forward. You have been operating north of the river against enemy reconnaissance and security elements. The enemy holds the riverline and the bridge in strength. (You understand the river to be unfordable.) Intelligence indicates that the enemy is planning an imminent offensive north

across the river—sooner than your division can be ready to attack in strength. Your mission, which gives you broad latitude in the manner of execution, is to take whatever actions you can to forestall or disrupt the enemy attack in your sector.

A patrol by one of your companies discovers that the enemy forces that were holding the bridge have withdrawn. The aggressive company commander has already begun to infiltrate his company across the bridge. You decide to exploit the situation by getting your entire battalion south of the river with an eye toward mounting a spoiling attack. In the process, one of your companies has an engagement near the bridge with an enemy scout car, which flees west along the river road. You contact regiment and explain the actions you have set in motion. The colonel tells you he will reinforce with all the forces he can muster; infantry and tanks will begin to arrive in 2 to 3 hours. He designates your battalion as the main effort. You have the priority of fires for all supporting arms, he tells you.

The time is about 2000; darkness is descending quickly. Elements of your surveillance and target acquisition

(STA) platoon report that Hamlet shows no signs of enemy activity. As your leading company moves into the triangular wood west of Hamlet, another STA team located on the high ground southwest of the wood reports an enemy column approaching from the south headed toward your position. The STA team sends the following report:

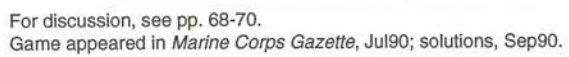
Enemy force, estimate at least battalion strength, moving north on Hamlet road, at the intersection south of the pass; covered trucks, jeeps, infantry on foot; I can hear tanks in the distance but do not have a visual.

Simultaneously, a short firefight breaks out with what appears to be an enemy patrol moving into the triangular wood from the south. You suspect it may be the advance guard of the enemy column. As the battalion commander, what do you opt to do?

REQUIREMENT

Within a 5-minute time limit, give your solution in the form of the frag order you would issue to your subordinates and support it with an overlay sketch. Then write a brief explanation of your actions, giving the key considerations and assumptions that shaped your decision.

How will knowing how you reacted to "Enemy Over the Bridge" (Scenario #9) influence your actions now that the combat boot is on the other foot?



Enemy Over the Bridge, Continued: A Thwarted Plan

This situation is the continuation of Scenario #9, "Enemy Over the Bridge." The actions described here are based on a solution to that problem submitted by Maj Claes Henrikson of the Swedish Army.

SITUATION

You are the executive officer of the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, consisting of a reinforced rifle company on trucks, two reinforced rifle companies on foot, a tank company (minus), and an antitank (TOW) section on HMMWVs. As the lead element in a major division offensive, your battalion was moving to an assembly area in preparation for an attack north across the river at 0400 tomorrow morning. Although the assembly area, bridge, and riverbank were supposed to be in friendly hands, at 2000 your battalion discovered this was not the case. An enemy force of at least company size has seized the bridge and occupied your assembly area.

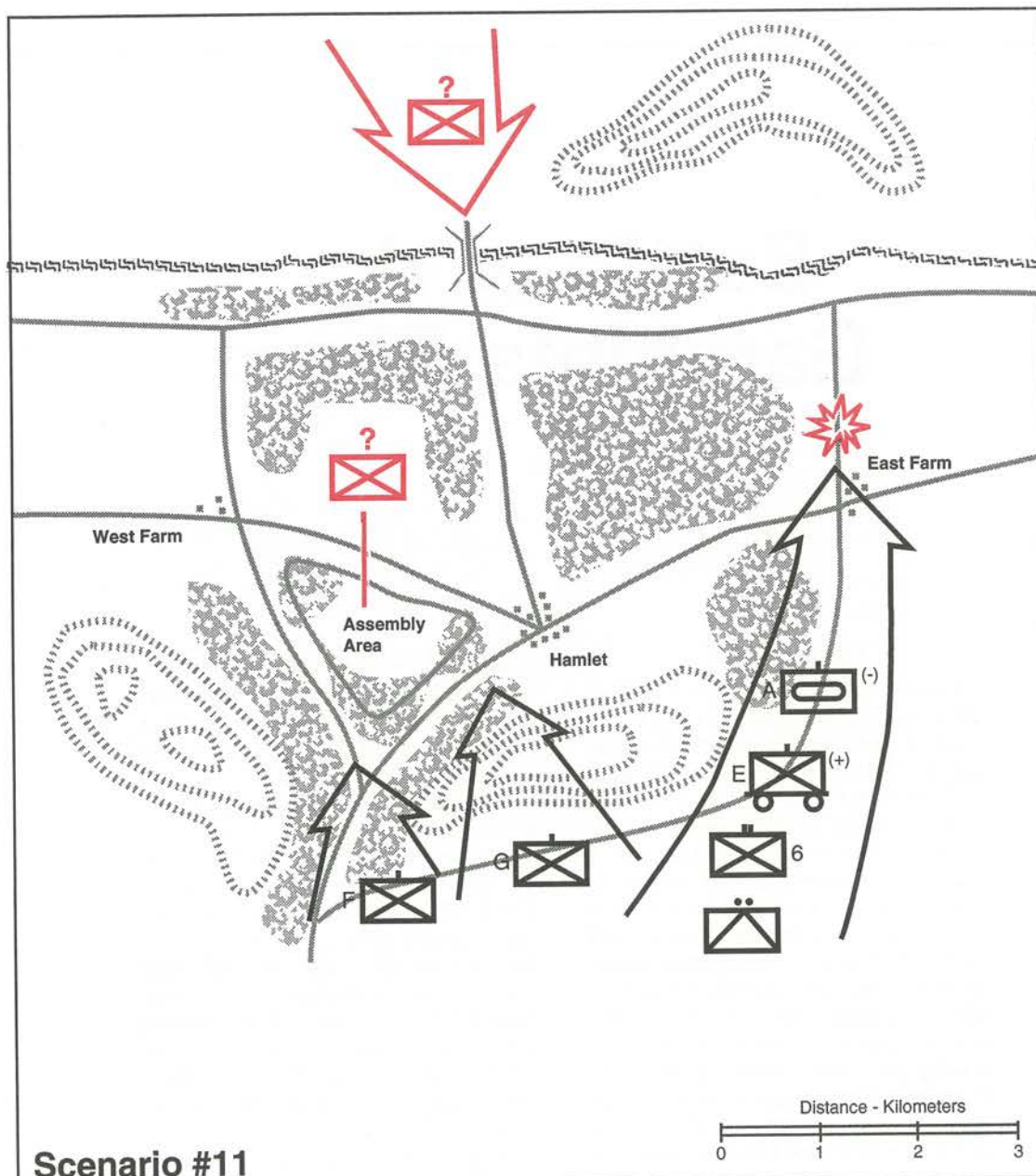
Recognizing the importance of the bridge and the need to move at once if the division attack is to proceed as scheduled, the battalion commander directed the mobile force of Company E (in trucks), supported by Company A (tanks) and the TOW section to attack the bridge by East Farm Road within one hour. As this was the main effort, he accompanied the force with his mobile command group. Companies F and G were directed to attack immediately to the northwest across East Hill toward Hamlet, the original assembly area and West Farm. The intent of this attack was to gain control of the main roads leading south, pro-

tect the deployment and advance of the main effort, and divert the enemy's attention from the bridge.

As executive officer, you moved behind Company F and were coordinating the attack of the two companies in the south. Briefing and preparation for the attack by both mobile and foot elements took longer than expected as troops were tired and had been looking forward to resupply and rest in the assembly area. At 2130 Company G reported that elements on East Hill heard loud explosions and an intense firefight to the northeast. It seemed clear that the mobile force had contacted the enemy, but neither you nor Company G on East Hill were able to raise anyone with the mobile force on any radio net. Periodic small arms could be heard for several minutes, then artillery began impacting in the vicinity of East Farm. At approximately the same time, Company F reported contact with the enemy south of the original assembly area. At about 2145, you receive a garbled, panicky report from a radio operator on the conduct of fire net. The mobile force has been ambushed with heavy casualties. It is stopped on the road, disorganized, and now under artillery fire. As the battalion executive officer, what do you do?

REQUIREMENT

Within a 10-minute time limit respond by developing the instructions or frag order you would issue and the reports you would make. Explain the rationale supporting your decisions and provide a sketch map depicting your decisions.



For discussion, see pp. 71-73.
 Game appeared in *Marine Corps Gazette*, Oct90; solutions, Dec90.

Battle of the Garagiola River

SITUATION

You are the commander of 3d Battalion, 4th Marines consisting of Companies I and K on assault amphibious vehicles (AAVs) near the Garagiola River, Company L on trucks at Androida, a light armored reconnaissance (LAR) company west of the river, and a tank company in reserve east of Androida. The TOW section is moving with Company L. For the last 2 weeks you have been facing superior enemy mechanized forces and have been forced to fall back from west to east, slowly wearing down the enemy while conserving your own combat power. You have learned that the enemy force opposing you is a mechanized regiment consisting of a tank battalion and two mechanized infantry battalions. Enemy tactics emphasize attacking aggressively upon contact and maintaining the momentum. The enemy will generally try to overrun resistance with tanks and prefers to dismount infantry only when necessary for close combat.

Poor visibility due to heavy fog lately has obscured the enemy situation since the last engagement, after which you lost contact with the enemy. While your battalion is halted along the river, your LAR company moves west to reestablish contact.

Steep banks make it infeasible for

your AAVs to swim the river. Your mission is to defeat any enemy forces in your zone or, failing that, at a minimum to delay and disrupt the enemy advance.

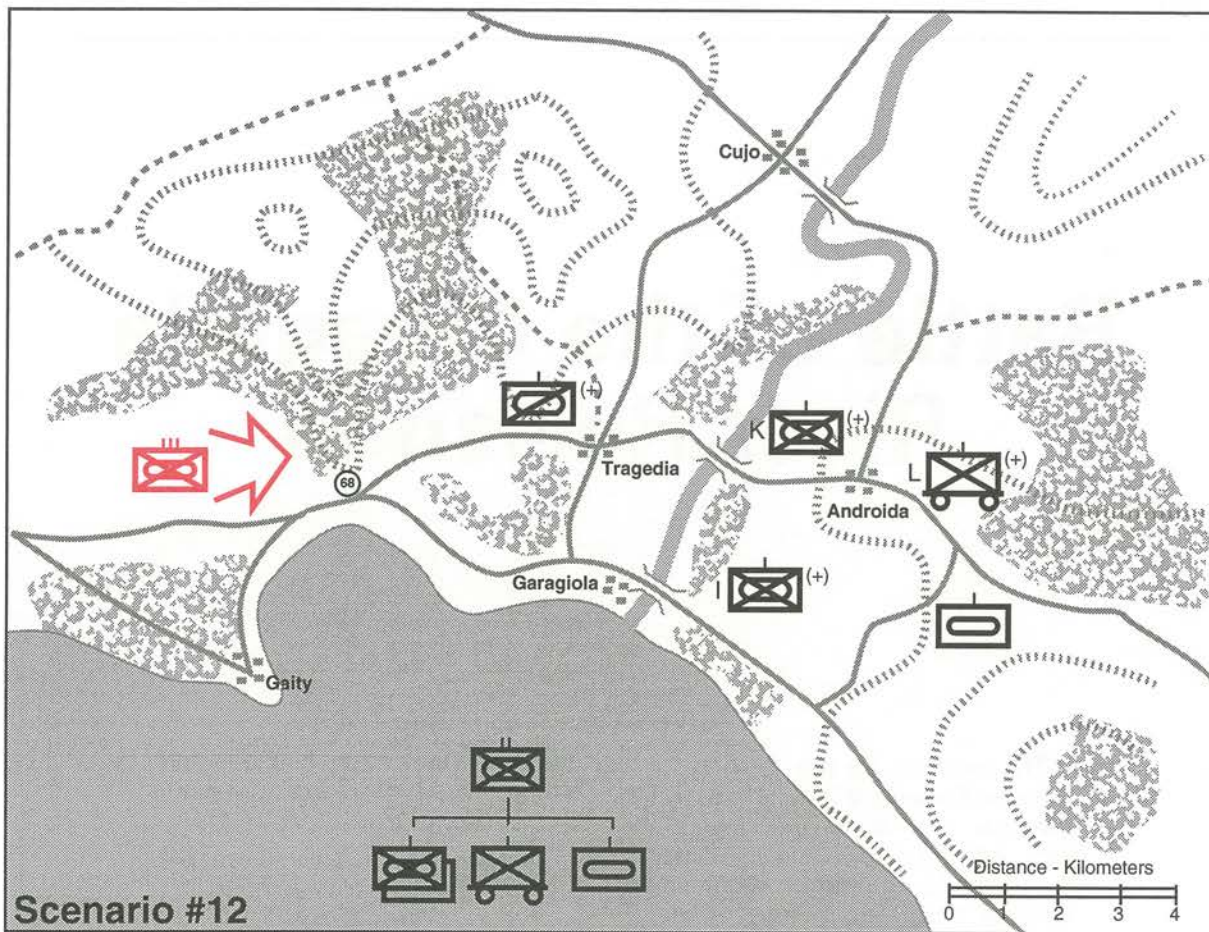
As your LAR company passes westward through Tragedia, it reports a sizable enemy mechanized force to the west approaching Checkpoint 68. The LAR company estimates an enemy regiment with a tank battalion in the lead. At this stage the LAR commander does not believe he has been detected by the enemy. Your artillery liaison officer assures you he can get massed fire support. Your air officer says he can get you "a couple of sorties of FA-18s."

At this rate, enemy tanks will be approaching Tragedia or Garagiola in about 30 minutes. What are your orders, Colonel?

REQUIREMENT

Time is critical, but since you have already been considering the possibility of a battle along the Garagiola for a couple of days now, you don't feel rushed. So go ahead and take 12 minutes to develop the orders you would pass to your subordinates. Make sure to include any guidance for supporting arms and a sketch of your plan. Then provide a brief explanation.

Does your frag order include a mission statement? a statement of intent? a concept of operations? tasks for subordinate units? a designated main effort?



Battle of the Garagiola River Revisited

The situation for this game is the same as Scenario #12, only it is seen this time from the enemy's point of view. As with Scenarios #9 and #10, the purpose is to illustrate the importance of trying to understand an enemy by seeing the situation through his binoculars.

SITUATION

You are the commander of 2d Battalion, 9th Marines advancing generally east along the lakeshore as part of the regiment. Your battalion includes Companies E and F on assault amphibious vehicles (AAVs), Company G on trucks, and an antitank (TOW) section on HMMWVs. The Dragons and heavy machineguns from your Weapons Company are attached to the companies. For the last 10 days the regiment has been advancing against an enemy tank-mechanized force of battalion strength. The enemy has been waging an effective and clever delaying action, fighting tenaciously from delaying positions, making effective use of terrain and supporting arms, but disengaging and falling back before the regiment can bring about a decisive engagement. At the last engagement, the enemy managed to give the lead battalion a bloody nose before breaking contact. Thick fog since then has obscured the enemy situation. Frustrated over the slow rate of advance and inability to force the enemy into battle, the regimental

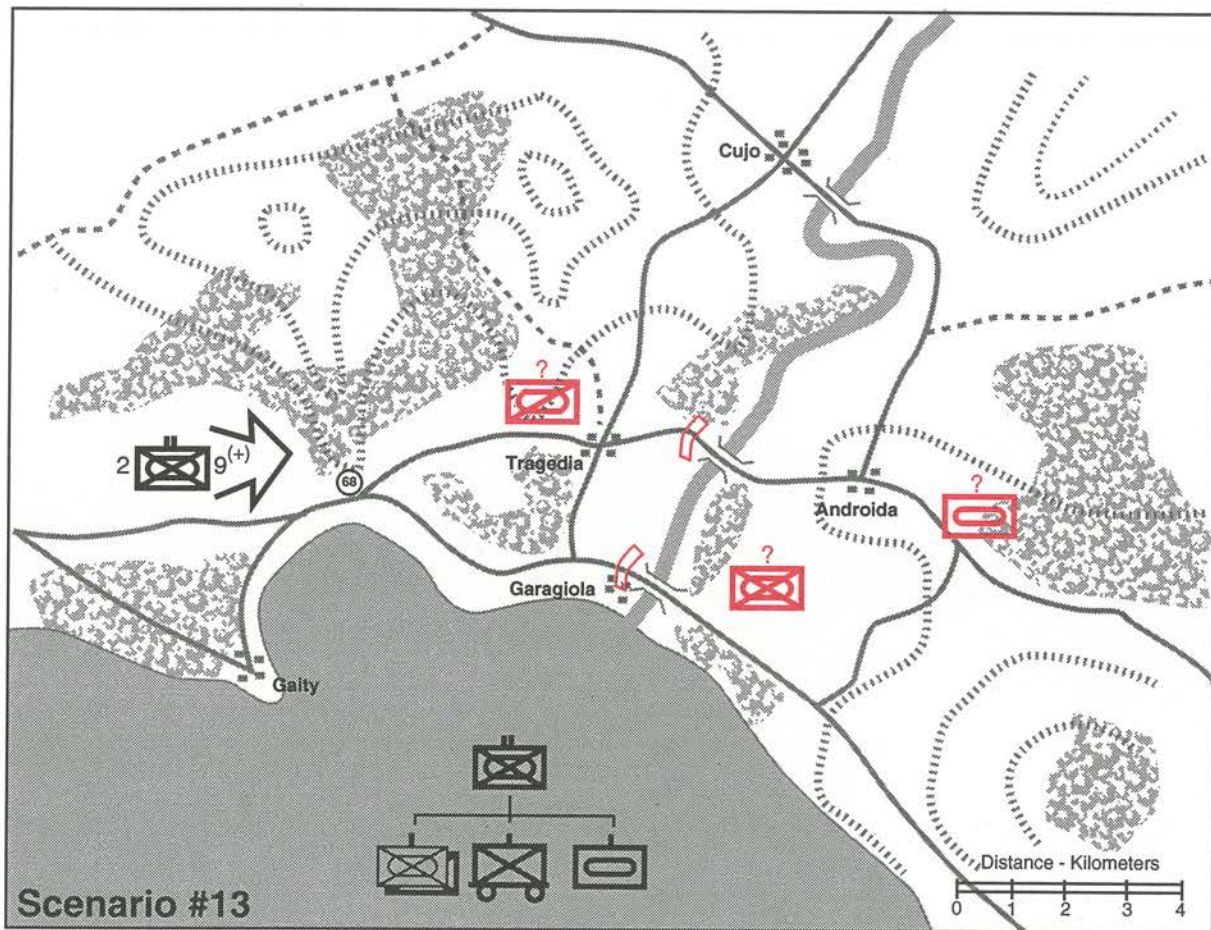
commander moves your battalion into the lead and attaches a tank company. His instructions to you are:

Attack aggressively, force a crossing of the Garagiola River as quickly as possible to facilitate the continuation of the advance, and crush the enemy force opposing us once and for all. My goal is to quickly create a secure bridgehead and an open road to the east. The 1st and Tank Battalions, in reserve, will be ready to reinforce and exploit your success.

Intelligence indicates that the enemy has fallen back through Tragedia and Garagiola and is preparing positions along the Garagiola River, which has steep banks that make it impassable to any vehicles. Additionally, enemy tanks have been spotted near Androida. As your leading mechanized company approaches Checkpoint 68, you receive a report of enemy armored reconnaissance (with antitank missiles) at Tragedia. Within the next half hour your battalion will be engaged. What are your orders, Colonel?

REQUIREMENT

Although time is short, you have been thinking about how to get across the Garagiola River for some time, so you already have some ideas. Take 10 minutes to finish up the orders you would pass to your subordinates. Make sure to include your intent, focus of efforts, and any guidance for the use of supporting arms. Provide a sketch and a brief explanation of your plan.



For discussion, see pp. 78-80.

Game appeared in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, Dec92; solutions, Feb93.

Battle of the Dadmamian Swamp

SITUATION

You are the commanding officer of the 4th Marines, which consists of two battalions on trucks, one battalion on assault amphibious vehicles (AAVs), a tank battalion, and a reinforced light armored infantry (LAI) company. You are west of the river with the mission of holding a bridgehead until reinforcements can arrive from the east in about 72 hours.

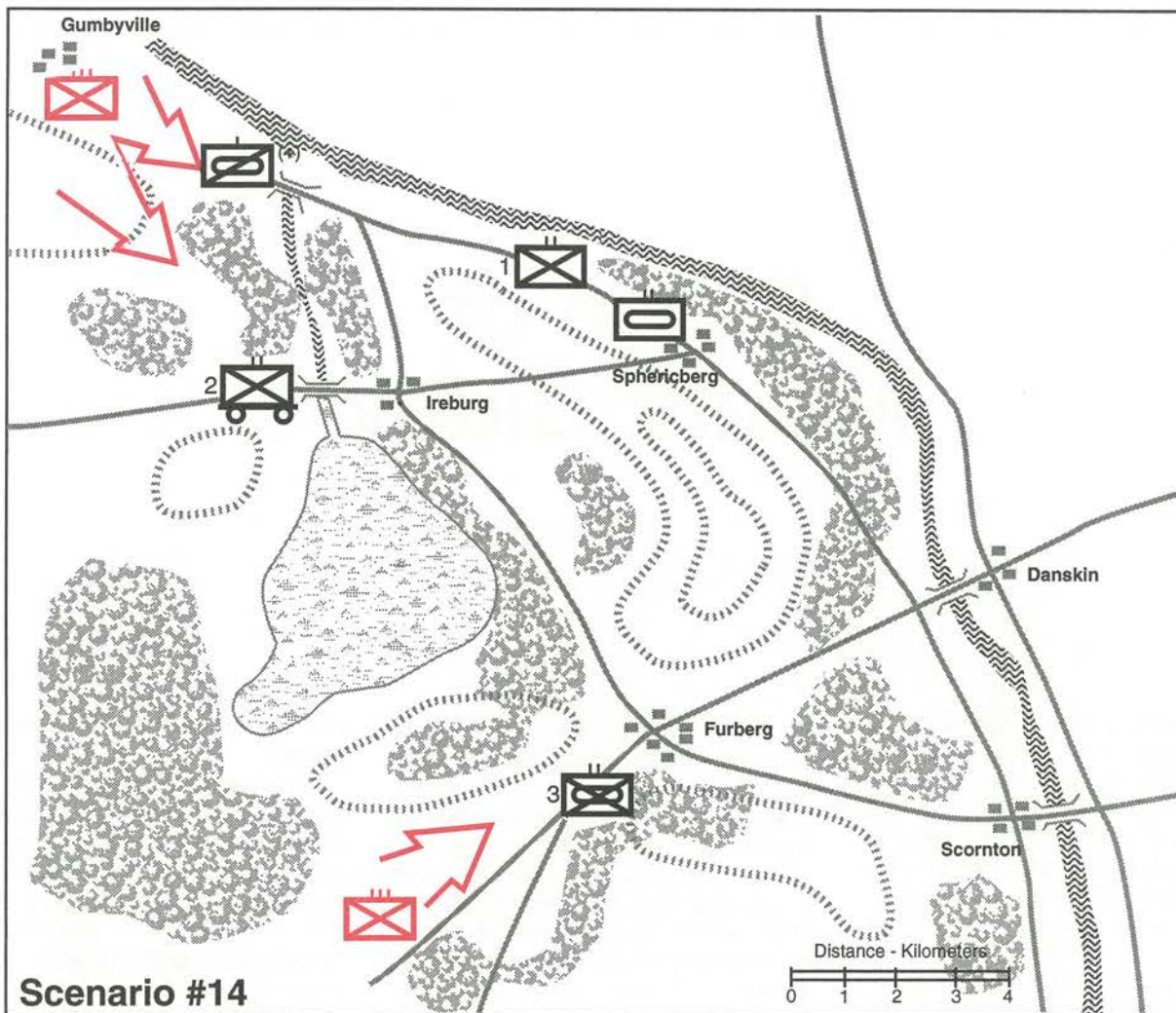
An enemy unit, which consists of infantry reinforced with limited numbers of tanks, is advancing generally from the west. An enemy regiment battered your 1st Battalion 24 hours ago in an engagement west of Gumbyville. Following that action, 1st Battalion withdrew east across the Dadmamian Creek. You now hold the bridges across the creek with 2d Battalion and the LAI company. The tank battalion is in reserve near Sphericberg. Your 3d Battalion protects the southern flank

near Furburg. While the first enemy regiment occupies Gumbyville, 3d Battalion reports that another enemy infantry regiment is marching on Furburg from the southwest; 3d Battalion's security elements are beginning to fall back under pressure. It is exactly the situation you have been contemplating for the last 48 hours, so you have some pretty good ideas what to do. What are your orders, Colonel?

REQUIREMENT

Since you have been planning for this contingency for some time, it should not take you long to issue your orders. So take 10 minutes. Give the orders you would pass to your subordinate units. Describe your intent and designate a focus of effort. Provide a sketch of your plan, any guidance for supporting arms and a brief explanation of your rationale.

Can you identify the historical case that this scenario is based on?
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Scenario #14

For discussion, see pp. 81-83.

Game appeared in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, Mar93; solutions, May93.

Battle of Mount Giddy

This scenario is a little different from previous ones for a couple of reasons. First, it is of a broader scope than previous scenarios; you might even argue that it verges on being an *operational* decision game instead of a purely tactical one. Second, it is a Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) problem—designed for a Marine expeditionary brigade (MEB) commander—in which the requirement is for the broad integration of ground, air, and logistics elements rather than just the tactical control of subordinate units on the ground.

SITUATION

You are a MEB commander fighting in a coastal desert that offers excellent mobility and freedom for mechanized and motorized forces save for the ridgelines, which tend to canalize vehicle movement. The theater strategy calls for the Joint Task Force (JTF)—of which the MEB is a part—to mount a major land offensive toward the north out of the Damoose region. The MEB's mission is to protect the JTF's southern flank, i.e., its rear, as the JTF attacks north. You are authorized to trade space for time as long as you deny the enemy the Damoose-Brut line, Brut being a key port and airfield and Damoose being a key logistics node.

Your MEB command element (CE) and brigade service support group (BSSG) are located at Damoose. Your aviation combat element (ACE) is located at Brute. The air situation is one

of relative parity, the enemy being stronger in air defense assets, while you are stronger in offensive air assets. Your ground combat element (GCE) consists of a motorized infantry battalion (minus) in the vicinity of Mount Giddy, one battalion on assault amphibious vehicles near Gooselub, another along the railroad west of Bed Lake, a reinforced light armored infantry company guarding the right flank near Berra, and a tank battalion (minus) in reserve near Nevertheless. The enemy has superiority of roughly two to one in ground forces.

You plan to conduct a delaying action, trading space for time. You intend to fall back only under pressure, making the enemy pay for every inch of terrain but avoiding decisive engagement. Since yours is a subsidiary mission, you do not intend to force a decision but rather to forestall one. The JTF offensive has been underway for nearly a week and to this point the enemy on your front has played into your hands by remaining relatively inactive, probing but not threatening your forward defensive positions. He has irregular forces equipped with light vehicles operating out of the barren desert to the west who periodically try to cut the Damoose railroad, an important line of communication. Intelligence has been reporting a buildup of enemy armored and mechanized forces and supplies south of Gooselub over the last 48 hours. The G-2 anticipates the enemy will mount an offen-

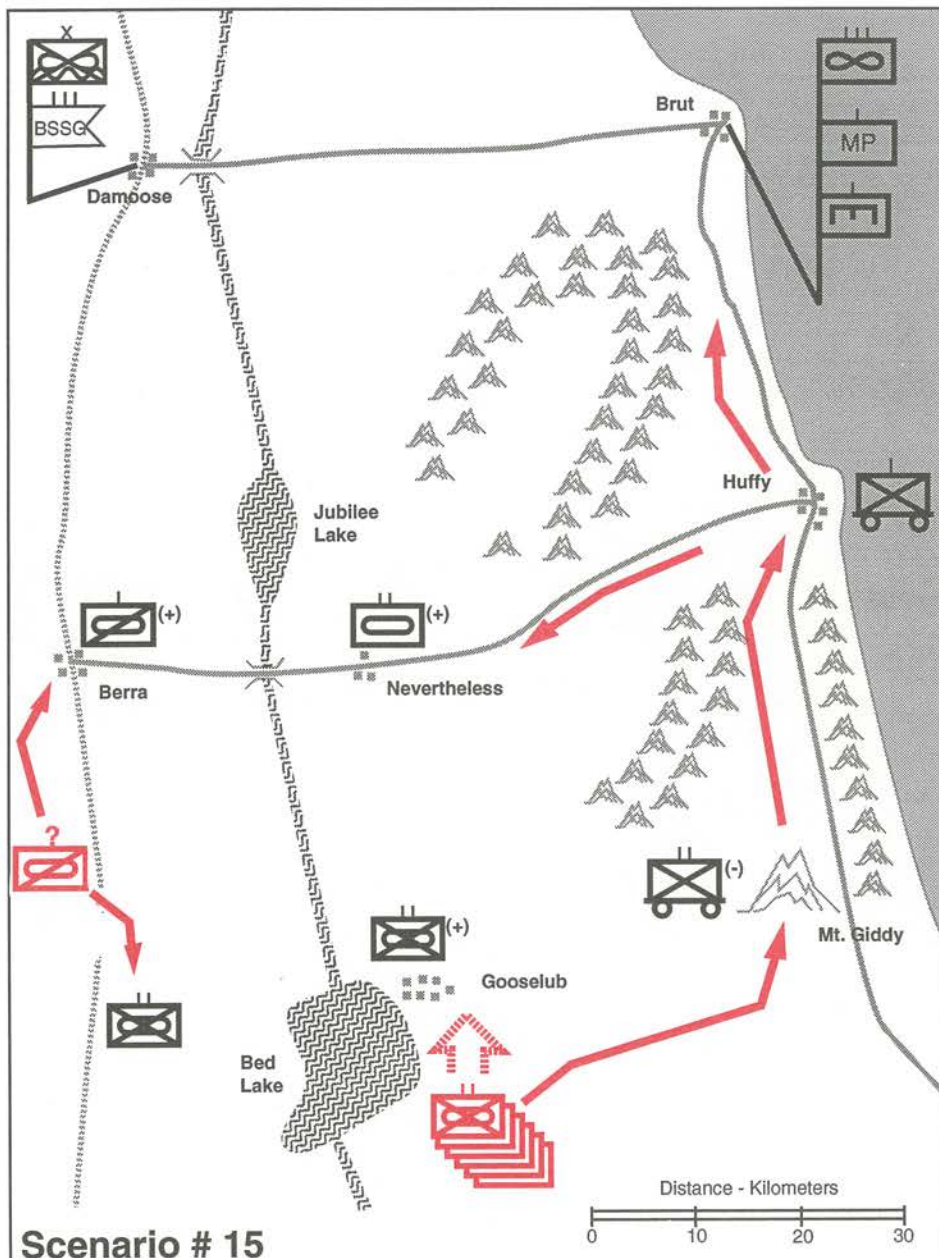
sive in that sector within the next 72 hours.

As it turns out, however, the enemy buildup in the south is actually a well executed deception. Instead of striking Gooselub, the enemy attacks in strength at Mount Giddy supported by massed offensive air power. The GCE commander also reports that the LAI company and mechanized battalion on the right flank are under attack but holding their own, as is the battalion at Gooselub. But he reports that he cannot make contact with the motorized battalion at Mount Giddy, which apparently has been overrun. Within 12 hours scattered situation reports indicate that enemy mechanized and armored forces have reached Nevertheless, where they are being engaged by elements of the reserve tank battalion, and are beginning to bypass Huffy headed north along the littoral plain.

By all accounts a major offensive has penetrated your left front and is pouring unchecked into your rear. As the MEB commander, what will you do?

REQUIREMENT

Develop a MEB plan that includes a general concept of operations (with intent) and broad missions for your GCE, ACE, and combat service support elements as appropriate. (Leave it to your staff to work out the details.) Then provide a brief explanation of your plan.



For discussion, see pp. 84-87.
 Game appeared in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, Aug90; solutions, Oct90.



Discussions

Normally, there is no ideal solution to military problems; every course has its advantages and disadvantages. One must select that which seems best from the most varied aspects and then pursue it resolutely and accept the consequences. Any compromise is bad.

—Field Marshal Erwin Rommel

Ambush at Dusk

"It is even better to act quickly and err than to hesitate until the time of action is past."

—Carl von Clausewitz

"Catch the enemy by the nose with fire and kick him in the pants with fire emplaced through movement."

—Gen George S. Patton

Initiative and Speed

The first scenario is pretty straightforward—which by no means makes it easy. The platoon is caught in an ambush. Our squad is the only element of the platoon that is not pinned down, but we have no communications with the platoon commander (who has been hit) or the platoon sergeant. We have basically two options: We can (1) wait for instructions, which includes trying to reestablish communications with the platoon headquarters and asking what to do, or (2) act on our own initiative.

While there may be no approved solution to any tactical problem, some problems demand to be solved, and fast. That's the case with "Ambush at Dusk." It's not a debatable point whether we (as the squad leader) should act or not. We *must* act, and we must act *immediately*. We cannot delay action because of a single casualty. In a situation like this in which Marines are under fire, seconds count, and if we do not act promptly there will certainly be more casualties. Thus we introduce the essential element of speed as a fundamental of tactics—timeliness of decision, tempo of operations, and velocity of movement. We'll see it time and time again in the following scenarios.

Everyone who responded to "Ambush at Dusk" when it appeared in the *MCG* agreed on the need for prompt action. We must not wait for instructions to reach us from the platoon headquarters, and it is certainly not advisable to go back into the killing zone—to surrender the only freedom of action the platoon has—to ask for instructions. This is a clear-cut example of a case in which a leader must act without instructions from above. The platoon commander, platoon sergeant, and the rest of the platoon

trapped in the killing zone have every right to expect the squad leader to take decisive action.

So, looking at the bigger picture, we ask ourself:

- (1) "What can I do to help the platoon as quickly as possible?"
- (2) "What can I do to further the accomplishment of the platoon mission?"
- (3) Can we do both at once?

A Sample FragO

The following is provided not as the "right" answer but as an example

“The idea behind the *cheng/ch'i* or fix-and-flank is to prevent our enemy from reacting effectively to us by fixing his attention in one direction.”

of a fragmentary order for one possible solution:

Fire team leaders, we're going to move on the double to that finger [pointing to the west] and attack the village by fire from the north in order to relieve the platoon and kill the enemy. Guns, you lay down a base of fire from here until we get to the finger. Then, we'll lay down a base of fire while you doubletime up to join us. Smitty [the wounded Marines' fire team leader], leave one man with the casualty until the medevac bird gets here. Get your fire teams and follow me; I'll explain the rest on the move.

[While moving:] "Once we get to the rise and open fire, one of two things will happen. Either the platoon will be able to move, and we'll be the base of fire for their attack, or we'll have to make the attack ourselves with our

machinegun team providing the base of fire and the squad enveloping right and swinging in from the north. A green-star cluster will shift the base of fire [as per the platoon's standing operating procedure]."

Importantly, the squad leader has realized the gravity of the situation and decided that an immediate, simple, and decisive response is the only answer. In order to save time, he's even gone so far as to issue part of his order on the move.

Saving the Platoon

The immediate problem is trying to save the platoon. How can we best do this? Several readers suggested sending all or part of the squad back into the killing zone to help evacuate wounded and increase the platoon's firepower. While it's understandable to want to go directly to the aid of our comrades, in this case it's not a wise idea. First, if it were possible to evacuate wounded from the paddy, there are still plenty of able-bodied Marines nearby to do it. Second, our squad is the only element of the platoon that has freedom of action. It's the only means, short of generating fire superiority from paddy, by which the platoon can seize the initiative back from the enemy. *The key is not to surrender freedom of action by getting pinned down with the rest of the platoon.*

Most readers recognized that the best way we can help the situation is by relieving the pressure on the platoon—i.e., by striking at the enemy force that has the platoon pinned down. The finger to the west offers a certain amount of cover if our squad moves west and also provides a position from which the squad can effectively engage the village from the north. By putting effective suppressing

fire on the village, we take pressure off the platoon—maybe to the point where the platoon regains its freedom of movement and can get out of the rice paddy or can even go into the attack.

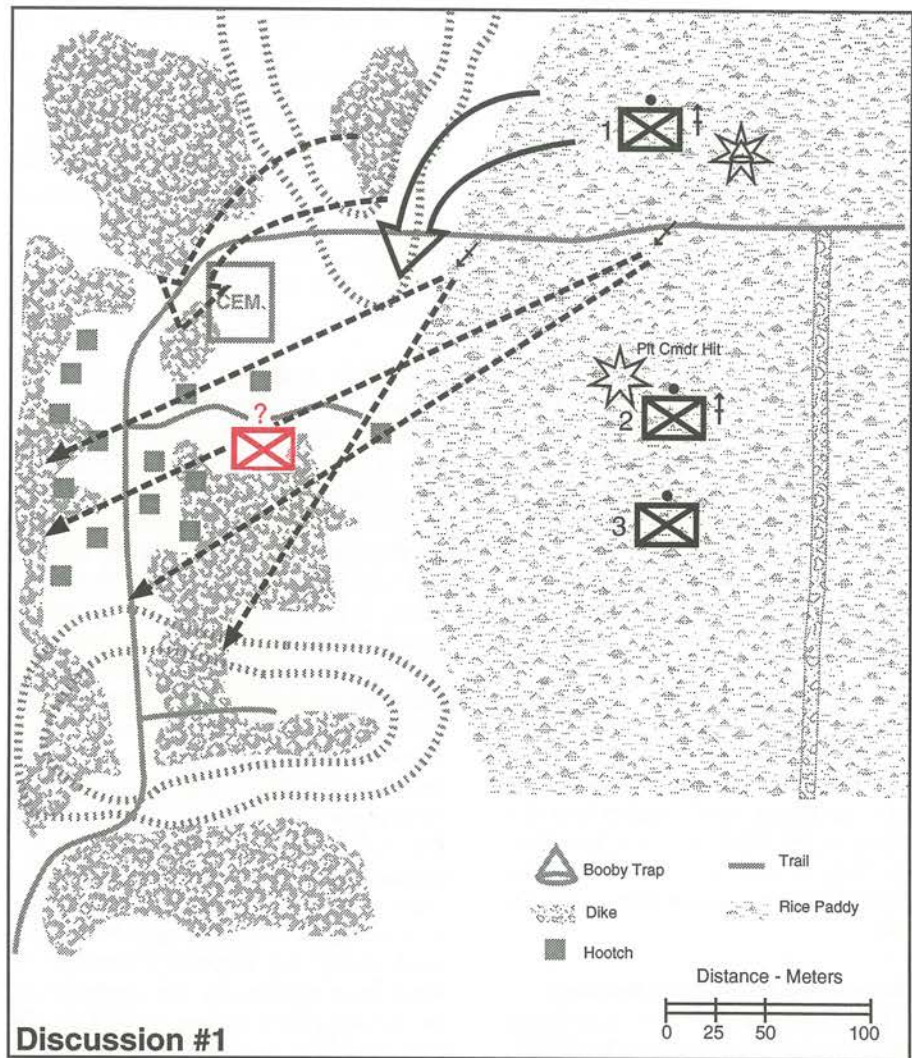
Accomplishing the Mission

Some *MCG* readers suggested we should be happy with preserving the platoon and should not try to engage the enemy any more than was necessary to allow the platoon to disengage. On the contrary, I suggest that although the platoon's predicament is our first concern, it should not be our only concern. We should also be thinking about ways to force the enemy into a decisive engagement. As Maj Steven A. Hummer wrote in his solution to this problem, "Our mission is to locate and destroy the enemy and now is our opportunity." The fact is that the two objectives are not mutually exclusive; we can attempt to accomplish both at once. It is generally difficult to get a guerrilla enemy to stand and fight. Here we have located a fairly significant enemy force and have a chance to destroy it. Although the platoon's situation is not good and the enemy clearly has the initiative, with timely and aggressive action we can turn the tables. In order to do that we need to launch a rapid and aggressive attack. If we generate fire superiority but do not attack, the enemy will likely withdraw. Likewise, the enemy will likely withdraw after dark, when the effectiveness of his fires has decreased. Either way, we have lost contact. Not good.

Complementary Forces: the Cheng and Ch'i

Not only does this problem demand offensive action, but the situation offers a tailor-made opportunity for attack. We don't have to think in terms of making the attack all by ourselves. The platoon returning fire from the rice paddy is a ready-made base of fire for a squad envelopment from the north. Similarly, by taking the enemy under fire from the north, we may relieve pressure on the platoon enough for the platoon to go into the attack.

This situation provides an excellent example of a concept of such basic importance in tactics that we can call it a tactical fundamental: the use of complementary forces, sometimes variously called the cheng and ch'i or fix-and-flank. We'll see the concept time and again in infinite variations, from the



simple base of fire and enveloping attack in this scenario to the complementary employment of the ground and aviation combat elements of a Marine expeditionary brigade in Scenario #15. The ancient Chinese warrior-philosopher Sun Tzu wrote that victory:

... is due to operations of the *ch'i* [extraordinary] and the *cheng* [normal] forces. . . . Generally, in battle, use the normal force to engage; use the extraordinary to win. . . . In battle there are only the normal and extraordinary forces, but their combinations are limitless . . . For these two forces are mutually reproductive; their interaction as endless as that of interlocked rings.

Marine BGen Samuel B. Griffith, Sun Tzu's translator, explains:

The concept expressed *cheng*, "normal" (or "direct") and *ch'i*, "extraordinary" (or "indirect") is of basic importance. The normal (*cheng*) force fixes

or distracts the enemy; the extraordinary (*ch'i*) forces act when and where their blows are not anticipated. Should the enemy perceive and respond to a *ch'i* maneuver in such a manner is to neutralize it, the maneuver would automatically become *cheng*.

More recently, the famed British military historian and theorist B. H. Liddell Hart wrote that:

In war the power to use two fists is an inestimable asset. To feint with one fist and strike with the other yields an advantage, but still greater advantage lies in being able to interchange them—to convert the feint into the real blow as the opponent uncovers himself.

And in the quote at the very beginning of this discussion, Gen George Patton expresses the same thought in his own particularly eloquent way.

The idea behind the *cheng/ch'i* or fix-and-flank is to prevent our enemy from reacting effectively to us by fixing his attention in one direction

while we strike from another. In other words, we eliminate his freedom of action. Without our *cheng* to occupy or hinder his efforts, the enemy can shift to meet our *ch'i* with his full strength. But by using complementary forces we force our enemy to disperse his efforts in different directions, while our efforts, although coming from different directions, have a converging effect.

The concept of complementary forces applies to the defense as much as to the offense. In the defense we strive to establish positions that are *mutually supporting*, so that in order for the enemy to attack one he must first expose himself to the fires of another. The concept applies as well to the complementary use of weapons systems, in which context we call it *combined arms*. The complementary use of different weapons systems creates a dilemma for our enemy—in order to avoid the effects of one weapon he must expose himself to another. Within a fire team, for example, we use the squad automatic weapon (SAW) to pin an enemy down, which makes him vulnerable to the M203 grenade launcher. If he tries to move to avoid the effects of the M203, we cut him down with the SAW.

Coordination and Communications

Part of our problem in this scenario is that we can't communicate directly with higher headquarters. We do not have direct access to supporting arms or medical evacuation (medevac) for our wounded Marine. How do we coordinate our actions with the platoon and get the support we need?

First, we keep our plan as simple as possible to minimize the amount of coordination necessary. Our decisive course of action should be evident to the rest of the platoon. Given a simple plan, the distances involved and the nature of the terrain, even without direct communications between the squad and the platoon, coordination should

not be too difficult. As Capt James R. Sinnott pointed out, any number of simple methods exist to signal the platoon to cease or shift its fires (which should be covered in unit standing operating procedures)—e.g., hand-thrown smoke grenades, pop-up pyrotechnics, or even M203 smoke rounds. As for supporting arms and the medevac, we have to count on the platoon to take care of those.

Immediate Action Drills

Perhaps the most important element in coordination in a situation such as this is the mutual understanding and trust that must exist among the different individuals and elements in the platoon. As discussed earlier, this is a situation that calls for immediate action. Appropriately enough, immediate action drills are designed specifically for just such situations. A well-trained platoon will have practiced "plays" for dealing promptly and effectively with likely situations. A typical counterambush drill for a far ambush (such as this) calls for the elements trapped in the killing zone to immediately seek cover and return fire, while elements not in the killing zone immediately maneuver against the enemy, using the trapped elements as their base of fire. As the name indicates, immediate action drills provide an immediate response to crisis situations, saving the critical moments needed to make a decision and issue orders. Equally important, with established immediate action drills everyone in the unit knows what to expect from the other elements, making it easier to coordinate efforts, even without direct communications. Immediate action drills should be practiced to the point that they become second nature for the unit.

As squad leader in this situation we know that the platoon expects us to maneuver against the enemy from the north; we know that the platoon will be

supporting us by fire (and will be requesting supporting arms), and will be ready to shift those fires as appropriate.

As Sgt M. R. Hetzler succinctly wrote of this scenario when it appeared in the *MCG*:

If anything, this problem should show the player the importance of immediate action (IA) drills . . . There is no time to think, only to act when your buddies are under fire. If you're following the prescribed drill, everyone should know what's going on. *Speed, simplicity, and aggressiveness* are the keys to IA drills, and this situation clearly shows how they can be used to react to a situation and save the lives of your men while destroying the enemy.

If the platoon commander has trained his Marines properly, "Ambush at Dusk" will not pose a problem for our squad leader for he will know just what to do and just what to expect from the platoon.

Historical Note

This scenario was based on an actual situation faced by 1st Platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines near Da Nang in the summer of 1966, as described in Francis J. West's "Mines and Men," *Small Unit Actions in Vietnam: Summer 1966*. The booby trap was intended to halt a Marine patrol in the open—which it did. The Viet Cong ambush was actually designed specifically to get the key members of the patrol. The enemy did not open fire as soon as the booby trap went off, but waited until the platoon commander, platoon sergeant, and corpsman came forward to investigate—as they invariably did. Fortunately, the enemy snipers missed their marks, but the various elements of the patrol were separated and unable to communicate. Squad and fire team leaders had to act on their own initiative, and through aggressive action were able to mount a hasty attack and overcome the resistance. The Viet Cong fled from the village.

US  MCG



Platoon Ambush

"In all operations a moment arrives when brave decisions have to be made if an enterprise is to be carried through."

—Adm Sir Roger Keyes

"He wins who fires first and can deliver the heaviest fire."

—Erwin Rommel

Seeing the "Bigger Picture"

"Platoon Ambush" is a tough problem. As with "Ambush at Dusk," this scenario places a squad leader in a situation in which, on his own initiative, he must make decisions and take actions that impact at a higher level. The platoon faces a dilemma: a presumably favorable occurrence in the approach of the convoy as expected and a very threatening occurrence in the unanticipated appearance of the enemy patrol. Our hypothetical squad leader is the most senior member of the platoon who sees the dilemma. Unfortunately, due to technical problems, his landline communications with the platoon commander aren't working. He is thrust into the position of having to make decisions at the platoon level. A lot of the responsibility for the success or survival of the platoon in the next few minutes will rest on his shoulders.

In order to act properly in this situation, we (as the squad leader) must think not just at the squad level, but at the platoon level. We must look at the "bigger picture" and consider the effects of our decisions on the larger outcome.

This concept applies at all levels and is important enough that we can call it a tactical fundamental. Our un-

derstanding of the "bigger picture" should provide a frame of reference for all our decisions. Furthermore, as a general rule, we should think at least "two levels up" and not just one. In other words, a platoon commander would consider the battalion situation in making his decisions. Likewise, a squad leader would normally consider the company situation. (In this particular case the platoon is acting independently.) In making his tactical decisions the commander at any level asks himself, "What can I do at my level to help the higher situation or further the accomplishment of the higher mission?"

In this scenario the platoon commander's orders did not specifically cover what to do in the event of an enemy force coming in from behind the platoon; the platoon commander anticipated forces coming down the road from Depot but not through the woods. We could argue that dealing with any unexpected enemy movement from the east falls under our squad's general mission of flank security. But even if this were not the case—if dealing with the enemy patrol were clearly not part of our squad's assigned mission—we should realize we must act anyway for a couple of reasons. First, this enemy development was not anticipated by

the platoon commander's order and therefore is not covered by the plan. Second, it poses a significant threat to the safety of the platoon and the accomplishment of the platoon's mission. Therefore, we have to do something about it.

Critical Vulnerability—Ours

Another way to look at this is in terms of critical vulnerability—in this case not the enemy's vulnerability, but our own. In this situation, are we critically vulnerable? Definitely. There is the potential for real trouble here. Of the two enemy forces—the convoy or the patrol—which is more likely to threaten us critically? Clearly, the patrol for it is moving toward the platoon's flank or rear and is in a position possibly to destroy the platoon or cut it off from its route of escape.

A New Situation Can Make Orders Obsolete

The one thing the platoon commander's orders were explicit about is that we were not to open fire until the ambush had been sprung. But those instructions clearly were based on conditions and assumptions that no longer exist and are no longer appropriate given the new developments in the sit-

uation; we shouldn't feel restrained by them. Instead, we have to use our best judgment to take whatever initiative will best support the platoon given the new situation.

"What's the Enemy Up To?"

In any tactical situation we should ask ourselves, "What exactly is the enemy up to?" We can't ignore the possibility that the enemy is aware of the platoon's presence, in which case the patrol is coming after us with a purpose. But even if they're not aware of our ambush and are merely a security patrol, things don't look good for the ambush. Thinking themselves safe in their own rear area, the patrol may very likely follow the animal trail that we crossed, and although we don't know exactly where the trail leads, it appears to lead into the rear of the platoon. Not good. If the patrol doesn't follow the trail but heads due west it will likely strike the objective rallying point (ORP), which probably contains the platoon sergeant and at most one fire team for security. Also not good. If it's a security patrol, protecting the enemy's rear area, it will likely check out the bridge on its route and will likely run directly into the flank of the ambush force on the way. Again, not good. In short, it seems extremely unlikely that the patrol will pass through the area without coming upon some part of our platoon. And even if the patrol does not discover our presence beforehand, it will be in a position to strike our platoon once the ambush is sprung—a vulnerable time.

Complicating things is the approach of the convoy, which will likely—but not definitely—arrive before the enemy patrol does. (A lot depends on the relative speeds of the convoy and patrol.) If we do nothing, the platoon will ambush the convoy as planned, thus giving itself away to the enemy patrol. Conversely, if we strike the patrol, we may give ourselves away to the convoy. The convoy is bigger than usual—eight vehicles already with more coming into view. A lucrative target, certainly—but how much is too much for a platoon ambush to bite off? When planning an ambush, it's not a bad idea to have decided in advance how big a target is too big. If the target is bigger than you can handle, you let it go. Although the convoy is not a combat unit, it is led by a couple of machinegun vehicles and presumably includes other weapons, and can definitely do some damage, especially in conjunction with an attack by the patrol from another direction.

So What Do We Do?

Having considered all this, what are our options?

- *Option 1: Ignore patrol, continue original mission.* Doing nothing is always an option, right? In this case, definitely not. There is a definite problem here that needs to be dealt with. We cannot ignore the patrol. It clearly poses too great a threat to the platoon and the accomplishment of the mission. At the absolute minimum, we have to warn the platoon commander of the new development.

- *Option 2: Report to platoon, ask for instructions.* Assuming that we can't get the landline working, we can send a runner back to the platoon; he could probably beat the convoy to the ambush site. You might argue that the decision of what to do in this case is not the squad leader's to make. Instead, you might argue, we should inform the

“ In making his tactical decisions the commander at any level asks himself, ‘What can I do at my level to help the higher situation or further the accomplishment of the higher mission?’ ”

platoon commander of the unforeseen situation, but leave it up to him what to do. Unfortunately, there isn't time for that. By the time the platoon commander were to get the information by runner, make his decision, and send instructions back to our squad by runner, it will almost certainly be too late. Furthermore, I suggest that the platoon commander isn't even the best person to make the decision. His entire knowledge of the situation is based on the sketchy and hurried information he will have gotten from the messenger. He understands none of the subtleties of the situation, such as the relative positions of the two enemy forces, their relative speeds, or the degree of threat each actually poses. We can't possibly communicate effectively to him all the intuitive factors that went into our estimate of the situation based on first-hand observation. The bottom line is that the squad leader (who, remember, is thinking like a platoon commander) understands the situation better than anyone else.

Consequently, we reach the conclusion that we must deal with the enemy

patrol. It poses too much of a threat to the platoon and the accomplishment of the mission.

- *Option 3: Deploy against patrol, but don't strike immediately.* You might argue that another option is to be prepared to strike the patrol but to wait as long as possible before initiating action so to give the platoon commander more time to decide what he wants to do. You might argue that by holding off on striking the enemy we leave open to the platoon commander the choice of surprising the convoy or letting it pass through the killing zone, but that once our firefight begins in the woods, the convoy will be tipped off that something's up. You might also argue that by waiting we give the platoon commander time to deploy against the patrol, if he so chooses. However, in this situation I think waiting is a mistake. The longer we wait, the closer we allow both enemy forces to converge on us and the more likely it becomes that we will have to deal with both at once—the worst possible scenario. And the longer we wait as the patrol moves west, the greater risk we run of the platoon being cut off from the ORP. Once the enemy patrol gains the nearby ridge which runs southwest between our squad and the ORP, the platoon is in trouble. The patrol is just about to become a major threat to the platoon, and we can't afford to wait. We must deal with this situation at once.

- *Option 4: Strike the patrol, let the platoon worry about the convoy.* Our fourth option is thus to strike the enemy patrol, by attack or ambush (sending information to that effect to the platoon commander). We can leave it up to the platoon commander whether he thinks the platoon is able to fight both the patrol and convoy at once. (I think it is highly risky.) Of all the elements in the platoon, our squad is the one best disposed to deal with the patrol; in fact, it is the only element in a position to deal with the patrol advantageously. The rest of the platoon, meanwhile, is already deployed to deal with the convoy. If we choose this option, we have to realize that by beginning an engagement with the patrol in the woods, we may sacrifice the element of surprise with regard to the convoy, and we are no longer in a position to protect the ambush site against reinforcements by road from the direction of Depot.

- *Option 5: Strike the patrol, abort the ambush.* We might reach the conclu-

sion, based on our knowledge of the situation, that it is too ambitious and risky for the platoon to try to spring the original ambush while also striking the patrol. So we can send the messenger to the platoon commander with the recommendation of foregoing the convoy and going after the patrol instead. Thus the patrol becomes the new target. Being a platoon-level decision, this certainly would be a gutsy decision for a squad leader to make, but a better one than Option 4, because it leaves less to chance. So what do we do about the convoy approaching down the road? That's a close judgment call that depends on time-distance factors. If the convoy is moving fast enough to get through the killing zone before we'll strike the patrol (but assuming that our messenger will arrive in time to warn the platoon commander not to spring the ambush), we might just let the convoy pass through. That way we have one less problem to worry about. (The platoon can blow the bridge to prevent the machinegun jeeps from coming back.) But if that's not the case—if it appears that the patrol will make contact first or the convoy and patrol will converge on the ambush site about the same time—we might think about quickly dropping a few mortar rounds on the road in order to disrupt and delay the approaching convoy. We should have already laid the mortar on the road and should be able to fire immediately while the rest of the squad de-

ploys against the patrol. A few explosions on the road some distance away will not necessarily alert the patrol to the possibility of the direct threat to itself. We should probably plan to withdraw the mortar at some point to the relative safety of the platoon position.

- *Option 6: Ambush the convoy, fix the patrol.* There is another way besides striking directly at the patrol to prevent it from threatening the platoon. That is by, instead of our going after the patrol, getting the patrol to come to us. We can ambush the convoy ourselves, before it can converge with the patrol and become a real problem, using primarily our mortar, AT4s, and M203s. This is another gutsy call by the squad leader because it is in direct violation of the platoon commander's explicit instructions. An enemy security patrol would be compelled to turn north to investigate. But they would not know that we're already aware of their presence and are waiting for them. After ambushing the convoy (making sure that we get the machinegun jeeps), we quickly shift to face the patrol. Our object is not necessarily to destroy it, but rather to keep it fixed on us while the platoon (which the patrol presumably is not aware of) strikes it from the west—another example of fix-and-flank. Like the others, this option is not without risk. If we fail to smash the head of the convoy, we could be between a rock and a hard place.

Observations

For such a simple problem there are a lot of difficult factors for our hypothetical squad leader to consider. Unlike "Ambush at Dusk," in which one general course of action presented itself, this problem has several drastically different solutions, any of which might work. You might argue that any commander would be hard-pressed in the time available to consciously consider all the factors we've discussed. And you'd be right. There simply isn't enough time to deliberate on all the various factors and considerations that weigh on the squad leader's decision. That's exactly the point of doing problems like this one. Through practice we develop the ability to deal with such considerations instinctively and instantly rather than through reasoned deliberation. We internalize the process, so that it occurs automatically and smoothly without our even being aware of it taking place.

What's the bottom line in "Platoon Ambush"? That the squad leader must continuously think beyond his own level and be prepared to act on his own initiative in the best interests of the larger mission—even if it means making decisions usually reserved for the platoon commander. As long as you realized that you have to do something about the enemy patrol which threatens to hit our platoon in the flank, you're on the right track.



Attack on Narrow Pass

"Undeniably, in a mountainous area a small post in a favorable position acquires exceptional strength."

—Carl von Clausewitz

"Battles are won by fire and movement. The purpose of the movement is to get the fire in a more advantageous place to place on the enemy. This is from the rear or flank."

—Gen George S. Patton

Thinking Two Levels Up—Again

This scenario generated a lot of controversy when it first appeared in the *MCG* in March 1991. Although we discussed the importance of thinking at least "two levels up" in the previous two scenarios, it's a point of such significance that it's worth making again. The basic problem in "Attack on Narrow Pass" is how the platoon commander can best further the accomplishment of the battalion's mission. Some readers felt very strongly that the best way the platoon commander could support the battalion was to guard its flank—as explicitly ordered—and nothing more. Others completely ignored the flank guard mission and moved off to strike the enemy in the flank, either at the bridge or at the pass, to take pressure off the battalion.

This scenario exhibits other similarities to the previous ones. As in "Platoon Ambush," while separated from the main body with the mission of protecting its flank, we discover a threat to the main body, but not from our area of responsibility. As in "Ambush at Dusk," the main body is heavily engaged, while our unit enjoys freedom of action and is potentially in a position to directly help the main

body. If nothing else, this illustrates the point that while different situations may exhibit similarities, no two situations are the same. We must solve each problem on its own merits, not according to the way we solved a similar problem. Our solution to "Ambush at Dusk," for example, may not be appropriate in the "Attack on Narrow Pass."

What's the Enemy Up To?

As always, we should try to get a handle on the enemy's intentions. We know that the enemy has a fairly strong position at Narrow Pass, but this doesn't necessarily mean a large force. As Clausewitz' quote indicates, the proper use of difficult terrain can confer exceptional combat power to even a relatively small force. The enemy has seen fit to place an outpost south of the dry gully to add depth to his defense. The fact that the enemy is able to use his heavy machineguns to fire over the heads of his outpost at night indicates that this is no hasty position, but has been carefully prepared. Without question, this will be one tough nut to crack. In fact, if we're going to take Narrow Pass, the way to do it is not frontally but from the

flanks, attacking along the spine of the high ground to negate the strength of the enemy positions.

What about Western Narrow Pass? The patrol we ran into fled in that direction. The enemy almost certainly has forces positioned there. The question is how many? Our platoon has already reached the east-west road and the only enemy we have met are the listening post (LP) we chased off. My guess is that Western Narrow Pass is not as heavily defended—although we don't know for certain.

What about the ridgeline between the passes? Our vehicles may not be able to cross, but as Napoleon said, our infantry can go anywhere two men can set foot. To this point our platoon has seen no sign of enemy forces along the ridge, but again we simply don't know for sure. There are possibilities here worth exploring.

And what about the enemy's tanks, which we haven't heard from yet? If I were the enemy in this situation I would prefer to hold my tanks in reserve north of the ridge on the Western Narrow Pass road midway between the two passes. As the enemy approached one pass or the other my concept would be to drive south through the

other pass and strike the enemy flank via the east-west road south of the ridge.

What Are Our Options?

So where does this leave us?

• *Option 1: Guard the flank, let the battalion commander worry about the battalion.* As LtCol S. A. Clay wrote:

The great temptation in this situation is to display excessive initiative at the expense of carrying out very clear-cut, specific orders. . . . The battalion commander instructed the platoon leader to guard the battalion's left flank. There was nothing iffy, conditional, or provisional about the mission: "Guard the left flank." The battalion commander clearly has the right to expect that his left flank will be screened and protected; at the very least, he will be alerted if a significant threat emerges from the west along the road, the rocky gully, or any of the adjacent terrain.

Unlike "Ambush at Dusk" or "Platoon Ambush," you might argue that in this situation the main body is not in obviously dire straits; the battalion is heavily engaged, true, but who's to say it won't fight its way through without our help? Moreover, in this situation we do have communications with higher headquarters. As a result, do we have less of an excuse for acting on our own initiative? Given the apparently unimaginative tactics of the battalion, you might infer that our battalion commander will probably not be too tolerant of subordinates who demonstrate too much independence. Because we're concerned about battalion's success, at a minimum we may offer to direct supporting arms against the enemy machinegun positions. (We might even go so far as to direct one of our machineguns at the western enemy gun position, betraying our own presence in the process.)

• *Option 2: Attack the enemy near Narrow Bridge.* As with going directly to the platoon's aid in "Ambush at Dusk," supporting battalion by this option is not a good idea. As Maj Dirk J. Vangeison wrote, "It would be foolhardy to rush directly to the aid of the battalion under confusing circumstances, darkness, and with such a small force." This is especially true since battalion seems to be conducting an attack around the enemy's east flank—i.e., toward us. Attacking east, we would put ourselves directly in the line of friendly fires. Moreover, this option would put us under the fire of the same machineguns that are engaging

the battalion. As we've said before, this would mean surrendering freedom of action. If we're intent on helping battalion out of its predicament, there are more far-reaching ways to do it. For example:

• *Option 3: Launch a flank attack against the enemy holding the pass.* You might argue that, looking at the bigger picture, we know we must do everything we can to facilitate battalion's getting through Narrow Pass, and that the best way to do this is to attack the enemy holding the pass in the flank. You might argue convincingly that the actual problem to the battalion's front makes a possible threat to the flank of less immediate concern. (I would argue, however, that an enemy counterattack with tanks east via Western Narrow Pass is a likely enemy response and cannot simply be ignored.) In opposition you might argue that

“Simply put, the idea . . . is to avoid enemy surfaces and exploit enemy gaps. . . . we try to avoid the enemy where and when he is strong and strike him where and when he is weak or vulnerable.”

our platoon is not a big enough force to overtake an enemy force that has managed to stop the battalion. But the American military historian S.L.A. Marshall wrote:

For the infantry soldier the great lesson of minor tactics in our time . . . is the overpowering effect of relatively small amounts of fire when delivered from the right ground at the right hour. . . . [T]he salient characteristic of most of our great victories (and a few of our defeats) was that they pivoted on the fire action of a few men.

As we've already discussed, if anybody is going to take Narrow Pass, it's probably going to be from the flank as opposed to frontally.

• *Option 4: Protect flank while also developing other options.* Perhaps you've reached the conclusion that you can't ignore your orders to guard the flank—that, in fact, an enemy counterattack from the west is a distinct possibility. But at the same time you realize that battalion isn't going to get through Narrow Pass using its current ap-

proach. Perhaps you know that your battalion commander is going to start considering other routes across Sanctuary Ridge and expects his subordinates to use initiative to develop opportunities. So you might establish a blocking position, with your Dragons and machineguns and most of the platoon, on the spur east of Western Narrow Pass and at the same time send a patrol up the spur to the crest of the ridge to ascertain enemy dispositions. We don't know if the ridge or Western Narrow Pass will offer a way for battalion to get into Sanctuary Plain; the only thing we know for certain is that Narrow Pass won't. From a central position on the ridge, we are in a good position to flank either of the passes, or move against the enemy machinegun positions from the rear. If we push out west along the ridge, we are also in a position to continue to protect the battalion's left flank by closing down Western Narrow Pass.

What About Battalion?

Unlike the previous scenarios, in this situation our commander does have communication with higher headquarters. No matter what decision the platoon commander makes, it's important that he contact battalion to report the situation as he sees it from his vantage point and to suggest any possible options for battalion.

It's perhaps a little unfair to put a platoon commander in the position of having to make all these decisions about how the battalion ought to act—although it could happen. Hopefully, our platoon commander is not the only person thinking at the battalion level; hopefully the battalion commander has got a few ideas himself. Hopefully, our platoon commander is not the only person in the battalion who realizes that we probably ought to at least start looking at some other options for getting across Sanctuary Ridge. That decision ought to belong to the battalion commander, and this scenario could just as easily have been designed as a battalion problem. If our battalion commander is intent on forcing his way frontally through Narrow Pass no matter what, there may be nothing our platoon can do to prevent disaster. But the battalion commander certainly ought to be considering other plans and ought to be open to suggestions from his subordinates. The question is: What will it take for the battalion commander to shift his axis of advance away from the Narrow Pass?

Surfaces and Gaps

This brings us to another fairly simple but extremely important concept: surfaces and gaps. This is not a new concept; it has been around for ages in various guises. Says Col Michael D. Wyly, one of our leading tactical thinkers:

It is unimportant whether you refer to this concept as surfaces and gaps or soft-spot tactics or simply the idea of pitting your strength against the enemy's weakness, call it what you will.

The great Sun Tzu used an analogy from nature:

Now any army may be likened to water, for just as flowing water avoids the height and hastens to the lowlands, so an army avoids strength and strikes weakness. And as water shapes its flow in accordance with the ground, so an army manages its victory in accordance with the situation of the enemy. And as water has no constant form, there are in war no constant conditions. Thus, one able to gain the victory by modifying his tactics in accordance with the enemy situation may be said to be divine.

Taking his cue from Sun Tzu, Liddell Hart developed the "expanding torrent" theory:

If we watch a torrent bearing down on each successive bank of earth and dam in its path, we see that it first beats against the obstacle feeling it and testing it at all points. Eventually it finds a small crack at some point. Through this crack pour the first driplets of water and rush straight on. The pent up water on each side is drawn towards the breach. It swirls through and around the flanks of the breach, wearing away the earth on each side and so widening the gap. Simultaneously the water behind pours

straight through the breach . . .

Simply put, the idea captured in these quotes is to avoid enemy surfaces and exploit enemy gaps. Or in other words, we try to avoid the enemy where and when he is strong and strike him where and when he is weak or vulnerable. Gaps may be actual physical gaps in the enemy's dispositions, or they may be any exploitable weakness—spacial, technological, moral, etc. Likewise, a surface may be an actual strongpoint, or it may be any enemy capability. In our scenario, Narrow Pass clearly is a surface. There may be gaps elsewhere—we won't know until we take action to find out.

In the words of *FMFM 1, Warfighting*:

Due to the fluid nature of war, gaps will rarely be permanent and will usually be fleeting. To exploit them demands flexibility and speed. We must actively seek our gaps by continuous and aggressive reconnaissance.

In Option 4, our platoon commander is actively seeking out gaps, as *FMFM 1* instructs, by sending a patrol north to the ridge. We know that the enemy is aware of our platoon's presence because we chased off one of his LPs. If the ridgeline or Western Narrow Pass isn't defended in strength, we can bet that the enemy is sending reinforcements in a hurry. If we don't act quickly we are going to find that our possible gap has turned into a surface. *FMFM 1* continues:

Once we locate [gaps], we must exploit them by funneling our forces through rapidly. For example, if our focus of effort has struck a surface but another unit has located a gap, we shift the focus of effort to the second unit and redirect our combat power in support of it. In this manner we "pull" combat

power through gaps from the front rather than "pushing" it through from the rear.

I suggest that in our battalion, the platoon commander should know that the battalion commander expects him to actively probe for gaps routinely and that the battalion commander, realizing he has struck a surface in this situation, should be ready to redirect his companies behind our platoon. As for the original flank guard mission, our battalion commander, realizing that our platoon is in the best position to find a gap, should consider assigning another unit to protect the flank and should cut our platoon commander loose to develop the situation.

The Bottom Line

One main reason this scenario caused such disagreement among readers is that the situation was so uncertain and allowed for widely differing assumptions and interpretations. One of the main points of this book is the importance of decisiveness in the face of incomplete information. However, a certain amount of information is essential to making a sound decision. Indecisiveness leads to disaster, but going off half-baked can be just as disastrous. There is a lot more about this situation that we ought to know before we commit ourselves. What is the situation at Western Narrow Pass? Does the enemy hold the ridge in strength? What is the actual threat to the left flank? A good commander has to know when he has enough information to make an informed decision and when he needs to develop the situation to gain more information. More about this later . . .



Attack on Narrow Pass, Continued— From Bad To Worse

"Gallant fellows, these soldiers; they always go for the thickest place in the fence."

—Adm Sir John de Robeck

"Do not renew an attack along the same line (or in the same form) after it has once failed. A mere reinforcement of weight is not sufficient change, for it is probable that the enemy will have strengthened himself in the process."

—B. H. Liddell Hart

What's Different?

Based on the controversial, strongly divided response to "Attack on Narrow Pass" when it appeared in the *MCG*, this follow-on scenario was developed in order to see what sort of developments in the situation it would take to get the hardline "flank guards" to change their minds.

What has changed from Scenario #3 to Scenario #4 that might (or might not) lead us to change our plan? In the former scenario, battalion had made contact with a sizable enemy force—had hit a surface—but was not necessarily in dire straits. Meanwhile, it seemed that the situation in our area *might* offer some opportunities (in the form of gaps), although we didn't yet know for certain. In the latter, it's becoming increasingly clear (to us at least) that battalion is going for the "thickest place in the fence"—as Adm de Robeck had observed of the British forces making repeated fruitless frontal assaults against strong Turkish positions at Gallipoli in 1915. Meanwhile, we have reconnoitered Sanctuary Ridge to our north and have made contact with nothing more than an enemy listening post (LP). Additionally, we spot some motorized/mechanized activity north of the ridge. In short, the situa-

tion has become much clearer on both fronts. Battalion has hit a hard spot and is in trouble while opposite us the enemy is weak.

What Do We Do?

Our options are roughly the same as before, with the exception that "pulling" the battalion across the ridge west of Narrow Pass is probably no longer viable (as we'll discuss).

Even if we decide to interpret our mission narrowly and maintain a blocking position to protect the battalion's left flank, 2dLts Brian J. Donovan and Thomas C. King suggest that we shouldn't do it in the immediate vicinity of Checkpoint 37. The enemy has already located us there twice. An artillery mission has landed a short distance away. We're just lucky he isn't more proficient with his supporting arms. (Or maybe he's too busy firing at the lucrative target our battalion presents and can't spare the fire missions.) The key concept here is obvious; if you can be located, you can be targeted. At a minimum we ought to move. The spur north of Checkpoint 37 looks like a suitable position from which we can control the east-west road. (More on this later.) Of course, if we're willing to move up onto the

ridge, why not keep going . . . ?

What About the Flank Guard Mission?

At this stage, the way things have developed, I would argue that a possible threat to the battalion's left flank is of less consequence than a very real and significant threat to its front. How much worse can things get? However, I think we have gotten lucky on this count. I think that there is, in fact, a *real* threat to the battalion's flank. It is the group of vehicles assembling (somewhat belatedly, in my opinion) north of the ridge. Again (and always) trying to figure out the enemy's plans, I think the enemy intends to move his mobile forces south via Western Narrow Pass and strike east against the battalion. It's the most logical enemy countermove. So, how have we gotten lucky? From the ridgeline we can protect the battalion by blocking the enemy move (*before* the enemy mobile force reaches Western Narrow Pass) just as effectively as we can from Checkpoint 37. But we have to act *fast*; the enemy appears to be getting ready to move.

Key Terrain

This situation leads us to another key thought: the importance of terrain.

Terrain is of primary significance to the tactician; a huge part of tactics, in fact, is based on being able to "read" terrain. But it's essential to point out that terrain is not significant for its own sake. The high ground north of Checkpoint 37 on Sanctuary Ridge is not important simply because it's high ground. *Terrain is important only to the degree that it confers an advantage to whoever controls it.* Terrain is something to be *used*, not simply something to be *gained*.

The high ground to the north—Sanctuary Ridge—is key terrain, though. Why? For several reasons. First, by controlling the undefended ridge we hold open a gap through which battalion might pour like an "expanding torrent." Second, being on the ridge puts us in position to make a move against the flank of the enemy positions at either pass. And third, from the ridge we can engage enemy forces moving east-west on *either* side of the ridge. We can thus move our entire platoon to the undefended ridge and be in position to make a move against the enemy positions at Narrow Pass from the flank while still providing protection for the battalion's flank.

We should point out that while the position on the ridge offers far more options, it is not without risks. We risk being cut off if the enemy is able to break through on the east-west road south of the ridge. Moreover, if the battalion decides to break contact and fall back, we're hung out to dry.

Multiple Options

This discussion in turn leads us to yet another valuable concept. Liddell Hart suggested that, whenever possible, we should "take a line of operation which offers alternative objectives." Not only do we create more options and opportunities for ourselves, we make it much harder for the enemy to anticipate our next move and to defend against it. As just discussed, the position on Sanctuary Ridge at once offers numerous options, both offensive and defensive. By comparison, a position in the vicinity of Checkpoint 37, only several hundred meters away, limits our courses of action to basically one—establishing a blocking position on the left flank.

More on Surfaces and Gaps

To continue our discussion of surfaces and gaps, what was a hunch in the last scenario is more certain now—that Narrow Pass represents a definite

enemy strongpoint, while further west along the ridge represents a soft spot. Ideally, by now the battalion should have shifted its axis of advance further west—either through Western Narrow Pass or over the ridge itself—to exploit the opportunity developed by our platoon.

In order for this process to work several conditions must exist. First, units and commanders must have the flexibility to adjust quickly to fleeting opportunities, to act like water "hast-

“ . . . whenever possible, we should take a line of operation which offers alternative objectives. Not only do we create more options and opportunities for ourselves, we make it much harder for the enemy to anticipate our next move. . . . ”

ening to the lowlands.” Second, subordinate leaders must have the initiative to probe for and create opportunities; they must keep their seniors apprised of developments; and they must stay focused on the mission and intent of their higher commanders—in other words, they cannot turn into “loose cannons.” They must act with initiative, yes, but always with regard to the larger situation. Third, senior commanders must be receptive to the opportunities developed by their subordinates; moreover, they must encourage their subordinates to act with boldness and initiative to develop the situation and must support them when they do. And finally, seniors must explain their intent clearly so that their subordinates have a sound basis for their actions.

In this situation, I suggest that “pulling” battalion across the ridge is probably no longer an option. Battalion is engaged in close combat and probably cannot effectively disengage and move laterally across the enemy's front at short range. So while finding a gap elsewhere might have been an option earlier, at this stage it seems that the only viable course is to help battalion fight its way through where it is. Lack of adaptability, flexibility, and quickness have constrained us to fighting a pitched battle at Narrow Pass.

Screen Versus Guard

There is possibly another way to deal

with the dilemma over securing the battalion's flank and helping battalion out of its immediate predicament. That is to change the mission from flank guard to flank screen. Guard and screen are two security missions that differ in the amount of protection they provide. A guard force has a mission to provide physical protection to the main body against the effects of enemy direct fire. A guard fights in the conduct of its mission, using offensive, defensive, or delaying action. A screen, on the other hand, provides the main body with early warning of enemy action but does not provide physical protection. A screen reports information and may direct supporting arms, but fights only in self-preservation.

A third classification of security mission is cover. Covering forces are self-contained tactical units operating independently from the main force for the purpose of intercepting, engaging, delaying, disorganizing, and deceiving the enemy before he can attack the main force. Covering forces generally operate beyond artillery range from the main body (and are thus beyond the scope and scale of this scenario).

In this scenario, an option might be to screen the left flank with a minimal force—maybe a fire team and the Dragons (since this is the likely avenue of approach of enemy tanks)—and use the rest of our force to relieve the pressure on the battalion. As discussed earlier, we can screen just as effectively (or even better) from atop Sanctuary Ridge as from Checkpoint 37.

Of course, the decision to change the platoon's mission from guard to screen rests normally with the higher commander who assigned the mission in the first place, although in a dire situation the platoon commander may very well find himself in the position of having to make that call himself. I introduce the discussion of screen versus guard simply to suggest another possible way to deal with the dilemma we face.

The Bottom Line

So, the question is, Has the situation changed enough—has it become desperate enough—for you to abandon your original orders as no longer applicable and to take matters into your own hands? Regardless of how you eventually answer, you're forced to analyze the larger situation, your role in it, and what actions you can and ought to take—and that's the ultimate object of the scenario.

'Film at Eleven'

"Should one ask: 'How do I cope with a well-ordered enemy host about to attack me?' I reply: 'Seize something he cherishes, and he will conform to your desires.'"

—Sun Tzu

"For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."

—Sun Tzu

Acting With Discretion

Given the relative strengths in this situation, there is little doubt we will seize Oasis one way or the other. The goal is to minimize the cost to all concerned. Obviously, we want to minimize our own casualties, but it's equally important to minimize casualties among the locals. In a response to this scenario when it appeared in the MCG, Maj H. Heath Fox II gave this concise analysis:

A key to this situation, especially since we're seizing the town for occupation by the MCSSD [Mobile Combat Service Support Detachment], is not making more enemies than we already have—particularly ones who are not easily identifiable. Care must be exercised when dealing with a mixed combatant/noncombatant populace. Any imprudence on our part will lead to unnecessary civilian casualties, create further animosities toward us among the civilian population, and is sure to be reported in a negative context by the TV news crew. Minimizing civilian casualties and collateral damage is in our own best interests.

Since the MCSSD is going to be operating out of Oasis, it will simplify the security situation if we gain the cooperation, if not the actual support, of the locals. We should try to spare not

only the lives but also the dwellings and crops of the inhabitants.

Our plan should first include the possibility of seizing Oasis without a fight. In fact, we should make every effort to induce the militia to surrender without fighting. Certainly, preparatory fires are out of the question; unprovoked firing, in addition to making

“We should also stipulate general rules of engagement, such as what sort of response to aggression is acceptable and what sort is not. Even after being fired upon, we don't want to return fire indiscriminately.”

for poor publicity, may convince the locals they have no choice but to fight in self-defense. We should fire only after being fired upon. But to prevent Marines from being passive targets, we should have a simple and immediate signal for transitioning from nonfiring to firing mode. We should stipulate who has the authority to give this signal.

We should also stipulate general rules of engagement, such as what sort

of response to aggression is acceptable and what sort is not. Even after being fired upon, we don't want to return fire indiscriminately. Since we have the time, we should make sure this is very clear throughout the unit. The bottom line is that we want to minimize collateral damage, while at the same time minimizing the risk of our Marines.

Center of Gravity/Critical Vulnerability

We have already discussed the importance of pitting our strength against the enemy's weakness, of striking where the enemy is vulnerable. But that's only part of the equation. An enemy may be vulnerable in a particular area precisely because that area is unimportant to him and so he hasn't bothered to protect it. In such a case, even though we would be attacking where the enemy is weak, we would gain little for our efforts. We must also commit our strength where and when it will do the most good. In other words, we want to attack the enemy at some critical point or center of gravity. We want to go after the one thing—the unit, capability, place, whatever—that contributes most to the enemy's ability or will to resist, the one thing that if lost will contribute most directly to the enemy's downfall. But we want to make sure to

do it in a way that exploits the enemy's vulnerabilities. There's a definite ruthlessness about attacking critical enemy vulnerabilities, a sense of "going for the jugular." Bruce I. Gudmundsson describes it very clearly in *Tactical Notebook* (Mar93):

Nature provides a useful example of a critical vulnerability in the form of the jugular vein and carotid arteries. Carrying, as they do, the blood to and from the brain, these vessels are critical to life. Located on the outside of the neck and throat, moreover, they are poorly protected. The knife aimed towards them will run into very little resistance from muscle and none from bone.

What is the center of gravity of Oasis?

“ We want to go after the one thing—the unit, capability, place, whatever—that contributes most to the enemy’s ability or will to resist, the one thing that if lost will contribute most directly to the enemy’s downfall. ”

sis? Some readers suggested the community center. Other readers recognized, however, that the true center of gravity—the one thing the locals cannot live without—is the pump station. Not only is the pump station the literal lifeline of this desert community, but it is probably the symbolic one as well. Seize the pump station and any inclination to continue to resist is gone. Being on the outskirts of the town, the pump station is vulnerable to attack. As SgtMaj P. J. Pollione wrote in response to this scenario:

The pump station is the prime objective. Since we don't know how the militia will react, control of the water will serve as a catalyst for the enemy to surrender. Attacking from the west and north is the only feasible way to maneuver without destroying the crop fields. Since the locals depend on these fields for food, it becomes important to save them and thus try to win local support.

The community center, a two-story masonry building that provides the best observation and cover in Oasis, is next in order of importance. The community center is probably also the militia headquarters and, like the pump

station, a community symbol. Wrote Maj Fox:

By seizing the pump station, we'll control the only local fresh water supply, and the source of irrigation for the local food supply. The pump station/water supply . . . is the center of gravity in this situation. By seizing the community center, we'll control the main building, and a key defensible position in the town. Controlling these two key terrain features gives us effective control of Oasis. By executing a vigorous effort to seize the two buildings quickly, I hope to discourage militia resistance against us.

Whatever plan we eventually develop, it should probably call for the early seizure of the pump station and community center as a means for controlling Oasis and its population.

Preparation

Of the first five scenarios, this is the first in which time is not a critical factor, the first in which we've actually got time to catch our breath and think about our plan. That in itself is a pretty clear indication of the importance of tempo. As the Duke of Wellington said, "In military operations, time is everything." The previous scenarios required us to conduct *hasty* operations, which relied for success on the enemy's lack of preparedness and on our ability to improvise and act quickly. In this scenario, however, it's to our advantage to conduct a *deliberate* operation. Deliberate operations rely for success on our own level of preparedness. The problem with deliberate operations is that while we are taking the time to prepare, usually so is the enemy. Not so with " 'Film at Eleven,' " a static situation in which we have no reason to think that the enemy's defenses will get any stronger over the next 22 hours. When time is on our side, we should use it. The luxury of a 22-hour window in which to accomplish our mission in this case allows us to pick the optimal time of attack, to consider our options deliberately, to develop a more detailed order reflecting a more coordinated plan, and to conduct a rehearsal. This last point is perhaps most important. When we've got the time, there is usually no better way to spend it than in a rehearsal, which allows us to iron out snags, smooth out coordination, and give our people some idea of what to expect.

Just because we have a certain amount of time to prepare an operation doesn't mean we should take it

easy. Time is a commodity shared by both sides, and the object is to make better use of that time than our opponent by getting better prepared. Moreover, once we're into the conduct phase and have made contact with the enemy, speed of action becomes essential again.

Options

There are a couple of fundamentally different approaches to solving this problem.

- *Option 1: Surprise night attack.* The object of this option would be to disarm the enemy before he could make any organized resistance. It would probably mean a dismounted attack, since the noise of our vehicles would

“ When we’ve got the time, there is usually no better way to spend it than in a rehearsal, which allows us to iron out snags, smooth out coordination, and give our people some idea of what to expect. ”

compromise the element of surprise. However, even moving by foot, it will be difficult to achieve surprise in open desert terrain.

- *Option 2: Show of force to intimidate.* This option is as much psychological as it is tactical, playing to the locals' natural disinclination for fighting by convincing them it is not a wise thing to do. The aim of this option would be to appear so overwhelming that the locals wouldn't even think of resisting. We would want to appear so powerful that they would realize that resistance was suicidal. In this case, we would probably want to make our move during broad daylight so the townspeople could see us; we would stay on our vehicles, making as much noise and kicking up as much dust as possible. Perhaps having one platoon halt conspicuously outside of Oasis with its weapons leveled at the town, we would drive into Oasis like we owned the place. Putting the camera van right up near the front would help to psychologically disarm the locals, reinforcing the point that we know we have little to fear. The danger with this option is that we have surrendered most tactical advantages for the sake

of psychological effect; if our psychological gambit does not work, we may have a fight on our hands.

Option 3: Cordon and negotiate. We could surround Oasis, open communications, and appeal to reason. This way we would give the Oasians a clear opportunity to surrender peacefully and in the process would appear as nonthreatening as possible. The problem with this option is that we would be putting the Oasians in a position to negotiate. A negotiated settlement could be a lengthy process. And if negotiations fail, we have lost any of the tactical or psychological advantages of the previous options.

What Do We Do Once We Capture Oasis?

No matter what plan we use, once we seize the town we have to act quick-

ly to consolidate our position. We should meet immediately with the local leadership. We should tell the local leaders that we hold them responsible for the cooperation and good behavior of the citizens. We should make it clear that in return for the citizens' cooperation and good behavior, we will harm nobody, will cause as little disruption to the daily routine as possible, and will provide what medical assistance we can. We should make it known that we have taken over responsibility for the protection of the village, that the local militia is at this moment disbanded, and that the leaders have 30 minutes in which to collect and turn in all weapons.

Dealing With the News Team

The problem of dealing with the news team is an interesting one. In this age of electronic media, images and

information are powerful weapons, particularly as they affect a nation's resolve. We must use them to our advantage. The presence of the news team in this scenario does not create the need to act with discretion, but it certainly emphasizes it. If there is to be bloodshed at Oasis, we want it to be clear that it is not the result of American misconduct.

The Bottom Line

This scenario differs from the previous ones in that restraint and discretion are key considerations. In an age of low-intensity conflict, in which a grayish sort of pseudo-war blurs the distinction between war and peace, questions about restraints on the use of force are extremely important and sometimes extremely difficult.



Hole in the Trowzer Pocket

"Countless minor incidents—the kind you never really foresee—combine to lower the general level of performance, so that one always falls far short of the intended goal."

—Carl von Clausewitz

"I suppose dozens of operation orders have gone out in my name, but I never, throughout the war, actually wrote one myself. I always had someone who could do that better than I could. One part of the order I did, however, draft myself—the intention. It is usually the shortest of all paragraphs, but it is always the most important, because it states—or it should—just what the commander intends to achieve. It is the one overriding expression of will by which everything in the order and every action by every commander and soldier in the army must be dominated. It should, therefore, be worded by the commander himself."

—Field Marshal Sir William Slim

Friction

This scenario was inspired by actual experience. During a field exercise, my force and another were supposed to link up on what we thought would be an easily identifiable piece of terrain. As expected, both forces had no trouble whatsoever locating the linkup point. Each commander was sure of his location. The only problem was that we had each gone to a different terrain feature. Needless to say, the linkup did not go smoothly as planned.

The first lesson of "Hole in the Trowzer Pocket" is thus that things *will* go wrong. People *will* go to the wrong piece of high ground. The seemingly simple things will become difficult. As Murphy said, what can go wrong, will. In addition to the problems posed by the enemy, it is the natural order of things to have to deal with the "countless minor incidents" that Clausewitz went on to call "Friction." Friction is one of the defining

features of combat. We will never eliminate it. The first requirement then, before we can hope to accomplish anything else, is to be able to deal with friction.

Mission Tactics

We have talked at length about the subordinate's need to "think big" and to act in the best interests of the higher mission. This places a lot of responsibility on the shoulders of subordinates. If we're going to burden people with responsibility (as we should), we must also give them the corresponding authority to act. We can best accomplish this through the use of mission tactics. According to *FMFM 1*:

Mission tactics are just as the name implies: the tactic of assigning a subordinate a mission without specifying how the mission must be accomplished. We leave the manner of accomplishing the mission to the subordinate, thereby allowing him the freedom—and es-

tablishing the duty—to take whatever steps he deems necessary based on the situation. The senior prescribes the method of execution only to the degree that is essential for coordination. It is this freedom for initiative that permits the high tempo of operations that we desire. Uninhibited by restrictions from above, the subordinate can adapt his actions to the changing situation. He informs his commander what he has done, but he does not wait for permission.

What we're talking about here is decentralizing decisionmaking authority. This decentralization allows us to continue to act appropriately and operate effectively in the face of failed communications, as we saw in "Ambush at Dusk" and "Platoon Ambush"; when the situation has drastically changed, as at "Narrow Pass"; or when friction threatens to unravel our best laid plans, as in this scenario. Moreover, decentralization allows us to act *quickly*. (As we saw in "Platoon

Ambush," the squad leader didn't have time to send a runner to the platoon commander with a situation report and wait for the runner to return with instructions. He had to act.)

Contrary to popular belief, this is not a radical, untried concept, but one that has been proved in combat. Slim, who inflicted the greatest defeat on Japanese ground forces of any Allied commander in World War II, described his lessons learned in Burma:

Commanders at all levels had to act more on their own; they were given greater latitude to work out their own plans to achieve what they knew was the Army commander's intention. In time they developed to a marked degree a flexibility of mind and a firmness of decision that enabled them to act swiftly to take advantage of sudden information or changing circumstances without reference to their superiors. . . . This acting without orders, in anticipation of orders, or without waiting for approval, yet always within the overall intention, must become second nature in any form of warfare where formations do not fight closely *en cadre*, and must go down to the smallest units. It requires in the higher command a corresponding flexibility of mind, confidence in subordinates, and the power to make intentions clear right through the force.

Slim makes it clear that we cannot have decentralized initiative without

“ . . . things will go wrong. People will go to the wrong piece of high ground. The seemingly simple things will become difficult. ”

some means of providing focus to the various efforts. As *FMFM 1* says: "To do so would be to dissipate our strength. We seek unity [of effort], not through imposed control, but through *harmonious* initiative and lateral coordination."

It is essential that the senior commander provide his subordinates with the guidance and frame of reference that allow them to exercise initiative more confidently and effectively.

Commander's Intent

There are several tools with which the commander can do this. The first, and perhaps most important, as Slim's quotes indicate, is the commander's intent. In assigning a mission to a sub-

ordinate we should give both the task to be accomplished and the intent behind the task. The task describes in quantitative terms the *who, what, where, and when* of the mission. The intent, on the other hand, describes the *why* behind the mission and, in qualitative terms, the *end result* we expect. Between the task and intent, *FMFM 1* says:

. . . the intent is predominant. While a situation may change, making the task obsolete, the intent is more permanent and continues to guide our actions. Understanding our commander's intent allows us to exercise initiative in harmony with the commander's desires.

The commander's intent describes his vision of the outcome of the action in terms that relate to the enemy and the battlefield. The intent is not merely a restatement of the mission or the concept of operations. It should not specify how to accomplish the mission ("Bypass enemy resistance; avoid getting bogged down . . .") or simply specify the intensity of the action ("Attack aggressively . . .").

In this scenario, for example, our assigned task is to establish a blocking position in the vicinity of Hills 88 and 82 and, commencing at 0300, to engage and destroy enemy forces trying to escape south out of the pocket in our sector. We know that the overall intent of the operation is to encircle and destroy the enemy force holed up in Trowzer. The final result expected out of the blocking position is to prevent the southward escape of the enemy. As the scenario unfolds we have no trouble with fulfilling our assigned task. We establish our blocking position with no problem. Unfortunately, it becomes clear to us that although we have performed our assigned task, our commander's intent is not being satisfied. The enemy is escaping in sizable numbers out of the pocket. (It doesn't matter that it's not our fault. We're not interested in who's to blame; we're interested in accomplishing the mission.) So where does this leave us?

Options

- *Option 1: Execute assigned task.* In other words, do nothing for the present. First, the time to engage the enemy as stipulated in the order has not arrived. Second, there is no enemy in our sector (the artillery unit on the road being in Fox Company's sector). We certainly can't be criticized for following orders, right? Wrong. Orders to

the contrary do not absolve us from doing the right thing. If we act, we may make a mistake, but not to act is inexcusable. As Winston Churchill said: "Errors toward the enemy must be lightly judged." By now it should be clear that even though we are executing our assigned tasks, our commander's intent requires us to do more. So what's next?

- *Option 2: Engage the artillery unit.*

At a minimum we can engage the artillery unit, a valuable target. Purists will argue that the artillery unit is in Fox's sector and that doctrine prohibits us from firing across boundaries. Boundaries are control measures established between adjacent units for

“ The task describes in quantitative terms the *who, what, where, and when* of the mission. The intent, on the other hand, describes the *why* behind the mission and, in qualitative terms, the *end result* we expect. ”

the purpose of coordination. They ensure a unit the freedom to operate within its own zone or sector without interference from outside, and they restrict a unit from interfering in another unit's zone or sector. You might argue that instead of violating the boundary we can request that higher headquarters shift it west so that the artillery unit is in our sector. Three problems with this. First, it'll never happen in time to get the artillery unit. Second, since Fox insists it's in the right place, regiment has no reason to shift the boundary; regiment has already told us to work it out between ourselves. And third, the more effective way to deal with such coordination problems is laterally—i.e., directly with the adjacent unit—rather than vertically through the chain of command. So then you might argue (quite correctly) that the more appropriate response is to contact Fox Company directly and request permission to fire across the boundary.

Since the Fox Company commander is convinced that he's in the right place and that *we're* the ones who are lost, he's not likely to give us permission to start firing indiscriminately into his sector. What do we do when

he denies our request? Just as an assigned task should not prevent us from doing what's required, neither should we let a control measure get in the way of the right tactical decision. Control measures aren't laws. Good tactics take precedence over proper use of control measures. Moreover, I would argue that boundaries are meant to exist between adjacent units, but in this case there is no adjacent unit. Fox isn't there. The boundary is not appropriate to the current tactical situation. "Fine," the purist might say, "if you take it upon yourself to ignore a boundary imposed by higher headquarters, you must be fully responsible for your actions." Quite true; but by now we should be quite used to taking full responsibility for our actions.

• *Option 3: Direct supporting arms west of Hill 81.* I don't mean to imply that we should simply ignore boundaries and fire across them indiscriminately. As already discussed, boundaries exist for good reason. Among other things, they are designed to protect us from friendly fire. In the first place, in this case we would be calling for fire exactly where Fox Company thinks it's located, and the fire support coordination center assigned responsibility for coordinating supporting arms for this operation would certainly disapprove the fire mission. We could fire the mission with our own mortars. Moreover, we could get Fox to give us a bearing to the sound of the impact as a means of trying to determine Fox's location. The problem is that we don't know exactly where Fox is, we're no longer in a

position to effectively control the fire mission, and we certainly don't want to risk friendly casualties. This option is less defensible than engaging the artillery on the road by direct fire.

• *Option 4: Attack west toward Hill 81.* The rationale here would be to assume Fox's mission as well as our own in order to prevent the enemy's escape. A bold move certainly; but in the dark, without any preparations, with enemy units moving down the road posing a definite threat to our right flank, without knowing where Fox is, and without the ability to coordinate effectively with Fox as a result, this is a risky proposition. There is a definite potential for several things to go wrong, not least of which is an intramural firefight.

• *Option 5: Shift southwest to Hill 87.* Based on the terrain, it seems quite possible that Fox Company has mistaken Hill 85 for Hill 81. (They're only a kilometer apart.) By shifting 3d Platoon (and possibly even 2d) to Hill 87 we might be able to reconstitute the blocking position on Hills 85-87-88 vice Hills 81-88-82 as originally ordered, satisfying the regimental commander's original intent. Even if Fox is not on Hill 85, Hill 87 is some 500 meters west and south of Hill 88 (but still in our sector). From Hill 87 we would therefore be in a much better position to try to bottle up the enemy forces that are crossing the ridge west of Hill 81.

More on Intent

There is no particular format that a commander's intent must take. In ad-

dition to being one of the most important parts of an order to issue, the intent is also one of the most difficult to prepare because it requires the commander to express a qualitative vision of how he wants the operation to turn out. A couple of possible techniques for expressing intent are:

- To follow each task assigned to a subordinate with an "... in order to ..." statement. For example: "Establish a blocking position in the vicinity of Hills 88 and 82 in order to prevent enemy forces from escaping south."
- As Capt Michael L. Ettore suggests in "Commander's Intent Defined," (MCG, Apr93), to begin the intent statement with "The final result desired is ..." For example: "The final result desired is to prevent enemy forces from escaping south."

The statement of intent should be clear and forceful. As Capt Ettore points out, a concise intent statement is easier to transmit by radio or messenger and is more easily remembered under conditions of extreme stress. But don't sacrifice clarity for brevity.

The commander's intent is different from any other part of the order, and there is a definite skill to expressing it well. As you do the remaining scenarios in this workbook, focus on issuing a good commander's intent, and afterwards analyze it to determine if it serves its bottom-line purpose of giving your subordinates the ability to deviate from the plan and still support your desires.



Securing Cam-Pljuna

"Weigh the situation, then move. He who knows the art of the direct and the indirect approach will be victorious. Such is the art of maneuvering."

—Sun Tzu

"Originality is the most vital of all military virtues."

—B. H. Liddell-Hart

Mission Tactics II

This mission is a straightforward one, in which our battalion commander has given us broad latitude in the manner of execution. The only condition he has imposed is the deadline, and even that is not particularly constraining. Moreover, to guide us in our actions he has explained the intent behind the operation and how the operation fits into the scheme of the larger upcoming campaign. He has furthermore made us the battalion's main effort, offering us any weapons company assets we might need and ensuring timely reinforcements by helicopter. All in all, we have the opportunity to weigh the situation thoroughly and the freedom to construct an original plan that we're happy with.

Looking for Patterns

"Securing Cam-Pljuna" shares several similarities with "Film at Eleven." Both involve a straightforward mission to seize a specific location for future use. In both cases time is not a particularly significant consideration; we have a reasonable amount of time to accomplish the mission. Both involve operations in populated areas, with the consequent need to exercise restraint so to limit collateral damage.

In both cases the enemy force is not particularly large. The problem will not be seizing the objective; it will be minimizing damage to ourselves and the locals. One key area in which the scenarios differ, however, is that at Cam-Pljuna we can expect the enemy to resist. At Oasis the situation with regard to the enemy was much more ambiguous, and that always complicates things. Knowing that we can expect the enemy at Cam-Pljuna to fight may not make accomplishing the mission any easier, but it certainly makes the situation less ambiguous.

Uncertainty—A Fact of Life

As at Oasis, we don't know much about the enemy situation. We know where his mortar and antiaircraft gun emplacements are, and we know the defensive positions he has prepared. But we don't know the actual dispositions of the main enemy forces. Nor do we know the current location of the mobile machinegun units, which may or may not be present when we make our attack. And of course, we don't know with any certainty—and never will—the enemy's exact intentions. Even in this age of high-tech sensors, there will always be much about the enemy situation that will remain un-

certain. The predominant feature of tactical decisionmaking is the pervasive uncertainty that surrounds every decision. Information will always be incomplete, will often be confusing, and will sometimes even be contradictory. If we wait for certainty before making a decision, we'll never act. The requirement is to recognize uncertainty as a fact of life and to learn to deal with it.

Flexibility

Because the enemy situation is uncertain, our plan has to be flexible to allow us to adapt to a variety of circumstances and developments. Our initial operation order should not try to cover the entire operation all the way through to conclusion, because there's still too much about the situation that we don't know. Our initial order can probably cover the approach march in detail, but specific actions after that will probably depend on how the situation develops. About the best we can do at this point is to prepare our company for future actions by issuing warning orders which describe our broad intent, likely anticipated tasks, and possible contingencies. For the units whose missions we know with reasonable certainty—tak-

ing out the antiair or mortar positions or blocking the Pandjeton road, for example—we can be more specific. But by and large, the detailed plan for actions in the objective area will have to come later, through the issuance of improvised fragmentary orders, as the situation develops and becomes clearer. This is when having good immediate action drills and standing operating procedures and a cohesive team with trustworthy subordinate leaders will pay dividends. In general, the less certain a situation is, the fewer forces should be committed initially to specific tasks, and the more should be held back ready to commit as the situation develops.

The Importance of Reconnaissance

Gen George S. Patton said, "You can never have too much reconnaissance," and this scenario is a perfect example of that adage. Our success at Cam-Pljuna will depend in large measure on our ability to generate information ourselves about the enemy situation through reconnaissance.

Exactly what information do we want to generate? There are a relatively few essential elements of information that will go a long way toward clearing up our picture of the situation at Cam-Pljuna. Everyone in the company should know these questions and should be instructed to keep their eyes open for the answers:

- Where are the main Early Retirist forces?
- Are the mobile machinegun units in or near Cam-Pljuna?
- Are the antiair and mortar units still where last reported?

Equally important, anyone who sees the answers to these questions must know to pass that information on, both up and down the chain of command.

Reconnaissance is not a specialized mission reserved for special units. It should be an on-going activity in every combat unit. As we discussed in the section on "Surfaces and Gaps," we should be continuously and actively probing down to the lowest levels for enemy vulnerabilities that we can exploit.

Exploiting Critical Vulnerabilities

Are there any critical vulnerabilities in the enemy dispositions as we currently know them, any weak spots we can exploit to gain leverage? The enemy defensive preparations are oriented to the south and east—i.e., directly toward us. There is only one defensive position northwest of the town. Importantly,

the enemy has no defensive positions to the northeast.

Meanwhile, the critical points in this scenario—at least the ones we know with any certainty—are to the west of town: the antiair and mortar positions and the landing zone (LZ). Likewise, enemy reinforcements will come from the west via the Pendjetan road.

The antiair positions are critical to this scenario because they command the LZ. (We can't take them out with supporting arms because of their proximity to local residences.) If we take out the antiair positions, we can begin to land helicopters. This is important because it facilitates immediate relief operations as per our orders, and it allows for the early introduction of reinforcements. The early introduction of reinforcements strengthens our hand no matter how the situation develops,

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especially since at the same time we could be blocking off enemy reinforcements via the Pendjetan road.

Thus, a basic concept for our plan might call for an approach via the apparent gap northeast of town to capture the antiair and mortar positions and the LZ.

Possibilities—Infiltration Attack

An infantry force infiltrating through the woods could cross the Bensjkula road northeast of Cam-Pljuna and move in a counterclockwise direction around the north and west sides of town, putting itself in position to attack the antiair and mortar positions, secure the LZ, and block the Pendjetan road. Moving around to the north vice the south, in addition to exploiting natural vulnerabilities in the enemy disposition, has the advantage—being on the slopes above the town—of offering better observation of the objective area, which may be very valuable as we continue to devel-

op our plans.

Because we've got time, the force can move carefully to avoid detection. By moving at night we can take advantage of the enemy's poor night-vision capability. Attack elements could move into position to launch simultaneous surprise attacks against the key known positions. We could hold other elements (one or even two platoons) in reserve to deal with the developing situation. We might make arrangements with battalion for a conspicuous feint up the Cam-Pljuna road—vehicles making a slow, plodding and noisy advance—to keep the enemy's attention fixed to the southeast. The ideal situation would be to be able to keep the enemy oriented southeast, occupying primarily the three positions around Hill 290: this could allow us to take the city proper from behind with minimal damage to the locals as well as to attack the enemy positions themselves from the rear.

What Weapons Company Assets Do We Want?

Assuming that we will not be moving with vehicles up the Cam-Pljuna road, our decision of what extra weapons to bring will be guided primarily by what we can reasonably man-pack over forested mountain terrain. But even within that restriction there is still plenty of room for differences. A lot depends on our concept of operations. Is our plan based primarily on speed and surprise or on superior firepower? I would argue that for the sake of mobility we want to travel light and carry the minimum gear necessary. Perhaps we can arrange to have certain heavier weapons brought in by helicopter in the initial wave of reinforcements.

We can probably do without mortars, relying instead on artillery. There is no significant armor threat, but at least some bunker-busting capability would help. We also want the capability to stop the mobile machinegun unit or enemy reinforcements by vehicle. Perhaps a few Dragon teams at most. Machineguns could be very valuable, both as part of a roadblock and because the terrain offers numerous opportunities for massing machineguns in a base of fire. Would the increased firepower of heavy machineguns be worth the loss of mobility they would cause? Or might we be better served by requesting reinforcement with another section of M60s from another line company?

Raid on Gazebo Ridge

"Speed is the essence of war. Take advantage of the enemy's unpreparedness; travel by unexpected routes and strike him where he has taken no precautions."

—Sun Tzu

"The principles on which I planned all operations were:

- The ultimate intention must be an offensive one.*
- The main idea on which the plan was based must be simple.*
- That idea must be held in view throughout and everything else must give way to it.*
- The plan must have an element of surprise."*

—Field Marshal Sir William Slim

SSS&B

This is a situation ripe with both danger and opportunity. We have caught the enemy unprepared and have a chance to wreak havoc. But we are also entering a fishbowl lined with enemy guns and enemy tanks on both flanks that can make life miserable for us. We are badly outnumbered. Success and survival depend on acting quickly and aggressively before the enemy can get his bearings. Nearly all of the MCG readers who submitted solutions to this scenario when it first appeared in Sep90 recognized that the keys to success at Gazebo Ridge were *speed, simplicity, surprise, and boldness*: Hit fast, hit hard, and get out quick.

Speed

In nearly all of the previous scenarios—the possible exceptions being "Film at Eleven" and "Seizing Cam-Pljuna"—speed has been an important ingredient. Even in those two scenarios, in which we seemed to have plenty of time to develop our plan, once we put the plan into action and came into contact with the enemy, speed of execution became important. In fact, of

all the concepts we have discussed to this point, there is none more important than speed—the ability to think fast, decide fast, act fast, move fast. Actually, it's not so much absolute speed that matters, but speed relative to our enemy. As military theorist Col John Boyd, USAF(Ret), is fond of saying, it doesn't matter if we're slow, as long as the enemy is slower.

Back in the late 1960s and early 1970s, BGen F. P. Henderson, USMC(Ret), and other Marines were talking and writing about a sequence of essential combat actions referred to as SEDA (Sense-Evaluate-Decide-Act). Boyd popularized this theory using the term "OODA loop" (Observation-Orientation-Decision-Action) to describe the fundamental time-competitive nature of conflict. The theory applies to any direct conflict, whether the antagonists are individual boxers, soccer teams, military units in combat, or businesses in a competitive market. It defines the cycle by which we make decisions in a competitive situation. Facing a competitive situation, we first sense the situation. We then evaluate it

by making estimates, assumptions, analyses, and judgments. Based on that evaluation, we make our decision—i.e., we come up with a plan. Then we put the plan into action. Having acted, we have changed the situation, and so the cycle begins again. To be faster through the cycle once gives us the advantage of being able to seize the initiative, dictate the terms of action, and force the enemy to react to us. But the side which can consistently and effectively transition through the SEDA cycle or OODA loop faster—the side which maintains a higher tempo—gains an ever-increasing advantage with each cycle. The slower antagonist falls further and further behind in his reactions and becomes increasingly unable to cope with the deteriorating situation. With each cycle his actions become less relevant to what's actually happening, and he becomes increasingly ineffective.

It's precisely because of the importance of speed that the TDGs generally have such a rigorous time limit. It's not just the ability to move fast—although that certainly is part of it—but

the ability to think fast and decide fast.

As a rule we want to do everything we can to improve our own speed: decentralize decisionmaking authority, minimize restrictive control measures, simplify our plans, make maximum use of immediate action drills and standing operating procedures, and streamline our decisionmaking and staff planning procedures. Likewise, since combat is time-competitive, we want to do everything we can to slow our enemy down.

As this scenario demonstrates, speed also has a protective element. It makes it harder to catch us, harder to hit us, and harder to fend off our thrusts.

Simplicity

At Gazebo Ridge there is no time for detailed coordination or instructions; this will have to be a hasty and improvised attack with our subordinates acting on their understanding of the commander's intent and the developing situation. If this turns into a confused and chaotic melee, fine; that serves our purpose of distracting the enemy. The bottom line is, the simpler the better.

How do we get simplicity? First, we develop a plan that has few "moving parts"—i.e., few different tasks or components. The more moving parts a plan has, the more elaborate it becomes. Fewer moving parts lessens the need for coordination, detailed instructions, control measures, etc. In our particular case it shouldn't be hard to keep it simple, since we have so few assets to work with. The simplest plan would be to keep our company together as a single unit and have the different weapons systems engage appropriate targets as we pass. Since we have only two sections of LAV-25s (the backbone of our unit) we certainly don't want to have any more than two main thrusts to our attack—in this situation, any more than two thrusts will start to get difficult to control.

LtCol Kenneth W. Estes suggested task organizing into two platoons each with three LAV-25s, an LAV-AG, and an LAV-AT—"That way I command two platoons of equal weight, not four different sections." In this case, there is something to be said for a two-pronged attack vice a single thrust. It would likely cause more confusion and disruption, which is our ultimate objective. Moreover, as we've discussed before, the use of separate but complementary forces compels the en-

emy to split his efforts.

The second way we maintain simplicity is to minimize the amount of direct coordination and positive control necessary to make the plan work. In this scenario, even if we come up with a two-pronged plan, we want to make sure that each element can execute its part of the plan independently, without having to coordinate with and worry about interference from the other element. The two forces can still complement each other, but in an indirect way. In other words, the plan fits together "loosely." What we absolutely *don't* want is a plan in which all the elements are precisely synchronized and there is little tolerance for friction or anything going wrong. An example of this is a plan in which A

“... the side which can consistently and effectively transition through the SEDA cycle or OODA loop faster—the side which maintains a higher tempo—gains an ever-increasing advantage with each cycle.”

happens after B takes place, but B can't happen until C occurs; C has to happen simultaneously with D, etc. If any one part of the plan is disrupted, the whole plan begins to fall apart. (In general, plans with a lot of "on-order" tasks, in which the commander directs each action, are good examples of operations with little tolerance for the natural friction of war.) To make an analogy, it's kind of like the difference between the music of a jazzhall band and an orchestra. In the orchestra, each instrument must respond to the positive control of the conductor and be precisely synchronized with the others; the music is, as the name indicates, orchestrated. The jazzhall band's music, on the other hand, is "looser," with room for improvisation and creativity. The bottom line is that we want to be more like a jazzhall band and less like an orchestra. We want our plans to fit together "loosely," so they do not have to be carefully orchestrated; so they are not as easily disrupted by fog, friction, and enemy action; and so we have room to improvise and show initiative as the situation warrants.

Surprise

We are vastly outnumbered and outgunned in this scenario. The only reason we can even think of attacking is that we seem to have the element of surprise. A multiplier of combat power, surprise is a concept of such importance as to rate as a tactical fundamental.

Clausewitz observed that the desire for surprise is "more or less basic to all operations, for without it superiority at the decisive point is hardly conceivable." But beyond being a necessary precondition for local superiority, surprise is a fundamental in its own right because of its psychological effect. As *FMFM 1* says, "Surprise can decisively affect the outcome of combat far beyond the physical means at hand."

It is interesting that we should use the "Raid on Gazebo Ridge" to introduce the concept of surprise because we typically think of surprise as the product of some devious and roundabout scheme—anything but driving straight at the enemy in growing daylight by the most direct route. But, in fact, this scenario illustrates the important point that although we often talk about "taking the enemy by surprise," surprise is not so much something the surpriser does. Rather it is a state of shock on the part of the surprised as the result of some unexpected event that leaves him temporarily unable to respond effectively. We may take certain actions intended to surprise the enemy, but success in the end depends ultimately on the enemy's susceptibility to being surprised. Typically, for example, we seek to surprise the enemy by striking his flanks, but if the enemy expects a flank attack the surprise will be on us. In other words, surprise comes down to *expectations*. The first requirement, then, in achieving surprise is to be able to anticipate the enemy's expectations. We try to look at the situation from the enemy's point of view, figure out his expectations, and then do the thing he least expects. As we've already done in previous scenarios, we ask: "What's the enemy up to?"

While surprise can be decisive, because it is not completely under our control, we should not count on it alone for the margin of success. For surprise to work, it's not necessary to take the enemy unawares. It's only important that he become aware too late to react. As a result, surprise is a product of speed and secrecy—secrecy so that the enemy does not become aware until too late, and speed so that once

he does become aware he doesn't have the time to react effectively.

Boldness

Boldness also is a key factor in the "Raid on Gazebo Ridge." Much like surprise, boldness is a true force multiplier. As Clausewitz observed:

Indeed in what field of human activity is boldness more at home than in war? . . . It must be granted a certain power over and above successful calculation involving space, time, and magnitude of forces, for where it is superior, it will take advantage of its opponent's weakness. In other words, it is a genuinely creative force.

Boldness can contribute to surprise and add shock effect to our actions.

A Sample FragO

The following fragmentary order, submitted by LtCol Estes, is not meant as the only "right" answer, but as an excellent example of a clear and crisp order for a quick, simple, and bold plan:

"Action right front: left platoon attack enemy artillery; right platoon attack enemy command post; no decisive engagement; withdraw to south and west through their log train; watch out for the tanks to the south; make smoke; NOW. Cobras, attack tanks on our left, cover our withdrawal. FO, try to get immediate smoke and ICM fire on the northern tanks."

[I ask the Company B commander to take on that tank unit (on the northern part of the escarpment) as mutual support, then call the Company C

commander to relay a sitrep to the battalion commander, asking that Company C support me by fire and maneuver.]

Notice that in this solution, our company commander asks Company B to the north to engage the enemy tank position on the northern end of the position and also asks the Company C commander to support our company. Because his company has been designated the main effort, our company commander knows that the job of the other companies is to support us, and so, in a pinch, without referring to the battalion commander, he can seek their support, and they are obligated to respond.

Historical Background

This scenario is based on an actual action from Robert Crisp's excellent memoir of the North African campaign of World War II, *Brazen Chariots* (New York: Bantam Books, 1978). During Operation CRUSADER, Capt Crisp commanded an understrength tank squadron as part of a raid against the rear of a German position pressuring an Indian division south of Gazala. Crisp's squadron was equipped with Stuarts, a light U.S. tank that was outgunned by, but faster than, the German Marks.

As he approached the rear of the German position in the daylight, apparently unrecognized by the Germans, Crisp lost communications with higher headquarters.

[As] I was not in touch with [head-

quarters], I proposed to act on my own initiative. The plan I had in mind was to make a charge in line abreast, straight towards the middle of the rear of the German position. When we reached it we would swing north in line ahead, and run along the whole length of the enemy lines blazing away with everything we had before wheeling out and away at full speed. It was the sort of recklessness that was, in fact, pretty safe in execution. By the time the Jerries had woken up to what was happening we would be in the middle of them, every gun firing and every tank going flat out. None of their weapons would be ready for us; they were all directed towards the east and the Indian division. They would not be able to engage us while we were right in their own position. By the time we swung out again there would be so much consternation and confusion, and we would be going so fast, that I had every prospect of getting away with it scot-free—without losing a single tank. . . . I was about to summon troop commanders to a quick conference back at my tank (it would have to be darn quick) when one of them came on the air to report four enemy tanks moving out from the left and coming across his front.

Crisp was seriously wounded in the ensuing firefight while trying to rescue the crew of a disabled tank. An intercepted wireless message from the headquarters of the Afrika Corps revealed that the Germans were evacuating the Gazala position, lucky in their opinion to have escaped a "steel trap."

US  MC



Enemy Over the Bridge

"To move swiftly, strike vigorously, and secure all the fruits of the victory is the secret of successful war."

—Stonewall Jackson

"The measure may be thought bold, but I am of opinion the boldest are the safest."

—Adm Lord Nelson

Looking at the "Big Picture"—Again

Since "Enemy Over the Bridge" was the very first TDG to appear in the MCG (Apr90), it is appropriate that this scenario returns us to the first of the tactical first principles discussed in this book—the importance of considering the larger situation. In this situation, there is no way our battalion commander can make the right choice unless he considers the division situation. The key question is, What can I do to further the accomplishment of the division mission?

Speed—Again

And it is also significant that we see yet again that all-important concept of speed, which is critical to every tactical situation. This scenario amounts to a meeting engagement, an unexpected meeting between two forces not fully deployed for combat. In any meeting engagement it is important to beat the enemy to the punch, to act quickly and aggressively to seize the initiative and gain the critical advantage. No matter what your solution to this problem may be, it should reflect a definite sense of urgency in acting more quickly than the enemy.

Friction and Uncertainty

Perhaps better than any of the others, this scenario also illustrates the important related concepts of friction and uncertainty. On the surface, this ought to be an easy situation for us. We're making a simple administrative move into an assembly area in our own supposedly secure rear area. It's not even a tactical situation. Friendly forces hold the bridge and riverline

with security forces operating farther forward. But we discover nothing is as it should be. There are, in fact, no friendly forces at the bridge or along the river. A sizable enemy force occupies our assembly area. We don't know exactly how big the enemy force is. We don't know what other areas, if

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any, the enemy has occupied. We don't know the enemy's intentions. We have no idea what happened to the friendly forces that were supposed to be forward of us. About all we do know is that the situation is not good and is nothing like we expected. Consequently, the instructions we've received are no longer appropriate. The bottom line is that we have to use our initiative to retrieve the situation.

What's the Enemy Up To?

As we've discussed, we don't know what the enemy's up to. But we can work through some possibilities. On one extreme, this action may be the beginning of a major enemy offensive, in which case we can expect substan-

tial enemy forces to begin pouring across the bridge soon. If that's the case, the enemy has beaten our division to the punch, and we need to try to contain the problem. On the other extreme, this may be nothing more than a local spoiling attack, in which case the enemy has succeeded in seizing the initiative and threatening to hamstring our offensive. If that's the case, we need to regain the initiative and get the division offensive back on track.

What's Critical?

What's critical in this situation? Thinking strictly at the battalion level, we might answer, "The enemy force occupying our assembly area. We were told to occupy that piece of terrain, and the enemy is preventing us from doing it." But how important is that triangular piece of woods? Not very; it has no inherent tactical value and, in fact, is hemmed in by the two hill masses to the south. Occupying the assigned assembly area is no longer appropriate since the situation has changed dramatically. An assembly area is merely a control measure designed to facilitate future preparations. As we've already discussed, we shouldn't let control measures get in the way of good tactics. And how much of a threat does the enemy force really pose in its current position? Can the division still use the bridge? Yes; as long as we can contain the enemy the division can still reach the bridge via the East Farm road. The hills south of the assembly area are important because if the enemy can control them he can begin to solidify his bridge-

head, and if we can control them we can contain the enemy. As Maj Leonard A. Blasiol observed, the east hill is more important of the two because it "controls both of the roads available to the division for its advance to the river."

Looking at the larger situation, we realize that the situation at the bridge is much more significant. If the division attack is going to go off as scheduled, we have to have the bridge. Even if the attack will have to be delayed, the situation will get worse as long as the enemy holds the bridge. The enemy continues to funnel forces across the bridge, so every passing minute means more enemy forces south of the river that we have to deal with. We don't want the division to have to launch its attack just to regain the bridge. And there is always the chance that the enemy will prepare the bridge for demolition. The bottom line is that although the enemy in the assembly area may be the immediate problem, the more critical problem is the bridge. To keep a potentially bad situation from getting worse and to facilitate the division's offensive, we must secure the bridge. In his solution to "Enemy Over the Bridge" when it first appeared in the *MCG*, Mr. Stephen V. Cole captured it most succinctly: "The key point is the bridge. The situation will continue to deteriorate as long as the bridge is in enemy hands. Therefore, capture of the bridge is the highest priority . . ."

What's Vulnerable?

All we know of the enemy disposition is that he occupies the assembly area in strength and continues to move south across the bridge. So to attack into the assembly area is to attack directly into the known strength of the enemy. The enemy's lines of operation run north-south from the bridge to the assembly area, so he is vulnerable to a flanking attack that threatens to sever that line from the east or west. Most threatening is an attack at the bridge—the key link in the enemy's lines of operation. The East Farm road seems to offer the most covered and concealed route for doing this.

The Critical Vulnerability

The bridge holds the key to this whole situation. It clearly is the most critical point on the battlefield, both for us and for the enemy. If we recapture the bridge we restore the division's attack plans for the morning, and we make the enemy's position

south of the river desperate.

Focus of Efforts/Main Effort

It's not enough merely to identify the enemy's critical vulnerability. There is a corresponding concept involving the focus of friendly effort* that ranks as a true tactical fundamental. Having identified a critical enemy vulnerability, we must go after it ruthlessly and with all the strength we can muster. We must

“It's not enough merely to identify the enemy's critical vulnerability. There is a corresponding concept involving the focus of friendly effort that ranks as a true tactical fundamental. Having identified a critical enemy vulnerability, we must go after it ruthlessly and with all the strength we can muster.”

concentrate our efforts against it. *FMFM 1* discusses the concept this way:

Of all the efforts going on within our command, we recognize the focus of effort as the most critical to success. All other efforts must support it. In effect, we have decided: *This is how I will achieve a decision; everything else is secondary.*

We cannot take lightly the decision of where and when to focus our effort. Since the focus of effort represents our bid for victory, we must direct it at that object which will cause the most decisive damage to the enemy and which holds the best opportunity of success. It involves a physical and moral commitment, although not an irretrievable one. It forces us to concentrate decisive combat power just as it forces us to accept risk. Thus, we focus our effort against *critical enemy vulnerability*, exercising strict economy elsewhere.

In this situation we have realized that capturing the bridge is the crucial act. Everything else is secondary. Who controls the bridge controls the situation; everything else will fall into place. Therefore, we should ruthlessly concentrate all our efforts and assets toward that essential task, ensuring overwhelming local superiority. More-

*While *FMFM 1* refers to the focus of effort(s) or point of main effort, Doctrine Division at Quantico now prefers the term "main effort." The concept, however, remains unchanged.

over, we judge any other secondary effort on how it supports the main effort. *FMFM 1* explains:

Like the commander's intent, the focus of effort becomes a harmonizing force. Faced with a decision, we ask ourselves: "How can I best support the focus of effort?"

For example, we have already decided that we can't simply ignore the enemy in the assembly area; we must contain the enemy force there. So we can definitely justify allocating forces to deal with the enemy in the assembly area, but we want to allocate no more forces than necessary. So how do we distribute our forces between the bridge and the assembly area?

Because time is critical we definitely want to commit our most mobile units—the motorized infantry and tank companies and the TOWs—to the bridge. Several *MCG* readers suggested sending the whole battalion to the bridge and fixing the enemy with supporting arms. That certainly demonstrates a willingness to concentrate ruthlessly at the critical spot and to accept risk elsewhere. Other readers, on the other hand, saw merit in occupying the enemy's attention to the south by a ground attack on the assembly area. (But, importantly, the object was not to attack for the sake of capturing the assembly area, but to support the main effort at the bridge.) Many readers committed only the motorized and tank units to the bridge and used the foot-mobile companies in the assembly area—essentially splitting their forces evenly between the two tasks—precisely because of the critical time factor. The foot-mobile companies would not be able to keep up with the other elements on the road to participate in the attack at the bridge in the first place. As Maj Blasiol explained in his solution:

My vehicular-mobile units will take advantage of the high-speed avenue of approach leading around the enemy's east flank. . . . My foot-mobile units will operate in the terrain best suited for them: the forest and high ground.

Differences in Mobility

This issue illustrates an interesting point—the differing degrees of mobility among the elements of our force. The motorized and tank elements have far superior mobility on the roads and open areas compared to the foot infantry, which has superior mobility in the woods and other restricted areas. Even within the so-called "mo-

bile" elements, the tank and truck-mounted elements can travel different speeds on different surfaces. Moreover, tactical mobility is not merely a matter of the speed at which a unit can travel over a given surface. For example, the armor protection of our tanks gives them mobility in the face of certain types of enemy fire that unarmored units lack.

Differences in mobility can be both a drawback and an advantage. They can be an advantage in that they give us the flexibility to move in a broad variety of terrain and conditions. They can be a problem, as in this scenario, when they prevent us from being able to concentrate all our forces as we might desire. *In general, a unit assigned a single task ought to have roughly uniform mobility.*

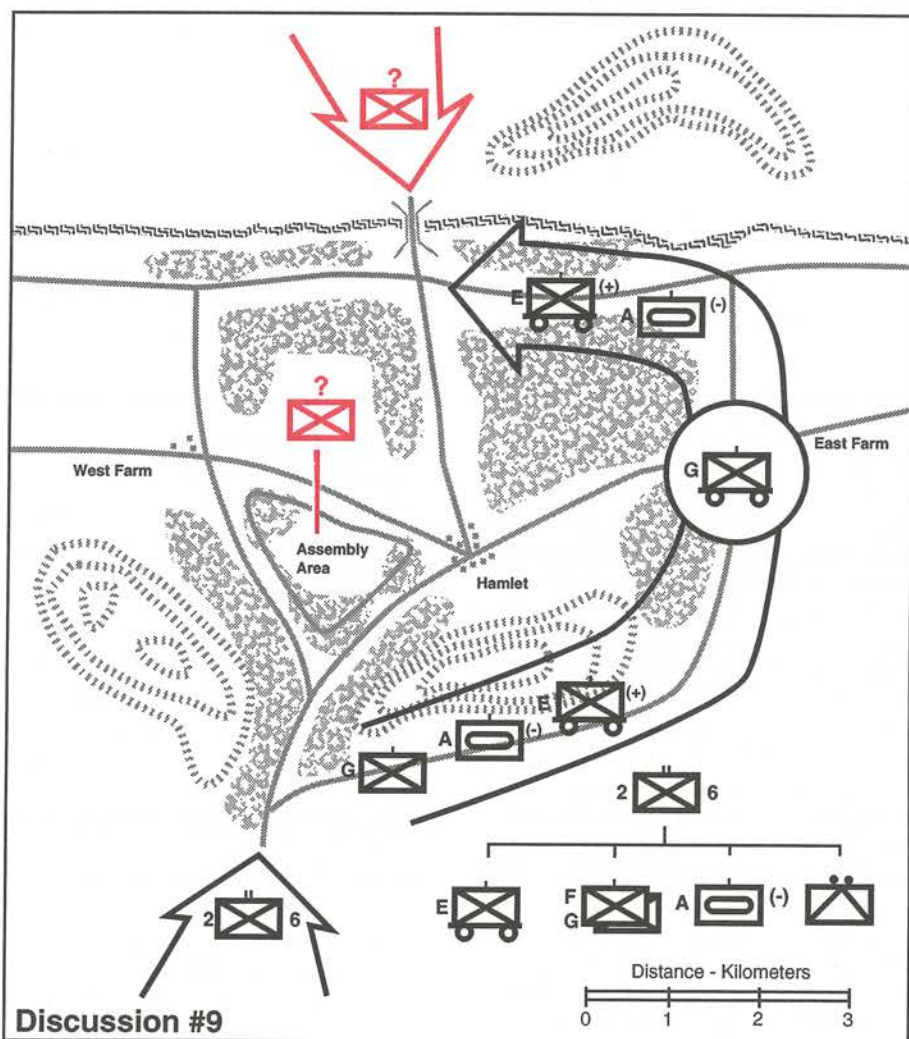
The Reserve

There is another issue affecting both the questions of the distribution of forces and of mobility that we have not yet discussed—the reserve. The reserve is a part of the force held under the control of the commander as a maneuvering force to influence future ac-

“... the reserve provides flexibility in the face of uncertain conditions. In general, the more uncertain the situation, the greater the need for a reserve and the larger it should be.”

tion. The reserve is the means by which the commander deals with unforeseen problems and exploits unexpected opportunities. In other words, the reserve provides flexibility in the face of uncertain conditions. In general, the more uncertain the situation, the greater the need for a reserve and the larger it should be. Given the uncertainty of this particular situation, a reserve is a good idea. The reserve should have the capability to deal with a variety of situations, and it should have the mobility to get quickly to where it's needed. Since we're going to commit our reserve at a critical stage in the battle, we want it to be strong, and we want it to be fast.

This is especially true in our scenario in which the two main actions are 4 or 5 kilometers apart. The problem is



that if we commit our "mobile" units to the bridge and one foot infantry company to the assembly area, this leaves us with a foot-mobile unit as our reserve. A foot-mobile reserve would likely lack the mobility to react quickly to the critical spot on the battlefield.

There are a couple of things we can do to deal with this problem. The first solution is the careful positioning of the reserve so that it is within reach when we need it. In general we should position our reserve in a central location, which does not necessarily mean in the middle but in a location where it can access any critical spot on the battlefield. However, if we anticipate committing our reserve in a specific area we may want to hedge our bets by moving it closer to that area. In this scenario, for example, a reserve located at East Farm—even though apparently far to the east—is within easy striking distance of the key location, the bridge, but can also strike south and west quickly by road. Moreover,

positioning our reserve at East Farm protects our route to the bridge via East Farm road.

The second solution, specific to this situation, is to shift our trucks to improve the mobility of our reserve company. Once Company E reaches the bridge, it no longer has need for its trucks; its mission requires it to hold its position. We can detach the trucks and reassign them to our reserve rifle company, which can already have started to march toward East Farm.

A Sample FragO

The following is an example of a fragmentary order based on the previous discussion. It is not meant as the "right" answer, but as food for thought.

The battalion attacks immediately to seize the bridge in order to cut off the flow of enemy forces south and to secure a bridgehead for the division's attack at 0400 tomorrow. I intend to control a bridgehead north of the river and to contain the enemy forces south of the river.

Echo [on trucks], with TOWs attached and reinforced by Tanks, attacks as rapidly as possible by way of East Farm road to secure the bridgehead and sever the enemy movement south. You are main effort. When you get to the bridge, send the trucks back for Golf, who'll be marching up the East Farm road.

Tanks, reinforce Echo; be prepared to continue the attack north or to attack south to destroy the enemy south of the river.

Fox probes north in order to determine the size of the enemy force and contain it in the assembly area. Control the east hill in order to ensure our continued use of East Farm road. Most important, keep the enemy force fixed where it is so it can't interfere

“ Acting with initiative does not give us license to leave others—adjacent units or higher headquarters—in the dark. . . . there's no reason that we can't advise regiment of the new situation and the action we're taking. ”

with advance of Regiment.

Golf is in reserve. Take up position near the East Farm from which you can protect East Farm road; be prepared to reinforce Echo at the bridge

or to attack west toward Hamlet to destroy the enemy. You'll pick up Echo's trucks en route back from the bridge.

I'll be with Echo and Tanks.

A Final Thought—Keep Higher Headquarters Informed

Acting with initiative does not give us license to leave others—adjacent units or higher headquarters—in the dark. As Maj Francis X. Bergmeister pointed out in his solution, while we certainly should not wait for instructions in this situation, there's no reason that we can't advise regiment of the new situation and the action we're taking. The sooner we do, the sooner regiment can support us.



Gap at the Bridge

"Nothing is more worthy of the attention of a good general than the endeavor to penetrate the designs of the enemy."

—Niccolo Machiavelli

"Therefore I say: 'Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in danger.' "

—Sun Tzu

Know Your Enemy

Did the fact that you played this game from the other side in the previous scenario—and probably opted for an attack by the East Farm road—influence your plan now that you are on the other side of the fence? It should. The foreknowledge you gained from having already seen this problem through the enemy's eyes did not solve the problem for you but it certainly should have given you some valuable insights. It is not enough to understand an enemy's capabilities and doctrine. We also have to try to get inside our enemy's head, to try to see the situation and the terrain from his point of view, with the intent of anticipating his actions. If we can anticipate our enemy's actions, then we can be waiting in ambush for him, and we can make him pay.

While it's always helpful to try to figure out what our enemy is up to, we should not delude ourselves into thinking that we know exactly what he's going to do and exclude all other possibilities. If we fall into that dangerous trap we're likely to get surprised ourselves. We should not only consider what we think the enemy *will* do, but what he *might* do and what he *can* do. As Helmuth von Moltke said, "You will usually find that the enemy has

three courses open to him, and of these he will adopt the fourth." While it is dangerous and reckless to gamble that we have figured out with certitude what the enemy will do, it helps immensely to focus on him and consider the options available to him. One thing we can never go wrong by asking: "What is the enemy up to?"

Exploitation

This scenario illustrates the concept of surfaces and gaps at work. The bat-

“ We also have to try to get inside our enemy's head, to try to see the situation and the terrain from his point of view, with the intent of anticipating his actions. ”

talion advance south across the river (to be reinforced by regiment) isn't the result of some plan devised at higher headquarters, but rather of the initiative of an aggressive patrol leader and the readiness of each successive commander to quickly and decisively exploit the situation. The actions of that patrol leader could turn out to be criti-

cal to the *division's* upcoming offensive. This is a clear example of a small unit "pulling" a larger unit through a gap.

This approach requires a ruthlessly exploitive mindset. Given an inch, we should be looking to take a yard. We must be constantly looking for opportunities and then jumping on them when we find them. And like the boxer who has stunned his opponent, once we get the enemy on the ropes, we want to redouble our efforts to go for the knockout blow. In general, the best way to exploit success is not to stop and consolidate what we have but to keep pushing.

The Bigger Picture

The key to success in this scenario is to deny the enemy a bridgehead north of the river at all costs until regiment can send reinforcements. Without a bridgehead the enemy can't effectively launch his offensive in this zone. Moreover, realizing that the division commander intends to go on the offensive soon, we know that a friendly bridgehead south of the river would be a huge advantage. If all else fails, we must deny the bridge to the enemy. But our more ambitious object should be to retain a consolidated bridgehead south of the river from which division

can launch its upcoming offensive. As Capt Robert M. Sellers pointed out in his solution to this problem, there are other reasons for not simply "hunkering" down to defend the bridge. First, we don't want to surrender the initiative to the enemy. Second, the sooner and farther south we meet the enemy, the more room (and, consequently, more time) we have to work with—in other words, the more delay we can impose on the enemy. And third, our

“While it’s always helpful to try to figure out what our enemy is up to, we should not delude ourselves into thinking that we know exactly what he’s going to do and exclude all other possibilities.”

Company A, on foot, is already too far south to withdraw to the bridge in time against a motorized enemy.

Speed, Speed, Speed

As we saw clearly in the previous scenario (and in practically every scenario before that), speed is a critical factor. The side that acts faster will have the upper hand. It is every bit as true as it was 2,500 years ago when Euripides wrote it: “The god of war hates those who hesitate.”

Firepower

Also critical to this situation is the timely and effective use of firepower. In his solution to the problem, Mr. Carl F. Kusch went so far as to designate his battalion fire support coordinator as the main effort:

For this initial phase, the POME [point of main effort] will be the fire support coordinator! Our supporting arms assets are the only weapons with which we can *immediately* strike the enemy and give us time to get into position for the next phase of this battle. Therefore, it is imperative that you (the FSC) bring *all available* fire support assets to bear on the enemy in the vicinity of TRP [target reference point] #1 [the road fork south of the hills].

For the same reason, several readers suggested that the STA team, the only friendly unit that can initially observe the enemy main body and therefore the unit which would be controlling the initial fire missions, should be designated initially as the main effort.

Either way, the point is that hitting the enemy quickly with massed firepower is imperative in this situation. We should take the regimental commander up on his offer of massed fire support. As Mr. Kusch pointed out, it is the one unit we have with which we can immediately engage the enemy. The object would not be to completely destroy, or even halt, the enemy column, but to delay and disrupt it so that we can gain the initiative. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel remarked that:

I have found again and again that in encounter actions [i.e., meeting engagements], the day goes to the side that is the first to plaster its opponent with fire. The man who lies low and waits developments usually comes off second best.

Key Terrain

There are several key locations to this situation. First is the bridge, the importance of which is self-explanatory. If all else fails, we need to hold the bridge at all costs and may want to dedicate one company to that mission. Company C is just arriving at the bridge and, being foot mobile, lacks the mobility to be employed almost anywhere else.

As we saw in “Enemy Over the Bridge,” the hills south and southwest of Hamlet are important because they provide a natural bridgehead defense and command all movement toward the bridge. Moreover, by controlling those hills we would be providing an excellent offensive bridgehead from which to launch the upcoming division offensive.

From the attacker’s perspective in “Enemy Over the Bridge,” Hamlet was not particularly important, but it is to us in this scenario. Centrally located, Hamlet is like the hub of a wheel with spokes radiating outward; from there we can strike quickly in any direction on interior lines. The enemy, on the other hand, must move on exterior lines—i.e., around the rim of the wheel. No matter which way he moves, even if he moves first, we can intercept him.

If “Enemy Over the Bridge” is any indication, the enemy will probably go for the bridge via the East Farm road. So the East Farm area becomes key. We could quickly move our mobile forces to East Farm to block this likely enemy move. But if the enemy does not go this way, our main striking force is then out of position. While we *expect* the enemy to use the East Farm

road, we shouldn’t gamble all our hopes on that eventuality.

By controlling the high ground and Hamlet, we maintain the flexibility to deal with whatever course the enemy takes. If he tries to drive straight up the middle, fine; he must drive through our entire battalion arrayed in depth. That will be a costly and time-consuming operation, which thus plays into our hands. If he drives east we use our interior lines to strike him in the flank at East Farm on terrain suitable for our tanks and TOWs. If he swings west, fine; our mobile forces can strike just as easily toward West Farm. And if the enemy somehow manages to get by us to east or west, we can still cut him off at the bridge by driving due north from Hamlet.

Differing Mobility & Capability

As with “Enemy Over the Bridge,” we have a force consisting of units with different capabilities and degrees of mobility. The trick is to put these units to best use. Our foot-mobile infantry are best used in the woods and for positional missions, such as holding key locations. We’ve already discussed using Company C to hold the bridge. Likewise, we can use Company A, our southernmost company, to engage the enemy as far south as possible. This adds depth and definition to the battlefield. By developing the situation aggressively, Company A may

“... once we get the enemy on the ropes, we want to redouble our efforts to go for the knockout blow. In general, the best way to exploit success is not to stop and consolidate what we have but to keep pushing.”

be able to force the enemy to commit to a particular course of action.

We should try to use our motorized and tank units in a way that exploits their mobility over the road network radiating out of Hamlet. Because the situation is fairly vague and uncertain at this point, we might do well to put *all* our motorized and tank units into a large, central reserve at Hamlet, ready to strike the decisive blow in any direction. We should consider keeping our reserve company commander with us so that the person who will be re-

sponsible for striking the key blow can gain the same appreciation for the situation that we have and so that we can make certain he knows what we expect of him.

The concept, then, would call for a mobile defense, with our foot infantry providing depth and definition to the battlefield in the form of the blocking positions around which our mobile reserve would maneuver.

Gaining and Maintaining the Initiative

In this context, initiative does not mean the willingness to act on one's own authority, but rather the advantage of having the upper hand in battle. The two meanings, however, are obviously related for we use individual initiative to seize battlefield initiative. Field Marshal Slim said: "In war it is all-important to gain and retain the initiative, to make the enemy conform to the action, to dance to your tune." We typically think of gaining the initiative by offensive action, by striking first and not letting up. Gen Holland M. Smith wrote:

Since I first joined the Marines, I have advocated aggressiveness in the field and constant offensive action. Hit quickly, hit hard, and keep right on hitting. Give the enemy no rest, no opportunity to consolidate his forces and hit back at you. This is the shortest road to victory.

And, in fact, this is probably the most common and direct way of seizing the initiative. But it is not the only way. Generally, by letting the enemy make the first move, we risk letting him gain the initiative—but not always. If we can anticipate our enemy's

“ If we can anticipate our enemy's move and be ready for it, we can often hurt the enemy worse than if we had struck the first blow; we then act like the counterpunching boxer who lets his opponent expose himself by throwing a punch. ”

move and be ready for it, we can often hurt the enemy worse than if we had struck the first blow; we then act like the counterpunching boxer who lets his opponent expose himself by throwing a punch. More than a few of the Great Captains were great counterpunchers. For example, Hannibal's masterpieces at the Trebia, Lake Trasimene, and Cannae were all based on letting the Romans strike first and then crushing their flank when they

did. (See the discussion for Scenario #12.) Although the enemy had initial freedom of action, Hannibal retained the initiative because he could anticipate the enemy's moves.

In this situation, we can move first to block the likely enemy move at East Farm, in which case we would at best blunt his attack frontally but would not likely destroy the enemy force. Or, from our interior position at Hamlet, we can let the enemy make the first move on East Farm and crush him in the flank when he does. We might want to put a small holding force at East Farm, not to block the enemy move but to control it, to act as a trigger mechanism for our flank attack and "grab him by the nose," as Patton would say, while we "kick him in the pants." It is a variation of the fix-and-flank in which, instead of our having to move around the enemy to get at his flank, we let him move past us to accomplish the same end.

We don't have to gamble everything on the enemy taking the East Farm road either. We can do the same thing at West Farm if the enemy goes west. By letting the enemy move first, because we are ready for him, we get him to expose himself, and we can create the opportunity for a decisive victory.



Enemy Over the Bridge, Continued: A Thwarted Plan

"However absorbed a commander may be in the elaboration of his own thoughts, it is sometimes necessary to take the enemy into account."

—Winston Churchill

"Positions are seldom lost because they have been destroyed, but almost invariably because the leader has decided in his own mind that the position cannot be held."

—Gen A. A. Vandegrift

Opposing Wills

Perhaps the most important thing this scenario does is illustrate the fundamental nature of war as a conflict between hostile, independent wills. The enemy is not an inanimate object but an independent and animate force that acts and reacts. His commanders may be clever and bold; his troops may be aggressive and well trained; he may recognize every bit as much as we do the importance of principles like initiative, speed, surprise, and main effort. (Because they depict a situation frozen in time, TDGs don't usually capture this idea of an animate, active enemy very well.)

We should not expect the enemy to sit still while we execute our plans—to die meekly in place like aggressors in a scripted field exercise. The enemy will have an object and intent of his own, and we must expect that while we are trying to impose our will on him, he is trying to do the same with us.

It's precisely for this reason that things will rarely go as planned. Despite the fact that our battalion com-

mander in this scenario has made the "right" decision and come up with a reasonable plan, the battle is going badly. It's possible to do everything right and still take a beating. We must recognize this, accept it as part of the nature of war, and have the perseverance to keep going.

Perseverance

This book is primarily about fighting smarter and about outsmarting and outfoxing the enemy. Fighting smarter means fighting more economically—i.e., accomplishing the mission at the minimum cost in lives and equipment lost. But there's much more than this to success. Since combat is a clash of hostile wills, willpower is an essential element. Perseverance, tenacity, steadfastness, resoluteness, and fighting spirit are at least as important as superior intelligence. When all else is said and done, as Gen Vandegrift's quote shows, it sometimes comes down to who's tougher and willing to persevere. Maj Leonard A. Blasiol's solution to this problem when it first ap-

peared provides a good example of perseverance in the face of a deteriorating situation:

This is a fluid, uncertain situation, and the upper hand will go to the commander who acts with the most daring and resolution. . . . Our bold plan will ensure that we keep the enemy reacting to us, rather than the other way around. As long as we can retain the initiative south of the river, the division can attack as scheduled, and the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines will have accomplished its mission.

What's the Enemy Up To?

Since the original scenario described in "Enemy Over the Bridge," has the enemy situation gotten any clearer? We now know that the enemy has a pretty sizable force south of the river—certainly larger than we were earlier led to believe. In addition to the estimated company in the assembly area, the enemy also has a large enough force at East Farm to smash half our battalion or at least to stop it and cause extensive confusion with his night ambush. Moreover, the enemy

has been south of the river long enough to prepare the ambush at East Farm. More and more, this has the appearance of a serious enemy initiative rather than just a probe. We don't actually know the situation on the west side, but it's reasonable to figure that if the enemy has sent out a force to protect one flank, he has likely done the same for the other. We can't ignore the distinct possibility that this situation represents a serious effort by the enemy to establish a bridgehead south of

“ We should not expect the enemy to sit still while we execute our plans—to die meekly in place . . . ”

the river, which would, of course, seriously disrupt our division's plans.

Options

So where does this leave us?

• *Option 1: Hunker down and hold what we've got.* As Mr. C. Craig Smith explained in his solution:

We have already sent in our Sunday punch, and the punchee has turned out to be an ogre. Now our primary objective is damage control until Big Brother comes to the rescue.

The regiment will be moving up in a matter of hours. Moving forward before that time will do us more harm than good. We would not only be walking into a fire sack, we would be leaving the roads to the south uncovered. . . .

At night in an unreconnoitered area, with tired troops and possibly heavy casualties, it is best to pull back to the strongest available defensive positions, reinforce, and move up later as part of a regimental counterattack.

According to this option, we've already taken too much of a beating to contemplate further offensive action. We should cut our losses rather than risk losing everything by further initiatives. We surrender the initiative to the enemy and hope that reinforcements arrive in time. By holding the two hills we can prevent the enemy from consolidating his bridgehead or breaking out to the south. We also secure terrain that division can use to launch an attack to recapture the bridge. As for Companies E and A, at this stage there is little we can do.

• *Option 2: Rescue the mobile force at*

East Farm. We certainly don't want to send our remaining combat power directly into the ambush that has hammered the rest of battalion. If we are intent on going to go to the rescue of the mobile force we should consider trying to take the enemy ambush in flank—perhaps with Company G crossing the Hamlet-East Farm road and approaching the ambush site through the woods from the west. There are several problems here, though. First, a move like this would be very vulnerable to an enemy stroke from the direction of Hamlet. Second, being foot-mobile, would we arrive in time to do any good? And third, trying to find what's left of the mobile force in the dark would be a coordination nightmare fraught with dangers.

But more important, regardless of the difficulties, is going to East Farm the right thing to do? It's natural to want to go to the aid of our comrades, but are there more important things we should be doing with our remaining combat power? Mr. Carl F. Kusch thought so, as he explained in his solution:

That portion of our battalion that was "engaged" with the enemy in the vicinity of the East Farm was the bulk of the battalion (especially in terms of combat power) and was therefore a sizable force in its own right. Any enemy unit that could have tied up our forces there would have been no mere passing recon patrol. There would be absolutely *nothing* whatsoever that the remainder of the battalion could do *directly* to help our comrades out of their jam. As hard as it may have been, the cold reality of the situation was that it would be the *wrong* decision to "speed" off toward the East Farm, attempting to reinforce our beleaguered forces in that area.

As a rule, we should look to reinforce success and not failure. Even if we're able to rescue part of the mobile force, resuming the attack along the original axis is not a good option. In general it's not a good idea to resume an attack in a direction that's already failed, even with more forces; it's usually better to try a different approach.

Most readers recognized that going to East Farm was not a good idea. First, at this stage there is little we could accomplish. Second, and more important, we would be playing directly into the enemy's hands; he will have distracted our efforts completely away from the bridge, the truly critical point for both sides in this situation.

• *Option 3: Seize Hamlet.* This was

the original mission of the two companies under our control (as battalion executive officer). The object of our attack was clearly a supporting one—to protect the main attack's left flank as it moved toward East Farm and to distract the enemy. To continue to attack Hamlet when the main attack that we're supporting has failed would be a meaningless mistake. But several readers suggested attacking Hamlet anyway, although for different reasons and always in conjunction with their own attack on the bridge. In that this decision was not the result of blindly following orders and reflected an appreciation of the larger developing situation and the battalion commander's intent, there may be some merit in it.

As we saw in the last scenario, Hamlet is more important to the enemy than to us. Perhaps Hamlet is worth taking precisely because it is so valuable to the enemy. By controlling Hamlet we would deny the enemy the use of interior lines that gives him such flexibility. By striking Hamlet we would not be directly improving our own position so much as weakening the enemy's—trying to lessen the initiative and freedom of action that so clearly belongs to him. And because Hamlet is valuable to the enemy, striking at it would definitely grab his attention, possibly getting him to react to us instead of vice versa. In effect, we would be launching a sort of spoiling attack to hamstring the enemy until our reinforcements arrive. Moreover, as Capt

“ The important things are to be willing and able to shift quickly when we have found a gap and not to beat our head against the wall when we've run up against a surface. ”

Gregory D. Stevens explained, an attack on Hamlet with one company could distract the enemy while we make a move on the bridge with the other.

• *Option 4: Go for the bridge.* It's very likely that the division attack at 0400 tomorrow will have to be scuttled. It's certain that if the attack does go as scheduled, our battalion won't be leading it. But that doesn't lessen the importance of the bridge. We want to do whatever we can to keep the option

of attack open. And as we've already discussed, as long as the enemy holds the bridge our division's situation continues to deteriorate. 1stLt Eric M. Veit's estimate of the situation in his solution was on the money:

Seizure and control of the bridge was the battalion commander's intent and remains the key issue even though his mobile force has been ambushed. I must fight off the natural reaction to come to their aid. If I did so, I may be only wasting my Marines in a hopeless situation, while failing to prevent more enemy forces from moving south across the bridge. Instead, I concentrate on seizing control of the bridge, and alert higher headquarters of my intentions.

Although the two companies under our control were given another mission, the focus of efforts was, and remains, the bridge. The battalion commander may actually be retrieving the situation at East Farm and continuing his attack. But our best estimate is that the main attack has failed, and based on that we should immediately go after the bridge ourselves.

Surfaces and Gaps Again—An Infiltration Attack

This scenario provides another good illustration of the concept of surfaces and gaps. In the original scenario we

knew that the assembly area was a surface; we ran head-on into an enemy infantry unit in the woods. We thought that the East Farm road might be a gap, which we tried to exploit with our motorized and tank units. But we learned the hard way that East Farm constitutes another surface. This brings up a couple of valuable points. The first is the importance of judgment. A clever enemy may try to disguise a surface as a gap by luring us into an ambush in the form of a fire sack. So how do we know the difference between a gap and a fire sack? There is no easy answer; it's a function of good intelligence, reconnaissance, knowing our enemy, and sound judgment. The second point, which we've made repeatedly, is that no situation is certain. Locating gaps is, to a certain extent, a process of trial and error—probing until we find a weak spot. The important things are to be willing and able to shift quickly when we have found a gap and not to beat our head against the wall when we've run up against a surface.

We don't know the situation to the west, but it's not unlikely that the enemy also has forces at West Farm. Since the enemy has been moving vehicles south across the bridge, it's a good bet that the road between the

bridge and Hamlet is clogged with vehicles and that Hamlet has probably been occupied.

Where does this leave us? We have a known surface to the east at East Farm. We have another known surface in the assembly area/Hamlet section. We have an unknown situation in the west, but would not be surprised if the enemy has a force at West Farm. The enemy seems to control the roads and road intersections; we have attacked with our vehicular elements by way of the roads and been ambushed. All we have left are our two foot infantry companies—Company F south of the assembly area and Company G near east hill. Our foot infantry companies are best suited to operating away from the roads, where the wooded terrain offers security and concealment. So if we're going to go after the bridge, the best bet at this stage seems to be to move through the woods between the strong enemy positions. The enemy occupies the wooded area between Hamlet and West Farm, which leaves us the area between Hamlet and East Farm. Company G is in the best position to use this axis. A simultaneous supporting attack on Hamlet by Company F would distract the enemy and protect Company G's left flank as it moves to the east around Hamlet.

US FMC



Battle of the Garagiola River

"Thus, those skilled at making the enemy move do so by creating a situation to which he must conform; they entice him with something he is certain to take, and with lures of ostensible profit they await him in ambush."

—Sun Tzu

"The withdrawal should be thought of as an offensive instrument, and exercises be framed to teach how the enemy can be lured into a trap, closed by counterstroke or devastating circle of fire."

—B. H. Liddell Hart

Two Approaches

This scenario suggests two fundamentally different types of solutions, with two drastically different intended results. Based on the latitude our higher commander has given us, we could argue that either, if successful, accomplishes the mission.

- *Positional Defense.* This is the conventional and modest—some might argue prudent—approach, by which we intend to delay the enemy advance. This approach recognizes the enemy's superior numbers. It involves establishing strong defensive positions along the key terrain, creating a defensive barrier by which we intend to hold up the enemy's advance. This approach uses the river as an obstacle to increase our own combat power. We may even consider demolishing the bridges if we can get permission. We intend to keep the enemy on the far side as long as possible and make it as costly as possible for him to get across. From our defensive positions we would absorb the enemy's attack frontally and blunt his advance, but we would not destroy him. Our reserves would counterattack to eject enemy penetrations and restore threatened areas. By this approach we would be surrendering the initiative to the enemy and would have to expect that eventually he will

force his way through or around us. This approach therefore accepts that eventually the enemy will get across the river to continue the advance—our intent is to exact the greatest possible cost in time and resources lost.

- *Mobile Defense/Counterstroke.* This is a much bolder and more ambitious

“The first ingredient in achieving a decisive victory is having the courage to try for one. You don't win great victories by trying for modest ones.”

approach—some would say rash—in which the intent is not merely to delay and wear down the enemy, but to destroy him altogether. It means attacking a regiment with a battalion. By this approach, minimal fixing forces to the enemy's front would fall back under pressure, coaxing the enemy into committing himself to the southern bridges and drawing the leading enemy elements across. Meanwhile, the bulk of our force, including all our tanks, would outflank the enemy via the Cujo bridge and attack the enemy in

the flank from the north. This approach ignores the natural defensive qualities that the river offers. We would still use the river as an obstacle, not to halt the enemy but, by letting his leading elements across, to split his forces. As Sun Tzu said: “When an advancing enemy crosses water do not meet him at the water's edge. It is advantageous to allow half his force to cross and then strike.” This plan has an inherent risk; for by seeking outright victory with a decisive battle, we also risk outright defeat.

A Sample FragO

The first approach is fairly straightforward; the second is less conventional and worth discussing. Therefore, the following is a sample fragmentary order for the latter course of action:

Gentlemen, just as we'd hoped, the enemy is walking into our trap, and we will implement the plan as we've previously discussed. You all remember Hannibal and the battle of Lake Trasimene that we studied at officers' call last month. Well, we're going to reenact it today. We will grab our enemy by the nose, lead him across the river, and while he's got one foot on either bank, just when he thinks he is about to break through, we will crush him in the flank.

I intend to draw the enemy across the river with two companies and crush him with a flanking attack from the north, supported by concentrated artillery and close air support. The initial focus of efforts is fixing the enemy in the killing zone, shifting to the flank attack as it commences.

LAR Company: Delay the enemy along the line Tragedia-Androida. India Company: Delay along the coast road from as far forward as possible to a commanding position on the heights east of the river. Both of you: Hurt him, but not so badly that he tries any flanking maneuvers; I want you to keep him oriented eastward. You've got to hold him for at least 90 minutes.

XO: Take Tanks, Kilo, and Lima across the Cujo bridge and prepare for a coordinated attack on order gen-

enemy makes against our *cheng*.) Unquestionably, this approach offers a much bigger payoff and also involves a bigger risk. Why should we think it will work?

Boldness

The first thing this plan has going for it is its very boldness, which, as we've already discussed, is a force multiplier. Rommel said: "Bold decisions give the best promise of success." Certainly Hannibal's victory at Lake Trasimene was bold in the extreme. Had Hannibal's plan not worked, we wouldn't consider it bold, it would be reckless. It takes moral courage to adopt a bold plan, and for that reason the enemy often does not expect it.

The first ingredient in achieving a decisive victory is having the courage to try for one. You don't win great victories by trying for modest ones—unless your enemy is completely incompetent, in which case it probably doesn't matter what you do, and you've got little to lose by going for a knockout. If Hannibal had adopted a more "prudent" and "reasonable" plan on that April morning, we wouldn't study Lake Trasimene today as an example of tactical genius.

This does not mean that we should swing for the fences every time up. The conditions must be right—the mission, the terrain, the enemy situation, the capabilities of our own forces. Sometimes, for example, the intent is not to gain a decisive battle, but to forestall one—to buy time so the higher commander can attempt something somewhere else. In that case, all other things being equal, it would be a disservice to the higher commander to risk a decisive defeat by trying for a decisive victory when no such victory was needed. But what it does mean is that we shouldn't pass up the opportunity when it's there.

Predictability

The next thing we have going for us in this situation is a predictable enemy. We and our enemy have established a little pattern over the last couple of weeks, in which he has demonstrated aggressive, head-strong tendencies. Knowing this, we can take advantage of these tendencies by anticipating what our enemy will do and be waiting for him when he does. As we've already mentioned, it's not a good idea to gamble everything on the enemy's doing what we expect. We should be ready to exploit the situation if he

does, but we should also be prepared to deal with the situation if he doesn't.

For our part what this means is that we want to avoid being predictable. By establishing patterns we set ourselves up to be ambushed. Instead, we want to be unpredictable, to change our tactics, to avoid discernible patterns. Not only will it be harder for the enemy to surprise us, but it will be easier for us to achieve surprise, since our enemy won't know what to expect from us. In this scenario, since we've already established a certain pattern and the enemy has developed some idea of what to expect from us, our element of surprise could be even greater; we've set him up for a fall.

Preparation

Another advantage we have in this situation is the opportunity to prepare for the battle. As Maj Michael P. Marletto has pointed out in "The View From the Other Side: A Conversation With the Hero of the Garagiola River" (MCG, Jan93), if we've waited until 30 minutes before the enemy arrives to even begin thinking about the upcoming battle, we're in trouble. The fact is our battalion commander should have been analyzing the situation as it developed over the last 2 weeks, developing possible courses of action and contingencies, issuing warning orders,

“ . . . we want to avoid being predictable. By establishing patterns we set ourselves up to be ambushed. Instead, we want to be unpredictable, to change our tactics, to avoid discernible patterns. ”

erally south along the line Cujo-Tragedia. The attack must be ready to kick off in no more than 90 minutes; the sooner you're ready, the better. Form a tank-infantry company in reserve. I'll let you know whether to commit it or not; it should be ready to attack along the lines Cujo-Tragedia or Cujo-Androida.

Fire Support Coordinator: As we discussed, plan to mass fires on-call in the vicinity of Tragedia, Androida, and the Tragedia and Garagiola bridges.

Air: A couple of sorties is not enough. Over the next couple of hours we are going to be destroying one enemy mechanized regiment. I need everything that flies. I intend to mass all supporting arms in conjunction with the flanking attack.

To the regimental commander:

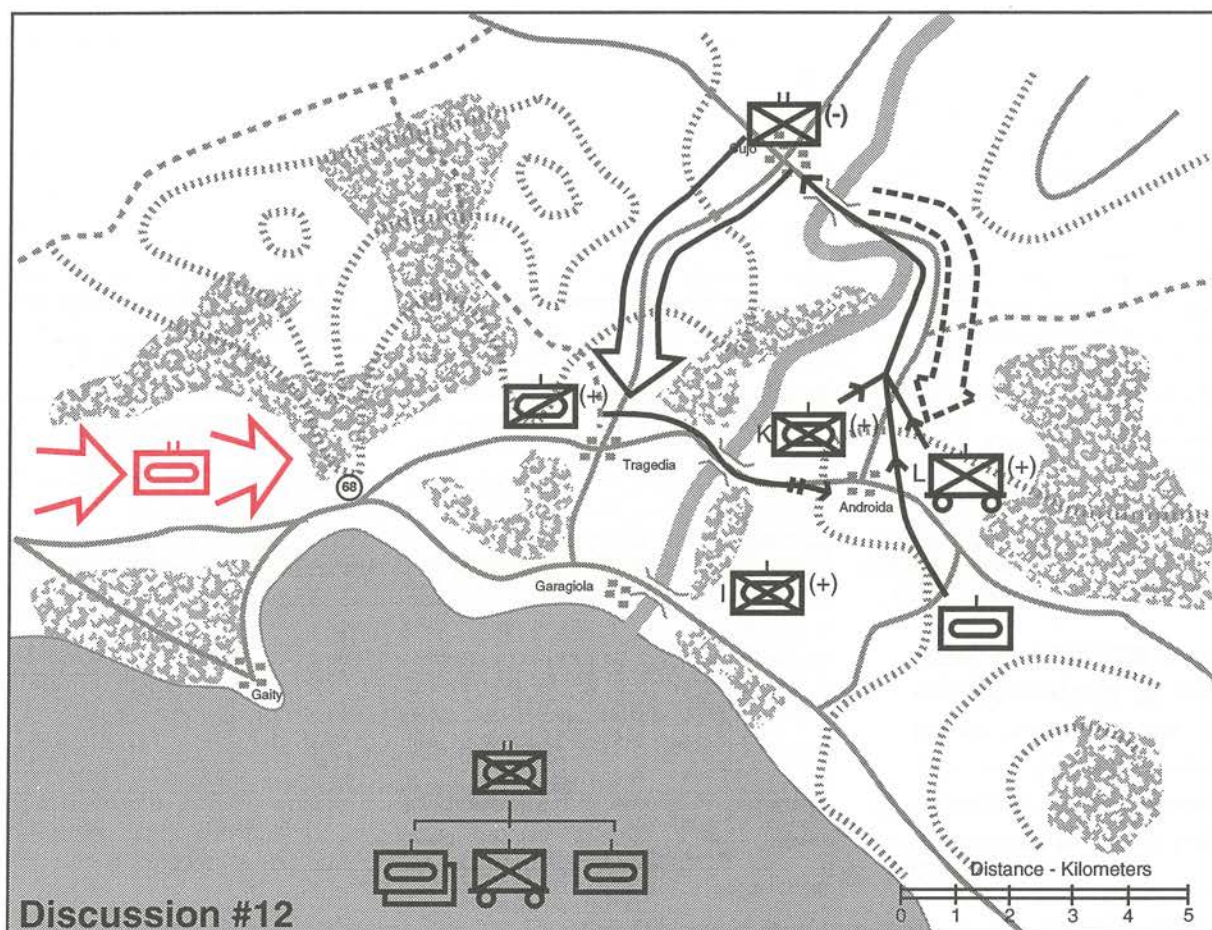
As we discussed, Colonel, we have a chance to deal the enemy a crushing blow; he is walking into our trap. I'm implementing the plan we discussed and will have to commit to a decisive battle. I need more than my fair share of support, especially air. And that tank-infantry battalion you've got in reserve sure would help.

(The reason for the "on-order" attack in this order is because the timing of the *ch'i* depends on the progress the

“ . . . it's difficult to overestimate the importance of avoiding the enemy's front and striking his flanks. . . . those areas where the enemy's attention isn't directed. ”

making defensive preparations and refining his plans.

We have been falling back in the face of enemy pressure for the last 2 weeks, buying time. We should make use of that time by "shaping" the battlefield, i.e., thinking in advance of how we want things to unfold and how we hope to achieve an advantage. We could reasonably anticipate falling back across the Garagiola River and could recognize that the terrain there offered the opportunity for a counterstroke. We had the advantage of being able to choose the battlefield, and because it was behind us, we could prepare it while the enemy could not. All



the while we were preparing the battlefield for the upcoming battle, we would be falling back in such a way as to draw the enemy into the trap. If we succeeded in getting the enemy to fall into the trap as we'd designed it, we'd spring our ambush; if not, we'd continue to fall back until we could create another opportunity.

Preparations would include fire support planning to provide for the coordination and massing of air and ground fires; operations by combat engineers to prepare defensive works, obstacles, and minefields to canalize and temporarily halt enemy forces to make them vulnerable to our fires; coordinating the barrier plan with the fire plan; and selecting withdrawal routes for our fixing forces and directions of attack for our flanking forces. If time permitted, they would even include a rehearsal (at least with key leaders) to get the timing and coordination down.

As Maj Marletto pointed out, time is a precious commodity shared by both sides. We have to make the most of every second.

Flanks

The final advantage we have in this situation is the opportunity, if things

go reasonably well, of striking the enemy's left flank. Nearly all of the discussions of the previous scenarios have involved some effort to get at the enemy's flank, but we have never treated the subject explicitly. We should, because fix-and-flank has been a central theme of this book. Simple as it sounds, it's difficult to overestimate the importance of avoiding the enemy's front and striking his flanks.

The enemy's front is that direction in which his units and weapons are facing and that direction in which his attention is focused. Strictly speaking, the flanks are to the sides and the rear to the back, but it's easier simply to think of them as those areas where the enemy's attention isn't directed. Truly decisive effects come from attacking the enemy in flank or rear, because by attacking in that way we save ourselves by avoiding the enemy's strength while at the same time striking him where he is vulnerable. A flanking attack or envelopment has the added psychological effect of threatening the enemy's lines of communication. Conversely, by striking the enemy frontally we may batter him, but unless we have overwhelming superiority we're not

likely to destroy him. In the process, because we're striking directly into the enemy's strength, we'll pay a cost.

We have discussed previously the need for a fixing force to complement our flanking force. Unless there is a fixing force to distract his attention to the front, an enemy force like a man will turn to face a threat to its flank.

It's been argued that in order to get into a position to threaten an enemy's flank or lines of communication we must often expose our own, and so there is risk inherent in any flanking maneuver. In theory this may be true, but the danger rarely exists equally in practice. If we have successfully and truly seized the initiative, we need seldom fear having our flank attacked. The enemy is too busy reacting to us and fearing for his own flank. In that case the best flank protection is bold and aggressive action.

If flanks are truly as important as history suggests, why is it that defenders continue to defend to the front and attackers continue to attack the enemy frontally and that the rare flanking attack continues to remain decisive? A couple of reasons. First, although logic may tell us to beware our flanks, milita-

ry units like human beings are naturally oriented forwards. In order to operate effectively to the sides or rear, they must turn to face that direction. Even though a commander's judgment may tell him to look for an attack against his flank, the activity to his front will naturally catch his attention. And second, the force of friction tends to reduce combat to the simplest terms, making even the simplest actions difficult. Compared to a frontal attack, even a simple single envelopment becomes difficult to execute. It's one thing to draw a flanking maneuver on a TDG map; it's another thing altogether to execute that maneuver in the field. But it's precisely because a flank attack is more difficult to execute that it is less expected and therefore more effective when pulled off.

When Is a Gap Not a Gap?

Answer: When it's a surface. Our position along the Garagiola River is a surface intended to look like a gap. We want the enemy to think he can get through; otherwise he's less likely to enter the trap we've laid. At this stage he is probably most concerned about seizing a bridgehead across the river. So, as Sun Tzu's quote suggests, we offer the possibility of seizing the bridges intact as bait. We have a fixing force to the enemy's front; but the intent is not to block the enemy's advance, but rather to control it. Our fixing force should lead the enemy by the nose right into our killing zone.

Ambush Mentality

The operation we've been talking about amounts to an ambush on a large scale. It requires us to think of the defense in different terms than we usually do. A traditional defense is thought of as a wall across our front designed to keep the enemy out. As we've said, that approach may blunt

the enemy's advance but is unlikely to destroy him. It means meeting him frontally and absorbing casualties in the process. Carried to its logical extreme, it results in an indecisive stalemate with two halted opponents facing each other frontally, as on the Western Front in World War I. The ambush mentality, on the other hand, thinks of the defense as a trap. Instead of trying to keep the enemy out, we try to lure him in. Remember, an ambush isn't

“ A traditional defense is thought of as a wall across our front designed to keep the enemy out. . . . The ambush mentality, on the other hand, thinks of the defense as a trap. Instead of trying to keep the enemy out, we try to lure him in. ”

interested in preserving terrain; it is interested in destroying that enemy unit that passes through the killing zone. Instead of positioning ourselves *perpendicular* to his direction of attack to block his advance, we position ourselves *parallel* so to ambush him in the flank as he passes.

Surprise is central to the ambush mentality. Typically we think of surprise as belonging to the attacker, but the defender can achieve it by concealing his presence, making his surfaces look like gaps, and pouncing when the unsuspecting enemy enters the trap.

Historically

Interestingly, the battalion commander used an historical example to describe his commander's intent, not be-

cause he expected this battle to be an exact replica (since no two battles are alike), but because the example of Lake Trasimene provided a clear and vivid description of the end result that he expected. (Fortunately, Lake Trasimene was familiar enough to his subordinates that the example was meaningful.) The battle of Lake Trasimene was one of Hannibal's masterpieces, in which the Carthaginian routed a superior Roman force under the headstrong Flaminius in 217 B.C. Flaminius' legions stood between Hannibal and Rome. Rather than attack his enemy on strong defensive terrain of the Roman's choosing, Hannibal marched his army through the Appenine mountains around Flaminius' left flank and threatened the Roman lines of communications, forcing Flaminius to come to him. With a small force operating to the Romans' front, Hannibal lured the enemy into an enclosed basin with the lake to the south and high ground to the north. His main body, hidden in the hills to the north, ambushed the Romans in the flank. The battle became a rout.

Our well-read battalion commander has failed to mention that this situation probably equally resembles Hannibal's earlier victory at the River Trebia, in which he was able to draw the Romans across the river and strike their flank before they were able to consolidate. He did not use the river as a barrier to halt the Roman advance, but as a means for disrupting the enemy movement and leaving them vulnerable. In both cases, Hannibal demonstrated the characteristic ability to get his enemy to come to him on his terms. Even though he let the enemy make the first move—or, more accurately perhaps, lured the enemy into making the first move—he retained the initiative.



Battle of the Garagiola River Revisited

"How can any man say what he should do himself if he is ignorant what his adversary is about?"

—Baron Antoine Jomini

"It is an accepted maxim of war, never to do what the enemy wishes you to do, for this reason alone, that he desires it; avoid a battlefield he has reconnoitered and studied and, with even more reason, ground that he has fortified and where he is entrenched."

—Napoleon Bonaparte

Know Your Enemy

As with Scenario #10, "Gap at the Bridge," this scenario is designed to illustrate the importance of trying to figure out what your enemy is up to and to use that insight to your advantage. The ability to anticipate the enemy's likely moves can be a decisive advantage. The ability to anticipate is based on the ability to see a situation through the enemy's eyes. How does knowing how you solved this scenario from the other side influence your actions?

What's the Enemy Up To?

Despite the fact that we have been in continuous contact with the enemy for the last 2 weeks, we have surprisingly little specific intelligence about the current situation. Once again the "fog" of war has descended (literally, in this scenario) to drive home the important point that incomplete information is a defining feature of tactical decisionmaking and something we have to learn to live with.

What do we know for certain? We know that the enemy has been falling back continuously for the last 2 weeks, and therefore seems content to trade space for time while gradually wearing us down. For the present at least, he seems intent on not becoming decisively engaged. What little current in-

formation we have of enemy dispositions indicates he intends to defend the riverline. As discussed in the previous scenario, this would be the obvious and logical course of action. We have no information about the situation at the Cujo bridge, but we can assume the enemy has some forces there. The question is how many?

The armored activity near Androida

“The ability to anticipate the enemy's likely moves can be a decisive advantage. The ability to anticipate is based on the ability to see a situation through the enemy's eyes.”

could be his reserve—again, fairly predictable and consistent with a defense of the riverline. The centrally located Androida is key for several reasons. First, from that position the enemy has good observation of nearly the entire battlefield. Second, Androida and the connected high ground which curves south to the shore dominate both southern bridges. Third, Androida also blocks the main route from the

Cujo bridge. And finally, if the enemy wants to shift forces laterally from one bridge to another, Androida is the central hub through which those forces must pass. Clearly, no matter what course of action we choose, at a minimum we should target Androida with supporting arms to obscure the enemy's observation and disrupt his lateral shifting of forces.

Everything we know of the enemy situation to this point leads us to conclude that the enemy will make a defensive stand along the river. This should be a matter of serious concern to us because, based on what we know of the last scenario, it's exactly what a bold enemy commander would want us to conclude if he were actually going to spring an ambush. (I think it makes the counterstroke/ambush solution to the last scenario even more appealing in retrospect.)

Regardless of our estimate of the enemy situation, the terrain ought to set off warning bells. We ought to recognize, as Hannibal did at Lake Trasimene, that the area immediately east of Checkpoint 68 is a tailor-made killing zone: a low area devoid of much cover and concealment, penned in and dominated by high ground on three sides and by water on the fourth.

Even if we're convinced that the en-

emy lacks the strength, or time, or nerve to launch a counterstroke/ambush from the north, we would be foolish to move our entire force into the basin without taking some measure to secure our left flank—even though the prospect of seizing the bridges intact might beckon us into a headlong rush. Flaminius did exactly that and suffered ignominious defeat.

Hasty Versus Deliberate Crossing

Given the choice, we would prefer to make a hasty crossing—launching directly into the crossing without loss of momentum, hopefully seizing one or more bridges intact and preventing

“The object would be to keep up the speed of the offensive and to strike before the enemy could further strengthen his defenses. But the enemy has a say in the matter.”

the enemy from disengaging again. The object would be to keep up the speed of the offensive and to strike before the enemy could further strengthen his defenses. But the enemy has a say in the matter. If he has made solid preparations, a hasty crossing may not be an option, and we will have no choice but to plan a deliberate crossing, a complex operation based on thorough planning and preparation. If that's the case the enemy will probably have the option of withdrawing on his own terms, and we will probably have to wait until later to get our decisive battle.

Where To Attack

We want to strike in more than one place, so that we have multiple options, with the flexibility to reinforce whichever action shows the most promise. If one crossing fails, we would still have another possibility. In other words, we don't want to put all our eggs in one basket. We could attack in the vicinity of all three bridges, which would give us the greatest number of possible options. However, this would disperse us across the greatest frontage, making it difficult to concentrate quickly at any one spot, and would leave us less in reserve to exploit whichever attack shows promise. Ideally, we want to design a *cheng/ch'i* move

which catches the enemy between two mutually supporting attacks.

Numerous readers recognized the advantages of attacking the Cujo bridge. First, it avoids the natural killing zone. Second, it offers the opportunity of taking the main enemy positions in the flank. Third, the Cujo bridge is somewhat isolated from the other two and beyond the range of mutual support. And fourth, moving a unit along the trail north of the ridge to the Cujo road—in addition to being the only move which is masked from enemy observation from Androia—will protect our left flank against an enemy attack from that direction. In fact, it may allow us to take the enemy's flanking attack in the flank or rear.

In conjunction with an attack on the Cujo bridge, an attack at the Tragedia vice the Garagiola bridge makes more sense. First, being closer to the Cujo bridge makes it easier for our two wings to reinforce and complement each other. Second, an attack directly toward Androia threatens to crack open the enemy position in general and to cut off enemy forces defending the Cujo bridge in particular. And third, an attack at Garagiola fixes only the far left of the enemy's front, leaving his center free to reinforce his right at Cujo. An attack near Tragedia, on the other hand, is more likely to prevent both the enemy's center and left from reinforcing Cujo.

The Garagiola bridge offers the fewest advantages. An attack across the river at Garagiola would not directly threaten the enemy's lines of communication or the forces defending the other bridges. And even after we'd forced a crossing we would still be in a precarious position, surrounded by dominating terrain.

In explanation of his solution, Capt David C. Fuquea wrote:

I know we can keep the enemy busy enough to allow [the main effort] to get across the river [at Cujo]. I'm not foolish enough to think Cujo will be undefended. I am sure that with speed, firepower from the CIFS [close-in fire support], and a little luck we can punch through Cujo and roll up the enemy flank before they get out of the box we build around them with fire support, FASCAM [field artillery scatterable mines], and the supporting attack.

The Amphibious Option?

Several readers suggested using our AAVs to turn the enemy's southern

flank by making a landing on the shore southeast of Garagiola (usually launching the envelopment from Gaiety). Strictly speaking, this does not constitute an amphibious landing—by definition an attack from ship to shore—but rather a shore-to-shore operation. Regardless, the idea behind it is to use our ability to move on the water as a means to avoid the enemy's front and get at his flank.

The shore-to-shore option introduces new variables to the problem. What is the military situation on the lake? Does the enemy have combat craft? Are there any suitable landing beaches for our AAVs? Has the enemy planted obstacles or mines in the surf? Presumably, we would know the answers to these questions, or could find out. Let's assume that somewhere in the 4 or 5 kilometers of flatland east of the river mouth there are suitable landing beaches but that further southeast there are not; the high ground appears to descend directly to the waterline.

One of the great advantages of amphibious operations is the strategic and operational mobility of movement by sea. Generally, we can move large numbers of men and equipment over great distances faster by sea than by land. But the same mobility advantage does not generally hold at the tactical level, in which the distances are shorter. Our AAVs would be visible to

“We want to strike in more than one place, so that we have multiple options, with the flexibility to reinforce whichever action shows the most promise.”

the enemy during the entire move, moving slowly through the water, on exterior lines. Meanwhile, the enemy, motorized and using interior lines, would simply have to face left to meet the threat (and would have plenty of time to do so). To have any chance of success, we would have to conduct such a landing as part of a fix-and-flank move, in conjunction with a frontal attack against the river to occupy the enemy's attention.

But even if we were to succeed in making the landing in the area directly southeast of the river, the envelopment wouldn't be deep enough to pose

much of a threat to the enemy position. We would still be in front of the commanding terrain at Androida and the Androida heights. As with an attack across the Garagiola bridge, we wouldn't directly threaten the enemy's lines of communication. Trying to sell the idea of an amphibious landing at Inchon to the Joint Chiefs in 1950, Gen Douglas MacArthur argued:

The deep envelopment based on surprise, which severs the enemy's supply lines, is and always has been the most decisive maneuver of war. A short envelopment which fails to envelop and leaves the enemy's supply system intact, merely divides your forces and can lead to heavy loss and even jeopardy.

So while the shore-to-shore option gets points for originality, in this particular case it's a marginal option.

Concentration

Liddell Hart wrote that, "The principles of war could, for brevity, be condensed into a single word—'Concentration.'" Likewise *FMFM 1* says:

Concentration is the convergence of effort in time and space. It is the means by which we develop superiority at the decisive time and place. Concentration does not apply only to combat forces. It applies equally to all available resources: fires, aviation, the

intelligence effort, logistics, and all other forms of combat support and combat service support. . . .

Effective concentration may achieve decisive local superiority for a numerically inferior force. The willingness to concentrate at the decisive place and time necessitates strict economy and acceptance of risk elsewhere and at other times. To devote means to unnecessary efforts or excessive means to necessary secondary efforts violates the principle of concentration and is counterproductive to the true objective.

Since war is fluid and opportunities fleeting, concentration applies to time as well as space. We must concentrate not only at the decisive location, but also at the decisive moment.

That's what the concept of the main effort is all about—focusing the maximum possible force at the decisive time and place. The aim is not marginal superiority at the critical point, or even modest superiority, but overwhelming superiority. We're not interested in fair fights, but in routs if we can get them.

How do we gain local superiority when the odds are roughly equal or when we're outnumbered? As Liddell Hart also pointed out, concentration is the product of dispersion. By keeping dispersed until the last moment, we keep the enemy guessing as to where

we will strike and thus keep him dispersed. We operate in ways that give us multiple options, so the enemy can't concentrate against us. We use speed and surprise so the enemy can't react in time. We concentrate quickly at the critical point while at the same time using supporting attacks, supporting arms, and other means to prevent the enemy from concentrating.

It's a challenge to gain local superiority when we're outnumbered. It's much easier when we've got overall superiority, such as in this case. Even discounting the battalion that the enemy has recently battered, regiment still has another infantry battalion and a tank battalion available. As Mr. C. Craig Smith argued in his solution, "We must use them in concert, not in serial sequence. We can create the proverbial horns of a dilemma by attacking strongly in two widely separated places at once."

His solution to this problem was to request that higher headquarters use another battalion to attack the southern bridges while we concentrate our entire battalion against the Cujo bridge—which would still leave regiment one healthy and one battered battalion with which to exploit.

US  MC



Battle of the Dadmamian Swamp

"The unquestionable advantages of the interior lines of operations are valid only as long as you retain enough space to advance against one enemy . . . gaining time to beat and pursue him, and then to turn against the other. . . . If this space, however, is narrowed down to the extent that you cannot attack one enemy without running the risk of meeting the other who attacks you from the flank or rear, then the strategic advantage of interior lines turns into the tactical disadvantage of encirclement."

—Helmuth von Moltke

"For great aims we must dare great things."

—Carl von Clausewitz

Concentration

This scenario is similar to "Gap at the Bridge" in that both require us to hold a bridgehead against enemy pressure until friendly reinforcements can arrive. As with "Gap at the Bridge," the overall mission is a defensive one, but the means of accomplishing it can be offensive or defensive. We can hunker down and try to hold out until help arrives, or we can strike out at the enemy to seize the initiative and keep him off balance. Unlike in "Gap at the Bridge," in which the enemy situation was extremely uncertain, in this case we can be fairly certain that the enemy is converging on us with two separate forces, each of which is roughly equal to our own, and threatens to catch us in a pincer.

The fundamental question in this scenario is thus one of concentration. How do we keep the enemy from achieving it? Most readers recognized immediately that we must prevent the junction or cooperation of the two enemy regiments. Fighting each separately, the odds are roughly even; fighting both together, we are outnumbered two to one.

But the problem is not simply one of preventing the enemy from concentrating against us. After we have accomplished that we still have the problem of focusing every available

ounce of our own combat power against one enemy regiment while using the minimum force necessary to hold off the other. What is the smallest unit we can use to occupy either enemy regiment? A battalion? Less?

We Must Strike First

The previous discussion should make it clear that in this scenario we can't afford to go on the defensive and

"We can't wait for the enemy to converge on us. By doing that we will surrender the initiative to the enemy and will guarantee that sooner or later we will become the victims of a major converging attack."

hunker down. We can't wait for the enemy to converge on us. By doing that we will surrender the initiative to the enemy and will guarantee that sooner or later we will become the victims of a major converging attack, finding ourselves under pressure from two directions at once.

We must strike before the enemy

regiments can converge on us, with the intent of destroying each in turn—or at a minimum, destroying the first and holding off the second until help arrives. A bold plan perhaps, but in my opinion the only one with a reasonable chance of success.

Boldness

Again, we see the importance of boldness. Decisively defeating a superior enemy force is a bold and ambitious aim, and as Clausewitz' quote at the beginning of this discussion argues, such aims require bold and ambitious plans.

Preparation & Shaping the Battlefield

As we saw in "Battle of the Gariola River," proper preparation will be an important element of our success. Once we recognized the possibility that two significant enemy forces could be converging on us from different directions, we should have been doing everything within our power to prevent their juncture and cooperation. In other words, by delaying one or the other of the enemy regiments, we want to try to shape the battlefield such that we have the opportunity to fight each separately on advantageous terms rather than both simultaneously.

Moreover, by thinking ahead and anticipating a situation like this we

give ourselves more time to prepare our bold stroke. In general, the larger a unit, the more time it requires to prepare and implement its plans. For one thing, it takes longer to disseminate plans because there are more layers of command. Likewise, it takes longer for combat information to reach the commander. Additionally, it takes longer for larger units to go into action once they receive their orders and to change directions once in action. A squad reacts faster to a changing situation than a regiment does. (This in itself is a good reason for pushing decisionmaking authority down to lower levels. It

“Once we recognized the possibility that two significant enemy forces could be converging on us from different directions, we should have been doing everything within our power to prevent their juncture and cooperation.”

speeds up the organization's ability to act.)

Recognizing the importance of planning doesn't mean taking our time and working out every last detail. The need for adequate planning is no excuse for acting slowly and ponderously. What this means is that as time is a precious commodity, we must get the most out of every minute. The time for preparation is in advance; not at the moment for action. As BGen Samuel B. Griffith wrote:

Time is the essence in war, and while a defeat may be balanced by a battle won, days and hours—even minutes—frittered away can never be regained.

Interior Lines and Mobility Equals Speed

One thing we have going for us in this situation is interior lines of communication. The fact that we are mechanized with a good road network for shifting our forces back and forth while the enemy is mostly foot mobile accentuates our mobility advantage. But these advantages are useless if we don't exploit them by generating the speed necessary to focus first against one enemy regiment and then against the other before the enemy can bring

his overall superiority to bear. As Von Moltke's quote at the beginning of this discussion makes clear, the critical factor in operating on interior lines is having enough space and time to deal with each enemy force in turn before they can together put us on the receiving end of a *cheng/ch'i* maneuver. The basic question in this situation is, "Do we have enough time and space to defeat one regiment before the other arrives to catch us in a pincer?"

That's a difficult question to answer. It will depend on a lot of factors, not least of which is how well, how quickly and how aggressively we execute. It's important to remember that in the end it all comes down to performance. Even the most brilliant plan badly executed will still fail.

A Near-Run Thing

The enemy will also have a lot to say about how things eventually turn out. What's he up to? How aggressively will he act? How well will he coordinate the actions of his two regiments? Why has his first regiment halted at Gumbyville after battering our battalion? Why not exploit that success by pursuing aggressively? Have we hurt that regiment worse than we realized? Or is it the enemy's plan to attack with the southern regiment first? If once we strike one regiment the enemy attacks aggressively with the other, he could make things difficult for us. If, on the other hand, the movements of his two regiments aren't well coordinated, we might pull this off.

Where To Strike First?

Having decided that we must attack, which regiment do we focus against and which do we hold off? Most readers recognized that although we are already concentrated mostly in the north, we were probably wiser to fix the northern regiment and attack the southern regiment. First, the enemy in the north is already halted and therefore poses less of an immediate problem. Second, the creek and woods across our front in the north will favor a defensive or delaying action. And third, as the northern regiment advances southeast, the relatively narrow front with river and swamp on either flank will limit the enemy's options and therefore facilitate a delaying action. Furthermore, striking first in the south has several advantages: First, the terrain around Furburg offers us better opportunities to strike the enemy's flanks; second, the terrain there is less

suitable to a holding action; and third, the southern regiment is a much greater menace because it is already closer to the Danskin and Scornton bridges, is advancing rapidly, and directly threatens the bridges and our lines of communication.

WO1 Earl Schuette explained:

With the enemy regiment to our north currently nursing its wounds, the focus of effort shifts to the south and the fresh enemy regiment closing on Furburg. It is necessary to stop its advance so as not to threaten our rear and cut us off from access to the bridges at Danskin and Scornton.

Likewise, 2dLt Patrick M. Hughes explained:

We have the opportunity to defeat the enemy in detail and avoid fighting both regiments simultaneously. Judging by the first regiment's lack of pursuit of 1st Battalion, it has probably paused in order to reconsolidate and to do some reconnaissance of the Dadmamian Creek area. This hesitation and the second regiment's rapid advance dictate that the latter must be our first order of business.

Common solutions thus called for using a minimal force to occupy the northern regiment, while 3d Battalion fixed the southern regiment and two or more battalions moved south to strike the southern regiment's left flank, via the Ireburg-Furburg road or even around the west side of the swamp.

Historically

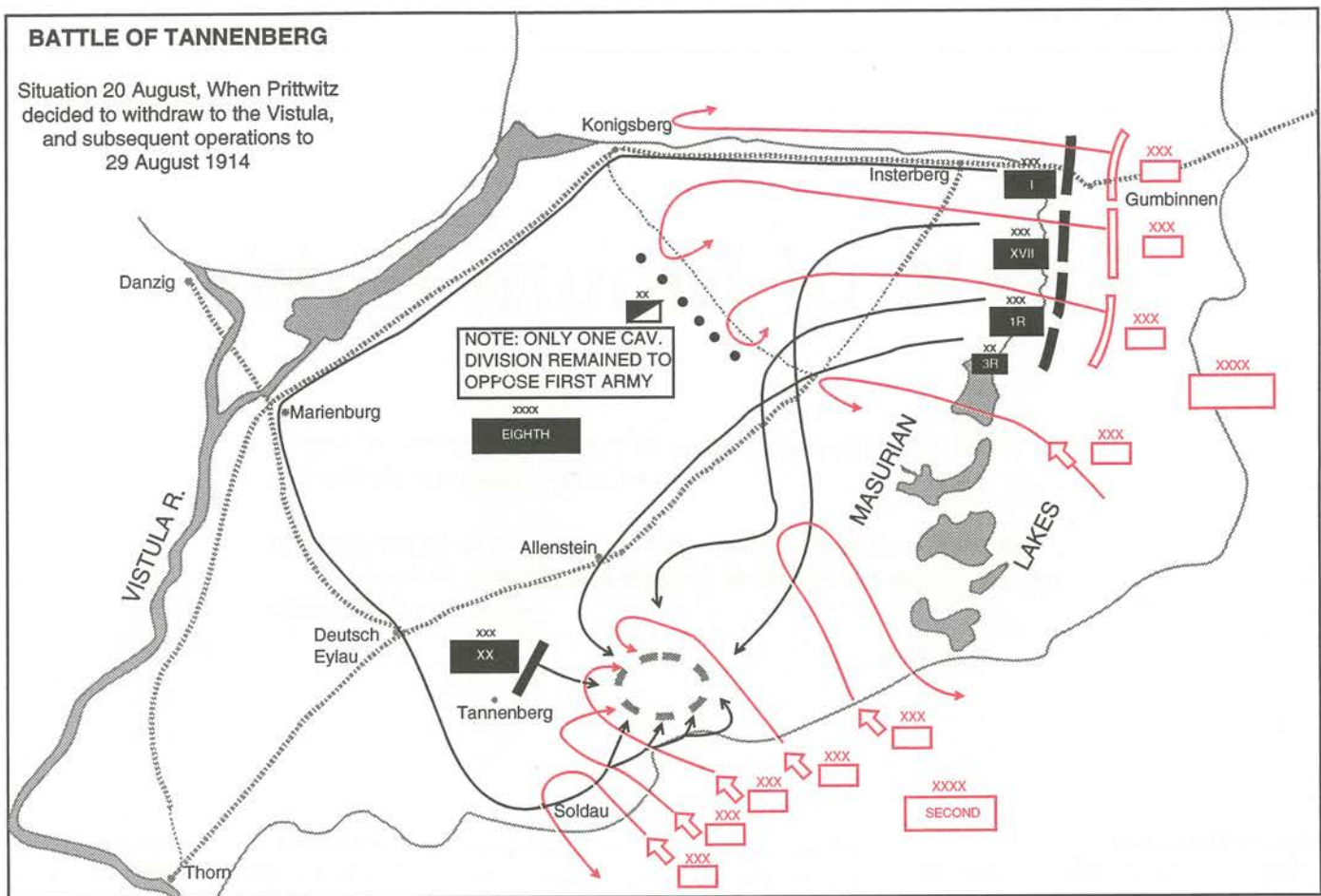
This scenario is based loosely on the Tannenberg campaign of August-Sep-

“The need for adequate planning is no excuse for acting slowly and ponderously.”

tember 1914. When Germany invaded France according to the Schlieffen Plan, Russia came to the aid of France by invading German East Prussia. The German Eighth Army, which had a purely defensive mission in Prussia, was caught between Rennenkampf's Russian First Army advancing from the east and Samsonov's Russian Second Army from the southeast. Although the Masurian Lakes prevented the junction of the two armies, each of them alone outnumbered the German

BATTLE OF TANNENBERG

Situation 20 August, When Prittwitz decided to withdraw to the Vistula, and subsequent operations to 29 August 1914



Eighth Army. After an engagement at Gumbinnen in which the Germans got the worst of it, the panicky German commander Prittwitz was sacked and replaced by the elderly Gen Paul von Hindenburg, with Gen Eric von Ludendorff as his chief of staff. Ludendorff immediately made plans for a bold encircling attack against Samsonov with forces stripped from the northern wing, leaving only a cavalry division to oppose the entire Russian First Army. When Hindenburg and Ludendorff arrived at Eighth Army headquarters they discovered that the chief of operations, LtCol Max Hoffman, had already made preparations for the same concept of operations. Ludendorff wrote:

Gradually during the period from

24th to 26th August, the battle plan took shape in all its details. The great question was whether it would really be possible to withdraw the 1st Re-

“ It’s important to remember that in the end it all comes down to performance. Even the most brilliant plan badly executed will still fail. ”

serve Corps and the 17th Army Corps from their position facing Rennenkampf, so as to unite them with other units of the 8th Army, for a blow against the Narew [Second] Army. It

depended solely on Rennenkampf himself, for if he knew how to make the most of his success at Gumbinnen and advance quickly my plan would be unthinkable.

Rennenkampf obliged by advancing slowly, and the result was the destruction of the Russian Second Army in the Battle of Tannenberg. The Eighth Army then promptly turned back northeast and defeated the Russian First Army in the Battle of the Masurian Lakes. Russian losses in the two battles were about 250,000, compared to about 50,000 for the Germans. Tannenberg is generally considered a classic example of the use of interior lines to defeat two enemy forces, each in turn, before they could concentrate.

US  MC



Battle of Mount Giddy

"Flank attack is the essence of the whole history of war."

—Count Alfred von Schlieffen

"A swift and vigorous transition to attack—the flashing sword of vengeance—is the most brilliant point of the defensive."

—Carl von Clausewitz

MAGTF Operations

This scenario is different from all the others because we command a different type of military organization, a Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF), consisting of command, ground combat, aviation combat, and combat service support elements. As the MAGTF commander we are no longer responsible for the detailed tactical employment of units on the ground. We have a ground combat element (GCE) commander whose responsibility that is. Nor are we involved in the detailed employment of our aviation combat element (ACE) assets; we have an ACE commander for that. Rather, we are concerned with the overall integration of all the elements of the MAGTF. In addition, we coordinate operations with higher headquarters—e.g., a joint task force (JTF)—and are probably responsible for coordination with the local civilian government and with other aspects of civil-military relations.

The object is to assign missions and provide guidance to our subordinate commanders that are sufficiently specific to ensure the accomplishment of the mission without treading on the province of those subordinates.

What's the Enemy Up To?

Trying to win the war with a bold and inspired stroke, it looks like. By

seizing the initiative in a secondary theater, the enemy threatens to preempt the JTF's major offensive to the north by endangering key objectives in the JTF's rear. So the danger is not just to our MEB, but to the entire theater strategy.

“ The object is to assign missions and provide guidance to our subordinate commanders that are sufficiently specific to ensure the accomplishment of the mission without treading on the province of those subordinates. ”

The enemy has completely fooled our intelligence system and duped us into thinking he was massing in one place when he was actually massing in another. He has managed to concentrate overwhelming superiority (including aviation) at one time and place while we have remained dispersed. Not content with a local tactical success, he has exploited his breakthrough with an eye toward dealing us

a knockout blow. He seems to have thrown everything he's got through the breach and is racing north, with nothing between him and Brut but miles of coastal desert plain. Some of his forces have turned left toward Nevertheless, probably with the intent of cutting off the lines of retreat of our westernmost ground forces while at the same time protecting his own left flank. But his main effort seems to be toward Brut.

Without question, this is an extremely dangerous situation—perhaps even desperate. A bold, ambitious, and from all indications, skilled enemy commander has seized the initiative and is exploiting it to the fullest. At the same time, however, if we act quickly and aggressively ourselves, we have the opportunity to deal the enemy a decisive counterstroke. Not only that, but we have no alternative.

Is the Glass Half Full . . . ?

What was your immediate estimate of the situation as you read this scenario? Bad? Terrible? Desperate? Or, even as you recognized the seriousness of the situation, did you see opportunity? Was your main impression that of a massive penetration of your front or of a huge enemy flank waiting to be crushed? The ability to seize opportunities demands the ability to spot opportunities, sometimes even

where others spot crises. Are you more concerned with what the enemy can do to you than with what you want to do to the enemy? The commander who is overly concerned about having his own flank turned isn't likely to pull off many envelopments.

This is not to suggest that attitude is all that matters; but at the same time we shouldn't underestimate the importance of the commander's state of mind, which will be reflected throughout the entire unit. As Hans von Seek wrote: "The will of Frederick and Napoleon was a living force in the humblest grenadier."

The commander who sees danger everywhere he looks and whose aim is

“ The ability to seize opportunities demands the ability to spot opportunities, sometimes even where others spot crises. ”

just to stave off disaster can expect to accomplish nothing more than that and may likely accomplish much less. And conversely, as we've previously discussed, the first prerequisite in achieving a great victory is having the nerve to try for one.

Critical Enemy Vulnerability

In order to have any hope of seizing the initiative from the enemy and retrieving this situation, we've got to hit him where it's going to hurt the most. How do we do that? The natural inclination is to try to catch his leading elements, which are doing the most damage. But this would be striking directly into his strength. Moreover, it would be futile—like trying to deal with a dam break by trying to scoop up in buckets all the water that has already escaped rather than by trying to plug the break.

The enemy has penetrated deeply on a very narrow front, and consequently has long, exposed lines of communication. In other words, he's got a huge flank. Given the distances he's got to travel, he can't afford to have his lines cut. That's what we've got to strike.

Options

So what are our options?

- *Option 1: Fall back, reconstitute*

front. Numerous readers suggested that we fall back to a subsequent position from which we continue our mission of delaying the enemy. This approach is doomed to failure. The enemy is already behind us and racing north at breakneck speed, while our own situation is in disarray. How do you get in front of an enemy who is already past you and moves as fast as you do? You don't. While our original mission was to forestall a decision on this front, this is no longer an option. The enemy is intent on a decisive battle, and at this point he's calling the shots. By piercing our defense he has forced us to take decisive, and also risky, action.

- *Option 2: Flank counterstroke:* As with options covered in the discussions of Scenarios #10 and #12, the intent here is to crush an advancing enemy's flank as he goes by. The difference is that in those scenarios we did this by design; in this one we are exploiting an opportunity presented by the enemy. The way to deal with a penetration such as this is to chop it off at the base. Some of the leading enemy forces may get through to Brut, but given the distances involved, if we successfully sever the enemy's line of operations, he won't be able to sustain an organized advance. We can have a much greater effect by attacking into the enemy's flank and rear. The narrow coastal plains, which are bordered by the sea on one side and mountains on the other, are a natural bottleneck. If we can pin the enemy there against the coast, he will be vulnerable to coordinated massing of our aviation and ground forces.

- *Option 3: Ask for reinforcements.* Obviously, we'll be talking continuously with higher headquarters, appraising our higher commander of the developing situation. As we discussed, this development endangers the entire JTF situation and so is clearly of concern to the JTF commander. Obviously, the JTF commander doesn't want to strip forces from his offensive to reinforce our area, but he may feel he has no choice—he can't afford to lose Brut and Damoose. His decision will depend in part on how much faith he still has in our ability to accomplish the mission. If he does decide to send reinforcements, he will send the minimum necessary to stave off disaster.

A Sample Plan

The following is a sample concept for the employment of the MEB based

on Option #2. Notice that it doesn't provide detailed assignments for subordinate units within the GCE or for detailed operations of the ACE:

My intent is to bottle the enemy up in the narrow coastal plains and destroy him there by a coordinated air-ground attack. To do this, I envision a two-phase operation. In the first phase, the GCE, supported by the ACE, attacks with all available combat power generally east and northeast, cutting off his line of operation, taking him in the flank, and pinning him against the coast. Meanwhile, the ACE attempts to fix the enemy by delaying and disrupting his advance toward Brut. Initial main effort is the ACE until we can get the enemy under control and the GCE back into action. In the second phase, the GCE and ACE will launch a coordinated attack to destroy the enemy forces trapped along the coast. The CSSE [combat service support element] and ACE are responsible for the defense of Damoose and Brut respectively.

Fix-and-Flank

This plan is yet another example of the fix-and-flank concept that is so

“ The commander who sees danger everywhere he looks and whose aim is just to stave off disaster can expect to accomplish nothing more than that and may likely accomplish much less. ”

fundamental to tactics—but with a twist. What makes this example different is the composition of the complementary forces. The *ch'i*, or flanking force, consists of our GCE supported by the ACE. The *cheng*, however, doesn't consist of forces on the ground, but of the fires of the ACE. It is primarily our aviation firepower that will fix the enemy force. Although the ACE is at the same time providing some support to the GCE, it is not merely a supporting element, but has a primary mission of its own. (As the MAGTF commander we'll have to give guidance on how much of its assets the ACE devotes to its fixing mission and how much to its mission of supporting the GCE.) Moreover, it's conceivable that the GCE could support the ACE

in the accomplishment of the fixing mission. If the narrow coastal plains are a bottleneck, we might think about providing a cork by lifting a small ground force (battalion?) by helicopter to establish a blocking position south of Brut. Since we gave responsibility for fixing the enemy to the ACE, we might consider having the small blocking force on the ground working for the ACE.

Adaptability & Flexibility

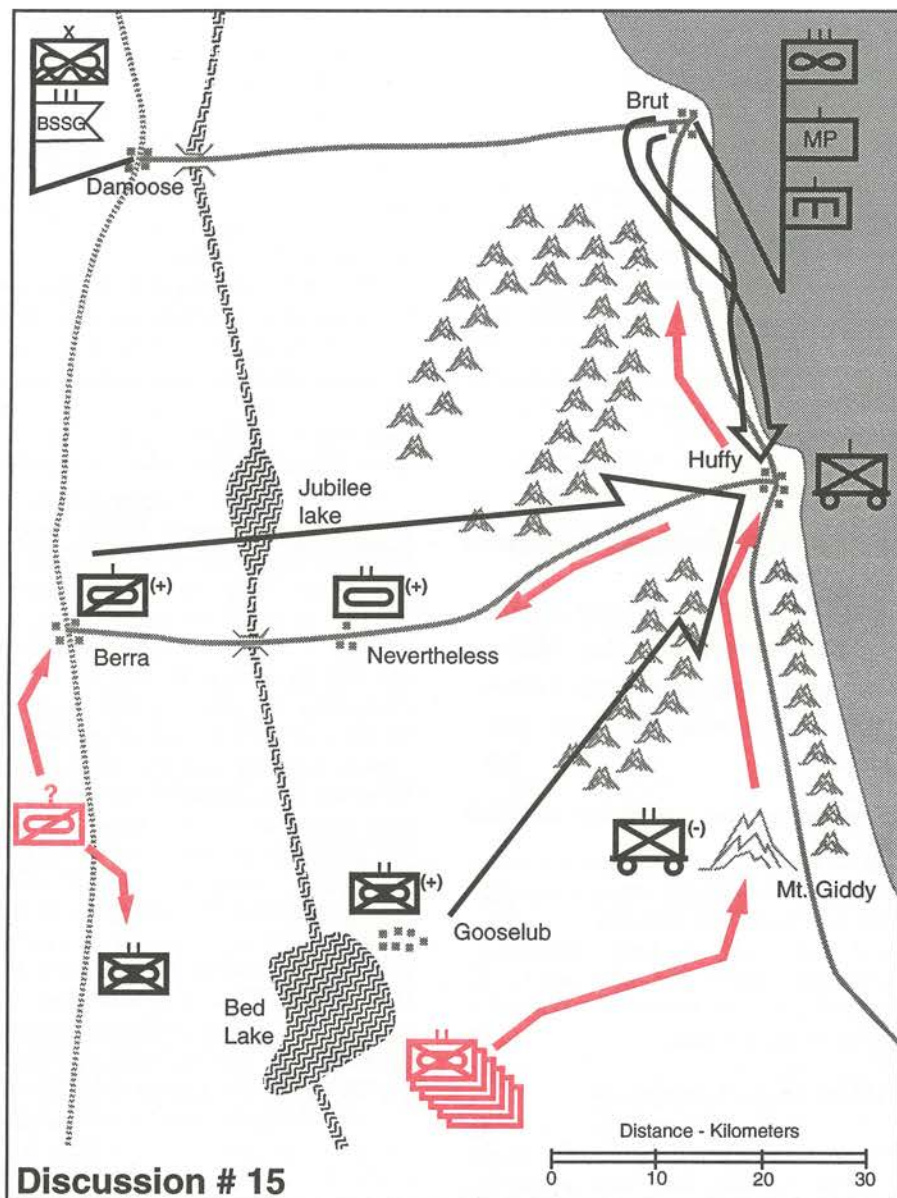
This battle which the enemy has forced on us is not going to be over in a matter of hours or probably even in days. We're looking at an operation lasting a week or more, in which the situation is continually going to develop and change. We have to realize that whatever decision we make in this instance, it is not the final decision. We will have to adapt and modify our plans as the situation develops, issuing new orders as appropriate. Any solution we develop to this scenario should be simple enough that it holds up under changing conditions and should be flexible enough that we can easily adapt it as those conditions change. As Gen George S. Patton said:

Plans must be simple and flexible. Actually they only form a datum plane from which you build as necessity directs or opportunity offers.

Historically

Students of military history may recognize this scenario. On a slightly different scale and with modernized equipment and organization, it is roughly a mirror image of the situation facing the Turks in Palestine late in World War I. On 21 September 1918, Gen Sir Edmund Allenby's infantry had just pierced the Turkish front along the Mediterranean coast at the Second Battle of Megiddo. His Desert Mounted Corps had "found the G in gap," as the cavalymen liked to say, pouring north along the Plain of Sharon and breaking out through the narrow passes above Haifa into the great Plain of Esdraelon, some 40 miles in the Turkish rear, headed for Beirut, Nazareth, Deraa, and Damascus. At the same time, T. E. Lawrence's Arab Force had swept out of its desert base at Azrak to cut the Hejaz railway—the Turks' main line of retreat—and was waiting in Deraa as Allenby's cavalry arrived.

Through an elaborate deception plan, Allenby had, over the course of weeks, simulated the massing of forces



in the Jordan Valley near Jerusalem when in fact he was concentrating overwhelming superiority opposite Megiddo. He commandeered the largest hotel in Jerusalem and established a sprawling headquarters there. He moved units east along dusty trails by daylight and sent them back west under cover of darkness. He established phony assembly areas in the Jordan Valley. The assembly areas which he had established in the west weeks before were intentionally much larger than needed, so that as more forces concentrated there it was not necessary to expand the assembly areas. He ordered Lawrence in the east to procure all the forage he could get his hands on—enough for the needs of an entire

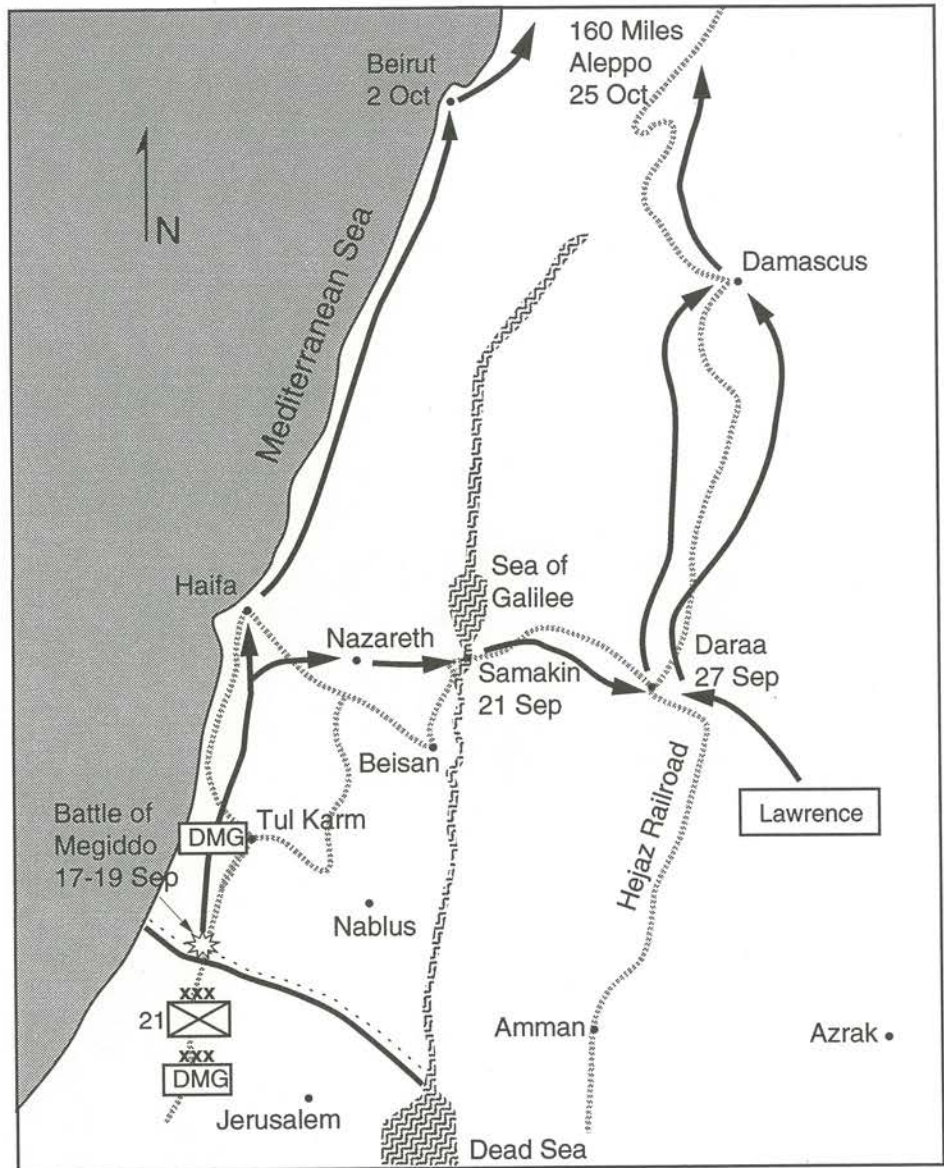
army. So convinced were the Turks that the attack would come near Jerusalem; the story goes, that an Indian deserter who disclosed the true plan to the Turks on the eve of the offensive was dismissed by the Turks as an obvious ruse.

The Turks had three "armies" holding the line from the Mediterranean in the west to Amman in the east. (Each Turkish army was roughly the equivalent of a British corps.) Allenby's initial plan was much less ambitious than the one he actually executed, involving a shallow envelopment aimed at Nablus which might have destroyed the Turkish army along the coast but which would not have unhinged the entire Turkish position. (Remember:

“ Any remote chance the Turks had lay in a bold, decisive, and immediate stroke, but any chance they had they surrendered by their indecisiveness. ”

What could the Turks have done? Perhaps nothing. Arguably, once the Desert Mounted Corps had successfully broken out of the constrictive Plain of Sharon by way of the narrow passes above Haifa, the issue was settled. Allenby's biographer, Gen Sir Archibald Wavell, wrote:

sive, but of its imminence and its weight they had no conception. Their traditional Ottoman stubbornness and skill in defence were of no avail to them here. This was to be no soldiers' battle, but the manoeuvre of a great master of war.



Appendixes

K _____
Keep your own orders short; get them out in time; issue them personally by voice if you can. . . . Plans must be simple and flexible. Actually they only form a datum plane from which you build as necessity directs or opportunity offers.

—Gen George S. Patton

Glossary of Tactical Terms

In order to ensure effective communications, it is important to use terms that are universally understood. The following basic terms are taken from Joint, Marine Corps, and U.S. Army doctrinal publications.

A

Advance Guard—Detachment sent ahead of the main force to ensure its uninterrupted advance; to protect the main body against surprise; to facilitate the advance by removing obstacles and repairing roads and bridges; and to cover the deployment of the main body if it is committed to action. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Ambush—A surprise attack by fire from concealed positions on a moving or temporarily halted enemy. (*FM 101-5-1*)

Assault—The culmination of an attack which closes with the enemy. (*OH 6-1*)

Assault Position—That position between the line of departure and the objective in an attack from which forces assault the objective. (*FM 101-5-1*)

Assembly Area—An area in which a command is assembled preparatory to further action. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Attach—To place units or personnel in an organization where such placement is relatively temporary. The commander of the formation, unit or organization receiving the attachment will exercise the same degree of command and control thereover as he does over the units and persons organic to his command. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Attack Position—The last position occupied by the assault echelon before crossing the line of departure. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Attrition—The reduction of effectiveness of a force caused by loss of personnel and materiel. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Axis of Advance—A line of advance assigned for purposes of control; often a road or a group of roads, or a designated series of locations, extending in the direction of the enemy. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **direction of attack**.

B

Barrier—A coordinated series of obstacles designed or employed to canalize, direct, restrict, delay or stop the movement of an opposing force, and to impose additional losses in personnel and equipment on the opposing force. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Base of Fire—Fire placed on an enemy force or position to reduce or eliminate the enemy's capability to interfere by fire and/or movement with friendly maneuver elements. (*FM 101-5-1*)

Blocking Position—A defensive position so sited as to deny the enemy access to a given area or to prevent his advance in a given direction. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Bound—A single movement, usually from cover to cov-

er, made by troops, often under enemy fire. Distance covered in one movement by a unit advancing by bounds. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Boundary—Line by which areas of responsibility between adjacent units are defined. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Bridgehead—An area of ground held or to be gained on the enemy's side of an obstacle. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Bypass—To move around an obstacle, position or enemy force to maintain the momentum of advance. (*FM 101-5-1*)

C

Canalize—To restrict operations to a narrow zone by use of existing or reinforcing obstacles or by fire or bombing. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Checkpoint—A predetermined point on the ground used as a means of controlling movement. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Close Air Support—Air action against hostile targets which are in close proximity to friendly forces and which requires detailed integration with the fire and movement of those forces. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Commander's Intent—Commander's vision of operations—how he expects to fight and what he expects to accomplish. (*FM 101-5-1*)

Command Post—A unit's or subunit's headquarters where the commander and the staff perform their activities. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Concealment—The protection from observation or surveillance. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Concept of Operations—A clear and concise statement of the line of action chosen by a commander in order to accomplish the mission. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Normally contains a **scheme of maneuver** and **fire support plan**.

Consolidate—To organize and strengthen a newly captured position so that it can be used against the enemy. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Contain—To stop, hold, or surround the forces of the enemy or to cause the enemy to center activity on a given front and to prevent his withdrawing any part of his forces for use elsewhere. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Also **holding attack**.

Counterattack—Attack by part or all of a defending force against an enemy attacking force, for such specific purposes as regaining ground lost or cutting off or destroying enemy advance units, and with the general objective of denying to the enemy the attainment of his purpose in attacking. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Cover—1. Protection from the effects of fire. 2. The mission assigned a **covering force**.

Covering Fire—Fire used to protect troops when they are within range of enemy small arms. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Covering Force—A force operating apart from the main force for the purpose of intercepting, engaging, delaying, disorganizing, and deceiving the enemy before he can attack the main force. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Cross-Attachment—The exchange of subordinate units between units for a temporary period. (*FM 101-5-1*)

D

Decisive Engagement—An engagement in which a unit is considered fully committed and cannot maneuver or extricate itself. In the absence of outside assistance, the action must be fought to a conclusion. (*FM 101-5-1*)

Defense in Depth—The siting of mutually supporting defense positions to absorb and progressively weaken attack, prevent initial observations of the whole position by the enemy, and to allow the commander to maneuver his reserve. (*Joint Pub 1-01*)

Defilade—Protection from hostile observation and fire provided by an obstacle such as a hull, ridge or bank. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Delaying Action—An operation in which a force under pressure trades space for time by slowing the enemy's momentum and inflicting maximum damage on the enemy without becoming decisively engaged. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Deliberate Attack—A type of offensive operation characterized by preplanned coordinated employment of firepower and maneuver. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **hasty attack**.

Demonstration—An attack or show of force on a front where a decision is not sought, made with the aim of deceiving the enemy. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **diversionary attack**.

Direction of Attack—A specific direction or route that the main attack or center of mass of the unit will follow. The unit is restricted, required to attack as indicated, and is not normally allowed to bypass the enemy. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **axis of advance**.

E

Envelopment—An offensive maneuver in which the main attacking force passes around or over the enemy principal defensive positions to secure objectives to the enemy's rear. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) See also **turning movement**.

F

Feint—A limited-objective attack involving contact with the enemy, varying in size from a raid to a supporting attack. Feints are used to cause the enemy to act in three predictable ways: to employ his reserve improperly, to shift his supporting fires, or to reveal his defensive fires.

Fire and Maneuver—The process of one or more elements establishing a base of fire to engage the enemy while the other element(s) maneuver to an advantageous position from which to close with and destroy or capture the enemy. (*FMFRP 0-14*)

Fire and Movement—A technique primarily used in the assault wherein a unit or element advances by bounds or rushes with subelements alternately moving and providing covering fire for other moving subelements. Fire and movement may be done by individuals (personnel or vehicles) or units (such as fire teams or squads). Usually, fire and movement are used only when under effective fire from the enemy because it is relatively slow and difficult to control. (*FMFRP 0-14*)

Fire Plan—A tactical plan for using the weapons of a unit or formation so that their fire will be coordinated. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Fragmentary Order—An abbreviated form of an operation order that eliminates the need for restating information contained in a basic operation order. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Also **frag order** or **FragO**.

Frontal Attack—An offensive maneuver in which the main action is directed against the front of the enemy forces. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

G

Gap—Any break or breach in the continuity of tactical dispositions beyond small-arms coverage. (*FM 101-5-1*)

Guard—A security element whose primary task is to protect the main force by fighting to gain time, while also observing and reporting information. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) **Advance guard**, **flank guard** and **rear guard**. Compared to **screen**, **cover**.

H

Hasty Attack—An attack in which preparation time is deliberately traded for speed in order to exploit an opportunity. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **deliberate attack**.

I

Infiltration—1. The movement through or into an area or territory occupied by either friendly or enemy troops or organizations. The movement is made, either by small groups or by individuals, at extended or irregular intervals. When used in connection with the enemy, it infers that contact is avoided. . . . (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

K

Killing Zone—An area in which the commander plans to force the enemy to concentrate so as to destroy him by fire. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Also **engagement area**.

L

Linkup—An operation wherein two friendly forces join together in a hostile area. (*OH 6-1*) **Linkup point**.

M

Main Attack—The principal attack or effort into which the commander throws the full weight of the offensive power at his disposal. An attack directed against the chief objective of the campaign or battle. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **supporting attack**.

Main Effort—The main or most important task to be performed in the accomplishment of the overall mission; receives priority of fires and other support. The term sometimes refers to the subordinate unit assigned that task. Also **focus of effort(s)**, **point of main effort**.

Maneuver—Employment of forces on the battlefield through movement in combination with fire or fire potential to achieve a position of advantage over the enemy. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Meeting Engagement—A combat action that occurs when a moving force engages an enemy at an unexpected time and place. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Mission Type Order—1. Order issued to lower unit that includes the accomplishment of the total mission assigned to the higher headquarters. 2. Order to a unit to perform a mission without specifying how it is to be accomplished. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Mobile Defense—Defense of an area or position in which maneuver is used with organization and utilization of terrain to seize the initiative from the enemy. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **position defense**.

Movement to Contact—An offensive operation designed to gain or reestablish contact with the enemy. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Also **advance to contact**.

O

Objective—The physical object of the action taken, e.g., a definite tactical feature, the seizure or holding of which is essential to the commander's plan. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Objective Rallying Point—A location near an objective from which a patrol launches its final actions in the objective area and to which it returns afterward. Also **ORP**.

Observation Post—A position from which military observations are made, or fire directed and adjusted, and which possesses appropriate communications; may be airborne. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Also **OP**.

Obstacle—Any natural or man-made obstruction that canalizes, delays, restricts, or diverts movement of a force; classified as either **existing** or **reinforcing**. (*FM 101-5-1*) See **barrier**.

On-Call Target—A planned target other than a scheduled target on which fire is delivered when requested. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Operation Order—A directive issued by a commander to subordinate commanders for the purpose of effecting the coordinated execution of an operation. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Overwatch—A tactical technique in which one element is positioned to support the movement of another element with immediate fire. (*FM 101-5-1*)

P

Patrol—A detachment of forces sent out for the purpose of gathering information or carrying out a destructive, mopping-up, or security mission. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Penetration—A form of offensive which seeks to break through the enemy's defense and disrupt the defensive system. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Also **breakthrough**.

Position Defense—A type of defense in which the bulk of the defending force is disposed in selected tactical localities where the decisive battle is to be fought. Principal reliance is placed on the ability of the forces in the defended localities to maintain their positions and to control the terrain between them. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **mobile defense**.

Pursuit—An offensive operation designed to catch or cut off a hostile force attempting to escape, with the aim of destroying it. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

R

Raid—An operation, usually small scale, involving a swift penetration of hostile territory to secure information, confuse the enemy, or to destroy his installa-

tions. It ends with a planned withdrawal upon completion of the assigned mission. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Reconnaissance—A mission undertaken to obtain, by visual observation or other detection methods, information about the activities and resources of the enemy. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Reserve—A part of a force, held under the control of the commander as a maneuvering force to influence future action. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

S

Scheduled Target—A planned target on which fire is to be delivered at a specific time. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **on-call target**.

Scheme of Maneuver—The tactical plan to be executed by a force in order to seize assigned objectives. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Screen—A security element whose primary task is to observe, identify and report information, and which fights only in self-preservation. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **guard, cover**.

Sector of Fire—An area required to be covered by fire by an individual, weapon or unit. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Spoiling Attack—A tactical maneuver employed to seriously impair a hostile attack while the enemy is in the process of forming or assembling for an attack. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Supporting Attack—An offensive operation carried out in conjunction with a main attack and designed to achieve one or more of the following:

- deceive the enemy;
- destroy or pin down enemy forces which could interfere with the main attack;
- control ground whose occupation by the enemy will hinder the main attack; or
- force the enemy to commit reserves prematurely or in an indecisive area. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Suppression—Temporary degradation of the performance of a weapons system or unit below the level needed to fulfill its mission, by an opposing force. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) See **covering fire**.

T

Task Organization—1. An organization formed to carry out a specific task. 2. The process of creating such an organization. (*OH 6-1*)

Turning Movement—A variation of the envelopment in which the attacking force passes around or over the enemy's principal defensive positions to secure objectives deep in the enemy's rear to force the enemy to abandon his position or divert major forces to meet the threat. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

W

Warning Order—A preliminary notice of an action or order which is to follow. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Withdrawal—A planned operation in which a force in contact disengages from an enemy force. (*Joint Pub 1-02*)

Z

Zone of Action—A tactical subdivision of a larger area, the responsibility of which is assigned to a tactical unit; generally applied to offensive action. (*Joint Pub 1-02*) Compared to **sector** in the defense.

Glossary of Map Symbols

As with terminology, standardized map symbols improve our ability to communicate quickly with minimal misunderstanding. Through the use of overlays the commander can quickly and effectively communicate a plan, concept or situation. This appendix provides information for the use of basic tactical symbols. For a more detailed discussion of map symbols and control measures, see *Operational Handbook 6-1* or *Field Manual 101-5-1*.

Units, Installations, Activities

• Basic Symbols

Unit		Logistical Installation	
Headquarters		Observation Post	

• Additional Information.

Each basic symbol requires additional information to describe the functions or characteristics of that unit, installation or activity. This information is provided in specific locations in and around the basic symbol, as shown in this example:



- The unit size is located directly on top of the basic symbol. (Battalion)
- The role indicator is provided inside the symbol. (Mechanized Infantry)
- The unique designation is provided directly to the left of the symbol. (1st Battalion)
- The higher headquarters is provided directly to the right of the symbol. (2d Marine Regiment)
- Any attachments or detachments are represented by (-) and/or (+) to the upper right of the symbol.

• Unit Size

Fire Team	Ø	Squad	•
Section	• •	Platoon/Detachment	• • •
Company/Battery	I	Battalion/Squadron	II
Regiment	III	Brigade	x
Division	xx	Corps/Force	xxx

• Role Indicator

Antitank		Light Armor	
Air Defense		Mechanized Infantry	
Artillery		Motorized Infantry	
Assault Amphibian (AA)		Reconnaissance	
Engineer		Tank	
Infantry		MAGTF (Marine air-ground task force)	

• Depicting the Enemy

Enemy units, installations or equipment are depicted one of three ways: (1) by using color Red on a multicolor overlay, (2) by using double lines where appropriate, or (3) by putting EN to the lower right of the symbol.

Unit Symbol Test

Draw symbols for the following units:

3d Plt, Co G, 2d Bn,
2d Mar

Co B, 2nd Assault
Amphibian Bn

Btry C, 1st Bn, 11th Mar

1st Bn, 4th Mech Inf Regt,
22d Div (Enemy)

1st Light Armored Recon Bn
1st MarDiv

7th Marine Expeditionary
Brigade

Weapons and Vehicles

Bars across the shaft of a weapon indicate size: one for medium, two for heavy. The base of the shaft indicates the function of the weapons system i.e. antitank, air defense, etc. A numeral to the lower right of the symbol can represent number of weapons or pieces of equipment.

	Light	Med	Heavy
Air-Defense Gun			
Antitank (AT) Gun			
AT Missile			
AT Rocket Launcher			
Howitzer			
Machinegun/Automatic Weapon			
Mortar			
Tank			

Light Armored Vehicle



Assault Amphibious Vehicle



Control Measures

• Points, Areas, and Lines.

Ambush



Assembly Area



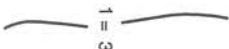
Attack Position



Battle or Blocking Position (BP)



Battalion Boundary



Checkpoint



Coordinating Point



Linkup Point



Objective



Phase Line



Target



• Movement and Activity

Attack Arrowhead



Axis of Advance (Ground)



Axis of Advance (Heliborne)



Delaying Action



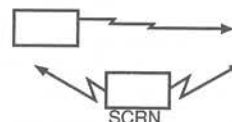
Direction of Attack



Follow and Support



Reconnaissance or Security



Withdraw



• Miscellaneous

Antitank Ditch



Fortified Line



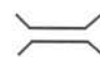
Antitank Minefield



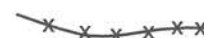
Antipersonnel Minefield



Bridge or Gap



Wire



Landing Zone



Trace of Forward Dispositions (Friendly)



Combat Orders

A word is in order about combat orders. They are the means by which commanders at all levels communicate their decisions to subordinates and the means by which you're required to present your solutions to the TDGs. Depending on the situation, and especially on the amount of time available, the commander's instructions may take one of several forms. They may be a full operation order—at lower levels often called a five-paragraph order because of its format. They may be a fragmentary order, an abbreviated form of the operation order that contains only the elements of the full order essential to the situation. Or, instructions may take the form of a warning order, by which the commander tells his units to prepare for an expected operation but not yet to execute it. As with a fragmentary order, there is no prescribed format to a warning order; the commander tells what he knows at the time in order to give his subordinates whatever information he can to help them prepare. Once operations have begun, fragmentary orders and warning orders are the norm. To maintain a high operational tempo, we rely on simple, concise orders issued orally, and we generally try to avoid lengthy, written orders.

While the format of the order may help to organize information, it is far less important than the contents or substance of the order. Regardless of format, if the order communicates the essential information clearly and forcefully, it's a good order. The elements of information that an order should convey include:

- Any changes or elements in the *situation* that will significantly influence the actions of the unit.
- The *mission*—what needs to be done.
- The *commander's intent*—why it

needs to be done and what the intended end result of the action is.

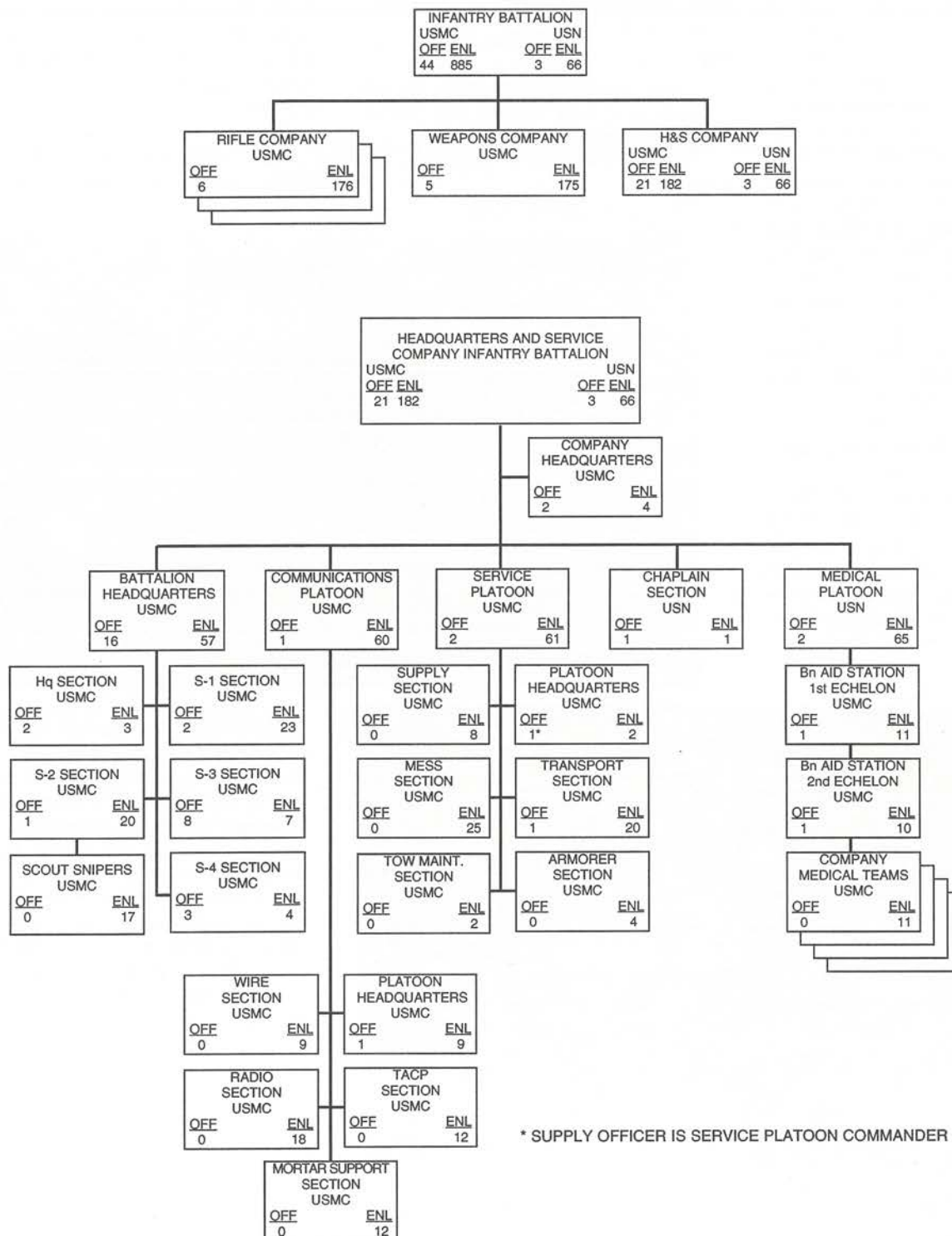
- The *concept of operations*—a broad description of the overall plan, normally including a *scheme of maneuver* and a *fire support plan*.
- The main effort—the main task or component of the plan around which the others revolve and which the others support.
- Tasks to subordinate units—what each unit is to do, and why.
- Any coordinating instructions to ensure coordination between subordinate units.



Following the prescribed format often helps to communicate this information. But you shouldn't become a slave to the format. You should adapt the format to support your tactics, and not vice versa. It's more important to worry about *what* you're trying to say than whether it's in the proper format. Anyone interested in the precise format for combat orders can find that information in *FMFM 3-1, Command and Staff Action*, or any number of other doctrinal publications.

For samples of fragmentary orders, see the discussions to scenarios #1, 8, 9, and 12. For an example of a fairly complete warning order, see scenario #6. In the July 1992 issue of the *Marine Corps Gazette*, Maj Dirk J. Vangeison describes a system units can use to issue warning orders on a more timely basis.

U.S. Marine Infantry Battalion Organization and Weapons



RIFLE COMPANY WEAPONS

Fire Team

3 M16A3 Rifles
1 M203 Grenade Launcher
1 SAW

Rifle Squad Leader

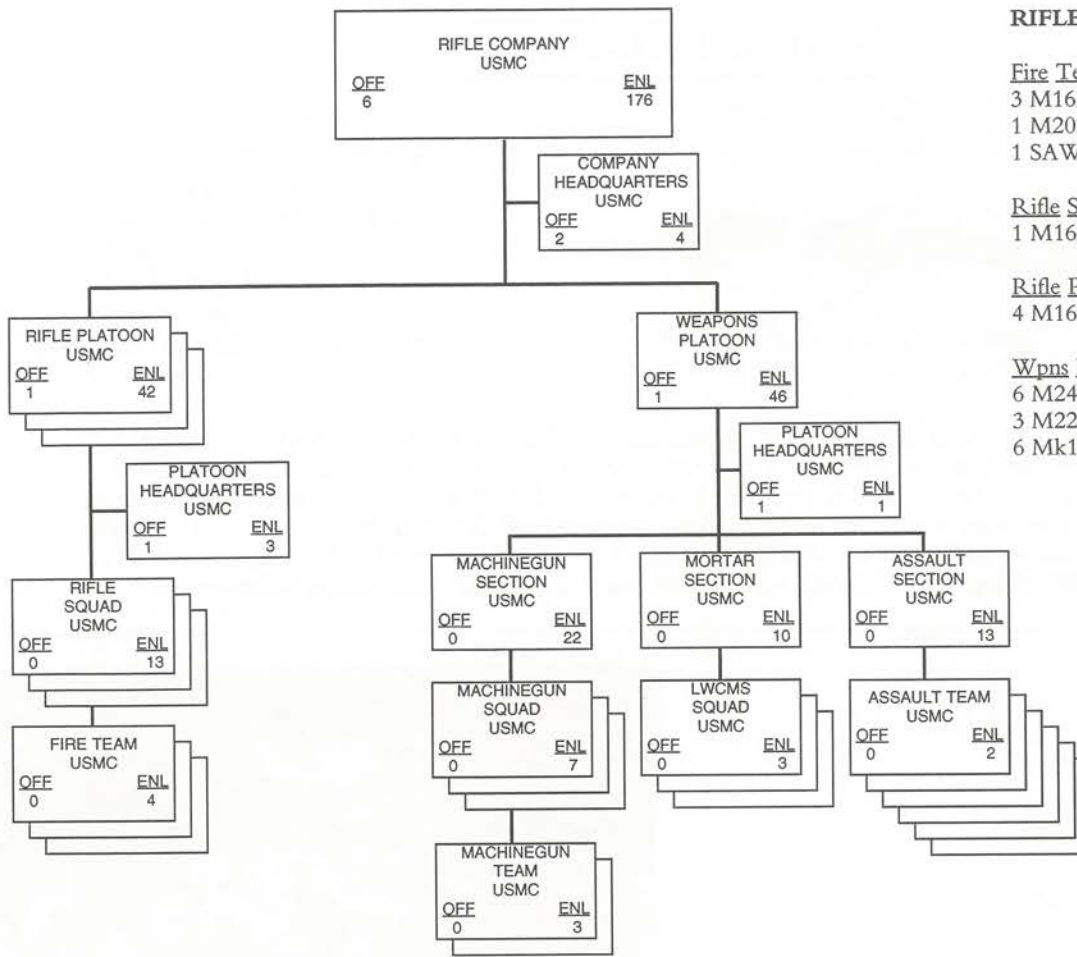
1 M16A2

Rifle Platoon Hq

4 M16A2

Wpns Platoon

6 M240E1 Machineguns
3 M224 60mm Mortars
6 Mk153 SMAWs



WEAPONS COMPANY WEAPONS

Mortar Platoon

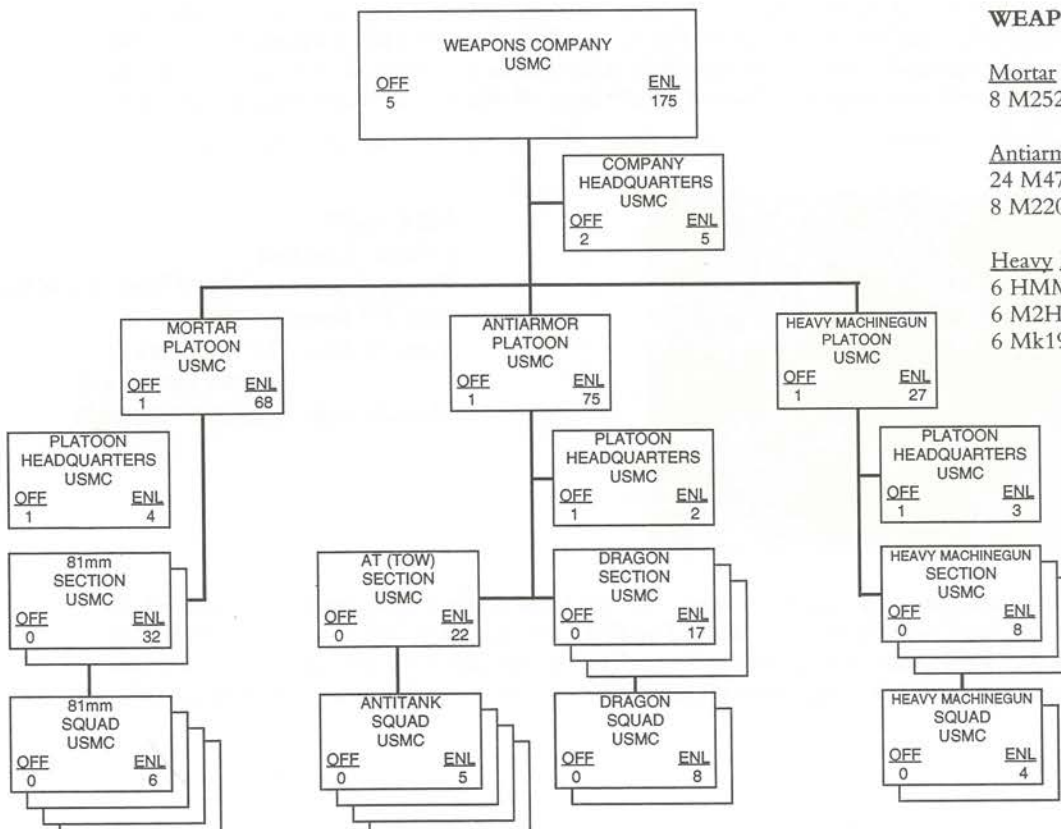
8 M252 81mm Mortars

Antiarmor Platoon

24 M47 Dragons
8 M220E4 TOW2 (8 HMMVWs)

Heavy Machinegun Platoon

6 HMMVWs
6 M2HB .50 cal Machineguns
6 Mk19 40mm Machineguns



PLATOON WEAPONS



M16A2 Rifle
Caliber: 5.56 mm
Weight (loaded): 8.8 lbs
Max Eff Range: 550 m (point)
800 m (area)
Rates of Fire: 45 rpm (semi)
90 rpm (burst)
Manufacturer: Fabrique Nationale, USA

In 1984, the M16A2 replaced the M16A1 as the standard service rifle in the U.S. Marine Corps. It improved on the M16A1, introduced in 1967, in a number of ways. First, the full auto option was removed and replaced with a three-round-burst option. Then, the barrel was made heavier and stiffer to give greater accuracy and a new compensator was added to help reduce muzzle climb. Also, the handguard, butt, and grip are made from a stronger material. The M16A2 commonly uses either a 20- or 30-round magazine and can be fitted with the M7 bayonet. The M16A2 remains the primary weapon of the Corps' riflemen.

M203 Grenade Launcher
Caliber: 40 mm
Weight: 3 lbs
Max Eff Range: 150 m (point)
350 m (area)
Max Range: 400 m
Manufacturer: Colt Industries



The M203 grenade launcher is a lightweight, single-shot, breech-loaded, pump action, shoulder-fired weapon attached to the M16A2 rifle. There are a total of nine standard 40mm rounds used in the M203: star cluster, star parachute, smoke (ground), smoke (canopy), high explosive, dual purpose, fragmentation, CS, and practice. The M203 is a multipurpose weapon, allocated on the basis of one per fire team, nine per platoon.



M249 SAW
Caliber: 5.56 mm
Weight (loaded w/200 rd box): 22.08 lbs
Max Eff Range: 1,000 m
Rates of Fire: 725 rpm (cyclic)
85 rpm (sustained)
Manufacturer: Fabrique Nationale

The M249 squad automatic weapon (SAW) is a gas-operated, air-cooled, bipod-mounted individual weapon first introduced to the Corps in the mid-1980s. The SAW can accept belt-fed or magazine-loaded ammunition, although the M16 30-round magazine is normally only utilized in an emergency, as it reduces the weapons performance. The SAW is assigned to the automatic rifleman of each fire team, nine per platoon.

COMPANY WEAPONS

M240G Machinegun

Caliber: 7.62 mm

Weight: 23.9 lbs

Max Eff Range: 1,800 m

Rates of fire: 600 rpm (cyclic)
100 rpm (sustained)

Manufacturer: Fabrique Nationale



The M240G is a belt-fed, gas-operated, air-cooled machinegun which is currently coaxially mounted with the M242 25mm chain gun on the Corps' light armored vehicle (LAV-25s) and the 120mm gun on the M1A1 tank. In addition, the M240E1, a spade grip commander's configuration, is mounted on selected LAVs. As a result of the M240G's low mechanical failure rate, the Corps has procured excess weapons from the Army as replacements for the M60E3 and is modifying them so they can be fired with a bipod or mounted on a tripod.



M60E3 Machinegun

Caliber: 7.62 mm

Weight: 18.5 lbs

Max Eff Range: 1,100 m

Rates of Fire: 550 rpm (cyclic)
100 rpm (sustained)

Manufacturer: Saco Defense

The M60E3 replaced earlier models of the venerable M60 general purpose machinegun in 1985. It is a belt-fed, fully automatic, crew-served weapon. Originally introduced in the late 1950s, the M60 saw action in the Vietnam War—lessons learned there were applied to the construction of the M60E3. In order to correct noted deficiencies, the M60E3 was made lighter, the barrel was made easier to change, the gas system was simplified, a second pistol grip was added under the bipod, and a double sear notch was added to prevent uncontrolled fire. In 1989 the Corps opted for still further improvements to the M60E3 in order to increase weapon performance, reliability, and maintainability. The M60E3 can be fitted to a tripod or it can be fired from its attached bipod. Each rifle company has six M60E3s located in its weapons platoon. Variants of the M60 are also used on helicopters and on tracked and wheeled vehicles.

M224 Mortar

Caliber: 60 mm

Weight: 44.0 lbs (total)

14.4 lbs (barrel)

14.4 lbs (baseplate-M8)

15.2 lbs (bipod)

Min Range: 45 m

Max Range: 1,814 m

Rates of Fire: 30 rpm (maximum)
18 rpm (sustained)

Manufacturer: U.S. Arsenal



The 60mm mortar is a lightweight, smooth-bore, muzzle-loaded, high-angle indirect fire weapon. It can be fired two different ways: either in the conventional mode with the bipod and standard M7 baseplate set up or in the handheld mode using the lighter weight M8 baseplate. The 60mm mortar uses four types of ammunition: high explosive, white phosphorus, illumination, and practice. The high explosive round weighs 3.2 lbs, has a range of 1,814 meters, and has a multi-option fuze that allows the mortarmen to select either high airburst, low airburst, point detonating, or delay. There are three M224s located in the mortar section of the weapons platoon in each infantry company.



Mk 153 SMAW
Caliber: 83 mm
Weight (loaded): 29.01 lbs
Max Eff Range: 250 m (HEDP)
 500 m (HEAA)
Manufacturer: McDonnell Douglas

The shoulder-launched assault weapon (SMAW) is a one-man-operable, smoothbore, fiberglass rocket launcher with a 6-shot, 9mm spotting rifle attached to the right side of the tube and boresighted with the launcher. The sight mount, attached to the left side of the launcher, is designed to accommodate either a telescopic sight or the AN/PVS-4 night vision sight. The high explosive, dual purpose (HEDP) rocket (bunker buster) will detonate on impact with either a quick or slow time-delay fuze. It is able to penetrate 7 feet of wood-reinforced bunker, 8 inches of concrete, or 1 inch of steel armor. The high explosive antiarmor (HEAA) rocket is capable of penetrating 23.4 inches of rolled homogeneous armor. A total of six SMAWs are located in the assault section of the weapons platoon in each rifle company.

BATTALION WEAPONS

M40A1 Scout/Sniper Rifle
Caliber: 7.62 mm
Weight: 14.5 lbs
Max Eff Range: 1,000 m
Manufacturer: Remington Arms



The M40A1 rifle is a modified version of the Remington 700 bolt-action rifle. It has a heavy barrel for accuracy and is always used with a 10x telescope. The M40A1 has a fiberglass stock and a 5-round integral magazine. There are eight M40A1s allocated to the scout snipers in the S-2 section of the infantry battalion.



M82A1A SASR
Caliber: 12.7 mm
Weight: 32.5 lbs
Max Eff Range: 1,800 m
Manufacturer: Barrett

The M82A1A special application scoped rifle (SASR) fires the same round as the M2HB heavy machinegun and is capable of accurately reaching ranges and penetrating armor that other rifles cannot. The 12.7mm round is available in armor-piercing, incendiary, or special explosive variations. The M82A1A carries 10 rounds in a detachable box magazine and is designed to be used primarily against material rather than personnel. There is a special allowance for two M82A1As for the scout snipers in the S-2 section of the infantry battalion.

M2HB Browning Machinegun**Caliber: 12.7 mm****Weight: 128 lbs (total)**

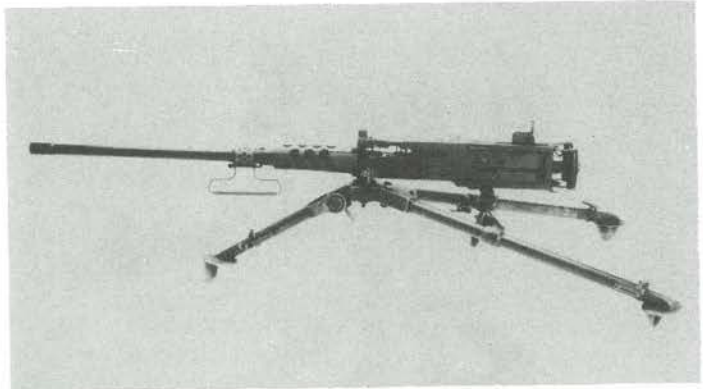
60 lbs (receiver group)

24 lbs (barrel)

44 lbs (tripod)

Max Eff Range: 1,830 m**Rates of Fire: 40 rpm (sustained)**

450–550 rpm (cyclic)

Manufacturer: Saco Defense

The Browning .50 caliber heavy barrel (HB) machinegun is a belt-fed, recoil-operated, air-cooled, crew-operated weapon. The machinegun is capable of firing single shot as well as automatic fire. The M2HB fires seven types of ammunition: ball tracer, armor-piercing, incendiary, armor-piercing incendiary, armor-piercing incendiary tracer, and blank. The .50 caliber is also mounted on tracked and wheeled vehicles. Six M2HB machineguns—along with six Mk19 40mm machineguns and six high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs)—are located in the heavy machinegun platoon of the weapons company of each infantry battalion.



The M2HB depicted here is mounted on a HMMWV. The two-man crew may employ the .50 caliber in a number of ways, to include against light armored vehicles and low-flying enemy aircraft. The Mk19 40mm machinegun and the M220E4 TOW 2 (both described below) can be mounted similarly on the HMMWV.

Mk19 Machinegun**Caliber: 40 mm****Weight: 75.6 lbs****Max Eff Range: 1,500 m****Rates of Fire: 40 rpm (sustained)**

325–375 rpm (cyclic)

Manufacturer: Saco Defense

The Mk19 40mm is a belt-fed, air-cooled, blow-back (weapon is operated by the exploding propellant charge) heavy machinegun. The Mk19 fires three types of rounds: the M383/M384, a high-explosive antipersonnel round, which can be fuzed for point detonation or graze/impact that has a casualty producing radius of 5 meters; the M430, a high-explosive, dual-purpose (antipersonnel/armor-piercing) round that can penetrate 2 inches of steel armor; and the M385 practice round. As noted above, there are six Mk19s—along with six M2HBs and six HMMWVs—in the heavy machinegun platoon of the weapons company of each infantry battalion. Additional Mk19s without dedicated personnel have been allocated as follows: four per H&S Co and one with the TOW section in the antiarmor platoon of the weapons company, both within the infantry battalion, and eight per regimental headquarters.



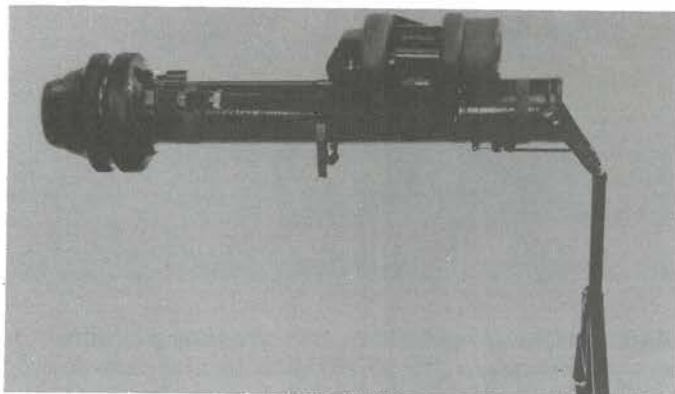
M220E4 TOW 2
Caliber: 152 mm
Weight: 252.4 lbs (loaded)
 205 lbs (launcher)
 47.4 lbs (TOW 2 missile)
Min Eff Range: 65 m
Max Eff Range: 3,750 m
Manufacturer: Hughes Aircraft

The tube-launched, optically tracked, wire command-link (TOW) guided missile is designed to defeat heavy armor and field fortifications and is manned by a gunner and an assistant. Like the Dragon, the TOW is wire-guided so its course can be altered by the gunner to keep it on target. The TOW 2A missile has a speed of 200 meters per second. It can be fired from a tripod, mounted on tracked and wheeled vehicles, or used on the AH-1W helicopter. There are 8 TOWs mounted on HMMWVs in the TOW section of the antiarmor platoon of the infantry battalion.

M252 Mortar
Caliber: 81 mm
Weight: 90.5 lbs (total)
 35 lbs (barrel)
 27 lbs (mount)
 28.5 lbs (baseplate)
Min Range: 100 m
Max Range: 5,733 m
Rates of Fire: 30 rpm (maximum)
 15 rpm (sustained)
Manufacturer: Royal Ordnance

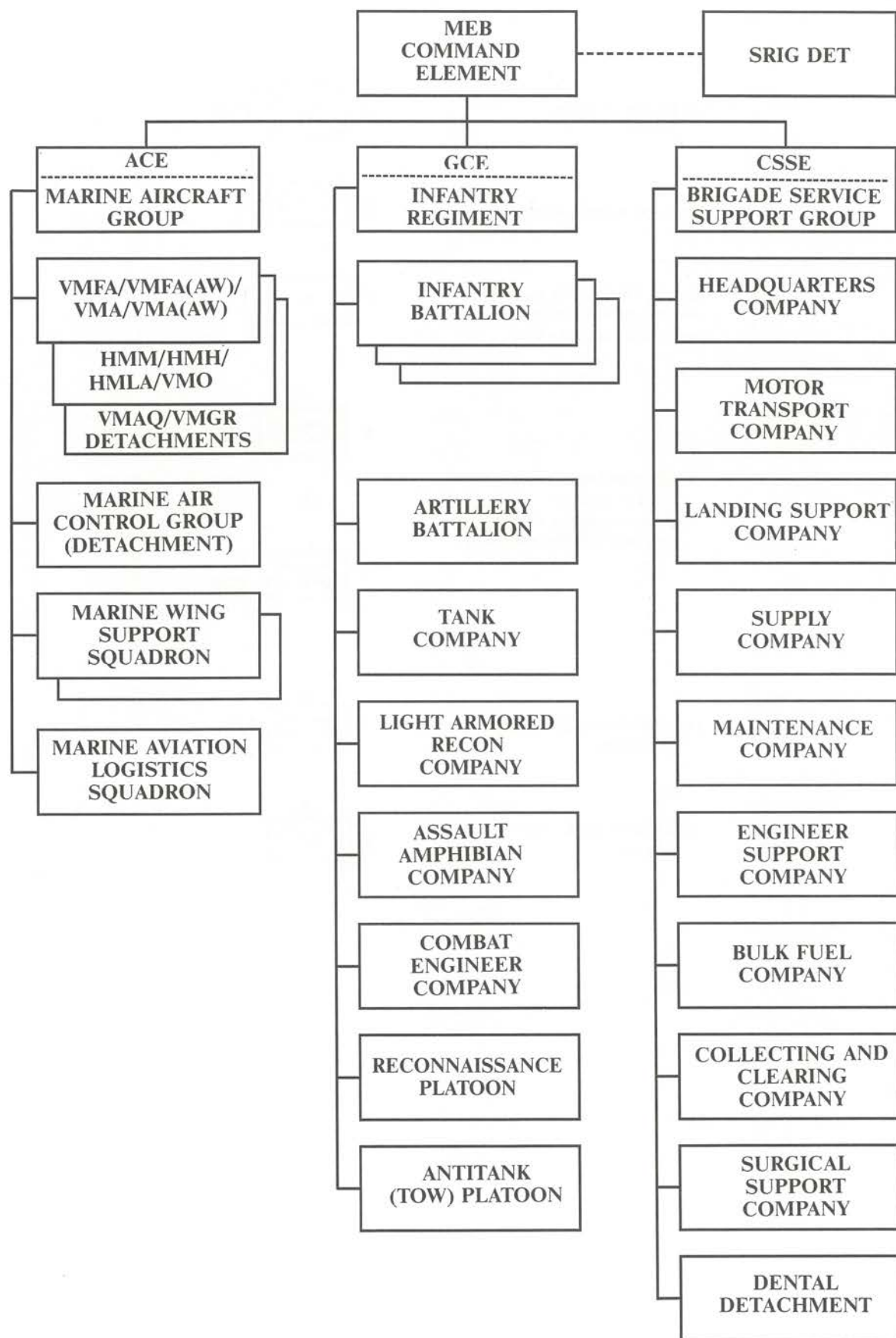


The 81mm mortar is a high-angle, indirect fire weapon used for close and continuous fire support. The 81mm mortar uses six types of ammunition: high explosive, white and red phosphorus, illumination, training practice, and training. The M889 high explosive round weighs 9 pounds, has a range of 5,733 meters, and has a burst radius of 40 meters. The M252 also has a removable firing pin that provides greater safety in clearing misfires. There are eight M252s located in the mortar platoon of the weapons company in each infantry battalion.



M47 Dragon
Caliber: 114.3 mm
Weight: 31 lbs
Min Eff Range: 65 m
Max Eff Range: 1,000 m
Manufacturer: McDonnell Douglas

The M47 Dragon is a man-portable, medium-range antiarmor weapon. It fires a sight-guided missile from a recoilless launcher that has a smooth, fiberglass barrel. A sensor on the missile tracks its course and relays signals through the fine wires trailed by the missile. Thus, the gunner can adjust the course of the missile while in flight as long as he can see the target. The Dragon II missile covers its maximum range in 11.2 seconds. The Dragon has a crew of 2, and there are 24 launchers in the antiarmor platoon of the weapons company of an infantry battalion.

*Typical Marine Expeditionary Brigade*

Answers to Unit Symbol Test

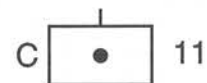
3d Plt, Co G, 2d Bn,
2d Mar



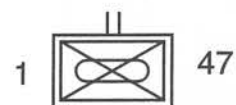
Co B, 2d Assault, Amphibian Bn



Btry C, 1st Bn, 11th Mar
(Bn designation not needed;
only 1st Bn has Btry C.)



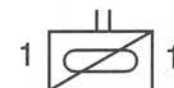
1st Bn, 47th Mech Inf Regt,
22d Div (Enemy)
(Div designation not needed;
only one 47th Mech Inf Regt.)



Or



1st Light Armored Recon Bn,
1st MarDiv



7th Marine Expeditionary
Brigade



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An active-duty infantry officer for 12 years, John Schmitt commanded Weapons Company, 3d Battalion, 6th Marines and Company A, 2d Light Armored Vehicle Battalion. He is the author of *Operational Handbook 6-1, Ground Combat Operations*; *FMFM 1, Warfighting*; and *FMFM 1-1 Campaigning*. He has taught at Marine Corps schools from The Basic School to the Command & Staff College. His last active duty assignment was as the Marine officer instructor at the University of Illinois. A major in the Reserve, he currently resides in Champaign, IL, with his wife and two cocker spaniels.

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