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FM 7-15

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY FIELD MANUAL

RIFLE PLATOON AND SQUADS INFANTRY, AIRBORNE AND MECHANIZED

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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FIELD MANUAL
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HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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RIFLE PLATOON AND SQUADS

INFANTRY, AIRBORNE, AND MECHANIZED

* This manual supersedes FM 7–15, 8 January 1962.

CHAPTER 1
GENERAL

Section I. INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose and Scope

a. This manual provides doctrinal guidance on the organization and tactical employment of each rifle platoon and squad organic to the infantry, airborne, and mechanized rifle company.

b. The material contained in this manual is applicable to nuclear and nonnuclear warfare.

c. With few exceptions, the material in this manual applies equally to the three types of platoons (infantry, airborne, and mechanized). Minor organizational and equipment differences and changes do not affect the basic guidance. Where differences do exist in the employment of the types of rifle platoon, they are so indicated.

d. New and improved weapons and equipment are continually being developed and tested for the rifle platoon; therefore, no specific nomenclature is given for automatic weapons, grenade launchers, or antitank weapons. The small-unit leader must adapt the tactics and techniques in this manual to fit the weapons and equipment of his unit.

e. This manual must be used in conjunction with FM's 7–11 and 17–15.

f. Users of this manual are encouraged to submit recommended changes or comments to improve it. Comments should be keyed to the specific page, paragraph, and line of the text in which change is recommended. Reasons should be provided for each comment to insure understanding and complete evaluation. Comments should be forwarded direct to Commanding Officer, United States Army Combat Developments Command Infantry Agency, Fort Benning, Georgia 31905.

2. Mission

The basic combat mission of the rifle platoon is to close with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver in order to destroy or capture him, or to repel his assault by fire and close combat.

3. Capabilities

In accomplishing its basic combat mission, the rifle platoon is capable of—

a. Closing with the enemy by means of fire and/or maneuver in order to destroy or capture him.

b. Repelling enemy assault by fire, close combat, and counterattack.

c. Providing a base-of-fire element and/or maneuver element.

d. Seizing and holding terrain.

e. Maneuvering and fighting in all types of terrain and climates and under widely varying degrees of nuclear weapons availability.

f. Capitalizing on all forms of mobility.

g. Conducting parachute operations (airborne rifle platoon).

h. Conducting semi-independent patrols, ambushes, and raids.

i. Conducting independent operations for limited periods when suitably reinforced.

4. Characteristics

a. The rifle platoon is the basic tactical element of the rifle company. Its equipment, organization, and training enable it to use a variety of techniques to accomplish a mission.

b. The rifle platoon of the infantry and airborne rifle company can be completely transported in carriers, trucks, or aircraft. The mechanized rifle platoon is completely ground mobile, and is air transportable less its carriers.

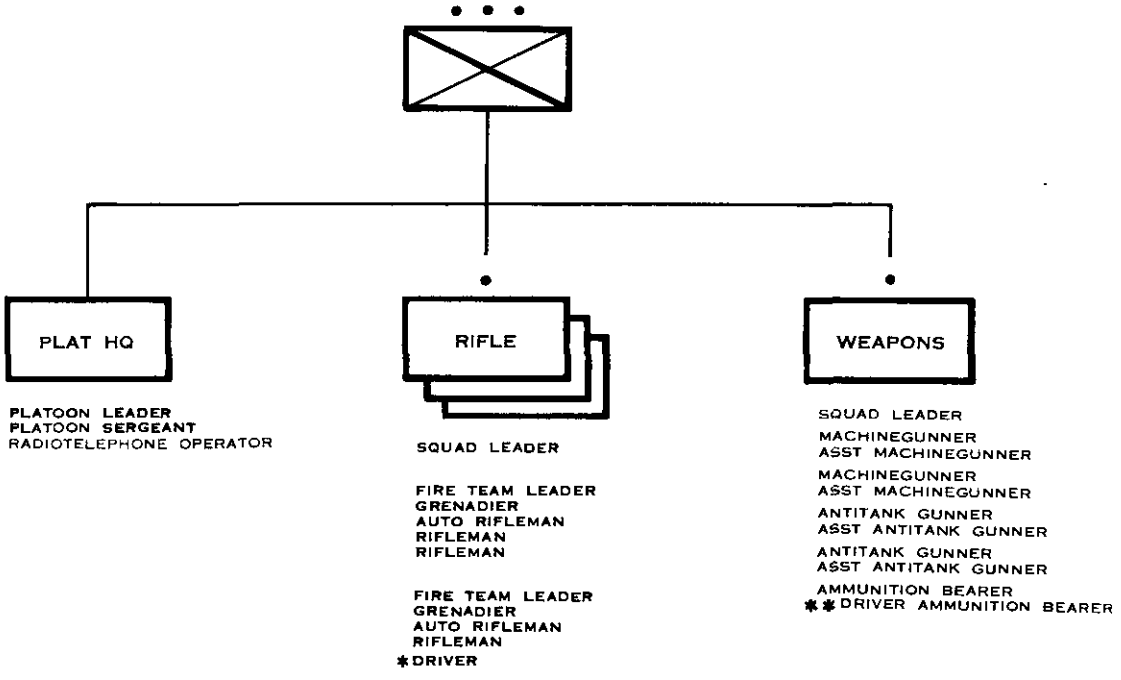
Section II. ORGANIZATION AND DUTIES OF PERSONNEL

5. Organization

a. The rifle platoon (fig. 1) of the infantry and airborne rifle company consists of a platoon headquarters, three rifle squads, and a weapons squad.

(1) The platoon leader, platoon sergeant, and a radiotelephone operator compose the platoon headquarters.

(2) Each rifle squad consists of a squad leader and two fire teams (ALFA and BRAVO). A fire team leader, an automatic rifleman, a grenadier, and either one or two riflemen compose each fire team. The fire team organizations are not inflexible; they may be adapted as required to fit the combat situation.



*AUTHORIZED IN MECHANIZED PLATOON ONLY

**DRIVER IN MECHANIZED PLATOON; AMMUNITION BEARER IN OTHER TYPE PLATOONS

Figure 1. The rifle platoon.

(3) The weapons squad consists of a squad leader, two machinegunners, two assistant machinegunners, two antitank gunners, two assistant antitank gunners, and two ammunition bearers.

b. The rifle platoon of the mechanized rifle company has the same organization as the rifle platoon of the infantry and airborne rifle company with the following exceptions:

(1) Each squad has an organic carrier with a vehicle-mounted weapon.
(2) A machinegun is organic to each rifle squad.
(3) One rifleman is added to the rifle squad and is also designated as the carrier driver.
(4) Within the weapons squad, the carrier driver is also designated as an ammunition bearer.

c. For a detailed explanation of the infantry, airborne, and mechanized rifle company, see FM 7–11.

6. Duties of Rifle Platoon Personnel

a. Platoon Leader. The platoon leader commands his platoon and is responsible for its discipline, training, welfare, control, and tactical employment. He is also responsible for all platoon equipment and its maintenance.

b. Platoon Sergeant. The platoon sergeant assists in the control of the platoon and supervises ammunition, water, and ration supply, distribution, and resupply. He keeps the platoon leader and company first sergeant informed as to personnel status at all times. He assumes command of the platoon in the absence of the platoon leader.

c. Radiotelephone Operator. The radiotelephone operator operates and maintains the communication equipment located in platoon headquarters.

d. Rifle Squad Leader. Each rifle squad leader is responsible for the discipline, training, welfare, control, and tactical employment of his squad. He is responsible for the combat readiness of all equipment. He uses his fire team leaders to assist him in control. In the mechanized rifle squad, he is responsible for vehicle maintenance.

e. Fire Team Leader. Each rifle team leader assists the squad leader in control of the squad in combat, and directs the actions of his team in carrying out the squad leader's orders. The senior fire team leader assumes command of the squad in the absence

of the squad leader. *In no way are these team leaders in the chain of command of the rifle squad.*

f. Rifle Squad Members. Riflemen, automatic riflemen, and grenadiers are trained to be proficient in individual as well as team combat. Their specific tasks are assigned by the squad leader or fire team leader, as appropriate. The grenadier of each fire team is armed with a grenade launcher. One rifleman in each fire team is normally designated to carry additional ammunition for either the automatic rifleman or the grenadier. The platoon leader may designate platoon members to be armed with special weapons in addition to their primary weapons. In the mechanized rifle squad, one man is designated squad machinegunner.

g. Weapons Squad Leader. The weapons squad leader is responsible for the discipline, training, welfare, and tactical employment of his squad. Based on the platoon leader's orders, he normally selects exact firing positions for squad weapons and he may control their fires. He supervises the displacement of his squad.

h. Weapons Squad Members. Machinegunners and antitank gunners employ their weapons as directed by the weapons squad leader. They control the fire of their weapons and the displacement of their teams as directed. The senior gunner assumes command of the squad in the absence of the squad leader. Assistant gunners assist in the employment of their respective weapons. Ammunition bearers resupply the machineguns and antitank weapons as directed and are prepared to replace members of either a machinegun or antitank weapon crew in the event of casualties. In the mechanized rifle company, there is only one ammunition bearer in each squad; the carrier driver is also an ammunition bearer.

i. Driver. In the mechanized rifle platoon, there is a specified driver for each carrier.

Section III. LEADERSHIP AND COMMAND

7. General

For a detailed discussion of leadership, see FM 22–100.

8. Troop-Leading Procedure

Troop-leading procedure is the logical sequence of actions a leader follows to make best use of his time, facilities, and personnel while preparing for and executing an assigned mission. Troop-leading procedure as discussed in this paragraph is appro-

priate for all leaders within the company in all types of operations. Depending on the existing circumstances, the level of command, and the type of operation, some steps or elements may be accomplished before others. In some situations, all steps may not be required or may not be possible because of time limitations. Time is the governing factor in the application of the steps of troop-leading procedure, and though all steps should be considered, the degree of consideration of each may vary. The sequence as outlined below is suitable for many situations. It is presented as a guide to assist the leader in making maximum use of the available time and means to prepare for and execute his mission. The sequence may be modified as necessary.

a. Begin Planning.

(1) *Begin the estimate of the situation.* On receiving the order from his next higher commander, the leader begins by first analyzing the mission to insure a thorough understanding of the specified and implied task(s) to be performed by his unit. This analysis of the mission activates the estimate of the situation (para. 9), and it is one of the most important steps in the estimate process.

(2) *Plan the use of available time.* After analyzing the mission, the leader immediately plans the use of the time available. Based on his experience, he allots a portion of the time for his own reconnaissance and planning, and he allots sufficient time for the reconnaissance and planning of his subordinates.

(3) *Continue the estimate of the situation.*

(*a*) The leader makes a terrain analysis on a map, sketch, or aerial photograph to determine the observation and fields of fire, concealment and cover, obstacles, key terrain features, and avenues of approach available in his area of operation and in adjacent areas.

(*b*) He studies the enemy situation, analyzing the enemy strength, locations, dispositions, and capabilities.

(*c*) He then develops courses of action which are analyzed and compared to determine which one offers the best chance for success.

(4) *Make a preliminary plan based on this initial estimate.* Based on this estimate, the leader formulates a tentative plan of action which serves as a basis for future planning. He announces it as guidance to individuals who will make recommendations on the employment of their units. For example, in the attack the company command-

er tells the weapons platoon leader, the artillery FO, and attached tank platoon leader his tentative plan of attack.

b. Arrange For:

(1) *Movement of the Unit (Where, When, How).* The leader must plan early for the movement of his unit, if appropriate, to include where, when, and how. Often, the company commander arranges for the entire company to move from an assembly area under control of the executive officer. At other times, subordinate leaders must arrange for the movement of their own units. The leaders usually receive the order to start the movement while they are forward with their commander. Sometimes they can return and bring their units forward, while at other times they must send someone back with instructions for the second-in-command to lead the movement. The instructions should be explicit and should include information as to the new location, the route to be used, the order of march, the time of arrival, and dispositions in the new location.

(2) *Reconnaissance.* The leader plans his reconnaissance so as to cover the area as completely as time permits. He may plan to coordinate with certain individuals at specified points and times. He plans which persons will accompany him, and he selects routes and a schedule. When time is limited, the company commander may assign specific reconnaissance responsibilities to his subordinates (such as the weapons platoon leader), directing them to make recommendations based on their reconnaissance. The rifle platoon leader may assign similar responsibilities to his platoon sergeant or weapons squad leader, as appropriate.

(3) *Issuance of order.* As early as possible, the leader informs his subordinates when, where, and to whom he will issue his order. When the terrain and enemy situation permit, he plans to orient his leaders from a vantage point overlooking the area of operations. He may designate someone to guide the subordinate leaders forward.

(4) *Coordination.* The leader plans to coordinate with adjacent unit leaders and with leaders or representatives of supporting units, units in contact, or other units with which he will come in contact during the operation. Many

of these leaders will be present for the issuance of the higher commander's order, at which time the leader can begin coordinating with them. The leader also makes plans to meet these and other leaders at a later time. The purpose of the coordination is to exchange information on plans of operation to insure that there is no mission conflict between units.

c. Make Reconnaissance. On his ground reconnaissance, the leader continues the estimate process, adjusting his courses of action as the results of his reconnaissance dictate, and he selects the best course of action under consideration. He then selects or confirms, as appropriate, such items as objectives, phase lines, LD, defense areas, routes, weapons position areas, sectors of fire, and targets. He notes the effects of the terrain on his tentative plan, and he adopts, alters, or rejects appropriate portions of this plan accordingly. During his reconnaissance, he coordinates with adjacent and supporting unit leaders as planned.

d. Complete Plan. After completing his reconnaissance, the leader receives recommendations from subordinates, if appropriate. Based on their recommendations and upon his personal reconnaissance, he revises as necessary his initial estimate and his tentative plan, and he completes his plan of action. He then prepares notes to be used in issuing his order.

e. Issue Order. At the time and place previously designated, the leader meets his subordinates. He orients them on the terrain from a vantage point. If this is not possible, he uses maps, sketches, aerial photographs, or an improvised terrain model. He then issues his order, using the standard operation order sequence (para. 10 and FM 7–11, app. II), to include everything his subordinates need to know. He insures that his subordinate leaders understand the order.

f. Supervise Activities. The leader, with the assistance of his subordinates, actively supervises his unit to insure the order is carried out as intended. If he notes a deficiency or a misunderstanding, he takes immediate corrective action. The need for effective supervision cannot be overemphasized.

9. Estimate of the Situation

By making an estimate of the situation, the small-unit leader considers all the factors which will affect the employment of his unit. The estimate of the situation is a problem-solving process, a continuous process of evaluation and revision which should be followed no matter how quickly a decision must be made. It is a

systematic method of selecting the course of action which offers the greatest possibility of success. At the small-unit level, the estimate is a mental process. The time spent making the estimate depends on the time available. The format of an estimate should follow the sequence discussed below.

a. Mission. The mission is a clear, concise statement of the task to be performed. It will be assigned by the next higher commander. A thorough understanding of the task to be performed is essential. If there is any question about the assigned mission, additional information must be obtained from the commander who assigned it. *Throughout the conduct of the operation, the commander must keep the mission foremost in mind.* Situations arise which might divert him unless he continually reviews the assigned task.

b. Situation and Courses of Action. The purpose of this step of the estimate is to consider all the factors or pertinent facts of the situation which affect the employment of the unit, the capabilities of the enemy that could threaten the accomplishment of the mission, and the reasonable courses of action which, if successful, will accomplish the mission.

(1) *Factors affecting possible courses of action.*

(*a*) *Characteristics of area of operations.*

1. *Weather.* The weather, present and predicted, is considered as it will affect personnel, equipment, visibility, and trafficability within the area of operations.

2. *Terrain.* A thorough terrain analysis is made of the area of operations, to include study of maps and aerial photos. The terrain is studied both from the friendly and enemy's probable viewpoint to evaluate observation and fields of fire, concealment and cover, obstacles, key terrain, and avenues of approach. The commander considers how these aspects of the terrain will affect the mission.

(*b*) *Enemy situation and friendly situation.* The enemy and friendly situations are studied to determine the relative strengths and weaknesses of each. Such factors as the dispositions, reinforcements available, weapons, fire support available, strength and morale, status of vehicles equipment and supply, recent significant activities, and relative mobility are considered.

(2) *Enemy capabilities and probable course of action.* Enemy capabilities are all courses of action of which the enemy

is physically capable and which, if adopted, could affect accomplishment of the mission. Consideration of the enemy situation, to include the capabilities, will indicate the most probable enemy courses of action. Enemy capabilities are then considered in the order of their relative probability of adoption.

(3) *Own courses of action.* The commander or leader develops courses of action from a study and consideration of the information provided, or facts gathered, regarding the mission, weather, visibility, terrain, relative combat power and mobility, his commander's concept or guidance, his own knowledge of tactics, and time available. He makes a mental note of the feasible courses of action which will accomplish the assigned task. The commander's courses of action for an offensive operation may simply take the form of the direction of the attack and terrain to be seized by the main attack. For example: "Attack 170730 October in direction Hill 486—Hill Charlie—Hill X-Ray to seize Hill 638." The commander's course of action for a defensive action may take the form of a general line or positions along which the FEBA will be placed and how the maneuver elements will be disposed. For example: "Defend along the west side of MacArthur Road," as compared with another possible course of action: "Defend along the ridgeline 300 meters west of MacArthur Road." If there is more than one feasible formation for each of the foregoing courses of action, then these courses of action may be expanded to include each formation.

c. Analysis of Opposing Courses of Action. Having determined possible courses of action, the commander or leader briefly considers how each of these would be affected by each of the enemy's capabilities. In this analysis, he visualizes the probable outcome of each course of action when opposed by each enemy capability. During this analysis, the other factors such as weather, visibility, terrain, enemy and friendly situation, and mobility are considered as they affect each course of action. Certain factors may have equal effect on each course of action, while other factors, called governing factors, have a variable influence on the several possible courses. It is the governing factors which are the basis for the comparison of own courses of action.

d. Comparison of Own Courses of Action. The governing factors are usually the mission, terrain, enemy and friendly dispo-

sitions, and time. The commander compares the various courses of action based on the governing factors and weighs the advantages and disadvantages of each. Based on his military knowledge, experience, and best judgment, he selects that course of action which offers the best chance of success. If two or more courses of action offer equal promise, he selects the one which most favors future action.

e. Decision. After selecting the best course of action for the offense, the commander formulates his detailed decision, i.e., the scheme of maneuver, to include the direction and objective(s) of main and supporting attack, where or how he plans to employ the reserve, and designation of these maneuver units. The decision is a concise statement of the commander's judgment of the manner in which his mission can be accomplished and may be expressed as follows: "Company attacks at 170730 October with 1st Platoon making the main attack in direction Hill 681—RJ 16 —Hill 823 to seize Hill 823, and 2d Platoon making a supporting attack in direction Hill 621—Hill 685—Hill 711 to seize Hill 711. 3d Platoon follow 1st Platoon." In the defense, the decision may be worded: "Company defends by 170730 October along the west side of MacArthur Road with 1st Platoon on the left, 2d Platoon on the right, and 3d Platoon in reserve vicinity Drake Hill. Priority of fires to the 1st Platoon. Forward platoons will exchange machinegun FPL." This decision, and the estimate from which it is derived, forms the basis for development of the rest of the commander's tactical plan, and subsequent preparation and issuance of orders to the subordinate leaders. The decision should normally answer the questions WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, HOW, and WHY.

10. Operation Order

An operation order sets forth the organization for combat (task organization), the situation, the mission, the commander's decision and plan of action, and the details of execution needed to insure coordinated action by a unit. The order format and content is discussed in appendix II, FM 7–11. Example orders are shown in appendix IV of this manual.

Section IV. OPERATIONS

11. General

The rifle platoon must be prepared to fight in all types of warfare, terrain, and weather. This section contains general consid-

eration for both nuclear and nonnuclear warfare and broad guidelines for platoon and squad leaders. It is imperative that the small-unit leader have a sound knowledge of the tactics and techniques of employing his unit in all situations. He must have a knowledge of the effects, delivery capabilities, concept of employment, and the changes in tactics required by the use of nuclear weapons.

12. Fundamentals of Employment

a. Control is directing and guiding individuals in the unit to insure the accomplishment of the unit's mission. Platoon and squad leaders must have firm control over their subordinates at all times. This is accomplished by maintaining communication with subordinates and through personal contact with them.

b. Security includes the measures taken to preclude surprise by the enemy: use of observation posts, listening posts, outposts, patrols, surveillance devices, and warning devices, and the alertness of the individual soldier. Material presented in this section agrees with applicable portions of STANAG 2047, Emergency Warning of Hazard or Attack.

c. Flexibility is the quality of being readily adaptable to changing conditions. Organizational flexibility is inherent in the TOE of the rifle platoon. The leader must also be flexible to the changing conditions and demands of combat to insure that his unit is effectively employed.

13. Effects of Nuclear Weapons

a. The principal casualty-producing effects from nuclear weapons are blast, thermal radiation, and nuclear radiation. The number of casualties produced by each of these effects depends on many variables; the primary ones are size of the nuclear weapon, height of burst (subsurface, surface, or airburst) distance of troops from ground zero, and the protection used by troops (in the open, in foxholes, or protected by armor). Troops in well-prepared foxholes have a better chance of surviving a nuclear attack than troops protected only by armor or, obviously, troops with no protection.

b. Conditions similar to those that existed in nonnuclear combat in the past will be greatly intensified in nuclear warfare, especially the following:

(1) *Obstacles.* Obstacles that did not exist prior to the detonation of a nuclear weapon can be expected within minutes after such a detonation: blast can cause tree blowdown, create widespread rubble in built-up areas, create

open areas, and create large dust clouds that obscure vision. Radiation can contaminate large areas and prohibit or restrict occupation by troops. Fire can block avenues of advance and smoke may reduce visibility.

(2) *Mass casualties.* A much larger number of casualties than has been experienced in nonnuclear battles may result from a single nuclear attack. Self-aid will assume increased importance. Self-determination to continue with the mission despite being injured will become a dominant factor in accomplishment of the mission. Treatment of injuries may be delayed. All soldiers must know these facts and realize that the accomplishment of the mission is the paramount objective in *any* combat, nuclear as well as nonnuclear.

(3) *Isolation of units.* Nuclear warfare will be characterized by relatively sudden and drastic changes in the tactical situation. Gaps may be created between units. Large numbers of casualties may indirectly open areas for enemy penetrations. Small units may become isolated in nuclear combat, thus requiring firm leadership, a thorough understanding of the mission to be accomplished, and a higher degree of initiative on the part of the small-unit leader.

(4) *Psychological aspects.* Fear of the unknown, shock caused by a nuclear explosion, uncertainty as to what to do—these psychological aspects of nuclear warfare may result in panic among troops or cause them to lose their will to fight; therefore, psychological effects become prominent considerations in leading troops in nuclear combat. Thorough training and enforced discipline coupled with strong leadership on the part of the small-unit leader will prevent these psychological considerations from becoming major obstacles to the accomplishment of the mission. A driving, dominant desire to accomplish the unit mission must always be uppermost in the minds of all men in the platoon and squad.

14. Tactical Operations in Nuclear Warfare

Nuclear weapons availability and the warfare it portends require increased emphasis on the training of the individual soldier. He must stay in excellent physical condition, and the knowledge and skills he learns—such as camouflage and concealment, field fortifications, first aid, patrolling, proficiency with crew-served

and individual weapons, adjustment of artillery and mortar fire, and self-confidence—all provide the foundation on which the conduct of successful operations is built. There are, however, certain other characteristics of nuclear warfare that the small-unit leader must consider:

a. Nuclear weapons are another form of fire support. The small unit can become a powerful force when it can call for nuclear fires on an enemy.

b. Terrain will maintain its importance in tactical operations. A small force may, by properly positioning itself and through the use of electronic devices and observation, control large areas by its ability to call for nuclear fires. However, the application of nuclear weapons may restrict the use of terrain and reduce the observation of it. Dominant terrain features that provide good observation are also probable targets for both nuclear and nonnuclear weapons.

c. Mobility will assume increased importance. Units may be required to assemble from widely dispersed assembly areas, disperse after concentrating to perform a mission, move long distances to reinforce sections of the front or to counterattack, and move from location to location to prevent detection by the enemy. For these reasons, the small-unit leader must be thoroughly trained in airmobile, mechanized, and footmobile operations, as he may be required to participate in any one at any time.

15. Chemical and Biological Operations

a. Both enemy and friendly forces may use toxic chemical and biological agents tactically. They may be used separately or together at any particular time. For example, a nuclear attack may be followed by a toxic chemical agent attack, or toxic chemical agents may be used to contaminate certain areas in order to canalize or delay forces and make them more vulnerable to nuclear attack.

b. Chemical and biological agents may be used to contaminate large areas or to restrict, if not prohibit, use of small areas. Such operations may be used to weaken an entire front or to create a high percentage of casualties within a restricted area.

c. In any case, the unit must be trained to continue its mission under chemical and biological attack. The individual soldier must have a knowledge of unit and individual protective measures and procedures so that he can carry out his mission with the least risk of injury. Unit leaders must teach individual procedures to their

troops to provide for collective and tactical defense, and use of organizational first-aid equipment and detection devices. Small-unit leaders must be prepared to cope with situations which will tax to the utmost their knowledge, judgment, initiative, and moral and physical courage. They must be prepared to operate under fragmentary, oral orders.

d. For a detailed discussion of chemical and biological operations, see FM's 3–5, 3–10, 3–12, 21–40, 21–41, and 21–48; AR 220–58; and TM 3–210.

16. Action Against Enemy Aircraft

a. Primary protection against air attacks for the rifle platoon or squad area is provided by air defense units supporting the infantry brigade or battalion.

b. The rifle platoon and squad take active and passive measures to prevent detection by enemy aircraft and to minimize the effect of enemy air attacks. Passive measures include dispersion, cover and concealment, camouflage, and the establishment of an adequate warning system. Under an air attack, troops deliver all available small-arms fire on the attacking aircraft. Positively identified low-flying enemy aircraft may be taken under fire when the unit is not under direct attack, if restrictions on firing at low-flying aircraft have not been imposed by the company commander. Against fast aircraft, the platoon may use a technique known as a "pattern of fire" in which every individual fires his weapon in the path of the aircraft, making no attempt to track it. Against slow aircraft, counterair fire will be more effective by placing well-aimed shots on the target. Aircraft recognition as described in FM 30–30 should be stressed in unit and individual training.

c. If machineguns organic to the platoon are provided wtih mounts which facilitate the tracking of aerial targets, machine-gunners should be thoroughly trained in the techniques of tracer observation as described in FM 44–2.

17. Intelligence

a. General.

(1) Combat intelligence is knowledge of the enemy, the weather, and the terrain which is used in tne planning and conduct of tactical operations. The purpose of the intelligence effort is to discover facts, to draw from these facts appropriate conclusions that can be used to facilitate the accomplishment of the mission, and to

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deny the enemy information of friendly forces and terrain.

(2) Information is sought of the enemy strength, location, and activity. This information is evaluated to determine enemy capabilities and which of these capabilities the enemy is most likely to use. The small-unit leader is particularly interested in such items of enemy information as the strength and location of opposing forces in contact; enemy activity; details of positions, including automatic weapons, mortars, tanks, and antitank weapons; location and strength of local reserves; and minefields, barbed wire, and other obstacles.

b. Collection of Information.

(1) The small-unit leader is directly involved in the collection of information about the enemy and terrain. Since the enemy will probably maintain a counterintelligence effort, the small-unit leader must be aggressive in his efforts to obtain enemy information. Outposts, listening posts, and forward positions have good observation of the nearest enemy area. By reports from these sites concerning the enemy and terrain, valuable information is obtained.

(2) Counterfire information assists in locating enemy close support weapons. This information is obtained by actual observation of the gun flash, by the sound of the weapon, or by crater analysis.

(3) Patrols provide a means of obtaining information from behind enemy lines. They provide information about obstacles, soil trafficability, and enemy strength, locations, and dispositions which is of immediate concern to the rifle company commander or small-unit leader.

c. Reporting of Information. The rifle platoon obtains information of the enemy primarily through reports from individuals within the platoon. The individual soldier is a primary collector of combat intelligence; whether on a combat patrol or manning a remote listening post, he is the eyes and ears of the commander. Troops must report all information of the enemy, negative as well as positive. Often, the knowledge that the enemy is *not* at a certain location or *not* engaged in a certain activity is extremely important.

d. Prisoner-of-War Handling. Rapid and orderly evacuation of prisoners of war is the most important factor in prisoner-of-

war handling. Prisoners of war must be removed from the battle area for interrogation as soon as possible to insure timely intelligence.

18. Communication

a. Communication is the means by which the small-unit leader directly controls his unit; communication is essential to the success of the platoon in combat. The platoon leader uses radio, wire, visual signals, sound, and messengers to maintain communication within his unit and with higher headquarters. No one means of communication is satisfactory for all situations; any of the five means listed above may be used alone or in various combinations to insure that communication is established and understood. Communication must be clear, concise, accurate, and timely.

b. Radio is the least secure means of communication; it may be jammed by the enemy, and he may monitor messages transmitted over it. It offers rapid, voice-to-voice contact at extended ranges. Radio can be used in defilade and, consequently, reduces exposure of the user to hostile fire.

c. Messenger is the most secure means of communication. It is the only means by which information in the form of maps and overlays can be transmitted.

d. Wire takes time to install; however, once it is installed, it provides communication security second only to that provided by a messenger.

e. An arm-and-hand signal provides a fast means of transmitting a message to a large group. Unless the signal is prearranged and understood, it may be misinterpreted. Visual signals provide limited security because they can be seen and possibly interpreted by enemy forces. Repeated use of the same visual signal may compromise its use.

f. Sound signals have relatively the same advantages and disadvantages as visual communication. In addition, the effectiveness of sound as a means of communication may be reduced by normal noises in combat.

g. See FM's 21–60, 24–18, and 24–20 for further details on signal communications.

19. Maintenance

Maintenance of unit equipment, materiel, and weapons is the direct responsibility of the small-unit leader. To survive in com-

bat, there can be no instance in which a weapon fails to fire, a vehicle fails to start, or a radio fails to function. The small-unit leader, through the standards he sets in maintenance and by personal supervision, insures the continued functioning of his weapons and equipment.

Section V. FIRE SUPPORT

20. Company Support

a. The rifle platoon is assisted in accomplishing its mission by fires from supporting units.

b. The weapons platoon of the infantry, airborne, and mechanized rifle company contains a platoon headquarters, a mortar section, and an antitank section.

(1) The mortars supply the primary means of indirect fire support available from the rifle company to each of its platoons. To assist the platoon leaders in directing these fires, a forward observer (FO) party from the mortar section is normally assigned to each rifle platoon. The FO party(ies) observes and adjusts the fire of the mortar squads and, when required, the fire of artillery and heavy mortar units. The mortar section is capable of firing white phosphorus (which may be used for smoke, for signaling, and for antipersonnel and incendiary missions), high explosive (primarily used for antipersonnel missions), and illumination rounds. In the defense, barrages of the mortar section are located in front of the forward rifle platoons, integrated into defensive fires primarily along avenues of approach.

(2) The antitank section is normally under company control. On occasion, an antitank squad(s) may be attached to a rifle platoon(s). These squads provide the primary means of antitank support to the rifle company. They are placed to cover likely armor approaches into the company zone or along the axis of advance, or to permit close fire support for attacking rifle platoons.

c. For details on the organization and employment of the weapons platoon, see FM 7–11.

Section VI. FIGHTING AND EXISTENCE LOAD

21. General

Leaders at all echelons are required to make decisions governing what equipment will be carried for specific operations. In making this decision, the leader should be aware of those items classified in the fighting load and the existence load. The equipment specified for each load is given in appendix V.

CHAPTER 2

OFFENSE

Section I. GENERAL

22. General

This chapter provides guidance on offensive operations by infantry, airborne, and mechanized rifle platoons and squads.

23. Mission

a. The mission of the rifle platoon and rifle squad in the attack is to close with and destroy or capture the enemy.

b. The weapons squad furnishes the platoon rifle squads with machinegun fire support and close-in antitank protection.

24. Employment

a. Rifle Platoon.

(1) The rifle platoon usually attacks as part of a coordinated company action, as described in FM 7–11. It maneuvers under cover of both organic and nonorganic fire support to assault the enemy.

(2) When the platoon is employed as a semi-independent force, its leader has more freedom of action. He employs his weapons squad and supporting fires to fix the enemy and neutralize his fire, while maneuvering rifle squads to assault the enemy, preferably from the flank or rear. As a semi-independent force, the platoon will usually be reinforced.

b. Rifle Squad. The rifle squad normally attacks as part of the platoon, moving as a unit under supporting fire. The rifle squad leader adapts combat formations (app II) to existing conditions and the platoon leader's instructions, keeping fire teams intact. If effective small-arms fire is encountered, the squad immediately returns the fire and employs fire and maneuver to close with the enemy, either alone or in conjunction with other squads (app III).

c. Weapons Squad. The machineguns and antitank weapons organic to the weapons squad are employed as directed by the rifle

platoon leader to provide close fire support and antitank protection as the platoon moves forward in the attack.

d. Platoon Reserve. The platoon leader employs his entire platoon in the attack. Exceptionally, he may employ a reserve when space is not available for three squads abreast in an assault, or to protect an exposed flank.

25. Tactical Control Measures

The company commander controls the maneuver elements in the attack by those control measures prescribed in FM 7–11. To permit his subordinate leaders maximum freedom of action, he prescribes the minimum control measures necessary to insure the progress of the attack in the desired manner. Normally, these are:

a. Time of Attack. The time of attack is the time that the leading rifle elements cross the line of departure, as specified in the company order, to control both the maneuver and fire support elements.

b. Assembly Area. An assembly area is an area in which a command assembles preparatory to further action. Within the company assembly area(s), the company commander designates dispersed platoon assembly areas where orders are issued, maintenance and supply are accomplished, and the organization for combat is completed. Assembly areas should provide concealment, dispersion, suitable routes forward, and security from ground or air attack. When possible, they should be beyond the effective range of the bulk of enemy artillery.

c. Attack Position. The attack position is the last concealed and covered position short of the line of departure where platoons deploy in the attack formation, fix bayonets, and accomplish last-minute coordination. The rifle platoon will halt in the attack position only when final preparations cannot be completed in the assembly area or on the move, or when ordered to halt by the company commander.

d. Line of Departure.

(1) A line of departure (LD) is designated to coordinate the beginning of an attack. Desirably, it should be easily recognized on the ground, generally perpendicular to the direction of attack, under control of friendly units, and not under enemy direct fire or observation. When the LD cannot be fixed on terrain, the line of contact (LC) may be designated as the LD.

(2) The LD specified by the company commander may be unsuitable for elements of the platoons. When this occurs, the platoon leader may select and use a platoon LD, but the platoon must cross the company LD at the time specified in the company order.

(3) If the LD is the line held by another unit already in contact with the enemy, coordination is required to insure the uninterrupted passage of lines in order to minimize the time that a nuclear target is presented. Speed and secrecy are emphasized. When possible, plans are made for the attacking echelon to be guided through gaps between elements in contact.

e. Boundaries. Boundaries are tactical control measures used to delineate areas of responsibility for units. In an attack, a boundary should extend beyond the objective at least to the depth necessary for coordination of fires in the seizure and consolidation of the objective. Boundaries are not normally used at rifle platoon level except when visual coordination between platoons cannot be accomplished or when, for other reasons, intermingling of platoons is likely. Units may move and fire across boundaries only after coordination with the adjacent commander and after notifying the next higher commander. When boundaries are not designated. a platoon zone is designated by the company commander by use of identifiable terrain features. Further, each platoon leader must coordinate his scheme of maneuver with adjacent platoons.

f. Axis of Advance. The axis of advance is a line extending in the direction of the enemy and indicating the general route along which attacking elements will move. An axis of advance is seldom assigned by the company commander to his subordinate platoons, but he may assign a platoon route within or along the company axis. This control measure is most frequently used when a certain approach facilitates seizure of a deep objective; in operations against light, disorganized, or discontinuous enemy resistance; and when the need for a closely coordinated attack does not exist. The commander may maneuver his troops and place his fires freely to either side of the axis, as necessary to avoid obstacles, to engage the enemy, or to bypass enemy forces of such strength as not to threaten his security or jeopardize the accomplishment of his mission. Significant deviations and bypassed enemy forces are reported to higher headquarters.

g. Direction of Attack. The direction of attack is a specific direction or route which the center of mass of the platoon will fol-

low. Effective enemy resistance must be cleared along the direction of attack.

h. Checkpoint. A checkpoint is an easily recognized point on the terrain, such as a road junction, used either to control movement or as a reference point for reporting the location of friendly units and for designating targets for supporting fires.

i. Contact Point. A contact point is a point on the terrain where two or more units are required to make physical contact, such as during the consolidation of the objective.

j. Phase Line. A phase line is a line perpendicular to the direction of attack and is usually an easily recognized terrain feature such as a ridge, stream, or road. It is used by the company commander to control the forward movement of the platoon and as a reference in reporting locations. The platoon will be required to report arrival at, and sometimes clearance of, phase lines. A phase line may be used to coordinate the advance of attacking elements in order that supporting fires and maneuver will be most effective. The platoon stops at phase lines only on order.

k. Final Coordination Line. The final coordination line is a phase line used to coordinate the lifting or shifting of supporting fires and to coordinate the final deployment of the attacking echelon prior to an assault. Because of the dispersion pattern of indirect supporting fires (principally artillery and heavy mortar), the final coordination line is normally located within 100 to 150 meters of the enemy position on the objective, or as close to the enemy position as attacking troops can move before becoming dangerously exposed to friendly supporting fires. It should be easily recognized on the ground. *Ideally, it should have concealment and cover.* When two or more units or elements of a unit assault simultaneously, elements of the attacking echelon may be halted at the final coordination line to await the arrival of other elements. A halt, if required, should be short of the line because of its proximity to the enemy.

(1) When enemy positions are known and supporting fires can be carefully planned, the company commander may select a tentative final coordination line while planning the attack. He selects a tentative line only for those objectives on which a coordinated assault by two or more platoons is planned, leaving the selection of other lines to the platoon leaders.

(2) When a final coordination line cannot be selected ahead

of time, it may have to be selected (or changed) during the attack (para. 31).

l. Objectives. The company objective is usually a key terrain feature, a geographical area, or an enemy force. When seizure or destruction of the company objective requires the employment of more than one platoon, the objective is clearly divided into platoon objectives to delineate responsibility. Terrain features selected as platoon objectives should have as many of the following characteristics as possible:

(1) They should be easily recognized on the ground.

(2) They should provide for convergence of effort.

(3) They should be within effective range of company mortars.

(4) They should be neither too wide nor too deep to be controlled by the platoon after their seizure.

26. The Attack

a. General. The attack is characterized by fire and maneuver combined and controlled to create a preponderance of combat power that culminates in an assault in the decisive area. A plan of attack includes a scheme of maneuver and plan of fire support.

(1) The *scheme of maneuver* (para. 28) is the plan for the placement and movement of maneuver elements on the ground to accomplish the mission. The rifle companies are the basic maneuver elements of the battalion, and the company maneuver elements are the rifle platoons (and tank platoons, when attached).

(2) The *plan of fire support* (para. 28) complements the scheme of maneuver and is developed concurrently. It includes the use of all available fires—organic, attached, and supporting.

b. Fire and Maneuver. The attack is distinguished by fire and maneuver culminating in an assault.

(1) *Fire and maneuver* involves two distinct elements having separate missions which must be closely coordinated to generate maximum combat power:

(*a*) Maneuver elements (rifle squads and platoons).

(*b*) Base-of-fire elements (can consist of organic, attached, and/or supporting weapons).

(2) The mission of the maneuver elements is to close with the enemy and destroy him with fire.

(3) The mission of the base-of-fire element is to minimize the enemy's capability to interfere with the movement of the maneuver elements and, within its capabilities, to neutralize or destroy the enemy.

(4) Fire superiority by the base-of-fire element must be gained early and maintained throughout the attack to permit freedom of action by the maneuver elements. The degree of fire superiority achieved will determine the speed at which the maneuver elements are able to move. Once established, fire superiority must be maintained either by the base-of-fire element or, when these fires are masked, by the maneuver element itself, or else the attack may fail.

(5) *Fire and movement* begins once the maneuver element meets effective enemy opposition and can no longer advance under cover of supporting fires without taking unacceptable losses. One portion of the maneuver element provides close fire support while another portion of the maneuver element advances toward the enemy or assaults his position.

(6) Fire and movement within the maneuver element at rifle platoon level is characterized by the action of individuals, fire teams, and squads in the assault of an objective. The effectiveness of enemy small-arms fire will determine the size of the element conducting fire and movement. Two principles to remember when closing with the enemy through heavy small-arms fire are:

(*a*) Only a minimum number of men should expose themselves simultaneously.

(*b*) Maximum *aimed* firepower must cover advancing troops.

c. Rifle Platoon Advance by Fire and Maneuver. For purposes of clarification of the above terms, following is a discussion of the rifle platoon during the conduct of an attack:

(1) As the maneuver element (the rifle platoon) crosses the LD (para. 25), the base-of-fire element attempts to gain fire superiority to allow freedom of movement for the maneuver force in its advance to the final coordination line (para. 25).

(2) The platoon leader employs a combat formation (app. II) that gives his maneuver force maximum security, control, and speed in its movement forward.

(3) Ideally, the platoon leader attempts to maneuver his force under cover of the base-of-fire elements all the way to the final coordination line. Battle drill (app III) is executed by the rifle squads deploying into the basic platoon assault formation (platoon line) prior to reaching the final coordination line. Movement across this line is a smooth, continuous advance with no halts or lateral deployment in the face of the enemy at this close range.

d. Maintaining Fire Superiority. As the maneuver element (platoon) crosses the final coordination line, supporting fires from the base-of-fire element dangerous to the maneuver force are shifted to the flanks and rear of the objective. In order to maintain fire superiority if a portion of the original base of fire is lost, the maneuver element must supplement the base-of-fire element with its own fires. This is accomplished by one portion of the maneuver element providing close fire support while another portion of the maneuver force moves toward the enemy. This technique of fire and movement continues as long as fire superiority is not absolute. The assault begins when the fires of the maneuver force have eliminated or neutralized effective enemy fire. This may occur either at the final coordination line or anywhere between this line and the enemy position.

e. Sequence of Actions at Rifle Platoon Level. A complete sequence of actions at rifle platoon level during the conduct of the attack is covered in paragraphs 30 through 35.

Section II. RIFLE PLATOON IN THE DAYLIGHT ATTACK

27. Preparation for the Attack

The rifle platoon prepares for the attack in its assigned portion of the company assembly area. Security is maintained by organizing the platoon portion of the company perimeter, posting sentries, establishing security posts, and using camouflage and concealment. Prone shelters are dug for protection against direct and indirect fire. Upon receipt of the battalion order or warning order, the company commander issues a warning order to the rifle platoons. This is a brief, fragmentary order containing time of attack, company mission, and details such as drawing special equipment, ammunition, and rations; turning in extra equipment; and the time and place the company order will be issued. Each platoon leader, in turn, relays this order to his subordinates. The platoon leader then moves forward to meet the company commander at the time and place set for the company order. He is normally ac-

companied by a guide, FO, and the weapons squad leader. During the platoon leader's absence, the platoon sergeant or senior squad leader supervises the continuing preparation for the attack, which includes turning in or drawing equipment, ammunition, and rations; checking camouflage; checking and cleaning weapons; setting battlesights; and boresighting antitank weapons.

28. Platoon Plan of Attack

Upon receipt of the company attack order, the platoon leader immediately begins his troop-leading procedure (para. 8) and makes an estimate of the situation (para. 9). Based on his estimate, he formulates his plan of attack (fig. 2) which consists of two parts: the scheme of maneuver and the plan of fire support.

a. Scheme of Maneuver. This is the employment plan for that portion of the platoon which comprises the maneuver element. It should be simple and flexible, and it should achieve surprise. It includes—

(1) *Route.* The route should take advantage of cover, concealment, and supporting fires, and it should direct the attack at the enemy flank or rear. However, the company commander normally restricts the choice of routes to coincide with his overall plan.

(2) *Formations.* The rifle platoon leader selects an initial attack formation and may designate formation changes along the route. The choice of formation is influenced by the mission, enemy situation, terrain, weather and visibility, and the desired speed and flexibility. For appropriate platoon and squad formations, see appendix II.

(3) *Selection of final coordination line.* The platoon leader selects a tentative final coordination line if one has not been designated by the company commander (para. 25).

(4) *Consolidation of the objective.* The platoon leader designates the general area of responsibility on the objective for each squad and a general location for each organic and attached crew-served weapon. Areas are chosen from which to repel a counterattack. The most desirable method of assigning areas of responsibility is to point out terrain features which mark the limits of each area (fig. 3). When terrain features are not visible, the platoon leader uses the clock system (fig. 4). An imaginary clock is placed on the objective with the center of the clock on the center of the platoon objective. The 6 o'clock—12 o'clock axis is specified on the ground by

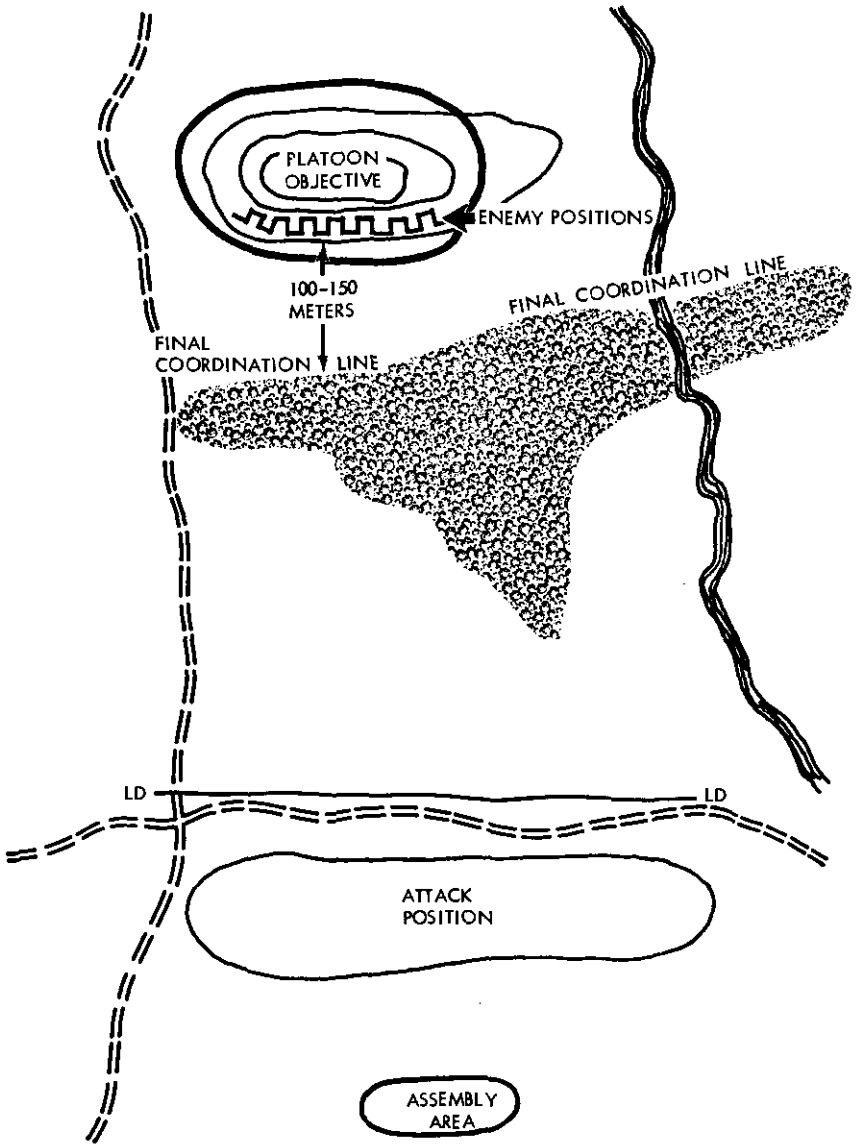

Figure 2. Rifle platoon in the daylight attack (schematic).

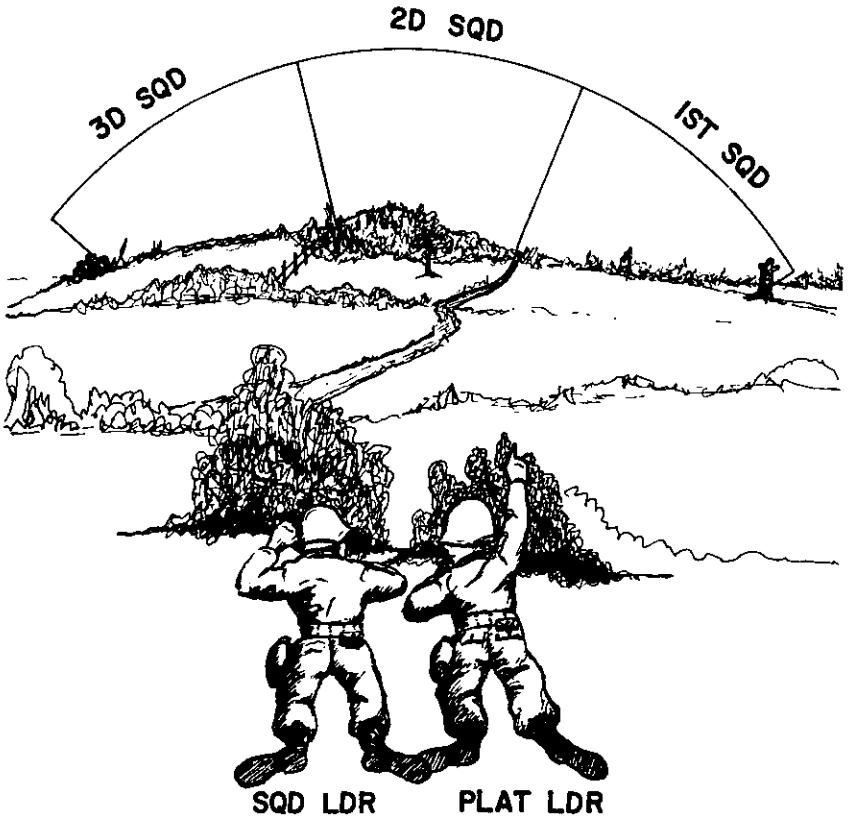

Figure 3. Terrain-feature method of designating squad areas for consolidation.

the platoon leader as extending from one outstanding feature to another, and usually in the direction of the assault. Squad and weapons positions are assigned by hour number.

(5) *Control.* The rifle platoon leader positions himself where he can best control the entire platoon and influence its actions. To maintain control, he designates a base squad, issues oral orders, remains in personal contact with subordinate leaders, and employs various means of communication, especially radio, flares and smoke streamers, and arm-and-hand signals.

b. Plan of Fire Support. In the rifle platoon plan of fire support, the fires of weapons of the company and higher units are planned to support the attack by neutralizing enemy positions while the platoon maneuvers to close with the enemy. In addition to considering nonorganic supporting fires, the rifle platoon leader,

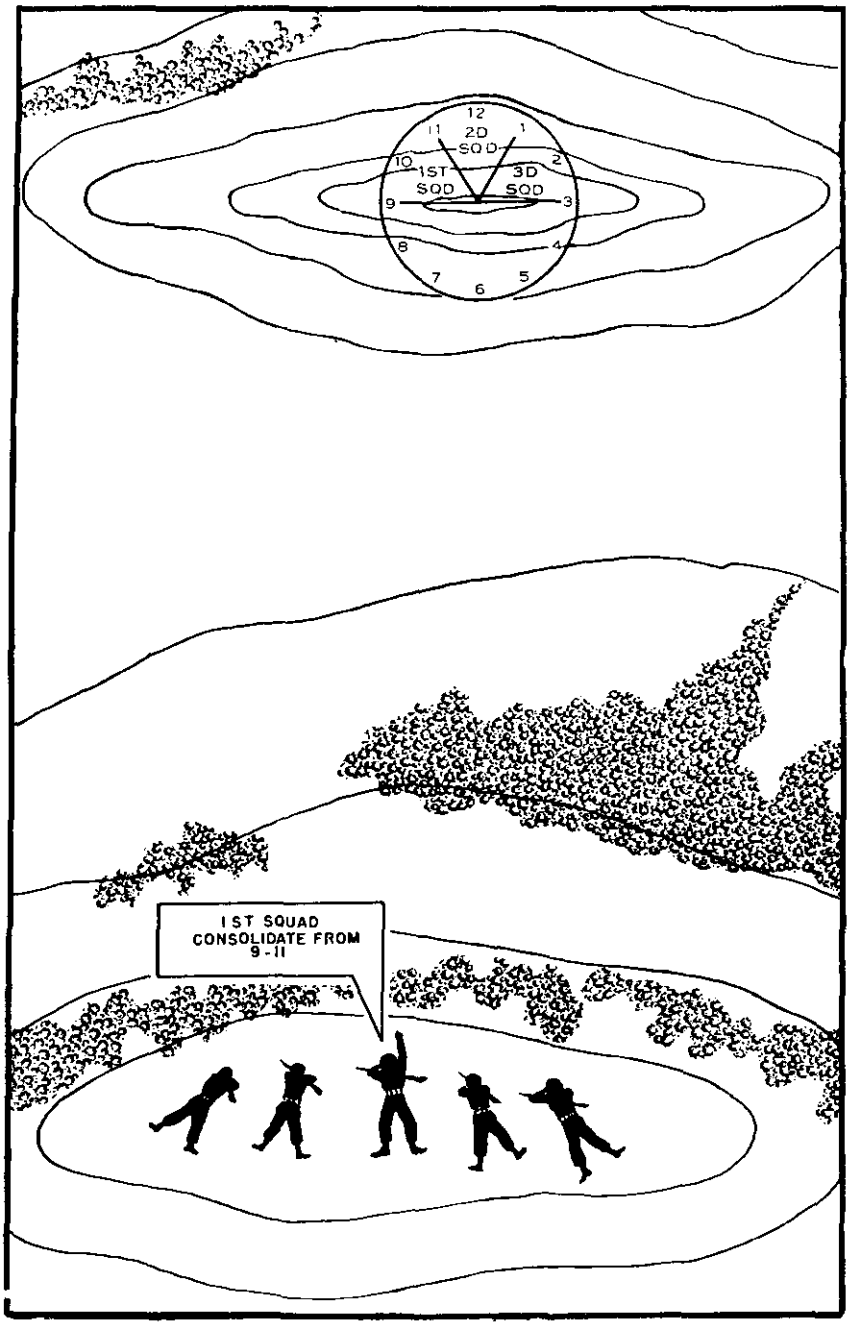

Figure 4. Clock system of designating squad areas for consolidation.

usually assisted in fire planning by a mortar FO, plans the employment of organic and attached weapons. If available supporting fires are inadequate to support his scheme of maneuver, the platoon leader may request additional supporting fires from the company commander, or he may use a rifle squad to provide additional direct fire support. The platoon leader's plan for organic and attached supporting weapons includes:

(1) *Initial employment.* The platoon leader designates general firing positions and assigns target areas. His decision on the employment of weapons is influenced primarily by observation, fields of fire, and weapons characteristics.

(*a*) *Machineguns.* If positions are available near the LD which afford observation and fields of fire over the route to the objective(s), machineguns of the weapons squad may occupy these positions just prior to H-hour. If a portion of the route is obscured from these positions, best fire support may result if one machinegun occupies a position near the LD while the other accompanies the maneuver element. If no fields of fire and observation exist over the route from positions near the LD, machineguns should accompany the maneuver element.

(*b*) *Organic antitank weapons.* Because of the comparatively short range of the antitank weapons organic to the rifle platoon, they will normally accompany the maneuver element. If no armor threat exists, antitank weapons are used to fire on targets such as grouped personnel and bunkers.

(*c*) *Attached weapons.* The platoon leader's plan for the use of attached weapons is based on fields of fire and observation available, weapon characteristics, and the recommendations of leaders of attached units.

(2) *Employment during the assault.* Machineguns, organic antitank weapons, and attached weapons should be in position to cover the movement of the rifle squads in the assault. They provide maximum fire support during the assault, continuing to fire until masked by the advance of friendly troops. When their fires are masked, these weapons displace, usually to new supporting positions. One or more machineguns may accompany the rifle squads in the assault.

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(3) *Displacement of machineguns.* Plans are made for the machineguns to displace by echelon to new positions as their fires are masked by the advance of friendly elements, or when control becomes difficult, to insure close, continuous fire support for the attacking echelons.

(4) *Consolidation.* General locations covering likely avenues of enemy approach are designated on the objective for each crew-served weapon. Routes for displacement to the objective should permit rapid movement and early occupation of positions.

(5) *Control.* The platoon leader plans to keep his organic and attached supporting weapons within communicating distance so he can control their fires throughout the attack. If this is not feasible, the platoon sergeant or weapons squad leader may be used to assist in this control. Radio as well as sound and visual signals is used. To avoid exposure to enemy fire and observation, weapons crews should move into position over covered routes.

c. Action Against Prepared Defenses. The rifle platoon leader will plan for the breaching of obstacles and enemy fortifications which may be encountered along the route and within the objective area. When there are suspected but unlocated bunkers in the area, the platoon leader makes special preparation in the event the suspected bunkers are encountered. These special preparations include:

(1) Informing the squad leaders of the probable locations of the suspected bunkers.

(2) Arming the platoon with additional white-phosphorus and high-explosive hand grenades, and obtaining special equipment and weapons (wire cutters, bangalore torpedoes, flamethrowers, and demolitions).

(3) Tentatively designating the elements of the platoon to compose the fire support and the maneuver elements and assigning special tasks to the maneuver element (FM 31–50).

(4) Assigning available special equipment to the squad having the mission of final neutralization of the bunker.

d. Issuance of Attack Order. At the designated time and place, the rifle platoon leader assembles his subordinate leaders, including attached unit leaders, and issues his attack order, following the standard operation order format (para. 10 and FM 7–11, app. II).

e. Rehearsal. Whenever feasible, the rifle platoon should conduct a rehearsal of the planned attack on terrain which resembles that of the objective area as closely as possible. A rehearsal is a valuable means of insuring that squad and individual tasks are understood, that planned control measures are adequate, that radios are in working order, and that the planned scheme of maneuver and fire support can accomplish the assigned mission. The rehearsal should cover movement to and past the LD, actions on unexpected enemy contact, and actions at the final coordination line, during assault, and during consolidation of the objective. These actions can be telescoped in time and space.

29. Action of Squad Leaders

Upon receipt of the rifle platoon attack order, the squad leaders begin their troop-leading procedure (para. 8) and make an estimate of the situation (para. 9).

a. Rifle Squad Leader. During reconnaissance, the rifle squad leader studies the terrain, paying particular attention to the route, landmarks on which to guide, and known or suspected enemy positions. He then plans the actions of his squad from the time it crosses the LD through consolidation of the objective. He plans in detail his assigned tasks, any anticipated action at danger areas along the route such as seizing terrain short of the objective, and his squad's part in the assault and consolidation.

b. Weapons Squad Leader. During reconnaissance, the weapons squad leader selects exact firing positions for weapons (including both primary and alternate positions) according to the platoon leader's instructions. He pays particular attention to targets, routes to weapons positions, routes for displacement, and the route the maneuver element will take to the objective.

c. Issuance of Orders. Time permitting, the squad leaders issue their orders in the assembly area, following the standard operation order format and using an improvised terrain model or sketch to orient their men. Often, the available time will be so limited that a squad leader must issue his order while moving forward from the assembly area, or in the attack position. The squad leader should orient his men on the terrain as soon as possible.

30. Conduct of the Attack

a. General. Control of small units in the attack is most difficult. The platoon leader uses his subordinates, radio, and visual signals (arm-and-hand, flares, smoke streamers) to control his platoon.

He assigns definite missions to subordinate leaders and individuals. He anticipates situations that could develop and keeps his plan of attack flexible.

b. Movement from Assembly Area to Line of Departure. The rifle platoon moves forward from the assembly area under company control. The platoon will often be under the command of the platoon sergeant or senior squad leader for this movement. Elements of the weapons squad may precede the remainder of the platoon to occupy firing positions on or near the LD. If an attack position is used, the platoon deploys into the initial attack formation, posts security as required, and accomplishes last-minute coordination. Normally, movement from the assembly area is timed so the leading elements of the platoon cross the LD at the specified time without halting in the attack position. Whether or not an attack position is used, deployment into the initial platoon and squad attack formations is accomplished and bayonets are fixed prior to crossing the LD.

c. Movement from Line of Departure to the Final Coordination Line.

(1) The maneuver element of the rifle platoon makes a rapid and continuous advance from the LD to the final coordination line. Maximum use is made of cover, concealment, and supporting fires, to include smoke.

(2) Elements of the weapons squad and attached weapons fire from positions that best support the forward movement of the maneuver element. The squad leader or gunner specifies the method and rate of fire and gives the command to open fire on specified targets. Sufficient fire is placed on a target to neutralize it, but consideration is given to conserving ammunition for other targets which may appear during the attack. The squad leader or gunner observes the progress of the maneuver element and engages targets which threaten it. When machineguns are located close together, the squad leader anticipates the masking of their fires and displaces the weapons by echelon in which one machinegun displaces before its fires are masked by the maneuver elements. The remaining machinegun continues to provide fire support until its fires are masked, at which time it will displace. The displacement of all supporting weapons should be so timed that the platoon is provided with maximum continuous close fire support. When the weapons are separated, teams or crews may displace under control of

the gunners when their fires are masked, or when they can no longer provide close fire support.

(3) If the platoon is subjected to artillery or mortar fire along the route, it moves quickly through or around the impact area.

(4) When enemy resistance is encountered short of the objective, fire is returned immediately by those squads in position to fire. Organic and attached supporting weapons engage the enemy and the platoon leader requests additional supporting fires as required. Depending on the location and nature of the enemy resistance, and the plan of attack, the rifle platoon in the attack may bypass enemy elements which cannot be neutralized or eliminated but which cannot affect the accomplishment of the platoon mission. The location of all bypassed enemy is reported to the company commander.

(5) If enemy resistance cannot be bypassed, aggressive action is taken to eliminate it. The continuous application of fire alone will normally not be decisive and may result in a stalled attack and unnecessary casualties. If a squad is in a position to maneuver against the enemy, the squad leader quickly makes an estimate of the situation to determine if he can use battle drill (app. III) to close with and destroy the enemy. Fire superiority over the enemy is necessary before maneuver can be accomplished. If possible, the squad maneuvers over a covered and concealed route to strike the enemy flank or rear.

(6) When enemy resistance is first encountered, the leading squad(s) returns fire immediately. Because of his location well forward in the formation, the platoon leader will be able to see the action being taken by the leading squad(s). He makes an estimate of the situation, quickly formulates a plan (including designation of a final coordination line if necessary), and gives commands or signals to carry out his plan. He should not commit squads piecemeal but should initiate a coordinated action which will subject the enemy resistance to the platoon's maximum combat power. Prompt action by the platoon leader is necessary in order to properly control and coordinate the action. The platoon leader attempts to maneuver an element to strike the flank or rear of the enemy position. When the enemy resistance is destroyed,

the platoon continues rapidly toward its assigned objective.

(7) Obstacles encountered along the route will be breached if the means to do so are available, or they may be bypassed. The platoon leader will decide how best to overcome the obstacles without losing the momentum of the attack. The company commander should be informed of any obstacles that may affect units following the platoon.

31. Movement From the Final Coordination Line to the Objective

a. The assault is controlled and coordinated by the use of the final coordination line. The location of the final coordination line (para. 25) is determined by how close the attacking force can get to the objective without suffering unacceptable casualties from friendly supporting fires. Because of the dispersion characteristics of heavy mortar and artillery fires, this is approximately 100 to 150 meters. However, this distance may be reduced if terrain permits, or if the platoon leader determines that fewer casualties will be suffered if the attacking echelon moves closer to the enemy positions under cover of supporting fires, as in the case of an attack against a well-prepared defensive position. If a tentative final coordination line has been designated, the platoon leader determines whether or not the existing situation permits its use. If a tentative final coordination line has not been prescribed prior to the attack, or if the company commander does not prescribe one during the attack, the platoon leader will designate one at the earliest possible time in order that coordination may be made in preparing for the assault. He may do this by referring to previously designated checkpoints or phase lines or by specific reference to identifiable terrain features. When the tentative final coordination line is selected, or changed, both the company commander and fire support units must be immediately notified.

b. As the platoon approaches the final coordination line, supporting fires on the enemy position increase in intensity. The platoon completes its deployment so that it crosses the line in its assault formation. In some situations, the attacking troops may be halted so that deployment may be completed and all elements cross the final coordination line simultaneously; this is an undesirable course of action and should be avoided. If such a halt is required, it will be accomplished *short* of the line so that supporting fires can continue on the enemy position.

c. When deployment is completed, the platoon crosses the final coordination line (fig. 5). Supporting fires dangerous to the troops (heavy mortar and artillery) are lifted or shifted while others (such as company mortars) continue to fall on the enemy position. The attacking troops, together with direct fire supporting weapons, increase the intensity of their fires in order to maintain fire superiority over the enemy. This lifting or shifting of the indirect supporting fires, normally controlled by the company commander, must be coordinated closely with the advance of the attacking troops. The commander is assisted in this control by reports or signals from his platoon leaders and by his own observation of the attack. As the fires of direct fire weapons become masked by the attacking troops, they are shifted by the gunners.

d. The successful movement of the attacking echelon is largely dependent upon the effectiveness of the supporting fires. Enemy resistance may dictate an advance by fire and movement (para. 26). In this case, the enemy position(s) offering resistance must be singled out by platoon and squad leaders as individual objectives. *The final coordination line is not normally the location where assault fire techniques are begun.*

e. When the attacking elements have gained fire superiority, assault fire techniques are employed (fig. 6). This condition cannot be determined prior to crossing the final coordination line but may occur at any time between the final coordination line and the enemy position. In closing with the enemy, riflemen move rapidly, firing aimed or well-directed shots either from the shoulder or underarm position at locations in the zone of advance that could conceivably contain an enemy. Regardless of whether the riflemen fire from the shoulder or underarm position, it will usually be necessary to pause in order to insure an aimed or well-directed shot. Assault fire is designed to fix the enemy until the riflemen can close with and kill or capture him. Squad automatic weapons are fired in short bursts, covering the squad front. Rifle grenades, hand grenades, bayonets, and flamethrowers are used to overcome pockets of resistance.

f. The assaulting troops, having closed with the enemy, clear the enemy positions and move over the objective far enough to place fire on any withdrawing elements and to protect against a counterattack.

g. Control of the platoon in the assault is exercised as follows:

(1) The platoon leader locates himself where he can best influence the action. This may be with one of the assaulting squads or centrally located in rear of the platoon.

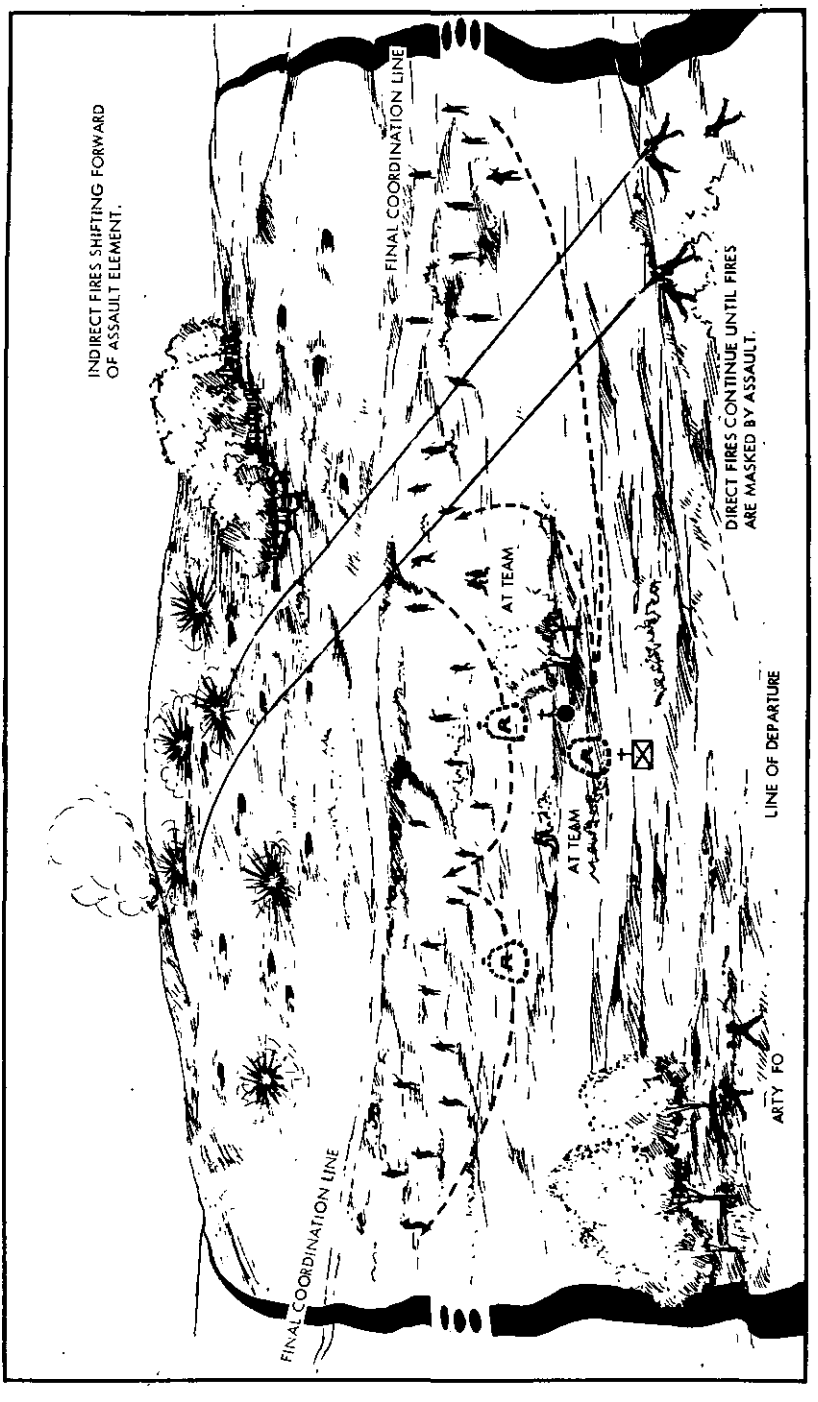

Figure 5. Rifle platoon crossing the final coordination line (schematic).

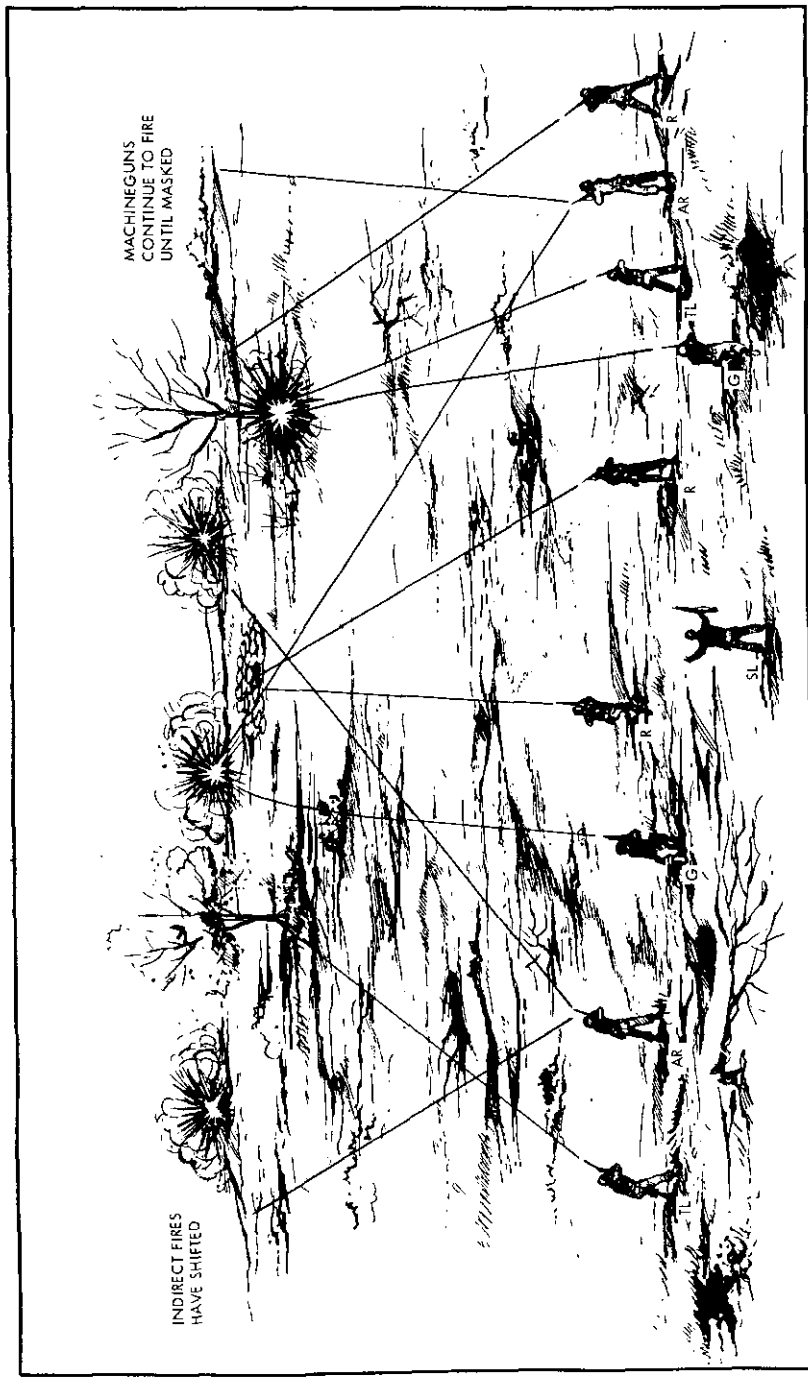

Figure 6. The assault when fire superiority has been gained (schematic).

(2) When more than one platoon is participating in the assault, the company commander designates a base platoon. Platoons in turn designate base squads. All squads guide on the base squad. The base squad leader designates a base fire team within his squad.

(3) All leaders insure that a heavy volume of accurate fire covers the objective, and that the assault moves forward aggressively. As the noise and confusion of battle normally make control by voice difficult, leaders often have to move to critical points of action where they can make certain their commands are understood and carried out.

(4) Since the unit must be prepared to repel a counterattack and/or resume the attack after the objective is seized, all leaders insure that individuals do not waste ammunition during the assault by indiscriminate firing.

32. Conduct of the Assault Against a Strong Enemy Defense

a. Depending upon the time and resources available, the enemy will continually improve his defensive positions by the construction of overhead cover on individual and weapons emplacements, by improvement of existing natural obstacles and installation of artificial obstacles, and by preparation and coordination of his defensive fires. While the basic principles of the assault (para. 31) are applicable to the assault of strong enemy positions (fig. 7), application of the principles will vary with each situation.

b. When the enemy has obstacles forward of his defensive position, maximum use will be made of heavy mortar and artillery indirect fire support weapons to saturate the area immediately forward of his positions to destroy, or clear paths through, such obstacles. Under these conditions, positioning for the assault will be accomplished by fire and movement with one element engaging known enemy positions by fire while other elements make their way through the enemy obstacles. When one element is through the obstacles, it will form a base of fire support to cover the movement of the other elements through the obstacles. During this action, indirect supporting fires are used to further neutralize enemy fires. Smoke may be employed to reduce enemy observation and the effectiveness of his fires. When the major portion of the assaulting elements are on the enemy side of obstacles and within assaulting distance of the objective, the assault is launched with speed, violent action, and maximum use of all available weapons and special equipment.

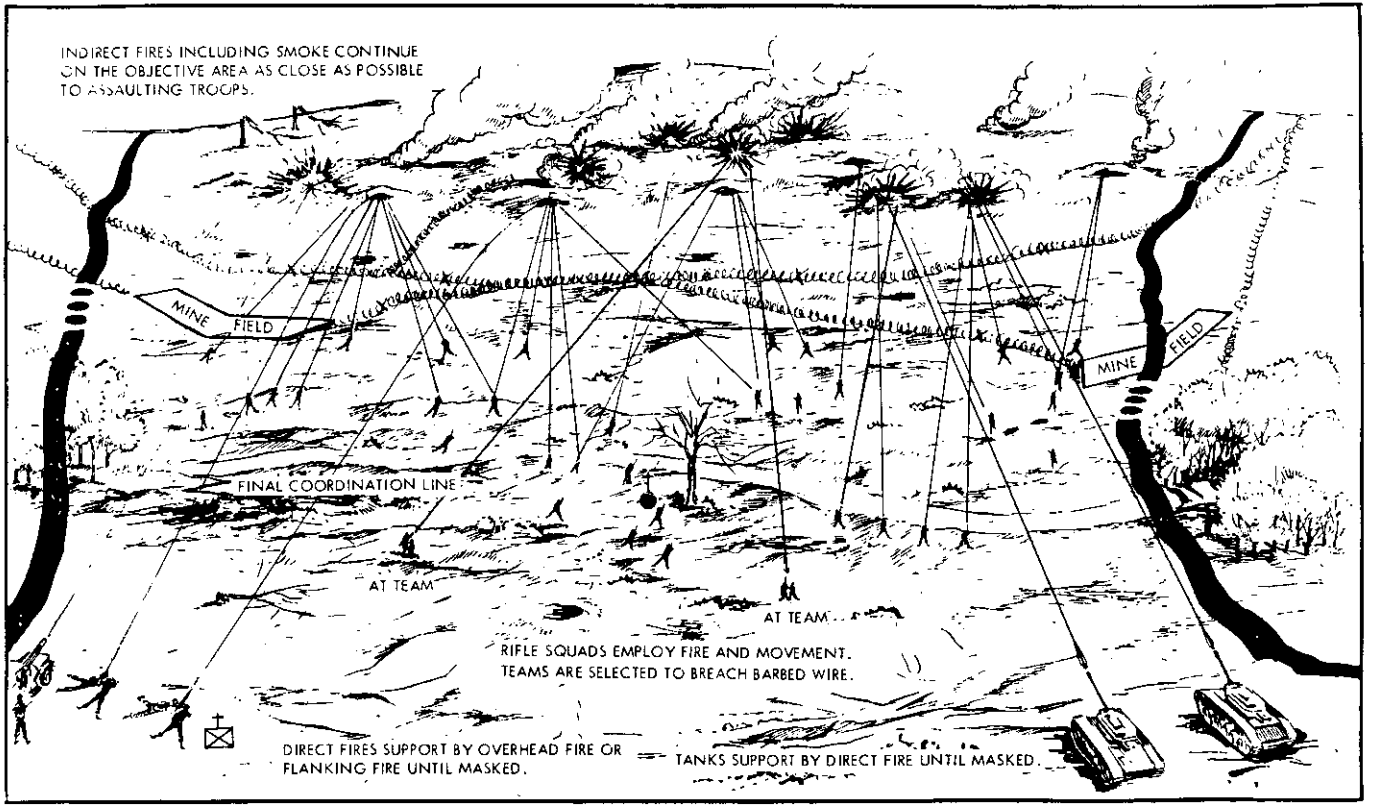

Figure 7. The assault against a strong enemy defense (schematic).

c. Special weapons and equipment for use against well-prepared enemy positions should be requested by the platoon leader, including bangalore torpedoes, flamethrowers, demolitions, tank dozers, and tanks equipped with minefield-breaching devices.

d. Usually, the planned preparatory fires on the objective will damage enemy wire obstacles and remotely controlled antipersonnel weapons employed forward of the position and will create paths through minefields. The rifle platoon leader must be continually aware of the effectiveness of these preparatory fires and exploit every advantage created by them.

33. Conduct of the Assault When Fire Superiority Has Not Been Gained

a. When supporting fires have not been entirely effective or when sufficient supporting fires are not available to neutralize the enemy fires, and fire superiority remains in the balance, fire and movement is the only means by which the attack can proceed (fig. 8). The movement element will take advantage of cover and concealment (creeping and crawling when necessary), supporting fires, and its own fires. Alternating fire and movement are employed by the maneuver element until fire superiority has been gained or the objective has been seized. The question of fire superiority may remain unsettled even though some elements are within the enemy positions and others are advancing by fire and movement.

b. Maximum use is made of the platoon's organic machineguns, antitank weapons, and grenade launchers in the assault. The terrain and the situation permitting, these weapons should be employed well forward. Desirably, the machineguns should be employed on the flank(s) of the assaulting elements where they can provide effective direct fire support before becoming masked by the assaulting elements. The platoon antitank weapons can be effectively employed against known enemy positions and may accompany the assaulting elements or support the assault from available firing positions in proximity to the objective. The grenadiers, depending upon the situation and terrain within the objective area, may accompany the assaulting elements or support the assault with overhead fire from positions to the rear of the assaulting elements. Because of the capabilities and firing characteristics of the grenade launchers, these weapons can be effectively employed to make up for the lack of effectiveness of other types of indirect fire supporting weapons.

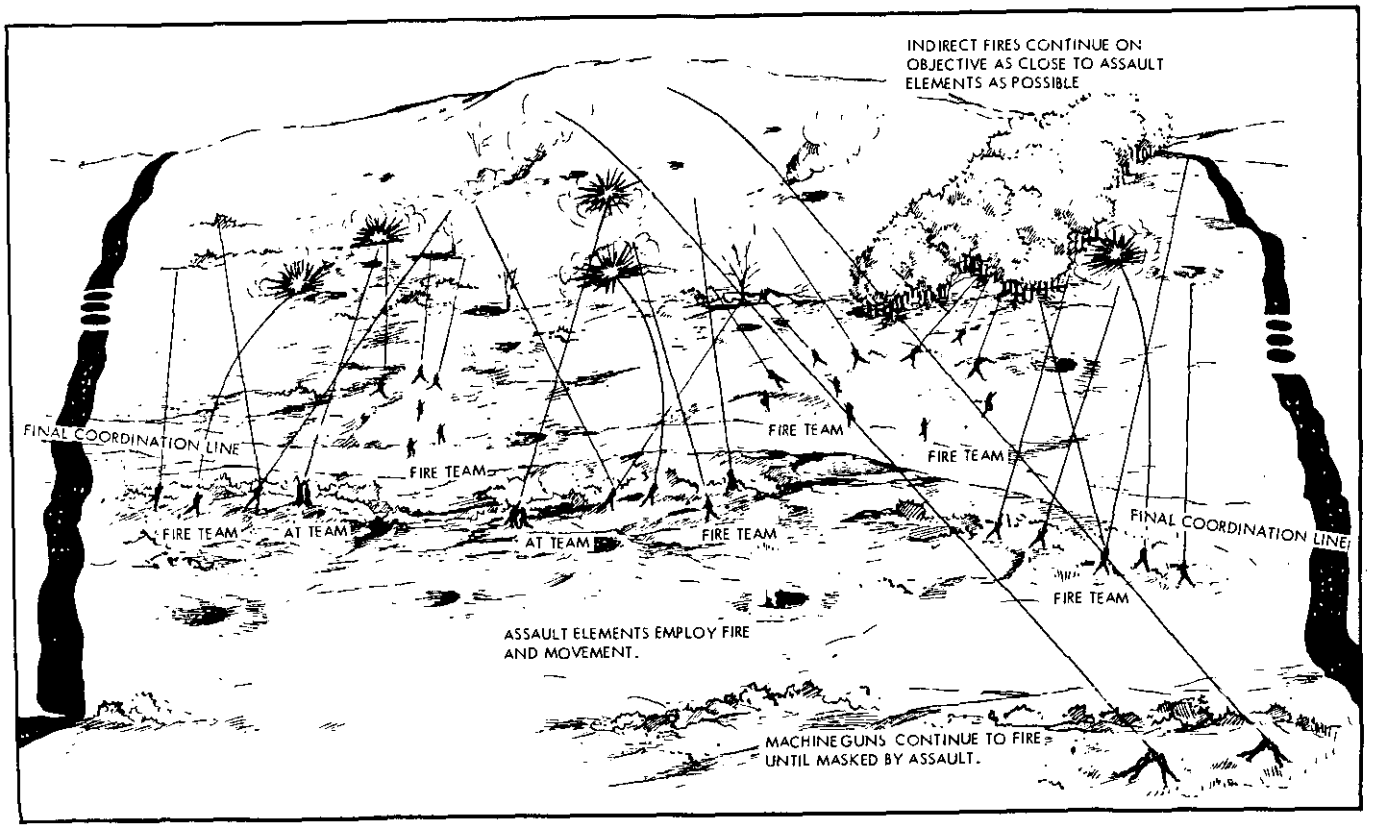

Figure 8. The assault when fire superiority has not been gained (schematic).

c. Elements of the assaulting echelon which may have gained a foothold within the enemy positions support the remainder of the assault by fire and the use of hand grenades to destroy the enemy in nearby positions.

d. All leaders within the rifle platoon must take aggressive action to exploit the slightest gains, demonstrating leadership and aggressiveness in controlling their portions of the assaulting elements.

34. Consolidation

a. Consolidation pertains to all measures taken to organize and strengthen a newly captured position as it may be used against the enemy; initially, a hasty defensive posture is assumed to ward off possible counterattacks. Thereafter, the platoon takes necessary action to occupy the objective or, following minimum essential reorganization (para. 35), to continue the attack depending on its mission.

b. The platoon leader empnasizes security, displacing and positioning of forces, fire planning, reconnaissance, and reorganization. These actions should not unnecessarily slow the momentum of the attack if it is to be continued.

c. Upon seizure of an objective, the platoon leader immediately orders small security elements forward to the next vantage point in the direction of the enemy, provided this vantage point is within small-arms range of weapons on the newly captured position. If no such vantage point exists, and the terrain is open, this security element, with approval of the company commander, should be positioned forward to the limit of small-arms range or visibility, whichever is greater. The mission of these small security elements is to obtain information of the enemy and relay this information back to the platoon leader. Depending on the strength of his unit after seizure of the objective, the company commander may immediately order patrols sent forward in an effort to maintain contact and keep the enemy off balance.

d. If the attack is to be continued, leaders make necessary reconnaissance, formulate plans, and issue orders. If no orders are forthcoming to exploit the success obtained, the platoon leader makes an estimate of the situation, determines the validity of his original plan for the consolidation, and insures that his platoon has seized the terrain which controls probable approaches to his position. Squad and supporting weapons are positioned without delay and crew-served weapons are assigned general positions from which to cover possible avenues of approach into the area.

e. Rifle squad leaders, assisted by fire team leaders, assign individual positions and sectors of fire. Squad automatic weapons are given sectors of fire and principal directions of fire to cover critical approaches. Men dig in immediately and the weapons squad leader and leaders of attached crew-served weapons select the exact positions for their weapons. These weapons form the defensive framework of the platoon and have the priority for position preparation.

35. Reorganization

Reorganization is a continuous process but it is given special emphasis upon seizure of the objective. During the attack, the platoon may have received casualties, expended ammunition, and perhaps lost equipment. To replace casualties, spot assignments are made for new leaders and gunners. Ammunition is redistributed within the squads by the squad leaders and team leaders. The platoon sergeant pays particular attention to the redistribution of ammunition to squads and the evacuation of casualties and prisoners. Casualties are placed in a covered position while awaiting evacuation. Situation, strength, and ammunition reports are given by the squad leaders to the platoon leader, and by the platoon leader to the company commander.

Section III. RIFLE PLATOON IN A LIMITED-VISIBILITY ATTACK

36. General

a. A limited-visibility attack may be made at night or in fog or smoke to gain surprise, to maintain pressure, to exploit at night a success in continuation of daylight operations, to seize terrain for subsequent operations, or to avoid heavy losses by utilizing the concealment afforded by darkness. Night attacks are considered a part of normal operations, becoming more frequent—and more desirable—as increased enemy firepower makes daylight operations more hazardous.

b. Night combat is generally characterized by a decrease in the ability to place aimed fire on the enemy; a corresponding increase in the importance of close combat, volume of fire, and the fires of certain weapons laid on definite targets or target areas by daylight; difficulty of movement; and difficulty in maintaining control, direction, and contact. Despite these difficulties, the night attack gives the attacker a psychological advantage in magnifying the defender's doubts, apprehensions, and fear of the unknown.

c. A night attack may be nonilluminated or illuminated, or it may begin nonilluminated and end illuminated. This section deals primarily with the techniques used in a nonilluminated attack by stealth, in which the attacker attempts to maintain secrecy and achieve surprise in closing with the enemy. The particular techniques employed will depend on such factors as the enemy strength and degree of preparation of his positions, his security measures, and the terrain and visibility. The situation may permit an attack by stealth to seize an initial objective with the continuation of the attack being made using daylight techniques. Other situations at night may require daylight techniques for the entire attack. During periods of reduced visibility (fog, snow, or smoke), some or all of the techniques in this section may be applicable to an attack during daylight hours.

d. Positive measures are taken to insure secrecy and surprise in a night attack. In addition to limitations on movement and size of reconnaissance parties, the movement of vehicles and weapons is held to a minimum. Light and noise discipline is rigidly enforced. Registration of weapons is avoided or accomplished in a way which will not prematurely disclose the forthcoming attack. A significant change in any type of activity is avoided.

37. Control Measures

The degree of visibility will determine the measures necessary to assure control in night combat. The following control measures are normally used by the company commander in a night attack conducted by stealth. (See also para. 25.)

a. Tactical Control Measures. Terrain features used as tactical control measures, if not easily identified at night, may be marked by infrared equipment, luminous tape, or other means.

(1) *Assembly area.* The assembly area in most limited-visibility attacks, especially at night, is normally smaller and closer to the LD than for a daylight attack.

(2) *Attack position.* An attack position is always designated in a night attack. The attack position should be in defilade but need not offer as much concealment as in daylight; it should permit easy entrance and exit.

(3) *Point(s) of departure.* A point(s) of departure is that point(s) on the ground where the platoons cross the prescribed LD. It is normally selected by the company commander.

(4) *Release points.* Release points are points on the ground at which attacking elements are released from the control

of the higher commander to the control of their respective leaders. A rifle platoon release point is designated by the rifle company commander, and a squad release point is designated by each rifle platoon leader in the assault echelon. Platoon and squad release points are located to provide a gradual deployment during movement to the probable line of deployment. They should be located far enough back to allow attacking units to complete their lateral movement before reaching the probable line of deployment, yet far enough forward to permit centralized control as long as possible.

(5) *Route.* The company commander selects the route from the assembly area to the platoon release point. The rifle platoon leader selects the route from the platoon release point to the squad release point. This selection is made on the basis of observation of the area from a position to the rear of the LD. Because of the difficulties in controlling maneuver during a limited-visibility attack, the platoon will move generally in a straight line over open terrain toward its objective. Therefore, the route from the platoon release point to the squad release point is usually announced as a direction by specifying an azimuth and distance. Guides from the security patrols (para. 39) are normally used to assist in the movement to the probable line of deployment.

(6) *Probable line of deployment.* The probable line of deployment is the location on the ground where the company commander plans to complete final deployment prior to moving forward with platoons and squads on line. This line should coincide with some recognizable terrain feature to facilitate its identification at night. It should be generally perpendicular to the direction of attack and as close to known enemy positions on the objective as it is estimated the company can move without being detected. If the enemy has wire obstacles in front of his position, the probable line of deployment should be on the enemy side of these obstacles.

(7) *Zones of action and objectives.* The company commander assigns platoon zones of action by the designation of a portion of their probable line of deployment and an objective for each platoon. Platoon objectives should be designated by unmistakable terrain features, and they should be small enough to be seized and cleared in a single assault to lessen the problems of control at night.

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Intermediate objectives are not usually assigned in night attacks.

(8) *Limit of advance.* A limit of advance is generally designated beyond the objective to limit the advance of attacking elements. It should be easily recognized in the dark (a stream, road, edge of woods) and far enough beyond the objective to allow security elements space in which to operate. Fire support units are free to engage enemy forces beyond this line.

(9) *Time of attack.* Often, an attack is made late at night so that initial objectives can be seized by daylight and the attack continued at the time. If the objective is relatively deep, or if the company mission requires immediate continuation of the attack, the attack may begin early at night and continue to the final objective during darkness.

b. Additional Control Techniques. Additional measures used to facilitate control may include:

(1) Use of azimuth, mortar or artillery marking rounds, or tracers to assist in maintaining direction.

(2) Use of guides and connecting files.

(3) Designation of intervals and distance to be maintained between individuals and squads.

(4) Designation of a base squad or platoon on which all other squads or platoons will base their movement.

(5) Use of infrared or other night-vision devices.

(6) Identification of leaders and friendly troops by use of luminous or white buttons, tape, or armbands.

(7) Use of radar sets organic to the battalion which may be attached to the company and used to vector the attacking units' movement to the objective.

(8) Use of searchlights to mark the objective or to assist in maintaining direction.

c. Communication. The means of communication employed within the rifle company in the night attack are wire, radio, visual signals (infrared, flashlights, and flares), personal contact, and messenger. Wire may be laid between the company commander and platoon leaders. The use of radios will normally be restricted until the attack is discovered.

38. Formations

a. Considerations. To assist in control of the platoon, the column formation is used as far forward as practicable. If possible, de-

ployment of the rifle squads into a squad line is delayed until the company is within assaulting distance of the enemy positions. The principal considerations in the selection of a formation are visibility, distance to the objective, and anticipated enemy reaction. Based upon these considerations, the company normally crosses the LD either in a column of platoon columns (fig. 9) or in a line of platoon columns (fig. 10). Generally, the single-file formation is avoided.

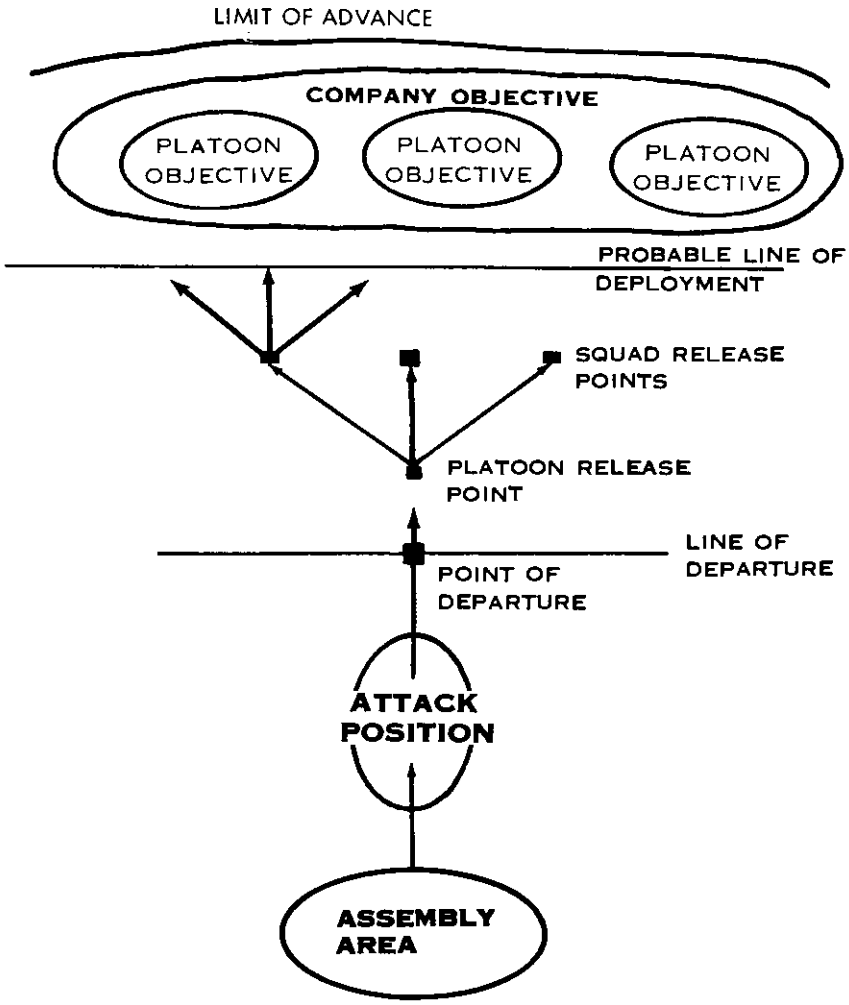

Figure 9. Night attack: company column of platoon columns (schematic).

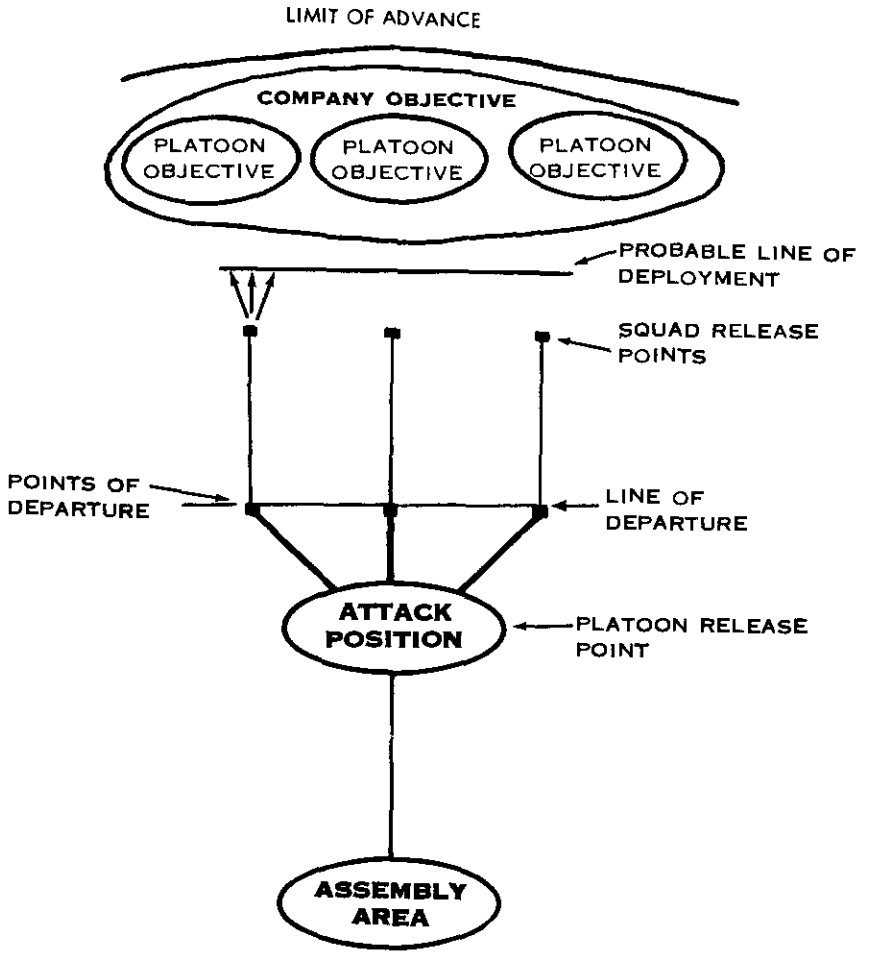

Figure 10. Night attack: company line of platoon columns (schematic).

(1) If visibility is poor, distance to the objective is great, or early contact with the enemy is not expected, the company may cross the LD in a column. Unless enemy action forces earlier deployment, the column formation is retained until the advancing troops reach the platoon release points.

(2) If visibility permits control of a more open formation, the distance to the objective is short, or early contact with the enemy is expected, it may be desirable to advance from the LD in a company line of platoon columns.

(3) If the company is in contact with the enemy and the dis-

tance to the objective is short, it will be necessary to have the leading squads move forward from their positions in a squad line. In this case, the LD is, in effect, the probable line of deployment.

b. Platoon Formations. The platoon column formation is used from the assembly area to the squad release point, unless earlier deployment is forced by enemy action. The platoon line formation is used from the probable line of deployment forward.

c. Squad Formations. The squad column is normally used until the platoon deploys into the line formation. The file formation is avoided unless extremely limited visibility makes control of the squad column impossible or unless terrain restrictions prohibit the use of the column. Use of the file formation by squads doubles the length of the platoon column and consequently increases the time necessary to complete deployment into the line formation.

d. Positions of Leaders. When in the column formation, leaders normally march near the front of their column to facilitate control. When in the line formation, they position themselves to best control their units, a location which will vary with terrain and light conditions.

e. Reserve. The company commander normally employs all three rifle platoons in the assault. Under conditions of reduced visibility, the effective use of a reserve as a maneuver element is extremly difficult because of the difficulties of control and coordination. A reserve is usually withheld only when the company zone of action is extremely narrow or when there is a dangerously exposed flank or rear. If a reserve is designated to provide flank or rear security, the company commander may direct it to follow the attacking echelon closely, or he may leave it on the LD and have it brought forward on signal.

39. Patrols

a. Prior to a night attack, and during darkness, a patrol of four to six men is normally sent out by each rifle platoon to secure the platoon portion of the probable line of deployment and to guide the platoon from the platoon release point to the probable line of deployment. The word "secure" in this case means to provide protection, information, and security for the platoon as it moves forward to the probable line of deployment.

b. The patrol leaders of each platoon are briefed by their platoon leaders. This briefing will normally include:

(1) Route from the platoon release point to the probable line of deployment, including the location of the squad release point.
(2) Specific instructions on the positioning of patrol personnel on the probable line of deployment to best aid the platoon in deploying thereon.
(3) Employment of guides.

c. The patrol leaders are also briefed by the company commander. He orients them on the route forward to the platoon release point, on the time for elimination of any enemy listening posts encountered between the squad release point and the probable line of deployment, the time and place where returning patrol members (guides) must report, and other information deemed necessary for the accomplishment of the mission.

d. After dark, the patrols under the control of the senior patrol leader move forward to a point near the LD (usually the attack position). From this point, the individual platoon patrols move forward and secure the probable line of deployment. Two or three members of the patrol return to the platoon release point to guide the platoon to the squad release point and to the probable line of deployment. The remaining members of the patrol under the command of the patrol leader stay on the probable line of deployment and assist in positioning the squads when they arrive with the guides.

e. Enemy outposts on or near the probable line of deployment are kept under surveillance and then eliminated at the time designated by the company commander or just prior to the arrival of the platoons on the platoon release point. Enemy encountered from the LD to the squad release point are bypassed, if possible, or eliminated as silently as possible. The secrecy of the attack may be jeopardized by the premature elimination of the enemy security post.

f. In addition to security patrols on the probable line of deployment, the platoon uses local frontal and flank security in moving from the platoon release point to the squad release point. The size of the security elements varies with the amount of detailed information available concerning the terrain and the enemy and his likely counteraction. The distance at which they operate depends primarily on the platoon leader's ability to control them.

40. Illumination

a. When authorized, the company commander normally determines the degree of illumination from artificial light sources to be

provided in night attacks. Even though the attack is to be nonilluminated, plans are made for the use of all available illumination if the need for it arises during the conduct of the attack, and illumination may assist in repelling a counterattack. Available sources of illumination may include searchlights (tank or truck-mounted), and flares delivered by hand pyrotechnics, mortars, aircraft, or artillery illuminating shells.

b. Normally during a nonilluminated attack, illumination is not used during the advance to the probable line of deployment. During the assault, direct illumination may be used to blind and confuse the enemy and to aid in the control of assaulting elements. Illumination used to aid consolidation after seizure of the objective is normally limited to indirect illumination by searchlights (artificial moonlight). Illumination from flares is normally used to assist in repelling a counterattack.

c. Infrared illumination, used in conjunction with appropriate viewing devices, may be used to facilitate movement, control, and firing of weapons.

d. Radar may be used to vector the movement of attacking elements onto the objective.

e. If illumination is provided throughout the attack, the tactics and techniques employed are generally the same as for a daylight attack (paras. 27 through 35). However, even with illumination, the problem of control and coordination in a night attack is greater, dispersion is less, and movement is slower than in a daylight attack.

f. Material presented in this section agrees with applicable portions of STANAG 2088, Battlefield Illumination.

41. Supporting Fires

a. The company commander controls the fires of supporting weapons in a night attack. If the attack is to be made by stealth, fires are planned in detail but are delivered only on call. However, some fires may be delivered to maintain the pattern existing prior to the attack. Fires are planned on the objective to support the attack if prematurely discovered. Additional fires are planned to protect the flanks and isolate the objective during the assault and consolidation.

b. If the attack is to be made against a well-fortified position, heavy supporting fires will normally be used. These may include artillery direct fire using high-explosive shells with concrete-

piercing fuze. Illumination may or may not be used; if it is used, fires are planned and delivered generally as in a daylight attack.

42. Organic and Attached Weapons

a. In a night attack, the weapons squad can be employed by the platoon leader in several ways.

(1) Crew-served weapons of the weapons squad (particularly machineguns) may be attached to the rifle squads and participate in the assault. In this case, the weapons are normally attached to the rifle squads in whose area they will be employed in the consolidation. This employment technique is the most desirable; the volume of fire provided by the machineguns will add to the platoon's combat power during the assault.

(2) Crew-served weapons may follow the rifle squads at a specified distance. Again, the weapons are normally attached to the rifle squads in whose area they will be employed in the consolidation. If necessary, the platoon leader can direct any or all of the crew-served weapons teams to accomplish a particular mission during the movement forward from the squad release points.

(3) The weapons squad may remain intact, in column formation, and follow assaulting elements at a specified distance. During, or just as the consolidation phase commences, the weapons will move to their designated locations for the consolidation and cover the probable avenues of enemy approach. This is normally the least desirable course of action because the crew-served weapons will provide no support for the attacking rifle squads.

(4) Machineguns may be positioned on terrain to the rear that affords maximum overhead fire on the enemy. This technique is most advantageous when the attack is likely to be discovered prematurely and close fire support will be necessary. The weapons must be positioned relatively close to the objective to permit good observation, and illumination must be available to aid the gunners in firing effectively. Particular attention must be placed on the use of signals for commencing, shifting, or lifting fires.

(5) A combination of any of the above techniques may be used for employment of the weapons squad.

b. Portable flamethrowers may be attached to the platoons for a night attack, and napalm field expedients may also be employed. Flame has a great psychological effect at night and assists the

attacker during the assault by providing some illumination. Flamethrowers are fired only after the assault has been launched.

43. Platoon Plan of Attack

The difficulties of a night attack are overcome by thorough planning, preparation, and training in night operations. Normally, more time is required to plan and coordinate a night attack than a daylight attack. The difficulty of control dictates a simple scheme of maneuver.

a. Upon receipt of the warning order for a night attack, the rifle platoon leader begins his planning and preparation.

b. After receiving the company attack order, the platoon leader formulates his plan of attack and plans for:

(1) Reconnaissance by key leaders during daylight, dusk, and darkness. Reconnaissance during changing conditions of light assures maximum familiarity with the terrain as it will appear during the conduct of the attack. To insure secrecy, the company commander will normally limit the size and activities of reconnaissance parties.
(2) Selecting, briefing, and dispatching security patrols.
(3) Control measures and formations from the assembly area to the objective.
(4) Actions at the probable line of deployment.
(5) Actions when the attack is discovered.
(6) Conduct of the assault onto the objective.
(7) Consolidation of the objective.
(8) Use of organic and supporting fires.

c. The platoon leader issues his order in the standard format. Although a plan of attack should be as simple as possible, a night attack order is normally lengthy and detailed because of the additional control measures and special instructions required. In conjunction with the order, a thorough terrain orientation is necessary.

44. Preparation for the Attack

Preparation for the night attack is generally the same as for the daylight attack, as discussed in paragraph 27. Special emphasis is placed on:

a. Rehearsals during both daylight and darkness. Rehearsals should include formations, audible and visual signals, and the actions of the platoon from the assembly area to the objective.

b. Members of the platoon resting prior to the attack.

c. Carrying only equipment essential for the success of the attack. All other equipment should be left behind and arrangements made for its delivery on the objective.

d. Camouflaging individuals and equipment. Equipment which rattles is padded or tied down.

e. Avoiding test firing of weapons and unnecessary movement which would prematurely disclose the forthcoming attack.

f. Insuring that the night vision of the platoon members is not destroyed by the use of lights prior to the attack.

g. Preparing illuminous or other special markings for identification of individuals.

45. Conduct of the Attack

a. Security patrols depart the company assembly area in time to accomplish their mission prior to the arrival of the platoons at the probable line of deployment. If enemy listening posts are encountered between the LD and the squad release point, they should be bypassed or eliminated silently. If bypassed, their location should be reported to the company commander and platoon leader. If the listening posts are encountered between the squad release point and the probable line of deployment, the patrols wait until the time designated by the company commander and then eliminate them as silently as possible and continue forward to secure the probable line of deployment. In the event the security patrols are discovered, they will either destroy the listening posts or withdraw, according to the directions that have been issued by the company commander.

b. The rifle platoons normally move in a company column formation from the assembly area to the platoon release point. At the platoon release point, they meet their guides from the security patrol and continue to move along their respective routes to their squad release points. The platoon communication wire is connected to the company switchboard prior to crossing the LD. Frontal and flank security is used, as appropriate, from the platoon release point to the squad release point.

c. Once the platoon crosses the LD, movement to the probable line of deployment is continuous. The rate of advance is slow enough to permit *silent* movement. Enemy encountered are eliminated as silently as possible.

d. If overhead flares are fired during the movement forward to the probable line of deployment, troops quickly assume the prone position until the flares burn out. If caught in the light of a ground flare, individuals move out of the lighted area as rapidly and quietly as possible. Close coordination is required on the use of friendly flares because indiscriminate use of them will result in loss of surprise. If the attack is to be illuminated, friendly flares are fired on signal from the attacking elements (usually after the attacking elements reach the probable line of deployment.)

e. On arrival at the squad release point, rifle squads are released from the platoon column formation to deploy on line prior to reaching the probable line of deployment. Members of the security patrols assist the squad leaders in positioning the squads on the probable line of deployment.

f. When the platoon is fully deployed, the platoon leader reports to the company commander by wire, radio, or messenger. On order from the company commander, the platoon moves forward *silently* from the probable line of deployment, maintaining the platoon line formation and guiding on the base platoon; the squads guide on the base squad.

g. When the attack is discovered, the assault is initiated. The authority to initiate the assault is normally delegated down to and including platoon sergeants, and under exceptional conditions down to and including squad leaders. *Scattered fire by small elements of enemy must not be taken as loss of surprise and should not be the signal to start the assault.*

h. The importance of developing a great volume of fire during the assault cannot be overemphasized. It is at this time that fire superiority must be established and maintained. The assault is conducted aggressively. Troops shout and create as much noise as possible to confuse the enemy. Tracer fire should be used to increase accuracy and control of fire and to demoralize the enemy. Planned indirect fires are requested to isolate the objective. The assault is conducted in the same manner as discussed in paragraph 31 and continues to the far side of the objective. The platoon must not move any farther than the limit of advance.

i. When the objective has been seized, the rifle platoons consolidate. Squad and platoon leaders establish their flanks on previously designated terrain features and establish contact with adjacent units. Organic and attached weapons teams move rapidly into predesignated positions. Local security is established, alert for a possible counterattack. This security does not go beyond the limit of advance. Ammunition is redistributed, supplies are

brought forward, key members of the platoon who have become casualties are replaced, casualties are evacuated, and status reports are made by all leaders. Artillery and mortar FO continue to request and adjust indirect fire on the enemy and along probable avenues of approach.

j. The conduct of the attack, as described above, requires that the attacking elements reach the probable line of deployment without being discovered. If the attack is discovered prior to reaching the probable line of deployment, the following actions will normally occur:

(1) The company commander will call for planned supporting fires on the objective to neutralize the enemy fires. Planned illumination will be called for to permit better control and more rapid movement. If the platoons have not yet been released from the company column formation, the company commander will release them at this time and have them continue rapidly to the probable line of deployment.

(2) The platoons should attempt to continue in the column formation to the probable line of deployment, deploy on the line as they arrive, and continue as in a daylight attack, treating the probable line of deployment as a tentative final coordination line. If they are unable to advance in the column formation without accepting excessive casualties, they must deploy and use fire and movement to reach a position (preferably the probable line of deployment) from which the assault can be launched.

(3) As the supporting fires are masked, the company commander shifts them to seal off the objective.

(4) Once the assault is initiated, the attack progresses as described in *h* and *i* above.

Section IV. RIFLE PLATOON IN THE MOUNTED ATTACK

46. General

a. For purposes of discussion in this section, a mounted attack is one in which the attacking platoon is mounted in carriers for any part of the movement forward of the LD.

b. Carriers operate most effectively over open and rolling terrain where their mobility is not hindered by natural obstacles and where fields of observation are not obscured.

c. Carriers provide the mounted platoon in the attack with these additional advantages and capabilities over the dismounted platoon:

(1) Limited armor protection and overhead cover.
(2) Increased cross-country mobility.
(3) Increased firepower.
(4) Increased ability to respond to changing tactical situations.
(5) Increased psychological effect on the enemy.
(6) Increased load-carrying ability.
(7) Increased conservation of the energy of the infantryman.
(8) Limited protection against effects of nuclear weapons.

d. In the employment of the carrier, every effort must be made to take maximum advantage of its mobility, while at the same time reducing its exposure to enemy antitank fire. Care must be taken to insure that the carrier is employed within its capabilities.

e. Since enemy defenses and terrain obstacles may restrict the effective use of carriers forward of the LD, the attacking platoon must be prepared to dismount rapidly, neutralize resistance, and continue the attack.

47. Preparation for the Attack

Preparation for a mounted attack is the same as for a dismounted attack (paras. 27 through 35) with the following additional considerations:

a. Maintenance on carriers must be performed. Fuel tanks must be filled.

b. Weapons should normally be test-fired if practicable, to include the carrier-mounted weapons. Carrier ammunition loads are brought up to the prescribed level.

c. All radios should be checked.

d. Platoon equipment and baggage are loaded on carriers as compactly as possible (as prescribed in SOP loading plans) to allow maximum troop space and freedom of movement for dismounting.

e. Since most of the mounted platoon will not see the terrain or the objective area until they dismount, a detailed terrain briefing in the assembly area is necessary to prevent loss of time and lack of orientation when the platoon dismounts.

48. Platoon Plan of Attack

Troop-leading procedure, orders, and fire support planning are generally the same for a mounted attack as for a dismounted attack. The primary difference is the more frequent use of mission-type orders in mounted operations. Considerations are:

a. Formations (app. II) to be used during mounted movement to and forward of the LD.

b. Tactical control measures.

c. Movement techniques, to include actions taken if carriers come under effective antitank fire.

d. Actions during and after dismounting, to include use of the carrier-mounted weapon for additional fire support.

e. Use of carriers during consolidation and reorganization of the objective.

49. Control

The mounted attack is controlled primarily by radio and visual means. Unit SOP should prescribe proper procedures in the use of visual signals, to include the use of arm-and-hand signals, flag signals, panels, pyrotechnics, and smoke grenades and streamers.

a. Formations. The formations of the mounted platoon are similar to the dismounted platoon formations and those of the tank platoon, both in appearance and combat characteristics; thus, combined mounted infantry and tank formations can be organized without delay or difficulty (app. II).

(1) In selecting the formation to accomplish his mission, the platoon leader considers control, security, firepower, terrain, and enemy information. As the platoon advances, it may change formations to fit the situation. During movement in formation, security is achieved by assigning each carrier commander a definite zone or sector of observation. When an attack is expected from known enemy locations, formations are used which permit rapid concentration of firepower in that direction.

(2) The platoon leader positions his carrier within the formation where he can best control the tactical actions of his unit. He notes any enemy activity and danger areas and keeps his immediate commander informed of the tactical situation.

(3) The weapons squad carrier is placed in a central location in the formation to permit its rapid deployment. To

place this squad on the flank or at the rear will cause delay in its dismounted deployment. The position of the weapons squad may be changed to conform to the situation.

(4) The squad leader commands his squad carrier and is responsible for its positioning, movement, camouflage, and all other aspects of its employment. The platoon leader and platoon sergeant command their respective carriers only while mounted. Leaders insure that drivers know the platoon mission and where and how each carrier will be employed during the time the unit is dismounted. Carriers must be attended and secured at all times. The radiotelephone operator and any attached FO usually ride with the platoon leader.

b. Tactical Control Measures.

(1) *Time of attack.* See paragraph 25.

(2) *Attack position.* An attack position (para. 25) is used more frequently in mounted attacks than in dismounted attacks. Considerations in selecting the position in both cases are the same except that the area selected for a mounted attack is generally larger than that for a dismounted attack.

(3) *Line of departure.* See paragraph 25.

(4) *Axis of advance.* When an axis of advance is designated, the mechanized rifle platoon will normally be assigned a route within or along the axis of advance (para. 25).

(5) *Checkpoint.* See paragraph 25.

(6) *Phase line.* See paragraph 25.

(7) *Dismount area.* In the attack, infantrymen dismount as directed by the company commander or platoon leader. The decision as to when and where to dismount, or whether to dismount at all, is based on the following factors: enemy antitank capabilities, terrain, availability of direct and indirect fire support, and ability of carrier-mounted weapons to support the attack. Considering these factors, tentative dismount areas are selected in one of three locations: short of the final coordination line, on or near the final coordination line, or on the objective. (See also para. 50.)

(8) *Final coordination line.* A tentative final coordination line is selected in all instances for the possibility of a dismounted assault. If the local commander elects to dis-

mount on the objective, this line may not be used, and indirect fire support is lifted or shifted as the situation dictates.

50. Conduct of the Attack

The major concern of the platoon leader is to maintain the momentum of the attack. The platoon leader observes the situation, noting any evidence of enemy activity and the progress of friendly units. He keeps the company commander informed of the terrain, platoon location, enemy resistance encountered, and any changes in the situation. He requests supporting fires through the company commander or FO upon meeting strong resistance which cannot be engaged or neutralized by his platoon organic weapons. He adjusts artillery fire if an FO is not available. While mounted, the platoon leader may fire the carrier-mounted weapon.

a. Movement across the LD is continuous with deployment into the initial platoon attack formation being accomplished on the move. If an attack position is designated, the mounted platoon should not halt its forward movement if at all possible.

b. Mounted movement forward of the LD is made as rapidly as the terrain, carrier speed, and supporting fires permit. Carrier commanders observe from their hatches until forced by fire to close them. During forward movement, carrier-mounted weapons may be fired at known or suspected enemy positions.

(1) An attacking platoon can often locate the enemy by employing reconnaissance by fire. Leading elements fire at suspected enemy positions in an attempt to make the enemy disclose his presence by movement or returned fire.

(2) Reconnaissance by fire is not conducted until the attack has been launched; otherwise, the attacking unit would prematurely disclose its position and intention of attacking. However, during the attack, both assault and support elements employ reconnaissance by fire to locate and neutralize suspected enemy positions.

c. During the advance, the infantry dismount rapidly in any action requiring dismounted action. In some situations, a portion of the movement forward of the LD must be made through close terrain, such as woods, in which fields of observation are greatly reduced. In such terrain, detection of enemy tank-hunter teams is extremely difficult and infantry may be forced to dismount. When the close terrain has been crossed, the advance is continued with the infantry mounted in carriers.

d. If the carriers receive antitank fire prior to reaching the planned dismount area, the platoon leader must determine *immediately* when and where to safely dismount. Often, the best course of action is to continue rapid movement to a covered position, if one is readily available. This is recommended if enemy artillery and small-arms fire is falling around the carriers. If the carriers are located on the crest of a hill when fire is received, it may be possible for the carriers to move into defilade. If located in the open when fire is received and there is no available cover in the immediate vicinity, the platoon leader may be forced to halt his carriers, dismount his platoon, and engage the enemy. Regardless of the circumstances, all available fires, including those of the carrier-mounted weapons, are directed at the known or suspected source of enemy fire. Smoke rounds fired into the enemy position by indirect fire weapons will greatly assist the platoon in moving to cover and dismounting.

e. The platoon leader must be alert for the unexpected and be able to change plans rapidly to cope with or exploit the new situation. Orders to subordinates must be brief, clear, and accurate.

f. The objective in a mounted attack is normally deeper in enemy terrain than in a dismounted attack. Therefore, the flanks and rear of the platoon are more vulnerable and all-round security must be established.

g. The mounted movement continues as far forward as possible based on the tactical situation. The platoon leader has the option of dismounting his platoon short of, on or near, or beyond the final coordination line. The tentative dismount area as determined in the attack plan is frequently selected just short of the final coordination line so as to permit the platoon to cross the final coordination line as a deployed unit. Factors which help the platoon leader determine finally where his platoon will dismount are enemy antitank capabilities, terrain, and availability of direct and indirect fire support. Considering these factors, dismount areas are selected at one of the following locations:

(1) *Short of the final coordination line.* The last covered and concealed area short of the final coordination line is normally selected as a dismount area when the platoon does not have tank support or sufficient indirect fire support to effectively reduce the enemy fires, and when it has been confirmed that the enemy has an effective antitank capability. The attack will then proceed from this location as in a normal dismounted attack.

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(2) *On or near the final coordination line.* A dismount area on or near the final coordination line is normally selected when the platoon is operating with tanks, and sufficient fire support is available to reduce materially the effectiveness of the enemy fires. In this situation, the carriers will move buttoned up, under the cover of supporting fires, to the dismount area on or near the final coordination line.

(3) *On the objective.* A dismount area may be selected on the objective under the same conditions as described in (2) above when a nuclear strike on the enemy has preceded the attack, or when the enemy position is weak or hastily prepared and little or no enemy antitank capability exists.

h. As the assaulting platoon, whether mounted or dismounted, seizes the objective, the carrier-mounted weapons should provide fire support if possible. In some instances, due to heavy antitank fire, the carriers may be positioned in hull defilade one terrain feature to the rear of the objective where they can support by fire. As the assaulting platoon moves over the objective, carriers move forward and, if possible, occupy hull-defilade positions behind their squads to supplement the platoon's fire in repelling a counterattack. If this is not possible, carriers are positioned so as to provide flank and rear security after the objective is taken. These positions may be located in the same area that would normally be assigned to that squad as its supplementary positions. The driver or a designated individual mans the carrier weapon.

i. The platoon leader makes a map and visual reconnaissance of the terrain between him and the next objective and issues any fragmentary orders that may be necessary. Maintenance and refueling of carriers is accomplished when possible. Generally, consolidation and reorganization on the objective proceeds in much the same way as in a dismounted attack (paras. 34 and 35).

51. Night Attack

See paragraphs 36 through 45 for discussion of a nonilluminated attack, and FM 17–15 for discussion of mounted infantry and tanks attacking at night. Since carriers in a night attack would destroy the secrecy of the attack, a nonilluminated attack by stealth would be conducted dismounted. However, if their use does not disclose the intention of the attacking unit, carriers may be positioned so that the mounted weapons can support the attack if it is prematurely discovered, or if it is necessary to call for

illumination. Carriers rejoin the dismounted infantry on the objective as soon as possible and participate in the consolidation as discussed in paragraph 50.

Section V. RIFLE PLATOON IN THE ATTACK WITH TANKS

52. General

This section sets forth methods, procedures, and techniques necessary for the mutual success of rifle platoons and tanks in a coordinated attack. One or more tank platoons may be attached to the rifle company. Since a tank platoon generally operates more effectively as a unit, the rifle company commander normally employs an attached tank platoon as a unit under company control. The material in this section concerning infantry operating with tanks is applicable to infantry, airborne, and mechanized rifle platoons when supported by tanks.

53. Mutual Support

Mutual support between rifle units and tanks is continuous. Platoon leaders coordinate actions among their platoons, and within the company coordination is accomplished by orders to each platoon leader from the company commander.

a. Rifle platoons and squads assist tanks in the advance by:
- (1) Breaching or removing antitank obstacles.
- (2) Neutralizing or destroying antitank weapons.
- (3) Designating targets for the tanks.
- (4) Protecting the tanks against individual antitank measures.
- (5) Leading the attack when necessary.
- (6) Clearing the objective and assisting in its consolidation.
- (7) Protecting the tanks in assembly areas and attack positions.

b. Tank platoons assist infantry in the advance by:
- (1) Leading the attack when so directed.
- (2) Neutralizing or destroying enemy weapons by fire and maneuver.
- (3) Clearing paths for dismounted rifle units through wire entanglements and antipersonnel minefields.
- (4) Neutralizing fortified installations with direct fire.
- (5) Supporting by direct fire when dismounted troops lead the attack.
- (6) Providing antitank protection.

54. Methods of Attack

a. The rifle platoon may attack either mounted or dismounted. Dismounted operations are conducted against well-prepared, strongly defended enemy positions. In contrast, mounted operations include attacks against light or discontinuous enemy resistance and the exploitation of the success of other units or the effects of nuclear weapons.

b. There are three general methods of employing tanks and infantry together in the attack. When employing these methods, the rifle platoon participates as part of the company. Platoon tactical integrity is maintained to permit it to operate more effectively as a unit. The three methods of attack are:

(1) Tanks and infantry attack on one route.

(2) Tanks and infantry attack on converging routes.

(3) Tanks support by fire only.

c. During an attack, more than one of the three methods may be used. Changes in the combat situation may require changes in the method.

d. The attacking element moves rapidly toward the objective using the selected method of attack. When compelled by enemy action, movement is accomplished by fire and maneuver.

e. Tanks and infantry normally attack in a closely coordinated, mutually supporting formation. This is not to imply that tanks and rifle platoons are intermingled in the same formation. Tanks will usually lead, followed at varying distances by infantry.

f. Regardless of the method or combination of methods used, the following apply:

(1) Tanks must be employed so that maximum use is made of their cross-country mobility, armor-protected firepower, speed, and shock effect.

(2) The rate of advance of the attack should be the maximum rate permitted by the terrain and enemy situation.

(3) The mechanized rifle platoon in the attack should remain mounted as long as possible so that:

(*a*) The attacking force can move forward at the speed of the tanks to close with and destroy the enemy

(*b*) The cross-country mobility of both tanks and carrier-mounted infantry will be retained.

(*c*) Casualties will be minimized in areas covered by small-arms and artillery fire.

(*d*) Artillery airbursts can be employed in support of the attacking force.

(*e*) A degree of protection will be afforded against the effects of nuclear weapons.

(*f*) The energy of the infantryman will be conserved.

(4) Mounted infantry normally dismount when necessary to:

(*a*) Prevent destruction of carriers by enemy antitank fire.

(*b*) Breach or remove obstacles which prevent forward movement of tanks.

(*c*) Assist in the neutralization or destruction of antitank weapons that are holding up the forward movement of the tanks and carriers.

(*d*) Take part in an assault through heavily wooded areas or very rough or broken terrain.

(*e*) Lead an assault across defended rivers that cannot be crossed by carriers.

(*f*) Take part in an assault through fortified areas or through defended built-up areas that cannot be by-passed.

(*g*) Assist the tanks forward under certain conditions of low visibility and restricted fields of fire (darkness, smoke, heavy woods, and broken terrain).

(*h*) Clear a defended objective and assist in the consolidation.

55. Tanks and Infantry Attack on One Route

a. General. In the attack on one route (fig. 11), the entire attacking force uses the same approach to the objective. The rifle platoon may be either mounted or dismounted using different techniques in the employment of the force.

b. Advantages. The one-route method of movement promotes coordination and control, as the entire attacking force is moving in one direction on the same route. Compared with other methods, it permits closer mutual support among elements of the attacking force.

c. Favoring Conditions. Conditions favoring this method include:

(1) The attack must cross open terrain devoid of vegetation capable of concealing armored vehicle movement.

(2) Only one likely avenue of approach is available.

(3) The objective cannot be easily flanked.

(4) Control of the unit is a problem and can be improved only by use of the most easily controlled method of attack.

d. Tanks with Mounted Infantry.

(1) *Tanks with mounted infantry employed in mass.*

(*a*) The attack of tank and mounted infantry can be coordinated by combining the combat formation into one mutually supporting, integrated formation (fig. 12). The distance between elements in the formation is based on the tactical situation. Tanks lead so they can use their firepower. The mounted platoon is located to the rear of the tanks so as not expose the carriers unduly. This technique is used against enemy positions lacking a strong antitank capability.

(*b*) The arrival of the tank and mounted platoons at the objective should be so timed as to provide close mutual support during the assault.

(2) *Tanks with mounted infantry moving by bounds.*

(*a*) Mounted platoons follow the tanks by bounds (figs. 13 and 14). This technique of movement increases the security of the mounted infantry but reduces the speed of the advance. When compelled by enemy action, tanks may advance as a unit from one terrain feature to the next, and the mounted platoon leader must rapidly move his platoon into defilade.

(*b*) Control must be exerted to make certain that tanks precede infantry onto the objective in one coordinated assault.

(3) *Variation.* When terrain, obstacles, or enemy antitank weapons restrict or stop the movement of tanks but permit dismounted infantry to move forward, tanks may temporarily support by fire while the infantry dismount and advance. When the dismounted attack has progressed sufficiently or an obstacle has been removed, the tanks may move forward, pass through the infantry, and lead the assault. This type of action must not be confused with the method of attack whereby tanks support by fire only (para. 57); here, the intent is for the tanks to participate in the assault of the objective.

e. Tanks with Dismounted Infantry. Dismounted infantry and tanks may move on the same route (fig. 11) as follows:

(1) *Different speed.* When tanks and dismounted infantry attack together on the same route, the tanks initially

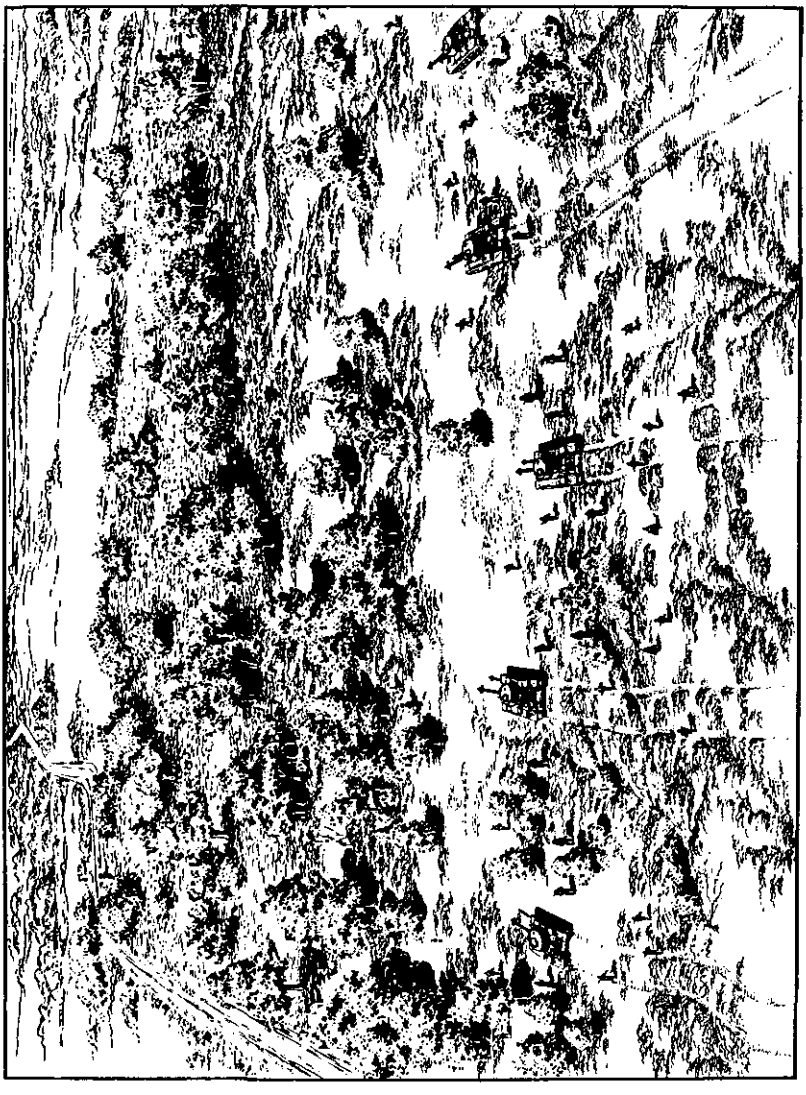

Figure 11. Dismounted infantry and tanks attacking together.

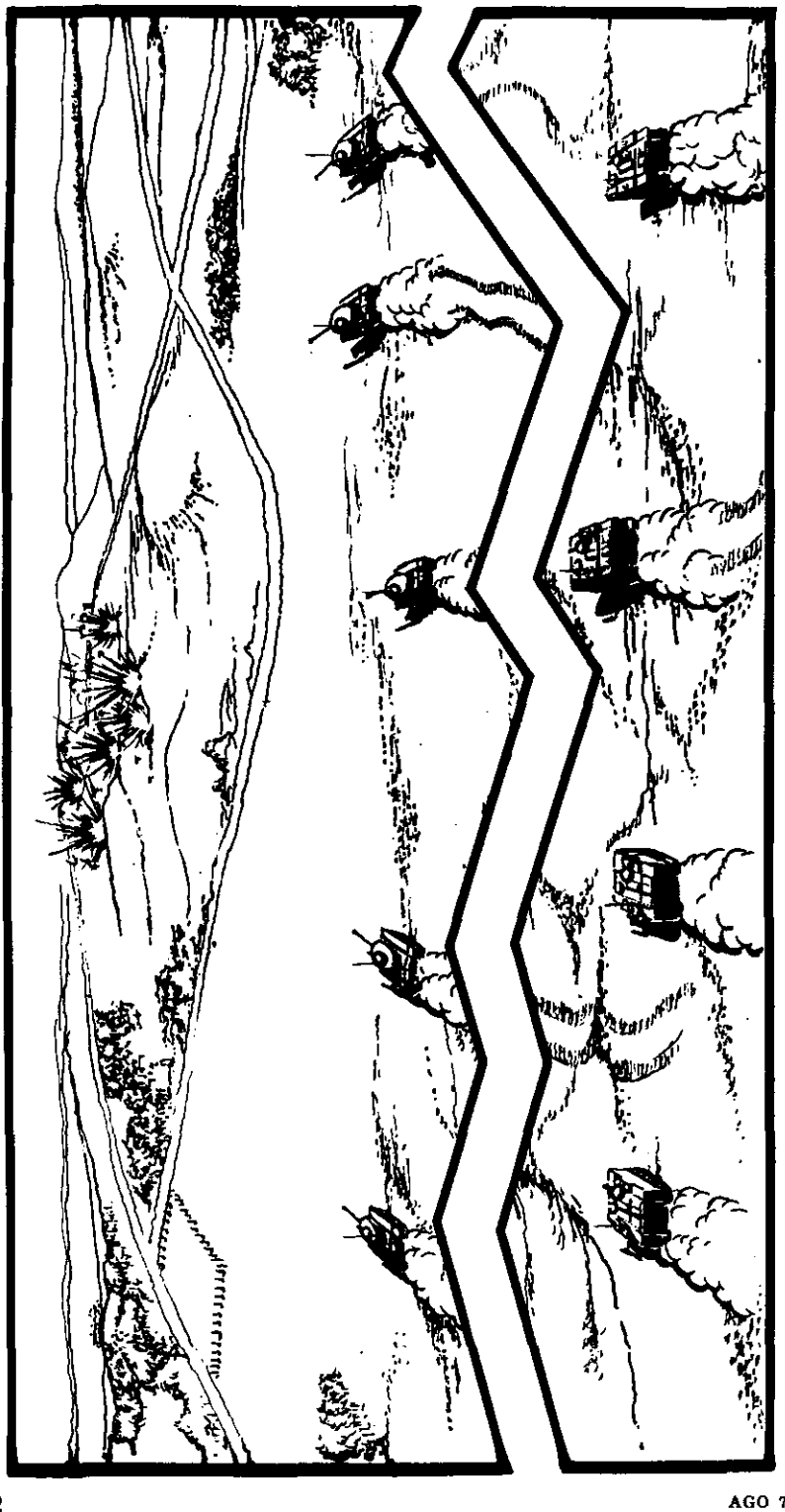

Figure 12. Mounted infantry and tanks both advancing in line formations.

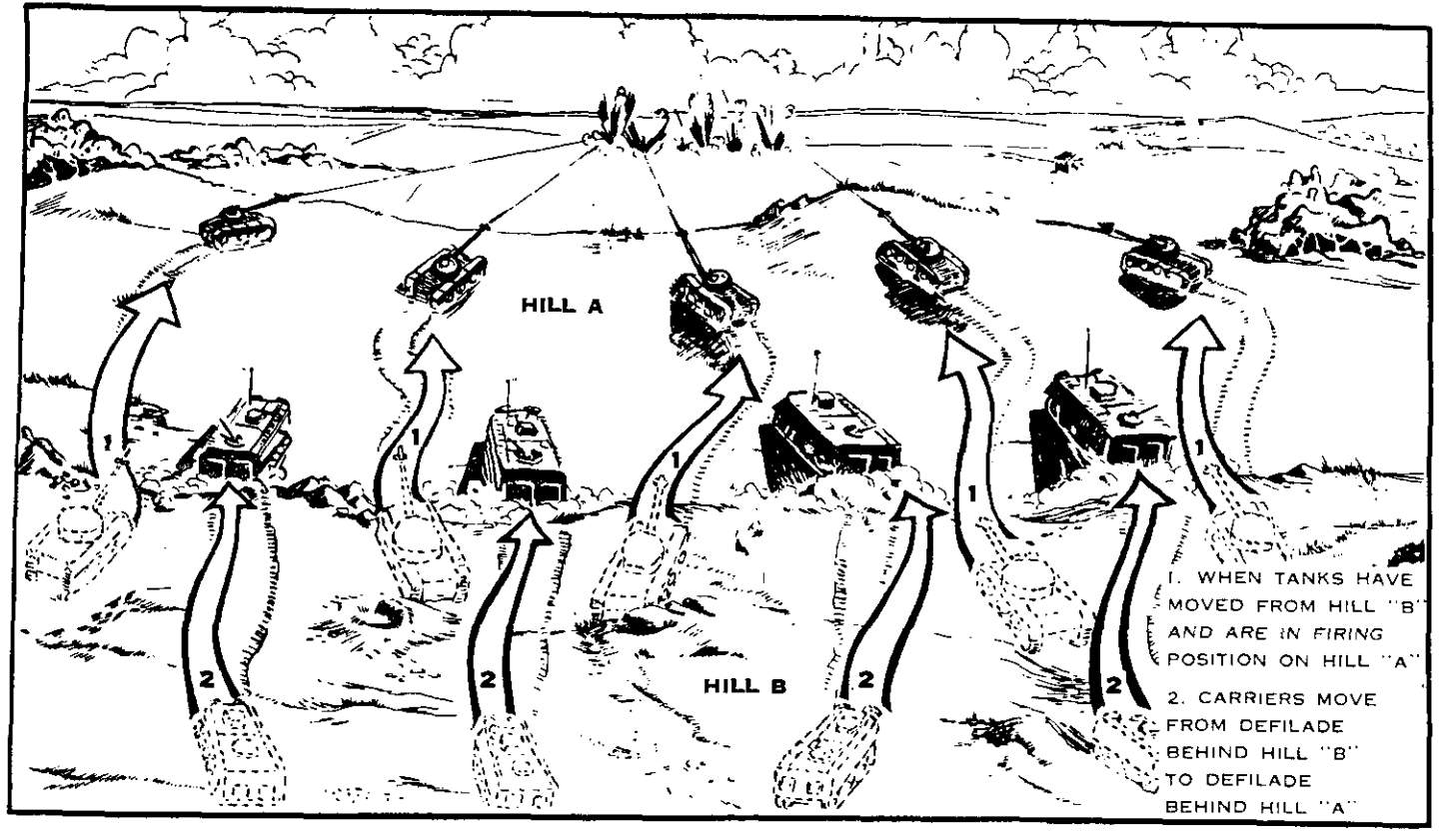

Figure 13. Mounted infantry following tanks by bounds.

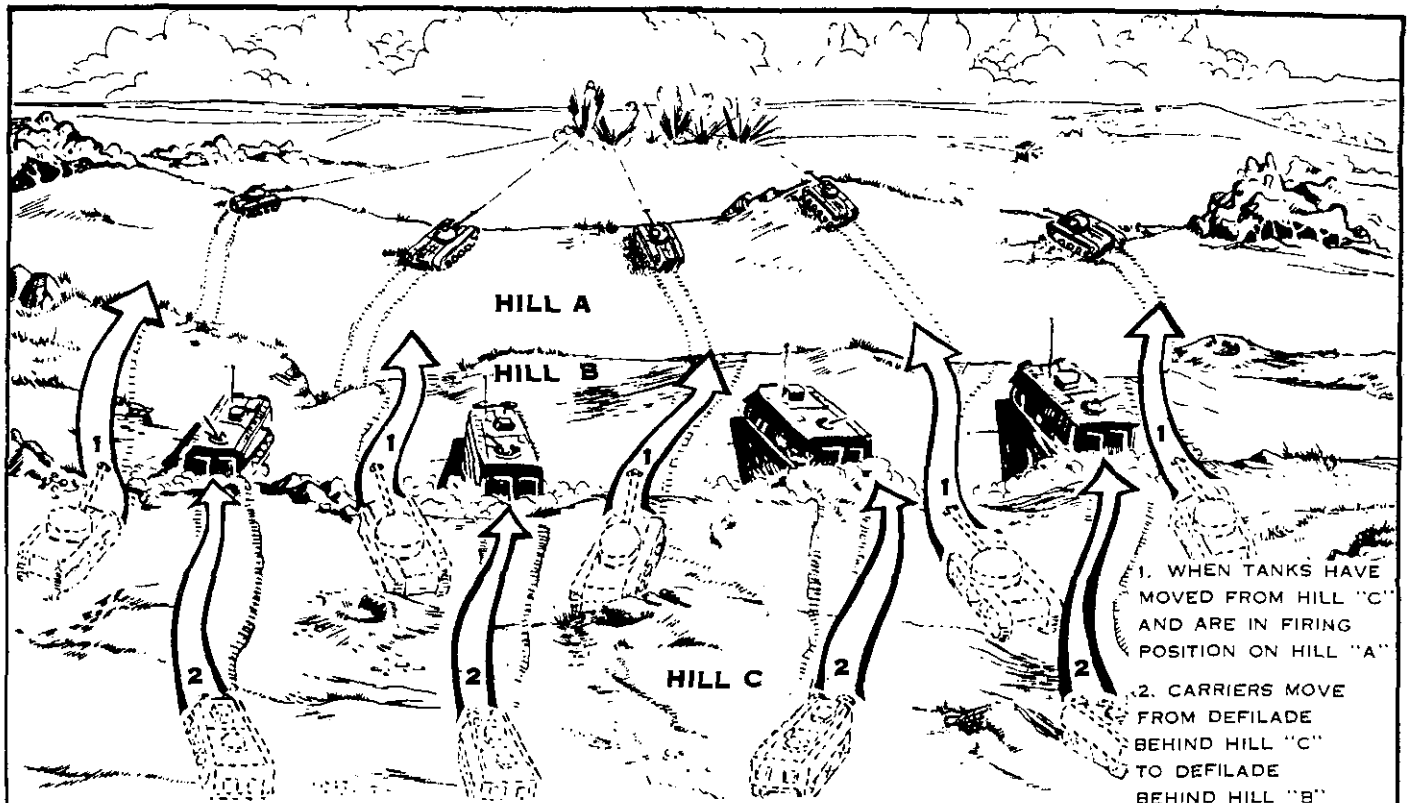

Figure 14. Mounted infantry following tanks by bounds (intervening terrain feature).

support the advance of the infantry by fire. As the infantry approach the final coordination line, the company commander orders the tanks forward for the assault phase. If the defenses on the objectives are hastily prepared and lack overhead cover, the movement of the tanks may be so timed that they pass through the infantry and assault the objective under artillery and mortar fire, followed closely by the infantry assault. When positions on the objective cannot be neutralized by indirect fires, the movement of the tanks is so timed that they join the infantry at the final coordination line, and both infantry and tanks assault together. In either case, the movement of the tanks forward from their initial firing positions must be carefully timed to prevent either tanks or infantry from halting at the final coordination line.

(2) *Same speed.* Dismounted infantry and tanks may advance together at the same speed when they need close mutual support, or when there are no positions from which the tanks can initially support by fire. The infantry may move slightly in advance of the tanks (in order not to mask their fires), between them, or immediately in rear of them. As the advance progresses, the relative positions of tanks and infantry are adjusted according to enemy resistance and the terrain. This technique of movement permits close coordination and maximum mutual support, but sacrifices the speed of the tanks which makes them more vulnerable to antitank fires.

56. Tanks and Infantry Attack on Converging Routes

a. General.

(1) To preserve platoon integrity, the rifle platoon participates in an attack using two converging routes (fig. 15) only as part of a larger force. However, it is necessary for the platoon leader to have an understanding of this method of attack.

(2) At company level or higher, the attacking force uses two different routes for the approach to an objective. Two techniques may be used: tanks with infantry on both routes or tanks on one route with infantry on the other.

b. Advantages. These techniques provide a greater opportunity for the attacking force to strike the enemy flanks or rear and force the enemy to fight in two directions.

Figure 15. Dismounted infantry and tanks attacking on converging routes.

c. Favoring Conditions. Conditions favoring this method occur when:

(1) More than one avenue of approach to the objective is available.
(2) At least one avenue of approach provides concealment.
(3) The objective can be flanked.
(4) Communication means, visibility, and terrain minimize control problems; thus closer coordination can be achieved.

d. Tanks and Dismounted Infantry on Both Routes. Some situations may require that mounted or dismounted infantry and tanks attack along each route. The movement on each route of tanks and infantry is governed by the same considerations as when a single route is used.

e. Tanks on One Route with Infantry on a Separate Route.

(1) When the attacking force is held up by enemy antitank fire or obstacles, infantry may move along a covered route in order to strike the enemy flank. The tanks initially support by fire, then move on a separate route to the objective. The elements on each route should arrive on the objective at approximately the same time, or the attack may be so timed that the tanks arrive first, under artillery or mortar airbursts, with the infantry following.
(2) This technique is employed when one avenue of approach is suitable for tanks but unduly exposes the infantry while the other avenue of approach can be used by mounted or dismounted infantry but restricts or prevents the movement of tanks.
(3) This technique makes control and coordination difficult and reduces the mutual support during movement to the objective.

57. Tanks Support by Fire Only

a. The infantry may attack to seize the objective, and the tanks support the attack by fire only (fig. 16). Conditions that make it necessary to use this method occur when:

(1) Obstacles prevent the tanks from moving in a coordinated attack with infantry. For example, it may be necessary for infantry to seize a terrain feature from which the enemy is covering a minefield or roadblock that is holding up the advance of tanks. Also, infantry can often cross streams unfordable for tanks; therefore, the tanks should

take up firing positions in defilade from which they can support by fire the crossing by infantry.

(2) Terrain impassable to tanks must be seized.

b. Tanks supporting an attack by fire only is the least desirable of the three methods of tanks with infantry in the attack. When this method must be employed, the shock effect of tanks is lost; however, its direct fire support can assist the infantry by taking

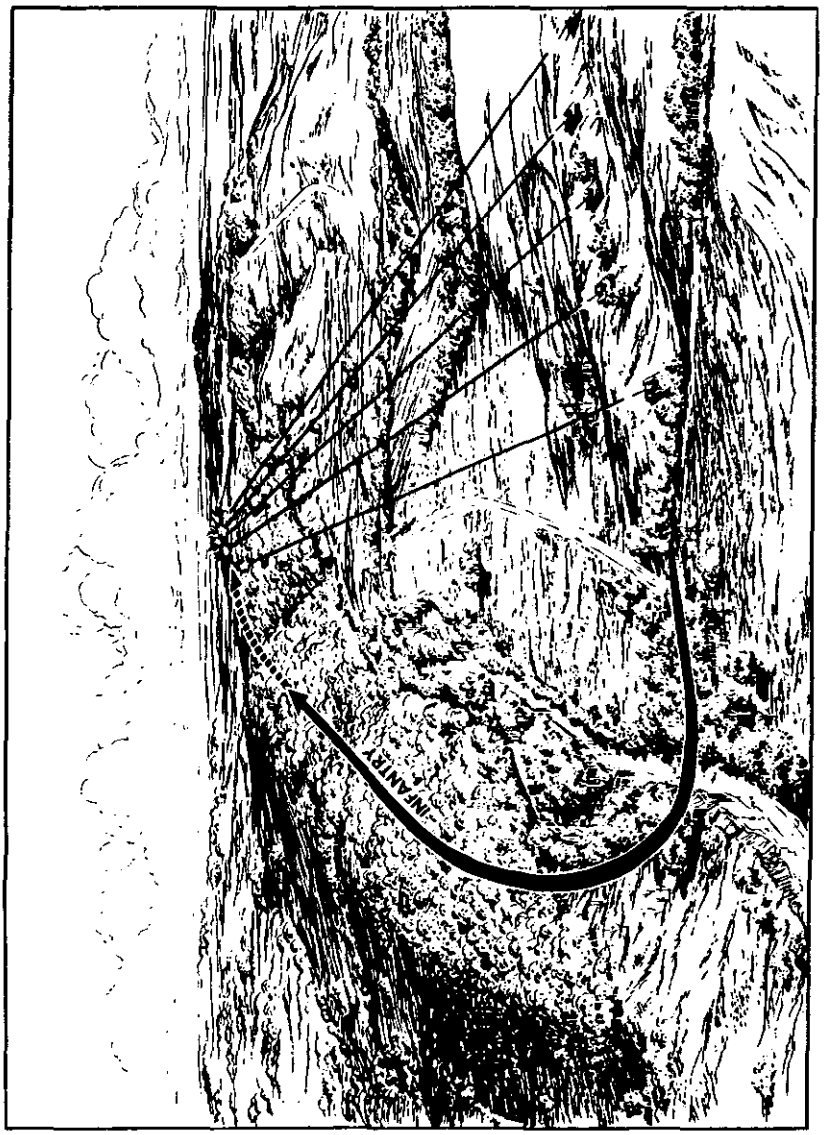

Figure 16. Tanks supporting by fire only.

over the mission of indirect fires on the objective once the indirect fires have been shifted or lifted. As soon as the obstacles are breached or a suitable avenue of approach is discovered, the tanks must move rapidly to join the infantry on the objective.

58. Coordination for the Attack

To obtain a close working relationship during an infantry-tank attack, the following points should be coordinated by tank and infantry leaders prior to the attack:

a. Routes to the objective.

b. Formations to be used in crossing the LD and in moving to the objective, and where changes in formation may be necessary.

c. Speed of movement to the objective, and speed of the tanks in relation to the infantry during the assault.

d. Distance between the infantry platoon and tanks during movement to the objective.

e. When mounted, actions prior to and after dismounting for the attack.

f. Position of tanks on the objective during consolidation.

g. Plan of fire support to include where and when direct and indirect fires will be lifted or shifted.

h. Communication and control measures.

59. Conduct of the Assault

The goal is an attack with tanks to bring the maximum firepower and shock effect of tanks, infantry, and artillery to bear upon the enemy to destroy him as rapidly as possible while friendly forces suffer the fewest casualties or vehicle losses. The commander must achieve this complex goal by forceful and decisive action coupled with good judgment in employing the combined arms team. The assault of a defended position by tanks and infantry in cooperation with artillery may take three forms:

a. Tanks and Dismounted Infantry in the Assault. Regardless of the method of attack used to bring the force into a position of assault, the assault is conducted as a coordinated effort. As the tanks and infantry approach the objective, the objective is brought under heavy supporting fires. The tanks maintain their rate of advance and increase the overall volume of fire by saturating the objective with fires from the tank-mounted weapons. As the force reaches the final coordination line, supporting fires are lifted or shifted to the flanks or rear of the objective to prevent escape of the enemy or break up counterattack formations. The

fires of infantry and tank weapons replace the indirect supporting fires. The dismounted infantry close with and destroy the enemy in close combat and protect the tanks from individual antitank weapons. The assault is conducted in the same manner as discussed in paragraphs 30 through 33. The shock effect of assaulting tanks and infantry is multiplied by rapid movement and a heavy volume of fire, including the use of hand grenades. During the assault, tanks continue to saturate the objective with machine-gun fire and destroy enemy positions and weapons with the main tank gun. This assists the dismounted infantry in clearing the objective. As the tanks arrive at the far edge of the objective, fire is directed on the withdrawing enemy. Effective placement of this fire reduces materially the enemy's capability of organizing and launching a counterattack.

b. Tanks and Mounted Infantry in the Assault.

(1) *Tanks with infantry dismounting on the objective.*

(*a*) Under some circumstances, the assault may be conducted by mounted movement all the way to the objective. An example of this would be after a nuclear strike on the enemy position, or against hastily prepared positions with weak antitank defenses. Such an assault requires that tanks be included in the assault force and that enemy strength must be effectively neutralized. In such cases, a tentative dismount area is selected on the objective. A final coordination line must be selected by the team commander short of the objective even when the commander plans for his force to move mounted onto the objective; this is essential since enemy action may force dismounting of infantry earlier than intended.

(*b*) When the dismount area is on the objective, carriers and tanks move rapidly to that area (with hatches closed) under artillery and mortar airbursts. When attacking elements reach the dismount area, supporting fires are shifted or lifted and the infantry dismount immediately to eliminate any enemy remaining on the objective. The exact timing of the shifting of fires is of great importance. The last rounds of supporting fires may be colored smoke to indicate when infantry should dismount.

(2) *Tanks with infantry dismounting prior to the objective.* When the mechanized rifle platoon is forced to dismount short of the objective, the attack is conducted as outlined

in *a* above. When artillery or mortar airbursts are used to support the attacking force, the dismounted platoon must be kept well to the rear of the tanks. The carriers should follow closely behind the dismounted infantry, to be readily available when needed to continue the attack mounted or assist in the consolidation of the objective. Whenever possible, carrier-mounted weapons are used to support the assault until their fires are masked by advancing infantry.

c. Tanks Support by Fire Only. In this situation, infantry will conduct the assault. Tanks will be used to support by fire with full consideration given to the long-range and rapid rate of fire of the tank-mounted weapons and the precision and control with which these fires can be delivered.

60. Consolidation and Reorganization

a. As it is in any attack, the actual occupation of the objective is the critical stage of an infantry-tank attack.

b. When a unit with tanks has seized an assigned objective, it immediately consolidates and reorganizes, generally as discussed in paragraphs 34, 35, and 50, but with the following additional consideration: Leading tanks take up deployed positions from which they can dominate the position and destroy visible enemy weapons and troops by fire. If enemy tank-hunter teams are active, the leading tank unit commander may request artillery and mortar airbursts over his position until friendly infantry arrive. Tanks should avoid the skyline and avoid unnecessary movement.

61. Infantry Riding Tanks

When tanks and dismounted infantry must advance rapidly, infantry may ride on tank decks. This technique of movement is effective when trying to regain contact with the enemy, when exploiting the effects of nuclear weapons, or when the terrain and the enemy situation indicate fewer casualties will result from rapid movement than from a dismounted advance. However, infantry mounted on tanks are extremely vulnerable to all types of fire, and they reduce the maneuverability and firepower of the tanks. The infantry must dismount as soon as they come under effective small-arms, artillery, or antitank fires, and when dismounted action is required. When tanks are moving in column and contact with the enemy is imminent, infantry do not ride on the first two or three tanks in a column. When infantry are riding

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on the tanks, rifles should not be slung across the back as enemy action may require immediate return of fire.

Section VI. RIFLE PLATOON AS RESERVE OF THE COMPANY IN OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

62. General

Normally, one rifle platoon is withheld as the company reserve during the initial action of the attack. The company commander commits the reserve platoon so as to best influence the action and to maintain the momentum of the attack. This is best accomplished by attacking in a new direction to hit the flanks or rear of the enemy to exploit the success of the attacking platoons. Because of the various missions which the reserve may be assigned, the platoon leader must keep abreast of the tactical situation at all times, know the missions and tactical plans of the assaulting platoons, and be familiar with the terrain and enemy situation in the entire company area of operation. He must be capable of rapid and effective response when committed.

63. Mission of the Reserve

The reserve rifle platoon may be assigned one or more of the following missions:

a. Protect the flanks or the rear of the company.

b. Maintain contact with adjacent units.

c. Clear a position which has been overrun or bypassed by the attacking platoons.

d. Provide a base of fire with the weapons squad to support the attacking platoons.

e. Assume the mission of an attacking platoon.

f. Attack from a new direction.

g. Protect or assist the consolidation and reorganization on the objective.

64. Mechanized Rifle Platoon in Reserve

Because of its greater mobility and reduced reaction time, the reserve platoon of a mechanized rifle company is often capable of accomplishing more than one of the normal reserve missions. As an example, it may be able to protect a flank, maintain contact with an adjacent unit, and still be able to quickly influence

the action of the attacking platoons. The mobility of the carrier of the mechanized reserve permits greater dispersion of the reserve in the company area. Mechanized flank patrols may be used to screen the flanks of a rapid advance. The adverse effects of depleting the reserve platoon must always be considered when more than one mission is assigned the reserve platoon.

65. Rifle Platoon in the Attack of Fortified and Built-up Areas

Combat in fortified and built-up areas necessitates training in special techniques and with special equipment. For detailed discussion, see FM 31–50.

Section VII. RIVER-CROSSING OPERATIONS

66. General

a. Purpose. The purpose of a river-crossing operation is to move an attacking force rapidly across a river obstacle so that it may continue its attack to seize an assigned objective(s). This operation differs from other ground attacks generally as follows:

(1) Specialized equipment and personnel are often required.

(2) The momentum of the attack is canalized into areas having suitable crossing sites.

(3) Control of units is difficult because of the obstacle itself, and the employment of units of several arms and services.

(4) Once a unit has begun the crossing, deviation from the initial plan is difficult.

(5) Tactical courses of action are limited, since deployment and firepower are restricted while troops are astride the river.

b. Types. There are two general types of river crossings: *hasty* and *deliberate.*

(1) A hasty crossing is a planned operation conducted with a minimum loss of momentum by the assault forces. The crossing means must be provided to the assault forces on their arrival at the river. The crossing is characterized by speed, surprise, and a minimum concentration of personnel and equipment. Every effort is exerted to seize bridges before destruction by the enemy; however, the conduct of a hasty crossing is not dependent on the capture of intact bridges.

(2) A deliberate crossing is characterized by some delay and more detailed preparation and planning. It may be conducted to resume the offense, as a result of an unsuccessful hasty crossing, or when a hasty crossing is undesirable because of the nature of the river obstacle or the strength of enemy defenses.

c. Other Considerations.

(1) Separate mechanized platoons may be authorized to cross as they arrive at the riverline when speed is essential to capitalize on a discovered enemy weakness or to reduce nuclear vulnerability.

(2) Assault boats are used more extensively in deliberate crossings than in hasty crossings. However, speed is reduced and the assault forces in boats are more vulnerable to enemy fires. Boats are highly effective during periods of reduced visibility for silent crossing of assault forces or for patrol actions. For techniques of employment, see FM 31–60.

(3) Rafts are an excellent means of ferrying essential supporting equipment when bridges are not found intact. Rafts provide greater flexibility in selecting crossing sites than do bridge sites.

(4) Bridges can be constructed by engineers to support crossings to rapidly build up forces on the far bank.

(5) Army aircraft, particularly helicopters, may be used to lift initial assault forces to objectives on the far bank for the purpose of isolating crossing areas or securing crossing sites. Helicopters may also be used to airlift the weapons platoon and heavy equipment, to resupply assault forces, to evacuate wounded, and to drop floating smoke pots for screening.

d. Crossing Site Characteristics. The following are desirable characteristics of a crossing site regardless of the crossing means:

(1) An undefended or lightly held enemy bank.

(2) Terrain on the far bank which facilitates the rapid seizure of key terrain.

(3) A moderate river current.

(4) No obstacles in the water.

(5) Suitable banks for entry and exit.

(6) Dominating terrain on the near bank.

(7) Covered approaches to the near bank.

(8) Suitable sites for ferries and bridges to carry tanks and other heavy equipment across.

(9) Good road net.

67. Planning and Preparation

a. A hasty crossing may be conducted without prior reconnaissance of the riverline by assaulting platoons, but the feasibility of a hasty crossing should be determined in advance. Higher headquarters will provide detailed information on the river and its defenses to attacking units before they arrive at the riverline. Based on this information, plans are made to conduct the crossing by the fastest and easiest means possible. Authority for crossing may be delegated down to platoon level to capitalize on discovered enemy weaknesses, to maintain momentum, and to achieve surprise.

b. Deliberate crossings require detailed planning and preparation at all levels of command.

(1) Platoon leaders should take as many of their subordinate leaders as possible on a reconnaissance. This includes carrier drivers, if the unit is mechanized. The reconnaissance should include routes forward, selected sites for entry and exit, conditions of the river and its banks, the presence of underwater obstacles, and objectives on the far bank. Specific sites should be selected where each boat (or carrier) will enter the water and, if possible, where each will land on the far bank. Care should be taken during reconnaissance to not alert the enemy in the area.

(2) Platoon leaders must determine the formation, priority of crossing, and the loading plans for their platoons. If carriers are used, the best formation is an echelon with the lead carrier on the downstream side. This precludes carriers from drifting into one another during the crossing.

(3) During the leader's reconnaissance, troops prepare their equipment for crossing, draw special equipment, and accomplish tasks normally performed in any forward assembly area.

(4) Rehearsals are as thorough as time and the availability of facilities will permit.

(5) Control is decentralized during the crossing, and crossing teams are expected to fight as teams until platoon

leaders can regain control. For this reason, troops must be thoroughly briefed and rehearsed.

c. For further details on river-crossing operations, see FM's 7–11 and 17–1 (for use of carriers); FM 57–35 (use of helicopters); and FM's 5–144 and 31–60.

Section VIII. RAIDS

68. General

a. A raid is a surprise attack on an enemy force or installation with the raiding force withdrawing after accomplishing its mission. All or part of a rifle platoon may conduct a raid independently, or the platoon may conduct a raid as part of the company. Regardless of the size of the raiding force, the same techniques of organization and tactical employment apply. See FM 7–11 for a discussion of company-level raids, and FM 21–75 for a discussion of raid patrols.

b. The success of a raid depends largely on the element of surprise. For this reason, raids are frequently conducted at night, or during adverse weather, or on terrain which the enemy may consider impassable.

c. This section deals generally with the planning and conduct of raids at platoon level. Specific duties of members of the raiding force are covered in FM's 7–11 and 21–75.

69. Planning and Preparation

Detailed planning is necessary for the successful execution of a raid. The raid commander must be provided with all available information of the enemy forces located along his route and in and near the objective area. The following should be included in the raid plan. (See FM 7–11 for a more detailed discussion of these items.)

a. Organization. The raiding force consists basically of an assault element and a security element. Each of these elements may be divided (to form demolition teams, search teams, prisoner teams, and other teams) and specially equipped to accomplish specific missions at the objective or during movement.

b. Route of Advance and Withdrawal. Routes are selected to avoid known or suspected enemy positions. Alternate routes of withdrawal are selected and used if necessary.

c. Rallying Points. Rallying points which provide concealment and cover and which are easily recognized are designated along the route to and from the objective.

d. Fire Plan. A complete, detailed fire plan is prepared for use if necessary. Supporting fires are planned to isolate the objective, to break up enemy counterattacks, and to aid in keeping the withdrawal route open.

e. Security. Every effort is made to prevent the enemy from gaining knowledge of the raid or its mission. During the raid, security detachments protect the flanks and silently eliminate enemy security elements blocking the route.

f. Rehearsals. When possible, the raid is rehearsed over terrain and under light conditions similar to those which are expected for the actual raid. All members of the raiding force must understand their tasks and be able to perform them quickly and efficiently.

g. Airborne Raids. In addition to the considerations listed in *a* through *f* above, the following aspects should be considered when planning an airborne raid (either parachute-delivered or airlanded):

(1) Routes for aircraft are selected to avoid enemy positions and to take advantage of defilade. Deceptive measures and low-level flying techniques may be used.

(2) An airborne raiding force can strike deep into enemy territory, but in so doing it will be out of range of normal supporting weapons. In such a situation, the force may work in conjunction with partisan or guerrilla groups and may receive fire support from aircraft or naval gunfire. Such operations are coordinated at higher levels.

(3) Planning and preparation for an airborne raid is similar to that for an airmobile assault, as is the conduct of the withdrawal by air. See chapter 5 and FM 57–35 for a discussion of airmobile techniques.

70. Conduct of Raids

a. During movement to the objective area, the raiding force attempts to bypass enemy elements and escape detection. If a security detachment becomes engaged, the main force attempts to avoid the action.

b. When an airborne or ground raiding force arrives at the objective area, security elements take positions where they can seal off entry to, and escape from, the area. When the security

elements are in position, the assault element attacks quickly and violently to capitalize on surprise and accomplish its mission in the minimum amount of time.

c. When the mission is accomplished, the force reassembles at a designated rallying point, breaks contact with the enemy, and moves rapidly along the route of withdrawal to friendly positions or to a designated point for withdrawal by air. Security detachments cover the flanks and rear during movement.

Section IX. INFILTRATION

71. General

a. Infiltration is a technique of movement used in conjunction with the several forms of maneuver. It involves the moving of forces into the enemy rear area by individuals or small groups. The infiltrators move by stealth, avoid enemy contact, and assemble at a rendezvous point.

b. Infiltrating groups normally move by foot and are therefore limited to light equipment.

c. Until the attack on the objective, infiltrating groups remain hidden from the enemy. Discovery of the groups by the enemy may result in their destruction by enemy artillery and reserve units.

d. Because of the dispersion that can be expected in nuclear warfare, infiltration as a movement technique will be emphasized. The vulnerability of the infiltrating force to nuclear weapons is reduced by the enemy's inability to employ such weapons against areas where both friendly and enemy units will be interspersed.

72. Planning and Preparation

a. Normally, units will be broken down into platoons, squads, or fire teams for the infiltration. The size of the infiltration group depends primarily on the need for control between groups, and the number and size of gaps in enemy defenses.

b. In the order, each infiltrating group is issued the following information as a minimum: a release point, a time of release, an infiltration lane, a rendezvous point, alternate rendezvous points, and the time of rendezvous (fig. 17). Group rally points and danger areas may also be specified. Each group leader is given the details on actions at the objective to insure that the mission can be accomplished in the event some infiltration groups are unable to rendezvous.

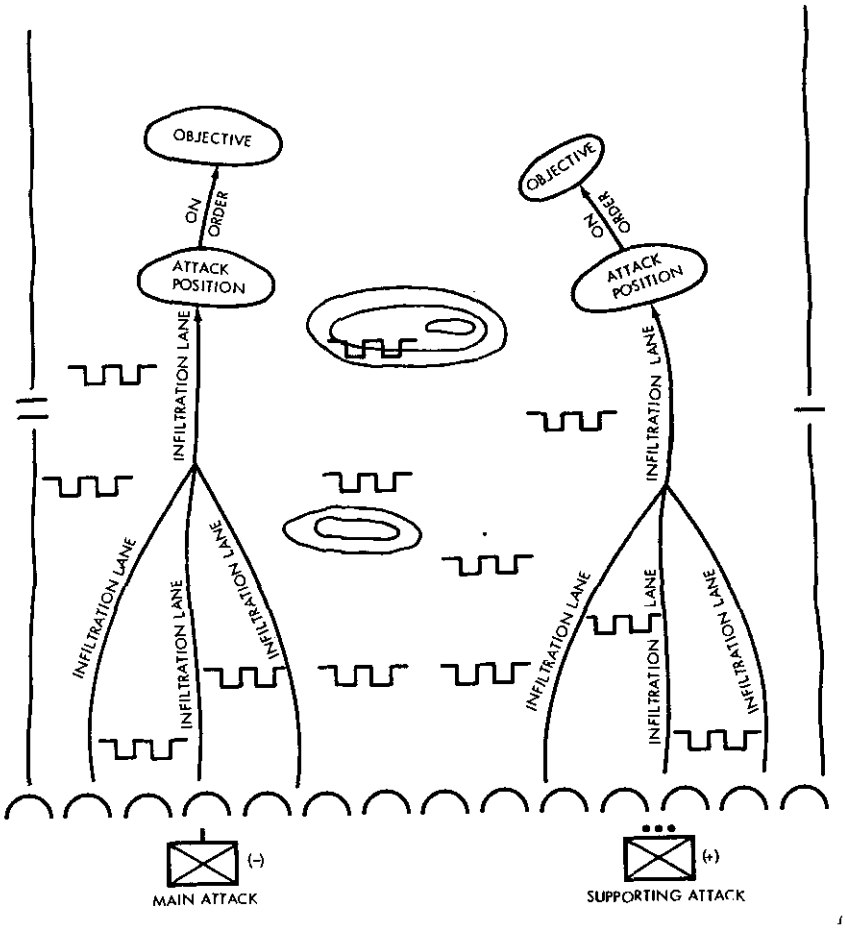

Figure 17. Rifle company conducting infiltration (schematic).

c. Upon receipt of the order, the group leaders follow normal troop-leading procedure (para. 8). The planning, preparation, and conduct of each infiltration group is the same as for a separate patrol (FM 21–75).

d. While the group leaders accomplish their steps in troop leading, the assistant group leaders prepare their groups for infiltration. Necessary equipment is issued, checked, and secured for silent movement. Where possible, each infiltration group should carry the necessary equipment to accomplish the mission of the major unit, thereby insuring the accomplishment of the mission in the event all groups do not participate in the attack.

e. After the group leaders issue their orders, rehearsals should be conducted covering the passage of lines, actions at danger areas, enemy contact, signals, and actions at the rendezvous point and objective. Each man should be required to memorize the route and azimuths to rendezvous points.

f. Since the accomplishment of the mission rests primarily on the ability of subordinate leaders, their preparation must be as thorough and as detailed as time and facilities will permit.

g. Direct and indirect fires are planned to create diversions and to protect and support the unit during the infiltration, at the rendezvous point, and during the attack and consolidation or withdrawal.

h. Control measures for an infiltration include:

(1) *Objectives* which may be enemy reserves, artillery units, or command and logistical installations. Infiltrating forces may also seize key terrain or establish roadblocks to restrict enemy movement, isolate the battle area, and facilitate the movement of friendly mechanized forces.

(2) *Routes* to the objective from the rendezvous point. Routes should be concealed for surprise and for protection.

(3) *Rendezvous points* which should be concealed from enemy observation and patrols. They are secured by the first group into the area. Escape routes should be designated to alternate rendezvous points.

(4) *Infiltration lanes* which extend through known or likely gaps in the enemy defenses and are often located in rough, swampy, or heavily forested areas.

(5) *The time of infiltration* which is selected to take advantage of darkness, rain, snow, or fog. The time of attack is often, designated to best support the plans of higher headquarters.

73. Conduct of the Attack by Infiltration

a. The infiltrating groups move by stealth to avoid detection. Artillery fire is used as necessary to distract enemy attention. If detected, groups avoid engagement by withdrawing or bypassing the enemy. Enemy forces in the infiltration lane are reported to the controlling headquarters. If groups are unable to reach their rendezvous point at the specified time, leaders report their situation for further instructions. Such groups may be assigned contingency missions, such as target acquisition or harassment of enemy positions and columns, or they may be exfiltrated by foot or air.

b. At the rendezvous point, groups assemble and attack preparations are completed (some groups may be missing). The assembled force leaves the rendezvous point to attack the objective at the designated time. The main body may be preceded by a small security patrol with a mission of preventing the main body from being detected or surprised. This will often require a detour in the planned route.

c. Short of the objective (in an attack position), the force is halted for final reconnaissance and coordination. This location should be the last safe, covered, and concealed area before reaching the objective.

d. The attack on the objective is characterized by surprise and maximum firepower on the objective's weakest point to quickly destroy or capture it. The attack may be a raid (para. 68 through 70), daylight attack (para. 27 through 35), or night attack (para. 36 through 45). Platoons acting alone normally use the raid technique, whereas company and large units usually use the day or night attack technique.

e. The objective, when captured, is consolidated against enemy counterattacks. If linkup is planned, previously designated visual and sound recognition signals prevent fire fights between friendly units.

f. If the objective is not captured, the attacking force withdraws either to an assembly area to prepare for further attacks, or else it withdraws to friendly lines. The exfiltration to friendly lines may be by air or foot, either as an intact unit or by small groups. The unit reassembles as necessary when it reaches friendly lines.

Section X. COUNTERGUERRILLA OPERATIONS

74. Reference

See FM 31–16 for details of counterguerrilla operations.

75. Types of Offensive Operations

a. Encirclement. The rifle platoon participates in an encirclement as a part of a larger force. The encirclement consists of the movement to the line of encirclement (fig. 18), occupation of the line of encirclement (fig. 19), and frontal attack(s) (fig. 20) or penetration(s) (fig. 21) as necessary to destroy the guerrilla force within the encircled area.

b. Penetration. When a guerrilla force presents resistance strong enough to stop leading elements, one method of destroying

the force is to penetrate the line of contact. The size of this assaulting force will vary, depending on the strength, armament, and disposition of the guerrilla force. It may move by foot, by helicopter, or by carrier. It employs normal offensive tactics to make the penetration. When the penetrating force has overcome all resistance, the objective area is thoroughly searched to insure that no guerrilla or materiel has escaped detection.

c. Envelopment. The guerrilla force may be enveloped (fig. 22) from one or more directions. A secondary attack may be effective in fixing the guerrillas in position. The secondary attack force emphasizes maintenance of contact with the guerrillas until the enveloping force is in position. The guerrilla force is then destroyed by a combination of offensive action and supporting fires.

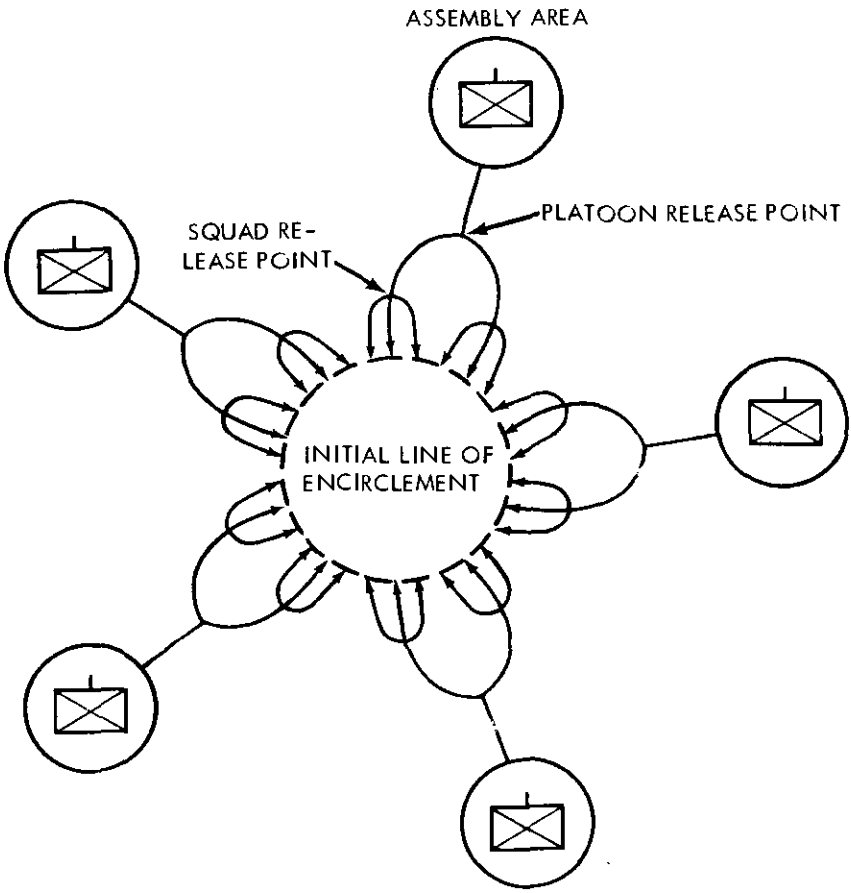

Figure 18. Counterguerrilla task force movement to the initial line of encirclement (schematic).

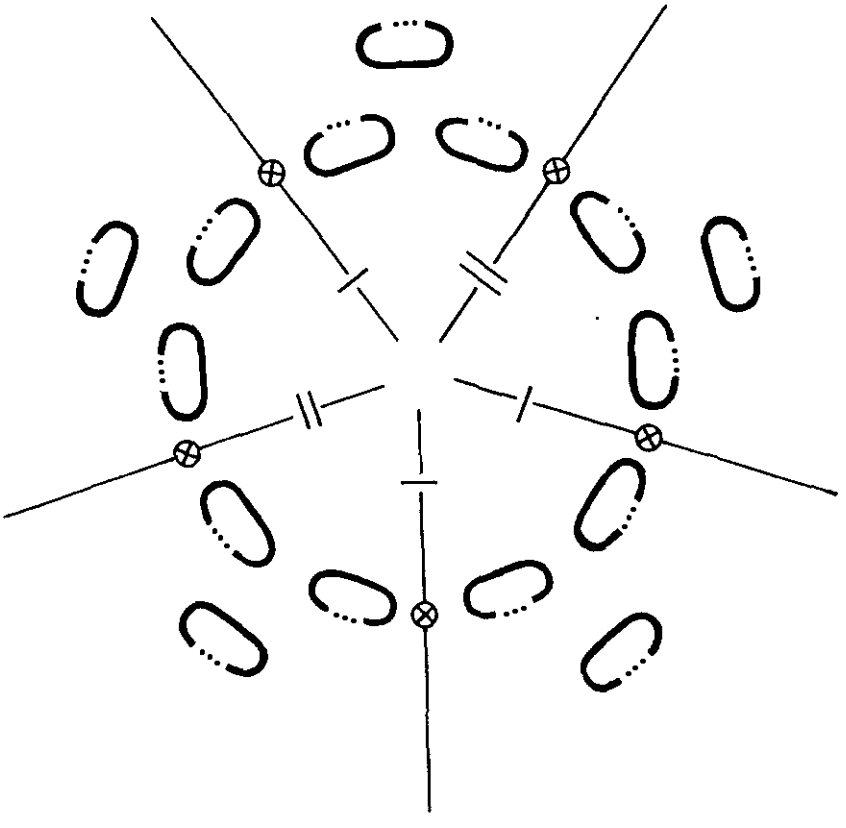

Figure 19. Task force occupation of the line of encirclement (schematic).

76. Variations and Other Operations

a. Although the encirclement is the most effective maneuver used in combating guerrilla forces, it may often be difficult to execute because of inadequate forces, the type of terrain involved, or the limitations imposed by the tactical situation. Regardless of these factors, pressure on the enemy must be maintained. Often, the most expedient means of gaining contact will be through patrols, raids, and search operations.

b. All forms of patrol action may be used during counterguerrilla actions. Combat, reconnaissance, security, contact, and ambush patrols are ideal in counterguerrilla operations because they can be tailored for a specific mission and quickly dispatched. Speed

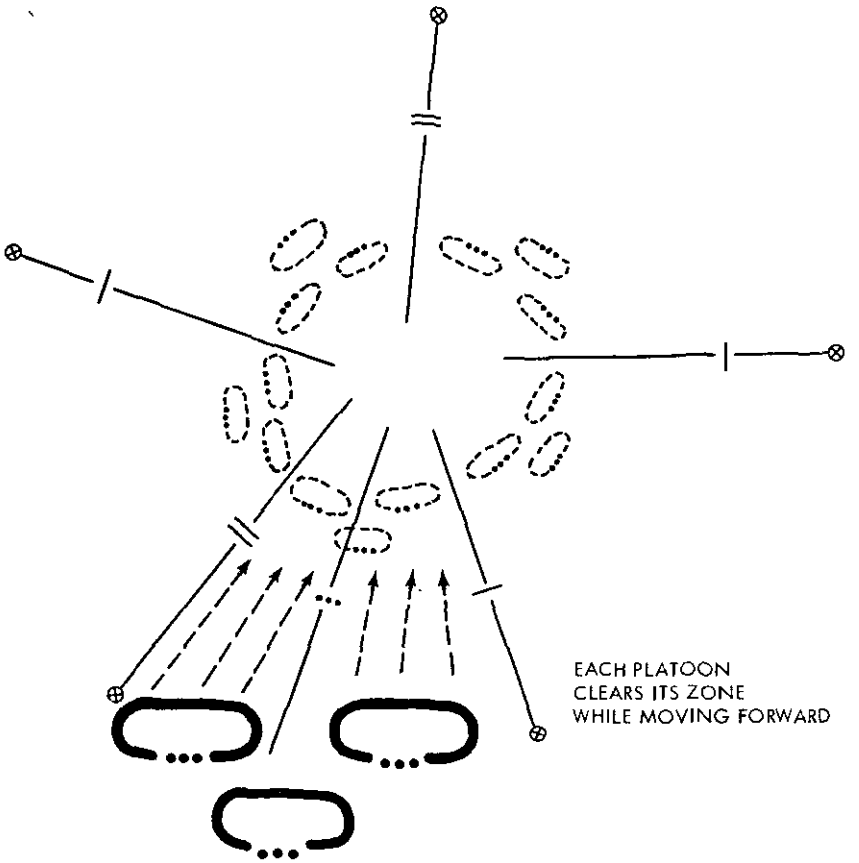

Figure 20. Frontal attack to destroy encircled guerrillas, all elements of the encircling task force advancing simultaneously (schematic).

and decisiveness are absolute requirements in such operations. Guerrilla forces use dispersion to avoid capture and annihilation, and even when surprise is achieved, some of the enemy can be expected to get away. The pursuit of such forces will usually require many squad and platoon-size operations. (Patrol organization is discussed in FM 21–75.) They can be held in reserve to be committed at any time during a counterguerrilla operation. Such patrols must be well rehearsed in actions to be taken. They must be led by men with initiative, be in excellent physical condition, and be capable of enduring prolonged hardship.

c. Patrols must move with the greatest stealth. All information must be transmitted as quickly as possible. All means of communication in keeping with the required security are used to insure

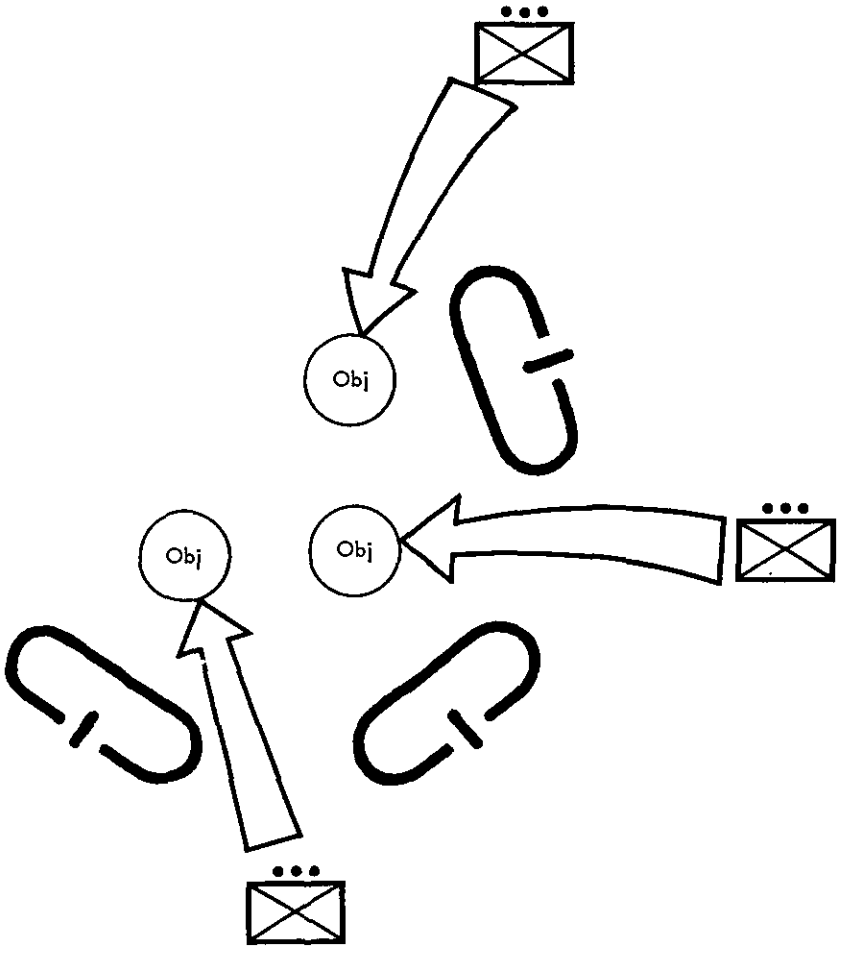

Figure 21. Destruction of a guerrilla force by penetration through the line of contact (schematic).

the rapid transmission of information. Only through the use of accurate, timely information can the forward elements of the attacking force move into position to maintain contact with and block the escape of guerrillas. Care must be taken to insure that any patrols dispatched from the main body are organized and equipped to assault immediately any guerrilla elements encountered or alerted. A careful estimate must be made as to the advantages and disadvantages connected with dispatching any elements ahead of the main body. Surprise may be lost by such action.

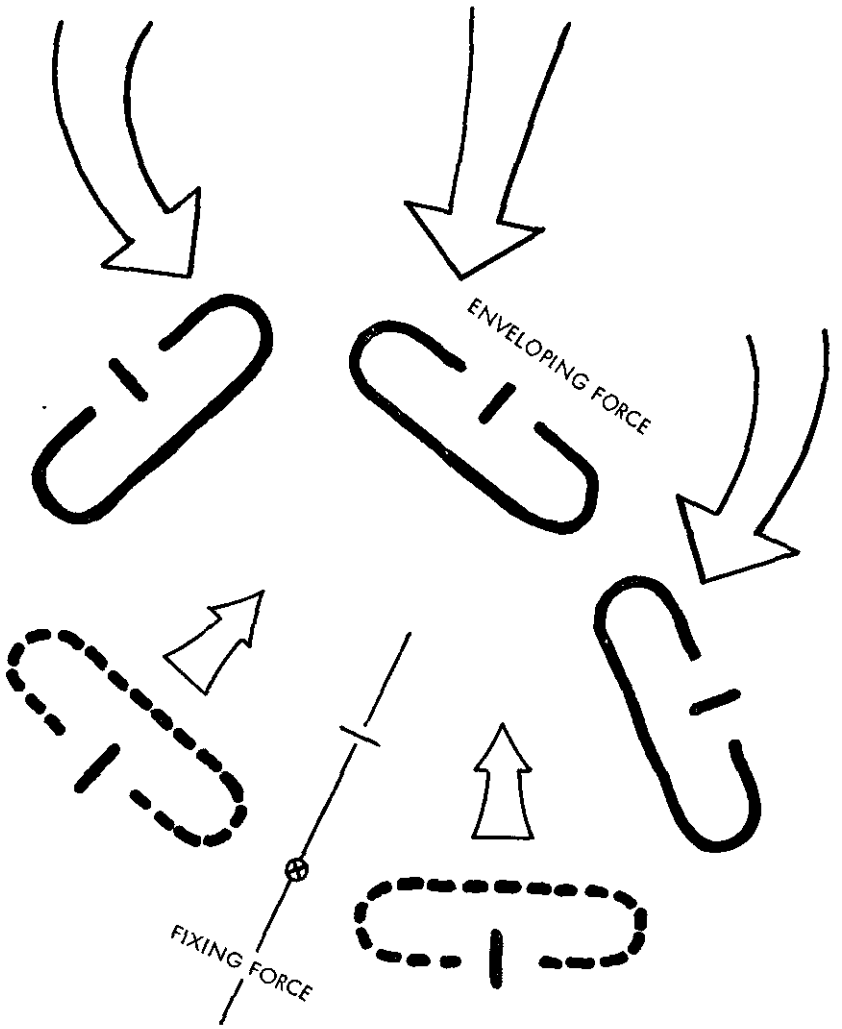

Figure 22. Task force envelopment (schematic).

d. Squads and platoons will normally employ the offensive tactics discussed in this chapter. Attacks upon guerrilla forces, however, are characterized by flexibility and rapid implementation of all types of offensive tactics. Surprise will give the attacker a marked advantage, so every effort must be made to make contact quickly before being detected. Guerrilla forces may cease movement during daylight. Squads and platoons will normally move in darkness to attack positions and maneuver to blocking positions which will seal off escape routes. Success or failure of the attack to destroy guerrilla forces will often be determined by the attacking unit's aggressiveness and the speed with which the main body of the attacking force joins the attack once contact is made.

e. Whenever possible, the double envelopment will be used by the main body. This maneuver limits guerrilla withdrawal, disorganizes them, and creates the greatest possible shock effect. All elements in the attacking forces should close rapidly with the enemy. Furthermore, squads and platoons must be impressed with the idea that the objective is destruction of guerrillas, not merely seizure and retention of ground.

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CHAPTER 3
DEFENSE

Section I. GENERAL

77. General

This chapter provides guidance for rifle squad, weapons squad, and rifle platoon leaders in conducting defensive operations. It is applicable to the rifle platoon of the infantry, airborne, and mechanized rifle company.

a. The rifle platoon normally defends as a part of the company, requiring the platoon leader to have an understanding of company defensive tactics as discussed in FM 7–11 and 17–15.

b. The mechanized rifle platoon will function essentially the same as an infantry rifle platoon. Paragraphs 106 and 107 outline major differences in the employment of the mechanized rifle platoon.

78. Mission and Employment

a. The rifle platoon defends as part of a larger force to deny a vital area to the enemy, protect flanks, gain time, economize forces, or disorganize and destroy the enemy.

b. The rifle platoon of a rifle company defends its assigned area by stopping the enemy by fire forward of the battle area, or by repelling him by close combat if he reaches the battle area.

c. The reserve platoon of a rifle company adds depth to the defense and provides a limited means to destroy or eject the enemy if he penetrates the defensive area.

79. Types and Echelons of Defense

a. There are two basic types of defense, the *area* defense and the *mobile* defense. (For a detailed discussion, see FM 7–11.) The employment of the rifle platoon is essentially the same in either type of defense.

b. The defense (either area or mobile) consists of three echelons: the security echelon, forward defense echelon, and reserve echelon.

(1) The security echelon provides early warning of the approach of the enemy, seeks to destroy or delay and disorganize his advance, and deceives him as to the true location of the battle area.

(2) The forward defense echelon engages the enemy in decisive combat to stop, slow, canalize, or disorganize him for destruction by other forces and/or means.

(3) The reserve echelon provides depth and flexibility to limit penetrations and destroy or eject the enemy by counterattack. This capability is limited at company level.

80. Fundamentals of Defense

The fundamentals used for planning and conducting the defense are discussed below. These fundamentals do not have equal influence in any given situation nor do any of them apply to the same extent in different situations. The leader decides the degree to which each will affect his planning.

a. Proper Use of Terrain. Defensive terrain analysis includes:

(1) *Observation and fields of fire.* The platoon leader examines the terrain to determine where he can obtain the best observation. Observation is essential for providing information of the enemy and adjusting indirect fire. The effectiveness of direct fire depends on observation and fields of fire.. To improve fields of fire, the platoon leader plans for cutting or burning weeds, grass, and crops; clearing brush, limbs of trees, or entire trees; demolishing buildings; and cutting lanes through woods. The clearing of fields of fire should not disclose the location of the battle area or weapons within the battle area. Terrain which affords good observation and fields of fire requires fewer men and weapons to organize and defend it.

(2) *Concealment and cover.* The platoon leader plans for maximum use of available cover and concealment to deny the enemy air and ground observation of the defensive position. The platoon leader provides specific instructions concerning digging and camouflaging positions. Concealed and covered routes within the platoon defensive position facilitate resupply, evacuation, and movement.

(3) *Obstacles.* Artificial obstacles are located where they can stop or canalize the enemy, and whenever possible, they are tied in with natural obstacles.

(4) *Key terrain.* Key terrain is defined as any locality or area whose seizure or retention affords a marked advantage to either combatant. The platoon leader considers those terrain features which dominate his area of responsibility. Key terrain is usually the high ground; however, high ground affording little or no observation or which does not dominate the surrounding terrain may be of little or no tactical value. The platoon leader plans to organize (or otherwise deny to the enemy) terrain features which are important to the defense of the area.

(5) *Avenue of approach.* The platoon leader analyzes the avenues of approach available to the enemy in the terms of both foot and vehicle movement (roads, draws, ridges, and areas where the ground favors enemy movement into the defender's position from any direction). This analysis forms the basis for the employment of the squads and crew-served weapons. The defender considers avenues of approach which, although difficult to traverse, might be used by the enemy to gain surprise.

b. Security. Security consists of measures taken to prevent surprise and to deny the enemy information concerning the plan of defense. All-round security and protection against surprise are gained by patrols, surveillance, security posts, obstacles, trip flares, and warning devices. The fundamental of security is also applied by insuring the proper use of countersigns, camouflage, light and noise discipline, fire discipline, and communication procedures.

c. Mutual Support. Units reinforce one another by fire and/or movement. The platoon leader obtains mutual support by assigning overlapping sectors of fire to his squads.

d. All-Round Defense. A platoon must be prepared to defeat an attack from any direction.

e. Defense in Depth. Defense in depth is required because any forward defense echelon may be penetrated if the enemy is willing to sacrifice the necessary men, materiel, and time. Defense in depth prevents the enemy from having freedom of movement in friendly rear areas.

f. Flexibility. The rifle platoon achieves flexibility in conduct of the defense by controlling and shifting fires and by preparing alternate and supplementary positions. Company and larger units employ reserves to gain additional flexibility.

g. Maximum Use of Offensive Action. Defending units maintain the spirit of the offensive primarily by the aggressive attitude and drive of their small-unit leaders. Combat patrols and limited-objective attacks assist in maintaining this spirit.

h. Dispersion. The rifle platoon organizes the terrain to best accomplish its mission without regard for dispersion in relation to nuclear effects.

i. Time Available. The time available for planning and preparing for the defense will influence the platoon leader's decision as to the positioning of his squads, preparation of obstacles, coordination of fires, and priority of tasks to be performed. Every effort should be made to prepare the defense in advance of enemy action. Maximum use of time must be made to prepare and improve defensive positions in order to conduct an effective defense.

j. Integration and Coordination of Defensive Measures. The overall defense plan involves the careful integration and coordination of the following plans:

(1) *Plan of fire support.* The company plan of fire support provides for taking the enemy under fire as soon as he comes within observation (long-range fires); holding him under an increasingly heavy volume of fire as he approaches the battle area and breaking up his attack formation (close defensive fires); stopping his assault by an intense barrier of fire immediately in front of the battle area (final protective fires); destroying him by fire if he enters the battle area, and supporting counterattacks (fires within the battle area). The plan of fire support includes fires of organic, attached, and supporting weapons on targets of opportunity and prearranged fires that can be delivered under any condition of visibility. The plan of fire support is coordinated with the barrier plan to insure that obstacles are covered by fire.

(2) *Barrier (obstacle) plans.* The defensive characteristics of the terrain are reinforced by the effective use of barriers. Barriers stop, slow, or canalize the enemy, making him more vulnerable to fires. Obstacles should be positioned in relation to the forward units along the FEBA to insure that they can be effectively covered by direct and indirect fire. The barriers/obstacles to be prepared are normally prescribed by higher headquarters and may include minefields (including flame and toxic chemical agents), abatis, road craters, tank ditches, and barbed-wire entanglements.

(3) *Plans for defense against armor.* The company commander employs the antitank section and attached antitank weapons to cover likely armor approaches into the company area. These weapons normally engage armor at maximum effective range. Antitank weapons are positioned laterally and in depth. The rifle platoon antitank weapons are positioned by the platoon leader to add to the coverage of armor approaches into the platoon area. The employment of the platoon antitank weapons is closely coordinated with other antitank weapons.

(4) *Plans for defense against air attack* (para. 16).

Section II. FORWARD RIFLE PLATOON IN DEFENSE

81. General

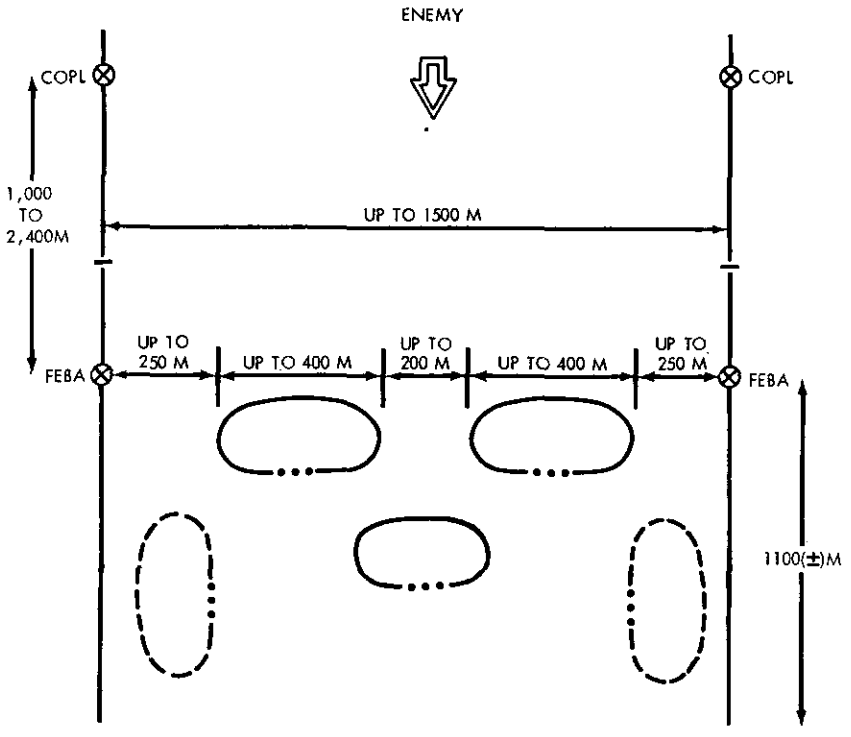
A rifle platoon is assigned a portion of the company defense area to organize and defend (fig. 23). Its elements are deployed to provide the maximum firepower in the expected direction of enemy attack, to protect the flanks, and to support adjacent units. The platoon leader coordinates the employment of his platoon with any attached or supporting weapons located within the platoon area.

a. Boundaries. Boundaries are extended forward and to the rear of the FEBA to indicate the company area of responsibility. Platoon boundaries are not normally designated in defensive operations.

b. Coordinating Points. Coordinating points, which are indicated on boundaries, serve two purposes. They indicate the general trace of the FEBA and the COP, and they designate places on the ground where adjacent leaders coordinate their defensive plans to insure mutual support. Commanders (or their representatives) coordinate at these points and decide whether unoccupied areas should be covered by fire (direct or indirect), by obstacles and fires, or by outposts and/or patrols.

c. Forward Edge of the Battle Area. The FEBA is the line formed by the forward defensive positions of the rifle platoons. It intersects boundaries at coordinating points.

d. Frontage. The frontage of a unit includes the area it can physically occupy plus the area it can cover by direct small-arms fire. On ideal terrain, the rifle platoon may physically occupy a frontage up to 400 meters. (The distance between two-man foxholes should not exceed 20 meters in open terrain; for single holes, the figure is halved.) An unoccupied area up to 200 meters wide



NOTE: FRONTAGES INDICATED ARE MAXIMUM AND ARE USED ONLY WHEN IDEAL DEFENSIVE TERRAIN EXISTS. (FOR A DISCUSSION OF IDEAL TERRAIN SEE FM 7-11)

Figure 23. Forward rifle company in defense (schematic).

may exist between two forward platoons of the rifle company, depending on observation and fields of fire, terrain, and other factors. Factors which determine the frontage a platoon can defend are:

(1) Terrain characteristics.

(2) The strength of the platoon and attachments.

(3) The enemy's strength, characteristics, and capabilities.

e. Depth. The depth of a rifle platoon position in defense is the distance between the squad primary and supplementary positions to defend against an attack from the flanks and rear. This depth may be up to 200 meters. Supplementary positions should have good fields of fire and covered and concealed routes from the primary positions.

82. Plan of Defense

The platoon leader's plan of defense includes *security measures, employment of the rifle and weapons squads, selection of a command post-observation post (CP-OP), control and communication measures, and a plan of fire support.*

a. Security. Platoon security consists of measures taken by the platoon to minimize enemy observation and surprise. Security measures may be either active or passive.

(1) *Active measures.*

(*a*) The company establishes local security immediately forward and in the rear of the company. Local security is a series of security posts and patrols that provide warning of the approach of the enemy. Security posts are established by the forward platoons. Coordination with the company commander is necessary to prevent conflict with patrols operating forward of the battle area and with the registering of fire. Where possible, security posts are located within rifle-supporting distance of the FEBA. They consist of two or three men from the rifle squads provided with a means of communication. Flares, barbed wire, night-viewing devices, and noisemaking devices increase the effectiveness of the security elements. Pyrotechnics may be effectively utilized by security posts to provide illumination and warning through prearranged signals.

(*b*) The platoon leader plans for security within his platoon area. Enough members of the platoon are kept alert to maintain an effective warning system. During the preparation of the area, a minimum of one sentinel is posted in each squad area to give warning of enemy ground or air approach, and at least one man will be positioned with each crew-served weapon.

(*c*) At night and during other periods of limited visibility, additional security measures are necessary. Within the platoon area at night, the number of personnel kept on the alert varies. When the enemy normally attacks at night, or contact is imminent, the entire platoon may be kept on the alert. However, the platoon leader must keep his men prepared for future action by permitting them periods of rest. When the COP is employed to the front, a minimum number of personnel will be kept on the alert in each squad area. The frequency of

relief for sentinels and listening posts is affected by such considerations as the physical condition of the men, effects of extreme weather, morale of the troops, available troops, and anticipated operations. As a guide, relief every two hours is desirable.

(2) *Passive measures.* Passive security measures include camouflage of positions and installations, control of movement, noise and light discipline, and minimum radio and telephone traffic.

(3) *Surveillance devices.* Infrared and (when attached) radar surveillance devices are frequently used to extend the surveillance capability to detect the enemy, especially during periods of poor visibility.

(4) *Infrared weaponsight.* The infrared weaponsight may be mounted on infantry small arms (except the pistol). It is a line-of-sight instrument that is limited by dense undergrowth and trees; therefore, lanes of observation must be cleared to obtain its maximum effectiveness. It is usually employed on or near an automatic weapon so that targets of opportunity may be immediately engaged by an effective volume of fire. Infrared viewing devices mounted on armored vehicles may also be used for surveillance.

(5) *Radar set (short range).* This lightweight, portable radar set organic to the battalion can detect moving personnel at ranges up to 1,500 meters and vehicles at ranges up to 8,000 meters. One man can place the set in operation in ten minutes and the set can be transported in two one-man loads. It is a line-of-sight instrument normally employed within the forward platoon defense areas for surveillance of the company front.

b. Employment of Squads.

(1) *Rifle squads.*

(*a*) The rifle squads are located to take maximum advantage of the natural defensive characteristics of the terrain and the capabilities of organic weapons (fig. 24). The rifle squads are employed generally abreast with maximum firepower planned toward the expected direction of enemy attack. Each squad's frontage varies from approximately 30 meters in unfavorable terrain to 100 meters in favorable terrain. Up to 25 meters may be added to the squad frontage for each crew-served weapon in its area.

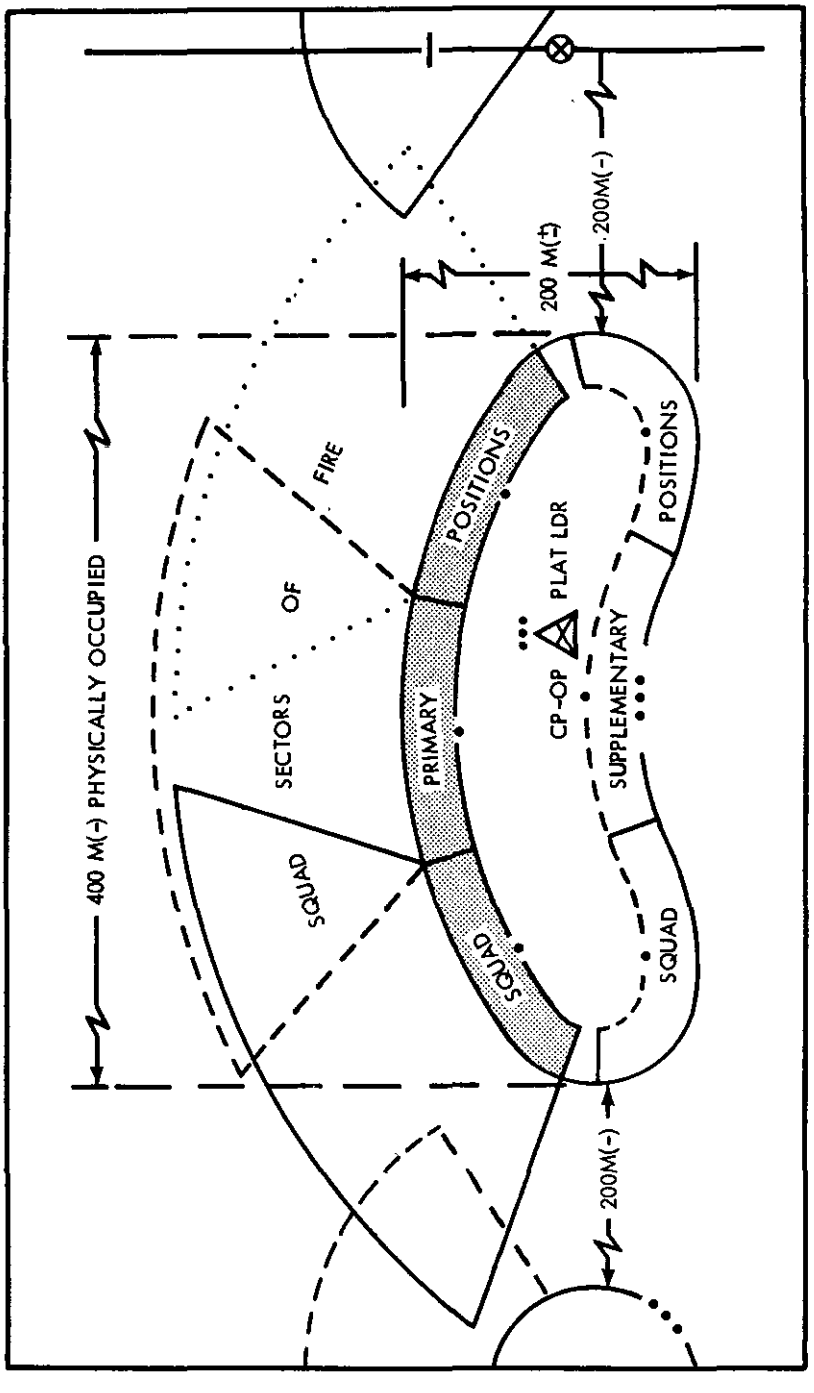


Figure 24. Forward rifle platoon in defense (schematic).

(*b*) The rifle squads prepare and occupy primary positions, usually on the military crest. The platoon leader assigns each squad an area to organize and a sector of fire. Each sector overlaps the adjacent squad's sector, and the sectors of the two flank squads overlap the adjacent platoon's sector. The platoon leader may assign certain automatic weapons or grenadiers their general firing positions and principal direction of fire to mutually support an adjacent platoon or cover a likely avenue of enemy approach. Normally, the squad leader determines the employment of these weapons.

(*c*) Each rifle squad prepares supplementary positions. These positions are organized the same as the platoon's primary positions but are oriented in a different direction. Squad supplementary positions are normally located within 200 meters of the primary position. As time permits, communication trenches are prepared to provide covered routes to supplementary positions. Although the rifle squads do not normally prepare alternate positions, additional fighting positions may be obtained with the improvement of communication trenches.

(2) *Weapons squad.* The platoon leader positions the weapons of the weapons squad within the rifle squad areas where they can provide the platoon with maximum support. If the crew-served weapons are emplaced on the platoon's flank, riflemen or automatic weapons are provided for their close-in protection.

(*a*) *Machineguns.* The platoon leader locates the machineguns along the FEBA to cover the most likely avenues of foot approach into the platoon area, to provide mutual fire support for adjacent units, and to participate in the delivery of final protective fires. The goal is to place a curtain of fire between the assaulting enemy and the friendly positions. It is desirable that these fires stretch completely across the front of the platoon and tie in with adjacent units. The machineguns of the forward platoons are employed on the tripod mount to achieve more accurate fires at the maximum effective range of the weapon and to facilitate employment during periods of reduced visibility. Machineguns may be employed singly or in pairs. When the guns are employed in pairs, they

should be far enough apart to reduce the probability of both being neutralized by one incoming mortar or artillery round. The terrain should permit grazing fire across most of the platoon front before a final protective line (FPL) is assigned. For ease of control and resupply, the most desirable way to employ machineguns is in pairs. However, the platoon frontage, the small number of weapons available, type of terrain, and number of foot approaches into the platoon area will *normally* dictate that the machineguns be employed *singly* in the infantry and airborne rifle platoon. In a mechanized rifle platoon, the capability to employ machineguns on the FEBA in pairs is increased. The machinegun in each mechanized rifle squad is employed by the platoon leader as discussed above. The platoon leader assigns the missions and *general* firing positions as necessary; the weapons squad leader selects the *exact* location for the machineguns to accomplish the assigned mission. (For a detailed discussion on the employment of machineguns, see FM 23–67.)

(*b*) *Antitank weapons.* The platoon antitank weapons are employed by the platoon leader to provide close-in antitank protection for the platoon area. The platoon leader selects a general firing position and a principal direction of fire for each antitank weapon. Antitank weapons positions should afford oblique fire at an armor approach, covered routes for ease of movement to alternate or supplementary positions, and protection from enemy direct and indirect fire weapons. In addition to antitank protection, these weapons may also be employed against enemy crew-served weapons, wheeled and tracked vehicles, and groups of personnel. The platoon leader selects alternate and supplementary positions as necessary.

c. Command Post-Observation Post. When possible, the platoon leader locates the CP-OP to enable him to observe and control his entire platoon. If this is not possible, he should locate the CP-OP so that he can observe and control that portion of his platoon covering the most likely avenue of approach into his position. When the platoon sergeant is located at the platoon CP-OP, he assists the platoon leader in receiving and reporting enemy information, controlling the fires of the platoon, and handling administrative functions such as feeding and resupply.

When located away from the CP-OP, he maintains contact with the platoon leader and controls that portion of the platoon most difficult for the platoon leader to control from the CP-OP.

d. Control and Communication. The platoon headquarters has a telephone in the company wire net and a radio in the company radio net. The platoon has its own internal radio and wire nets. Additional telephones may be issued to the platoon for use on security posts. Voice commands, arm-and-hand signals, and prearranged field-expedient means of communication are used. The platoon leader also may use the communication facilities of FO and any attached or supporting units within the platoon area. When necessary, he moves to a threatened area to take personal control.

e. Plan of Fire Support.

(1) Fires in the defense are classified as long-range fires, close defensive fires, final protective fires, and fires within the battle area (para. 80). The platoon leader's primary concern is with the last three types. Fire support planning in the defense involves the preparation of a coordinated fire plan designed to insure that maximum effective fire is brought to bear on the attacking force throughout the conduct of the defense. The plan of fire support includes the fires of organic, attached, and supporting weapons and is coordinated with the barrier plan to provide fire coverage of obstacles. Fire support planning includes:

(*a*) *Barrages.* A barrage is a prearranged barrier of fire designed to protect friendly troops by impeding enemy movement across a defensive area. The location of barrages is coordinated with other indirect and direct fires and obstacles, and they are part of the final protective fires. Barrages are normally planned on likely avenues of approach to break up an enemy assault on friendly positions along the FEBA. They are usually planned so that the near edge of the barrage is as close as possible to the FEBA and no more than 200 meters forward of the FEBA. Barrages take priority over all other indirect fire missions. Artillery and mortar barrages are fired on order of the company commander in whose area they are located and, when delivered, are fired continuously at maximum rate until ordered discontinued, or until the available supply of ammunition is expended. Authority to call for them is frequently

delegated to the platoon leader in whose area they are located. The firing of a barrage is repeated on call. The widths and depths of typical barrages of firing units are shown below.

Weapons	*Unit*	*Width of Barrage*	*Depth of Barrage*
81-mm mortar	Squad (1 tube)	50 meters	50 meters
81-mm mortar	Section (3 tubes)	100 meters	50 meters
4.2-in mortar	Squad (1 tube)	50 meters	50 meters
4.2-in mortar	Section (4 tubes)	200 meters	50 meters
105-mm howitzer	Battery	180 meters	150 meters
155-mm howitzer	Battery	300 meters	150 meters

(*b*) *Concentrations.* A concentration is an area designated and numbered for future reference as a possible target. Concentrations planned may include fires to support the COP, cover avenues of approach, cover areas which direct fire weapons cannot reach, cover unoccupied areas between units, limit penetrations, support counterattacks, and cover any other likely target areas.

(*c*) *Small-arms fire.* The platoon leader insures small-arms coverage of the platoon area of responsibility by assigning overlapping sectors of fire to his squads and directing the employment of his machineguns. To provide small-arms fire coverage of the area during all conditions of visibility, the platoon leader insures that range cards are prepared and that aiming stakes that can be seen at night are placed at each position. These devices assist the troops in forming a mental picture of the battle area so they may place fire in critical areas. He also insures that weapons equipped with night-viewing devices are employed on the avenues of approach and can mark targets for weapons not equipped with such devices.

(*d*) *Fire support.* The platoon leader familiarizes himself with the company plan of fire support. He uses a map, overlay, or sketch to memorize the location and designated numbers of artillery and mortar concentrations and barrages in his area. A mortar FO party will normally operate in the platoon area and will assist the platoon leader in planning, calling for, and adjusting indirect fires. When time and facilities permit, the platoon leader issues maps, overlays, or sketches to his subordinate leaders. The platoon leader coordinates the fires of his organic and attached weapons with the company plan of fire support for maximum defense

of the platoon area. The plan of fire support submitted to the company commander should consist of all of the following: principal direction of fire for the antitank weapons and attached direct fire weapons, firing positions and missions for machineguns, squad primary positions, concentrations and barrages employed in his defensive area, and the firing positions and missions of supporting weapons located in his area. Figure 25 is a sample platoon fire plan.

(2) Fire control measures are included in the platoon leader's defense order. These measures may include the designation of terrain features which the enemy must reach before the platoon opens fire and/or signals for final protective fires.

(3) The platoon leader increases the effectiveness of his defense by the use of mines, barbed wire, trip flares, portable flamethrowers, and field expedients.

83. Troop-Leading Procedure in Defense

a. Begin Planning.

(1) Upon receipt of the company defense order, the platoon leader begins an estimate of the situation by analyzing his mission.

(2) The platoon leader plans the use of available time. The more time the platoon has to clear fields of fire, prepare firing data, register fires, and prepare positions, obstacles, and camouflage, the more successful the defense will be. Based upon his experience, he allots a portion of the time for his own reconnaissance and planning and a portion of the time for his squad leaders to plan, make a reconnaissance, and issue their orders.

(3) The platoon leader continues his estimate of the situation by:

(*a*) Analyzing the terrain from a map, sketch, or aerial photograph for:

1. Observation and fields of fire.

2. Cover and concealment.

3. Obstacles.

4. Key terrain features.

5. Avenues of approach.

(*b*) Analyzing enemy strength, locations, dispositions, and capabilities.

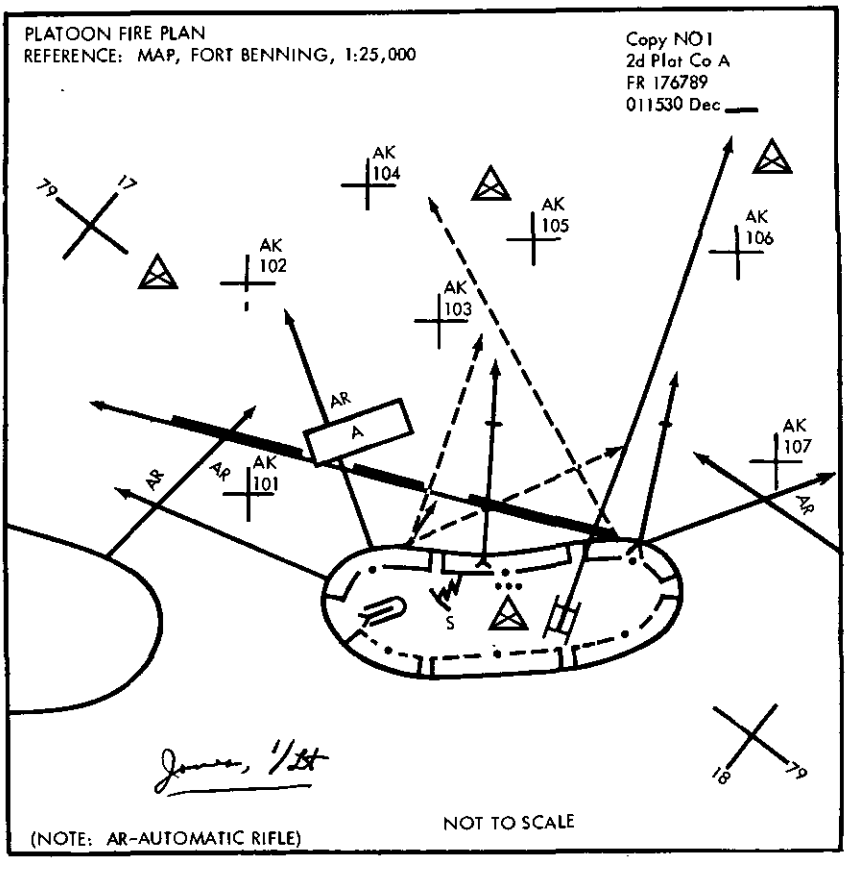


Figure 25. Platoon fire plan (overlay type).

(*c*) Developing, analyzing, and comparing courses of action.

(4) The platoon leader makes a preliminary plan of defense based on his initial estimate. This plan, which he announces to those who will accompany him on the reconnaissance, serves as a basis for future planning and includes security measures, employment of the rifle and weapons squads, selection of a CP-OP, control and communication measures, and a plan of fire support. This is tentative and is used only as a basis for future planning.

b. Arrange For:

(1) *Movement of the platoon.* Based on available time and his plan, the platoon leader plans for the movement of the platoon to insure no time is lost in preparation of

the defensive position. Instructions will be provided by the company commander pertaining to the move, including the route to be used, order of movement, the location of the new assembly area, time of arrival, and disposition in the new area. The platoon is brought forward by the senior NCO present.

(2) *Reconnaissance.* Using his plan as a guide, the platoon leader plans the reconnaissance of his entire defensive area. He will arrange to coordinate with certain leaders at specified points and times during his reconnaissance. Normally, the weapons squad leader accompanies him to assist in the selection of missions and positions for the machineguns and antitank weapons. If an FO party is attached, it will normally accompany the platoon leader to assist in planning indirect fires. If time is limited, the platoon sergeant may be assigned specific tasks on the reconnaissance; for example, the selection of a location for the CP-OP, squad supplementary positions, and routes of supply and evacuation.

(3) *Issuance of order.* The platoon leader informs his subordinates as early as possible when, where, and to whom he will issue his order. The order is normally issued to the platoon sergeant, squad leaders, and the leaders of all attachments. When the terrain and enemy situation permit, he plans to orient his leaders and issue his order from a vantage point overlooking the platoon defensive area.

(4) *Coordination.* The platoon leader plans to coordinate with adjacent unit leaders and with leaders or representatives of supporting units, units in contact, or other unit leaders with whom he may come in contact during the defense. Many of these leaders will be present for the company commander's order and certain coordination can be accomplished at that time. The purpose of coordination is to exchange information on plans of operation to insure there is no mission conflict between units and insure complete and adequate coverage of the defensive area.

c. Continue Planning. While the platoon leader makes his ground reconnaissance, he completes his enemy and terrain analysis. He selects primary and supplementary squad positions and sectors, weapons positions and missions, locations for security posts, and a CP-OP location. He notes the effect of the terrain on

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his preliminary plan and he confirms or changes the plan accordingly.

d. Complete Plan. After completing his reconnaissance, the platoon leader considers recommendations from his subordinates. He revises the preliminary plan as necessary and completes his plan of defense. He then prepares notes for issuing his order.

e. Issue Order. At the time and place designated, he meets his subordinate leaders. He orients them on the terrain from a vantage point. If this is not possible, he uses a map, sketches, aerial photograph, or an improvised terrain model. He then issues his defense order using the standard operation order sequence (para. 10 and FM 7–11, app. II) and includes everything his subordinates need to know. He insures that his subordinate leaders understand the order. Time permitting, he walks the area with his squad leaders and points out squad areas of responsibility, sectors of fire, and weapons positions.

f. Supervise Activities. The platoon leader, assisted by his squad leaders, actively supervises his platoon to insure the order is carried out. If he notes a deficiency or a misunderstanding, he takes immediate corrective action. Supervision is continuous throughout the conduct of the defense.

g. Submit Fire Plan to the Company Commander. The fire plan (para. 82 and fig. 25) may be submitted in sketch form or as an overlay. The fire plan is as complete and detailed as time permits. Changes are submitted as they occur. One copy of the fire plan is retained by the platoon leader.

84. Preparation for the Defense

a. Upon arrival of the platoon, security is posted and crew-served weapons are immediately emplaced in temporary firing positions to cover the most likely approaches into the area. Squads move directly to their assigned areas. When applicable, sectors of fire, principal directions of fire, and FPL are assigned. The platoon leader's defense order prescribes the priority of work and time limit in which work is to be accomplished. If the company commander does not prescribe a priority of work, the platoon leader establishes his own. A recommended priority is:

(1) Establish security.

(2) Position crew-served weapons and squads.

(3) Clear fields of fire and determine ranges to probable target locations.

(4) Provide signal communication and observation systems.

(5) Prepare positions and emplacements.

(6) Establish early-warning devices.

(7) Prepare supplementary positions.

b. During the preparation of the positions, all leaders closely supervise the actions of their men. No unnecessary noise or movement which might disclose the position is allowed. Camouflaging is concurrent with the preparation of positions. Range cards are prepared and checked. Leaders verify sectors of fire and principal directions of fire or FPL. Adjustments are made to correct deficiencies. Individuals are questioned to insure that orders have been thoroughly disseminated and understood.

c. Preparation of the area is continuous. As long as the area is occupied, improvements are made to strengthen the defense.

85. Rifle Squad in Defense

a. Rifle squads are assigned sectors by the platoon leader (para. 82 and fig. 26).

b. Within each squad, the fire teams are employed on line with fire team integrity maintained. The choice of single or double foxholes is determined by squad strength, fields of fire, and morale. Advantages of two-man foxholes include continuous observation (while one man is resting or working, the other is alert), assistance and reassurance from each other, and redistribution of ammunition between the two.

c. Upon receiving the platoon defense order, the squad leader follows troop-leading procedure and develops a squad order. The order, issued on the terrain to be defended, is clear and definite so that the men in the squad understand the mission and the plan. If time is limited, the squad leader may issue the order as the men are being located or after they have started the preparation of the position. The squad leader's defense order includes:

(1) Information of the enemy and friendly forces, including the location and identification of adjacent squads and platoons and supporting weapons located within the squad area.

(2) Mission of the squad.

(3) Positions and sectors of fire for each rifleman, grenadier, and automatic weapon; provisions for antitank defense by assigning squad antitank weapons to selected members of the squad; and organization of the ground, in-

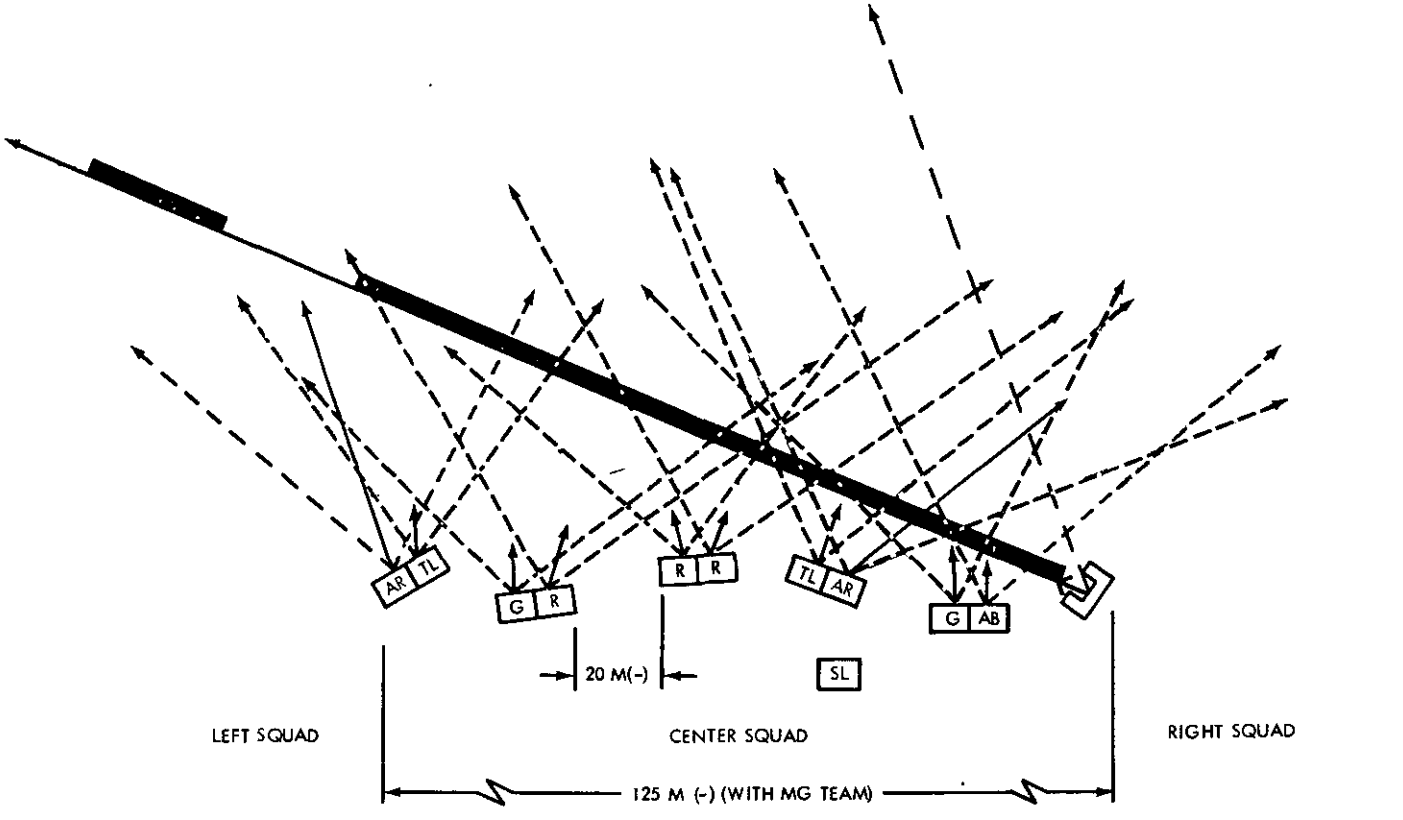

Figure 26. Forward rifle squad in defense (schematic).

cluding the type of emplacements, other instructions, and priority of work.

(4) Administrative and supply details such as ammunition resupply and the location of the aid station.

(5) Prearranged signals such as pyrotechnics or audible signals designating when to open fire or deliver final protective fires; and the location of the squad leader and platoon leader.

d. After issuing the squad defense order, the squad leader moves his men directly to their firing positions. Local security posts are manned. At least one sentinel is posted in the squad area. Before work is started, the squad leader verifies the observation and sector of fire of each man. During his check of the positions, the squad leader insures that sectors of fire overlap and that the desired density of fire can be delivered on avenues of approach. The squad leader positions himself where he can best observe his assigned area, control his squad, and maintain contact with the platoon leader. The squad leader's responsibilities during the preparation of the position include:

(1) Coordinating with other weapons located in the squad area.

(2) Supervising the preparation of foxholes.

(3) Supervising the preparation of range cards to include assisting in the estimation of ranges to prominent landmarks.

(4) Insuring that aiming stakes that can be seen at night are placed at each position.

(5) Supervising the clearing of fields of fire.

(6) Supervising the preparation of supplementary positions.

(7) Inspecting the positions to insure that camouflage and overhead cover are sufficient.

(8) Insuring that all weapons have their battlesight setting and have been test-fired.

(9) Preparing a sketch in duplicate of the squad's sector of fire, showing prominent landmarks or terrain features and the ranges to them. He gives one sketch to the platoon leader and keeps one copy for himself.

e. Selection of firing positions is essential for each rifleman.

(1) The squad leader, in conjunction with his fire team leaders, selects firing positions for each rifleman within the squad and assigns him a sector of fire. These sectors

of fire overlap to insure complete coverage of the squad sector.

(2) The squad leader selects firing positions and sectors of fire for the squad automatic weapons. If possible, the sector of fire assigned each automatic weapon covers the entire squad sector. If not, the automatic weapons are assigned overlapping sectors to cover the squad sector of fire. They may fire into other sectors to assist the defense if no targets appear in their own sector.

(3) The squad leader assigns the exact firing position and sectors of fire for the grenadiers, if not previously selected by the platoon leader. The sector should be the squad sector or large enough to overlap the sectors of adjacent grenadiers. The grenade launcher is used as a direct fire weapon at ranges up to 350 meters against crew-served weapons and grouped personnel. Grenadiers will cover the areas of dead space in the final protective fires of other weapons and engage other appropriate targets.

(4) Team leaders are normally located in an automatic-weapon or grenade-launcher position, whichever covers the most likely avenue of enemy approach, and their teams are assigned a sector of fire. They also assist in the control of the squad.

(5) Each firing position, to include supplementary positions, must be camouflaged, and unnecessary noise and movement held to a minimum. The squad leader requires his men to:

(*a*) Stay within shadowed areas whenever possible.

(*b*) Utilize branches and leaves and other natural material to break up the outline of men, weapons, equipment, and emplacements.

(*c*) Conceal mess gear, range cards, rations and ammunition containers, and all other light-colored or glittering objects.

(*d*) Break up solid areas of color and blend them with the natural surroundings.

(*e*) Hide or dispose of fresh earth uncovered while digging foxholes and weapons emplacements.

(*f*) Use only selected paths for movement within and out of the position. If it becomes necessary to move cross-country, remove or conceal all evidence of the movement.

f. The rifle squad provides for its security by alertness and by implementing its part of the platoon security plan.

g. Personal contact with subordinates is the squad leader's chief means of controlling his squad. However, his control is often limited by the distance his oral commands can be heard and his visual signals seen. The squad leader anticipates the difficulties of control during the conduct of defense and plans expedients to assist him in overcoming these difficulties. Passing information and orders from foxhole to foxhole is one method. Field expedients should be developed to meet specific situations, such as stringing wire or string along the line of foxholes and establishing a set of pull signals to transmit specific messages. Arm-and-hand signals, pyrotechnics, or small arms fire may also be used. Communication trenches should be dug between foxholes as time permits.

86. Weapons Squad in Defense

a. The machineguns and antitank weapons of the weapons squad are the platoon's organic fire support.

b. The weapons squad leader positions himself to control his entire squad. If this is not possible, he controls the weapons covering the most likely avenues of approach or assists the platoon leader in the platoon CP-OP. In the absence of the squad leader, gunners control their own weapons.

c. The weapons squad leader normally accompanies the platoon leader on his reconnaissance to make recommendations concerning the positions of the weapons of the squad. The platoon leader selects the general positions for the weapons and coordinates their fires with adjacent platoons and the company fire plan. The weapons squad leader selects the exact location for each weapon.

d. On receipt of the platoon defense order, the weapons squad leader following troop-leading procedure develops his plan and issues his order. He issues this order from a central location in the platoon area to point out specific positions.

e. After issuing the squad defense order, the squad leader moves his teams directly to their firing positions. Each weapon is set up and prepared to fire in its assigned sector. Weapons must be checked. The squad leader and the platoon leader check the observation and sectors of fire afforded by the selected positions and complete the coordination with the rifle squads. If FPL have been assigned by the platoon leader, the weapons squad leader checks the lines and reports the extent of grazing fire and dead space to the platoon leader. The checking is done with the assistant

gunner walking the FPL while the gunner sights down the weapon and records the extent of dead space and grazing fire. (Observing from behind the gun and from the flanks also assists in locating dead space and grazing fire.) The squad leader allocates the initial ammunition, and he supervises clearing fields of fire and preparing range cards and primary, alternate, and supplementary positions for each firing position. When not firing, machineguns are always laid on their principal direction of fire.

f. Security for the teams of the weapons squad is provided by having at least one member of the team on the alert and ready to deliver effective fire at all times. The rifle squad sentries posted in each squad area warn of the enemy approach and furnish additional security for the team.

g. Ammunition bearers provide a continuous supply of ammunition, assist in the security and close-in protection of the weapons positions, and replace injured crew members. They may be placed in a position with a rifle squad member.

87. Conduct of the Defense

a. The company commander alerts the forward platoon leaders prior to the withdrawal of the COP to facilitate its withdrawal through the FEBA. Forces along the FEBA cover the withdrawal of the COP by fire if necessary. The conduct of defense of a forward platoon begins when observation of the enemy is sufficient to permit delivery of effective fire by weapons organic, attached, or supporting the forward platoon. As the enemy continues the advance, he is brought under an increasing volume of fire. Security posts located forward of the battle area report information of the enemy and call for and adjust indirect fires. When the advance of the enemy threatens these security elements, they are withdrawn by the platoon leader to avoid close combat.

b. All leaders and FO in the forward platoon area search for indirect fire targets. Direct fire weapons located along the FEBA engage enemy targets within their effective range. If enemy armor is not active in the area, antitank weapons withhold their fires or engage suitable targets such as enemy crew-served weapons and groups of personnel. Machineguns, automatic weapons, riflemen, and grenadiers fire at appropriate targets within their assigned sectors. If it appears that the enemy does not know the location of the defensive positions and surprise fire is desired, direct fire is withheld until the enemy is well within effective range of the riflemen. While surprise fire may have a great psychological effect on the enemy, it must be realized that withholding fire may

lose valuable time and space. Leaders actively control the fires of their units to insure that ammunition is not wasted. Weapons are shifted to alternate or supplementary positions as required.

c. The rate of fire increases as the enemy approaches the platoon area. If the attacking forces include tanks as well as infantry, all available fires, direct and indirect, are delivered to force tanks to button up, and to separate foot elements from the tanks.

d. If the enemy continues to advance through the close defensive fires and starts his assault, the platoon leader calls for his final protective fires. The machineguns fire their FPL; if FPL have not been assigned, they engage all appropriate targets in their sectors of fire. Mortars and artillery fire barrages and all weapons fire maximum rate of fire. These weapons continue to fire until the assault has been halted, or the available supply of ammunition has been expended. A prearranged signal, normally a pyrotechnic, is used to stop the firing when the assault has been halted. Final protective fires may be repeated as often as necessary. Since final protective fires consume vast quantities of ammunition, they should not be called for until maximum use has been made of the close defensive fires. If the enemy gets through the final protective fires, he is repelled by close combat (all combat conducted within hand-grenade range of the FEBA to include small-arms fire, grenades, hand-to-hand fighting, and indirect fires on positions).

e. If the platoon area is penetrated, the platoon leader may refuse (or bend back) the flanks of squads in the penetrated area to allow maximum fires to be directed on the neck of the penetration. Direct and indirect weapons fire into the penetrated area to prevent reinforcement. If the platoon is threatened from the flanks or rear, the platoon leader may move men and weapons along communication trenches from the least engaged area into supplementary positions to meet the threat.

f. If the enemy is repelled, he is pursued by all available fire. Local security is reestablished and patrols may be ordered forward to maintain contact. Fires are delivered in areas where the enemy is likely to regroup his forces. Troops along the FEBA reorganize, evacuate casualties, redistribute and resupply ammunition, and strengthen their defense.

g. During the conduct of defense, all leaders keep their next higher commander informed of the situation. Aggressive leadership is essential. Normally, the platoon leader and squad leaders do not fire except during close combat when their fires may be required; however, they may fire to point out a target or as a signal to open fire.

h. The duties of the rifle platoon leader during the conduct of defense include:

(1) Close supervision to insure that the security plan is followed.

(2) Fire control, including the opening of initial fires and shifting of fire.

(3) Calling for and adjusting supporting fires on targets of opportunity.

(4) Shifting of men within the platoon position.

(5) Keeping the company commander informed of the situation.

(6) Direct, positive leadership at critical points.

(7) Insuring that additional ammunition and equipment is made available.

(8) Reorganizing and reestablishing the defense during lulls in combat.

88. Conduct of Defense at Night

a. At night, patrols, listening posts, and surveillance devices detect the advance and infiltration of the enemy.

b. Local security elements report the advance of the enemy and call for illuminants and supporting fires. As in daylight defense, these security elements are withdrawn before they become engaged in close combat.

c. As the enemy approaches, mortar and artillery illumination, infrared viewing devices, and battalion radar surveillance teams are used to detect his movement. Trip flares and field expedients such as flame fougasse provide additional illumination. Fires are opened on order of leaders when surprise is desired. As a general rule, weapons do not open fire until targets are visible. Rigid fire control by all leaders is required to prevent indiscriminate firing which results in the needless expenditure of ammunition and disclosure of firing positions. Indirect fires should be used to the maximum. Fires of crew-served weapons are delivered using range cards, aiming stakes, and predetermined firing data.

d. Other aspects of the conduct of defense at night are generally the same as the conduct during daylight except that surprise and close combat are more likely.

Section III. RESERVE RIFLE PLATOON OF THE FORWARD RIFLE COMPANY IN DEFENSE

89. General

a. Positions and Missions. The reserve rifle platoon is normally positioned in the rear of the forward platoons to provide depth to the company defensive area (fig. 23). The company commander assigns the reserve platoon a primary position and one or more supplementary positions. It is moved from one position to another as required by the enemy situation. The company commander assigns the reserve one or more of the following missions (discussed in para. 90) and states the priority of each:

(1) Limit penetrations.
(2) Protect the company flanks and rear.
(3) Support the forward platoons by fire.
(4) Performs surveillance and provide security in the company rear area.
(5) Counterattack. (This capability is limited.)
(6) Man the COP (para. 93).

b. Location. The reserve platoon is located on the best defensive terrain in the rear of the forward platoons from which it can accomplish the mission(s) assigned, but not so far forward as to expose it to enemy direct fires aimed at the forward platoons.

c. Organization of the Position. The organization of a reserve platoon position is generally the same as for a forward rifle platoon except that final protective fires are not planned. The entire platoon normally occupies its primary position. When the terrain makes it difficult for the reserve to move to supplementary positions, it may have to organize and occupy more than one position initially. If so, the integrity of the rifle squads is maintained, though the weapons squad may be divided.

(1) Positions should provide for three squads to be placed abreast and are prepared to permit shifting of their fires to the flanks and rear by moving to and occupying squad supplementary positions.
(2) With the exception of the machineguns, the fire planning of the reserve platoon is the same as that of the forward platoons. The machineguns of the reserve platoon, when possible, are employed on the tripod. Because there is a greater area of responsibility, and because there may be more avenues of approach to be covered, machineguns are normally employed singly. Machineguns are assigned

a primary and secondary sector of fire, a principal direction of fire for day, and a principal direction of fire for night. Machineguns are *not* assigned FPL. Alternate and supplementary positions are prepared for each gun.

(3) The reserve platoon leader locates his CP-OP where he can best observe his area of responsibility and control the fires of his platoon. Terrain permitting, the CP-OP should be located to provide observation of the forward platoons' defense areas and the company flanks and rear.

(4) The reserve platoon leader employs the same security measures as the forward platoons.

90. Missions of the Reserve Platoon

a. Limit Penetrations. The company commander determines the possible areas of penetration, and based on this determination the reserve platoon prepares a primary position to limit penetrations. To limit an enemy penetration, the reserve platoon blocks the enemy's advance by fire. The forward platoons may play a decisive part in limiting a penetration by placing fire across the neck and flanks of the penetration while continuing to refuse their flanks. Every effort is made to prevent the enemy from reinforcing the penetration and reorganizing within the penetrated area. When the reserve platoon is engaged in limiting a penetration, the counterattack will be accomplished by the reserve of a higher echelon. Artillery and mortar fires are vital to contain and reduce the penetration.

b. Protect the Company Flanks and Rear. To gain all-round defense, the reserve platoon prepares supplementary positions to protect the company flanks and rear. The company commander designates specific avenues of approach into the rear area that the reserve platoon will block. In protecting a flank, the positions of the reserve platoon must be coordinated with the supplementary positions of the forward platoons and adjacent units. The reserve platoon may be ordered to assume positions to protect the flank when a penetration has occurred in the area of an adjacent company.

c. Support the Forward Platoons by Fire. When assigned this mission, the platoon is located where it can fire into unoccupied areas between forward platoons and on their flanks and rear. The position is organized within effective range (460 meters or less) of the forward platoon's primary position so that effective fire can be placed on the enemy elements that penetrate these forces. The position should be far enough to the rear of the squad sup-

plementary positions (150 meters or more) of the forward platoons to avoid exposure to fires directed at the forward platoons. The reserve platoon is normally kept intact and is moved by the company commander as the situation requires.

d. Perform Surveillance and Provide Security in the Company Rear Area. The company commander states in detail specific security and surveillance responsibilities of the reserve platoon, as well as for other elements of the company. He provides for sentinels, surveillance and listening posts, patrols, CBR detection devices, electronic surveillance devices, infrared or other night-vision devices, trip flares and antipersonnel mines, noise-making devices, and any other warning means made available to the company. In addition to the security provided by the reserve platoon, sentinels are posted for the company command post, mortar squads, and crews of attached or supporting weapons in the company rear area. Surveillance posts and listening posts are established by the reserve platoon to provide security for the unoccupied portions of the company rear area. These security elements are located to cover avenues of approach, routes of movement, and key terrain. They normally consist of two or three men, relieved frequently enough to insure alertness, and are equipped with appropriate surveillance devices. Patrols are used primarily to provide security in those areas which cannot be effectively covered by other means and to maintain contact with adjacent units. They may also be used as a means of communication between surveillance or listening posts.

e. Counterattack.

(1) A counterattack at company level is seldom executed, but when executed it is a limited-objective attack designed to destroy the enemy or eject him from an area of penetration and to regain control of the penetrated portions of the battle area. The reserve platoon remains in position to accomplish its other missions until the counterattack order is given. When the reserve platoon counterattacks, the action must be rapid and aggressive, fully utilizing all available artillery and mortar support. The company commander considers the following before committing the reserve platoon to a counterattack:

(*a*) The platoon is not limiting an enemy penetration.

(*b*) The counterattacking force must have a reasonable chance of success.

(*c*) The enemy penetration is not being reinforced or enlarged.

(*d*) Fire alone has failed to destroy or eject the enemy in the penetrated area.

(*e*) The enemy within the penetrated area has been stopped or slowed by the fires of the forward platoons or other means.

(2) In his planning, the company commander determines likely areas of penetration and plans a counterattack for each. The counterattack plans are numbered or lettered for priority of planning and convenience of reference.

(3) The reserve platoon leader prepares or assists the company commander in preparing counterattack plans. He plans for the employment of his platoon upon receipt of the company counterattack order. Counterattack plans are based on a detailed reconnaissance and careful coordination with units occupying positions in the area of expected penetration. Attacking through friendly units is avoided where possible. A counterattack is conducted in the same manner as any other attack (ch. 2).

91. Planning

The planning of the squad leaders and platoon leader of the reserve platoon is much the same as for the forward platoon as discussed in paragraphs 81 through 88 with these exceptions:

a. Because of the variety of missions and positions which may be assigned, reconnaissance and planning is more detailed.

b. Coordination must be made with all possible units.

c. The reserve platoon leader must be thoroughly familiar with the defensive plans of the forward platoons and adjacent companies.

92. Preparation and Conduct of the Defense by the Reserve Platoon

a. The preparation of the squad and platoon positions of the reserve platoon is much the same as for a forward platoon with these exceptions:

(1) Because of the number of supplementary positions, simultaneous work may be required on two or more positions.

(2) The platoon leader must be able to assemble his platoon rapidly from widely separated positions at any time.

b. The reserve platoon prepares its primary and supplementary positions as directed by the company commander. The positions

are continuously improved. The platoon occupies its primary position and is prepared at any time to move to supplementary positions. The reserve platoon is immediately responsive to the company commander's orders so as to provide depth and flexibility to the company defense.

Section IV. RIFLE PLATOON ON THE COMBAT OUTPOST

93. General

a. The COP is a security echelon which denies the enemy close ground observation of the battle area and provides early warning of his advance. Within its capabilities, it delays and disorganizes the enemy and deceives him as to the true location of the battle area. It avoids close combat whenever possible.

b. The brigade commander may prescribe the composition and retain control of the combat outpost or he may delegate his authority to his forward battalions. In the latter instance, the battalion commander will normally prescribe the composition of the combat outpost. He may require the reserve company of the battalion to provide the combat outpost in which case he will normally retain control of the combat outpost at battalion level. On the other hand the battalion commander may require his forward companies to provide the combat outpost in which case he will normally delegate the authority to control the combat outpost to his forward company commanders; however, the battalion commander may require the forward companies to provide the combat outpost and retain the control of the combat outpost at battalion level. A forward company will normally use the reserve platoon to man the combat outpost, additional forces may also be attached for use on the COPL only. In any event the combat outpost in front of each forward company usually consists of a reinforced rifle platoon, preferably mounted.

c. The forces on the COP are deployed laterally in one echelon in a series of outguards. These outguards vary in size from a half squad to a reinforced squad. Outguards are positioned on or near the military crest in order to obtain maximum observation and long-range fires. Outguards should be positioned so that they can achieve overlapping sectors of observation and mutual fire support, or at least they should be in sight of one another. The COP is normally within supporting distance of the indirect fires of the rifle company. Covered and concealed routes of withdrawal should be planned for each element of the COP, and reconnaissance should be conducted along these routes.

d. The COP commander is responsible for his own local security. Security is provided by security posts, patrols, and passive measures. Security posts are established forward of and between outguards. Security posts forward of the COP remain within rifle-supporting distance of outguards. Additional security posts may be required at night or during other periods of poor visibility to prevent surprise and for complete coverage of the area. In addition to security posts, the COP commander specifies the number of persons kept on alert within each outguard.

e. When observation is limited or when outguards are widely separated, patrols may be used to operate between outguards and security posts. These patrols should move at irregular intervals and over different routes to avoid establishing a pattern that might be detected by the enemy. In addition to providing security, patrols can relay information, check wire (both communication and barbed wire) and minefields, and resupply ammunition and equipment. Following the withdrawal of the general outpost (GOP), or its absence, contact is gained and maintained with the enemy by observation posts and patrols forward of the COP which call artillery and mortar fire on the enemy. These patrols may be furnished from units in the battle area or from the COP. The COP may be used as a patrol base for all patrols operating forward of it. The COP commander's responsibility for patrols forward of the COP may include a last-minute briefing on the enemy situation, coordination of movement forward of the COP, coordination for relaying of requests for indirect fires or for the indirect fire support available to the COP, and arrangements with outgoing patrols to act as a communication relay station.

94. Organization of the Combat Outpost Line

a. The outpost commander organizes his outguards and weapons (fig. 27) to attain mutual fire support across the entire front and to delay, disorganize, and deceive the enemy. Because the COP is incapable of all-round defense, defense in depth, or sustained operations, close combat is avoided.

b. Machineguns are normally employed singly to cover the extended platoon frontage and on the tripod to achieve more accurate fires at the maximum effective range of the weapon and to facilitate employment during periods of reduced visibility.

c. Tanks and antitank weapons are positioned for mutual support to engage enemy armor at maximum range.

d. Mortars may support the COP from within the battle area. However, if the COP is located beyond effective supporting dis-

Figure 27. Type organization of a combat outpost (schematic).

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tance, one or more of the company mortars may be attached to the COP.

e. Forward observers are employed with the COP to assist in planning, requesting, and adjusting indirect fires in support of the COP. Sufficient FO are employed with the COP to provide for overlapping sectors of observation across the front. The COP commander plans fires well forward, immediately in front and to the flanks and rear of the COP positions as well as within the positions.

f. Engineer support may be provided to assist in accomplishing specific tasks such as laying minefields, constructing obstacles, preparing demolition charges, and erecting wire obstacles.

g. Surveillance devices are employed with the COP to detect the advance of the enemy. Communication between the COP commander and the surveillance team insures early warning and enables the commander to take the enemy under fire. Security for surveillance teams is the responsibility of the COP commander. The infrared weaponsight is used to provide close-in observation during periods of darkness.

h. Carriers available to the COP provide mobility, flexibility, and additional firepower and communications.

i. To assist the COP in accomplishing its mission and maintaining control, communication is established between the CP-OP and patrols and elements within the battle area. Wire and radio communication is required from the COP to the FEBA, and to all outguards. The radios of attached FO and tanks may be used as an alternate means of communication. Visual and sound signals, patrols, and messengers should be planned to augment radio and wire communication. Additional telephones and radios may be requested through the company commander.

95. Withdrawal of the Combat Outpost

a. The authority to withdraw the COP may be delegated to the forward company commander. The company commander plans to withdraw the COP before it becomes engaged in close combat. In the event the COP commander loses communication with his parent unit, he may withdraw the COP when it has accomplished its mission or to prevent its capture or destruction.

b. Routes of withdrawal are selected in advance for each outguard. These routes should provide cover and concealment, avoid lateral movement, permit the withdrawal of the outguards without masking the supporting fires from within the battle area, and be

easy to follow under all conditions of visibility. All members of the outguards should be thoroughly familiar with their route of withdrawal and those of adjacent units; when conditions permit, the withdrawal should be rehearsed. When forced to withdraw by enemy action, normally the least engaged outguards are withdrawn first. Fires planned in support of these outguards are then shifted to assist the more heavily engaged outguards in breaking contact with the enemy. As the COP withdraws, contact is maintained with the enemy and indirect fires are placed on him. See chapter 4 for a discussion of withdrawal techniques.

c. The COP may be assigned the mission of delaying from successive positions to maintain contact with the enemy (fig. 27). Outguard locations on the delay position should be in the same order as on the COP. Changes in attachments should be held to the minimum to prevent confusion and delay. The use of successive delay positions should be planned and include the preparation of firing data for both direct and indirect fire weapons to include artillery smoke support. Maximum use of natural and artificial obstacles assist in delaying the advance of the enemy.

96. Planning for the Occupation of the COP

Planning for the occupation of the COP is much the same as that for the forward platoon position (para. 82) with these exceptions:

a. Because of the width of the platoon front, reconnaissance and control are difficult.

b. Each outguard must be organized with one individual in command.

c. Coordination must be made with adjacent and support units as well as the platoons on the FEBA.

97. Preparation for the Defense on the COP

Preparation is as detailed as time permits. Each individual prepares his position, clears fields of fire, makes a reconnaissance of withdrawal routes and subsequent positions (if possible), and coordinates with troops on his right and left.

98. Conduct of the Defense on the COP

a. As the enemy approaches the COP, all leaders and FO search for targets and requests the fire of indirect fire weapons. When the enemy comes within range, all weapons along the COP engage appropriate targets within their assigned sectors.

b. If the enemy withdraws, he is pursued by all available fire. Local security is reestablished. Fires are delivered in likely enemy regrouping areas. Outguards on the COP reorganize, evacuate casualties, redistribute ammunition, and strengthen their defenses.

c. The duties of the COP and outguard commanders during the conduct of defense include:

(1) Supervising local security.
(2) Controlling fire, including opening and shifting fires.
(3) Calling for and adjusting indirect fire on targets of opportunity.
(4) Shifting men and weapons within the positions.
(5) Keeping the next higher commander informed of the situation.
(6) Influencing the action by personal contact at critical points.
(7) Insuring continuous improvement of the position.
(8) Requesting ammunition and equipment as needed.

d. The platoon leader on the COP anticipates the order for a withdrawal to avoid close combat. He must evaluate enemy contact to distinguish between enemy patrol activity, probing attacks, and the enemy's main effort. The reporting of enemy actions by the COP provides the company and battalion commanders with the desired early warning and enables prompt withdrawal at the appropriate time.

e. The withdrawal is conducted rapidly to prevent engaged outguards from being overrun or enveloped by the enemy. Outguards break contact and move to the rear using fire and maneuver when necessary.

f. Notification of the withdrawal of the COP consists of three reports: planned time of withdrawal, time the withdrawal actually starts, and time the withdrawal is completed. If radio and wire communication fails, the COP commander resorts to messengers or prearranged signals.

g. When the enemy pursues the platoon to the FEBA, fires of weapons within the battle area cover the withdrawal. The platoon moves rapidly through the FEBA and then accomplishes its next assigned mission.

h. Plans are made to reoccupy the COP after the enemy attack has been repelled.

Section V. SPECIAL DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS

99. Reverse Slope Defense

A reverse slope defense (fig. 28) is organized on that portion of a terrain feature which is masked by a crest from enemy direct fire and ground observation. Control of the crest by either fire or physical occupation is necessary.

a. The company commander may order the occupation of a reverse slope position:

(1) When the forward slope cannot be occupied because of enemy fire.

(2) When the forward slope has been lost or not yet gained.

(3) When the terrain on the reverse slope affords better fields of fire than the forward slope.

(4) When possession of the forward slope is not essential for observation.

(5) To avoid creating an undesirable reentrant or salient.

(6) To assist in achieving deception and surprise.

b. The advantages of the reverse slope defense are:

(1) Enemy ground observation of the battle area is masked.

(2) Enemy direct fire weapons cannot effectively fire on the position.

(3) Enemy indirect fire becomes less effective because of lack of observation.

(4) Tactical surprise is gained by the defender.

(5) More freedom of movement is permitted within the battle area due to the enemy's lack of ground observation.

c. Disadvantages of the reverse slope defense are:

(1) Observation of the enemy is limited.

(2) The effective range of the direct fire weapons of the defender is limited by the topographical crest of the hill.

(3) The enemy will hold the high ground in an attack, and his attack will be downhill.

d. Positions in the reverse slope defense are organized the same as in the regular defense (paras. 81 through 88). Special considerations are:

(1) Observation and security (O&S) groups are positioned on, or just forward of, the topographical crest to give observation over the unit's entire front. These groups, usually provided by the reserve platoon, may vary in

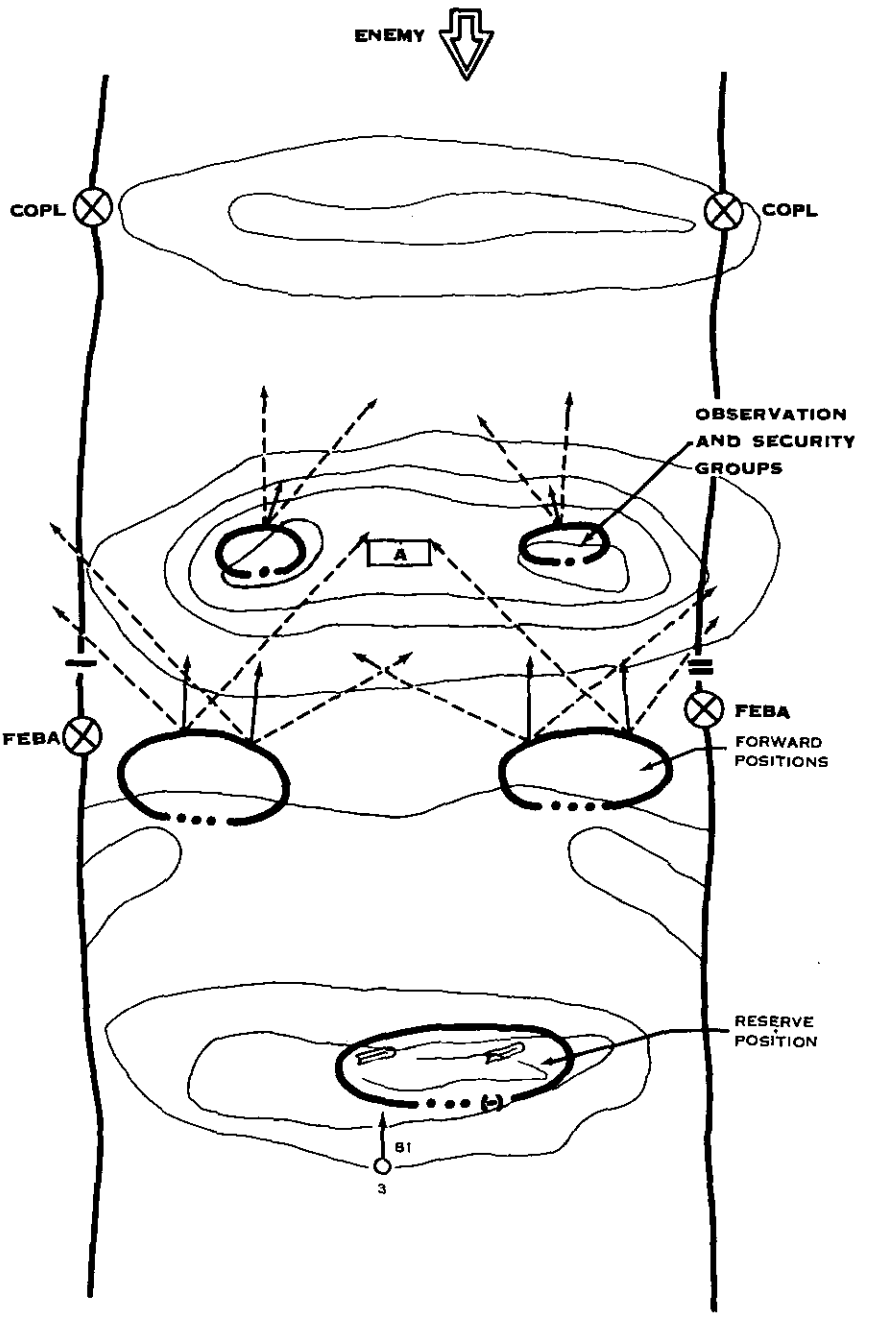

Figure 28. Rifle company in a reverse slope defense (schematic).

size from two men to a rifle squad reinforced with machineguns, antitank weapons, and tanks.

(2) The forward platoons are located from 200 to 500 meters from the crest of the hill to provide adequate fields of fire. Troops on the reverse slope are located to achieve maximum fire on the crest, on the approaches around the crest, and on the forward slope of adjacent terrain features. If within supporting distance, the reserve platoon is placed on the military crest of the next high ground to the rear.

(3) Machineguns and other automatic weapons are located to place the most effective surprise fire on the enemy as he crosses the crest. Machinegun FPL are employed as in a forward slope defense. Sectors of fire should provide maximum coverage of the crest.

(4) Barrages are placed on or short of the crest of the hill to deny that area to the enemy and to assist in breaking up his assault as he crosses the crest.

(5) The conduct of a reverse slope defense is generally the same as for a forward slope defense. However, the O&S groups forward of the FEBA not only provide early warning of the enemy's advance but attempt to delay, deceive, and disorganize him by fire. They then withdraw into the battle area prior to becoming closely engaged with the enemy. Automatic weapons with the O&S groups are withdrawn first so they can occupy their primary firing positions before the enemy reaches the crest.

(6) As the O&S groups withdraw to the FEBA, concentrations are placed on the forward slope and along the crest of the hill to slow and disorganize the advance of the enemy. Direct fire weapons and small arms located along the FEBA hold their fire until the enemy crosses the crest. As the enemy advances over the crest of the hill, all available fires are brought on him.

100. Perimeter Defense

The organization of the platoon defensive position in the perimeter defense (fig. 29) is the same as that discussed in paragraphs 81 through 88, with these exceptions:

a. The company front is circular rather than linear.

b. Unoccupied areas between platoons are generally reduced.

c. The flanks of the platoon will be refused (or bent back) to conform to the company plan of defense.

d. Machineguns will normally be employed singly to provide adequate coverage of all probable approaches.

e. A forward platoon in the portion of the perimeter not under attack may be used as a counterattack force to destroy a penetration.

101. Defense of a Riverline

Even though advantages of a river obstacle are exploited to the maximum, friendly forces must be careful not to overestimate the value of the river as an obstacle. The various means available to the enemy for crossing an unfordable river—individual flotation devices, boats, armored amphibious vehicles, amphibious tanks, and helicopters—must be considered.

a. Methods of defense.

(1) At battalion level, there are two basic methods of defending a riverline:

(*a*) To make maximum use of the river as an obstacle by employing maximum combat forces on or in the immediate vicinity of the riverline.

(*b*) To utilize minimum forces on the riverline with the bulk of the combat force held in reserve to strike the enemy when he is astride the river.

(2) Although the method of defense is influenced by the mission and enemy and friendly situation, in most cases the terrain on the near and far banks is the predominant factor. The following factors favor placing maximum combat power on the riverline:

(*a*) When sufficient forces are available to permit a strong defense of the riverline.

(*b*) When observation and fields of fire on the near bank are equal or superior to that on the far bank.

(*c*) When good defensive terrain exists on the near bank.

(*d*) When poor trafficability exists on the near bank which would restrict rapid movement of reserves.

b. Disposition of Troops. The rifle platoon will normally defend a riverline as part of the rifle company (fig. 30). Forward platoon defense areas are selected and organized generally as in the area defense regardless of the method of defense used.

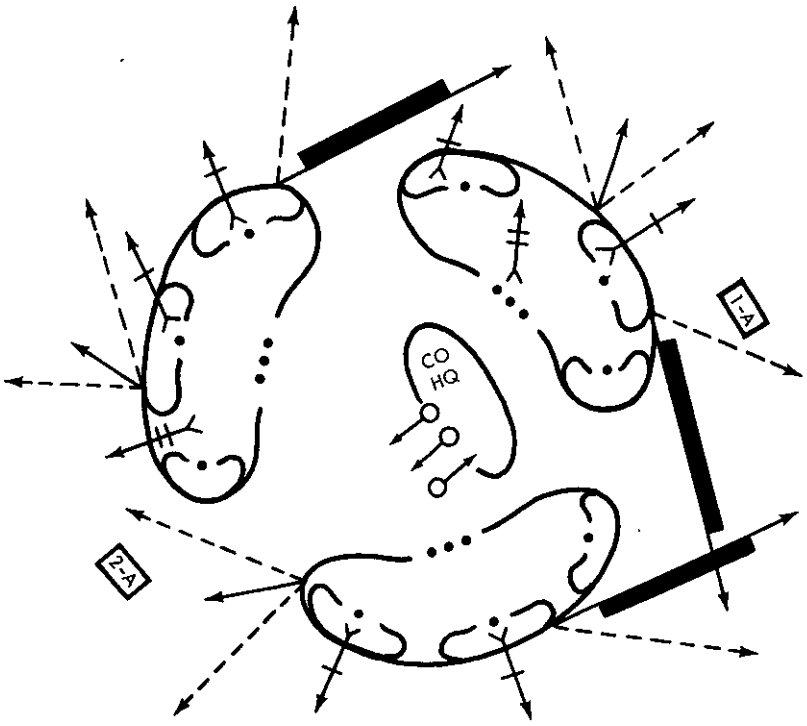

Figure 29. Rifle company in a perimeter defense (schematic).

(1) When maximum combat power is near the river, the forward platoons are positioned to cover the entire river, if practicable, with emphasis placed on the most probable crossing sites. The company commander retains a reserve whenever possible. He may have to select many supplementary reserve positions to provide depth in the areas of likely enemy crossing and for defense against helicopterborne attack.

(2) When minimum combat power is placed on the riverline, the forward platoons may occupy one or more strongpoints to cover the likely approaches from the river and to fix enemy by fire so that the reserve of the battalion may be committed in a counterattack at the most advantageous time.

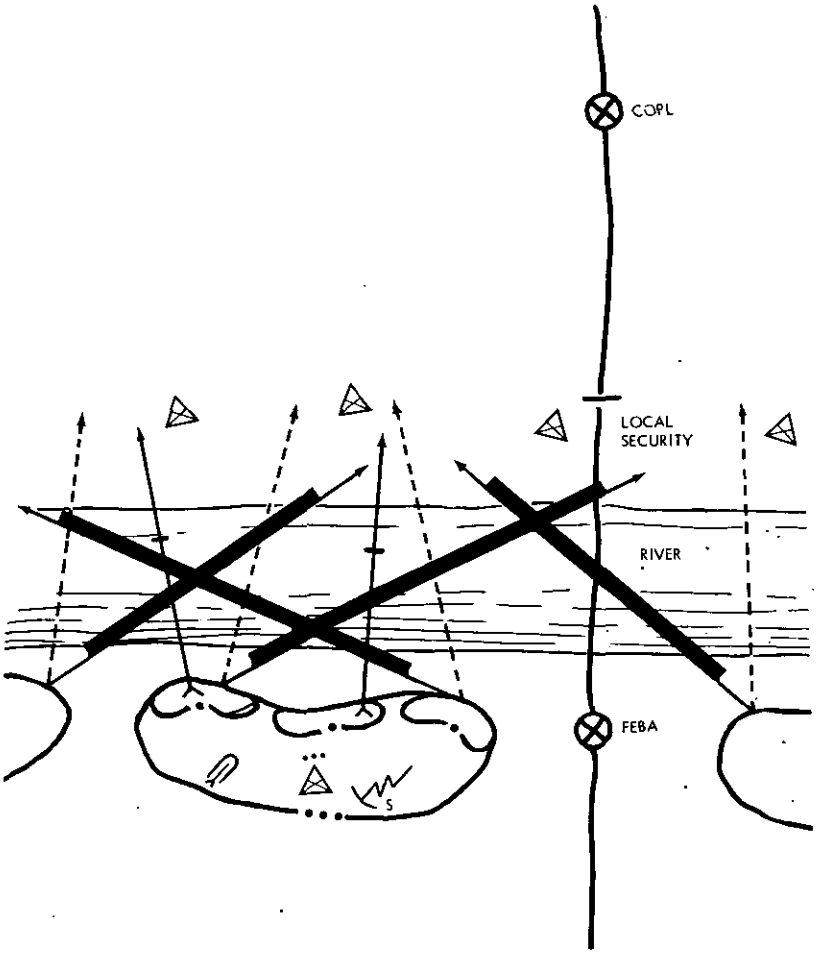

Figure 30. Defense of a riverline (maximum forces employed forward) (schematic).

c. Fire Support. Organic and attached weapons and supporting fires are employed generally the same as in the area defense with consideration being given to the following additional factors:

(1) Fires are planned on possible assembly areas which are suitable for massing crossing equipment. Fires are also planned on the approaches to the river and possible crossing sites. Time fires are planned to be used on the enemy while he is crossing the river.

(2) Machineguns are positioned to cover likely crossing sites and avenues of approach to them. The terrain along a

river usually offers excellent fields of fire and permits grazing enfilade fire to be delivered along the front. FPL may be established to give grazing fire on the river or the near bank.

(3) Antitank squads and attached tanks are positioned to cover avenues of approach to the river and likely crossing sites for amphibious armored vehicles.

d. Security. Security and surveillance measures on the far bank of the river are similar to the area defense except that all security elements must be provided with a means of withdrawal over the obstacle.

(1) When the COP is located on the far bank, it will have only amphibious vehicles attached unless there are bridges or fords that can be kept intact for the withdrawal of the COP. Plans for withdrawing the COP include both primary and alternate crossing means. Crossing means available may include carriers, helicopters, boats, or other flotation devices. The COP is alert to locate likely nuclear targets and to determine where and when the enemy will attempt to cross.

(2) Local security elements from the forward platoons or reserve units normally patrol the far bank. These patrols are alert for any enemy withdrawal which might indicate the enemy's intent to use nuclear weapons. Alternate means of withdrawal should also be planned for local security elements. Circumstances permitting, boats with two ropes can be concealed on the far bank to assist rapid withdrawal. Plans for employment of smoke to cover withdrawal are considered.

(3) The rifle platoon may be assigned a mission of rear area security. Since the enemy may conduct an airborne assault in conjunction with the river crossing, surveillance means in rear areas are necessary to detect airborne attack. Particular attention must be given to the screening of, and the construction of obstacles on, possible landing or drop sites.

e. Obstacles. Every effort must be made to improve the river as a natural obstacle. All bridges, boats, and barges are prepared for demolition. Wire entanglements and mines are used at fords and other likely crossing sites. Plans must also include delaying the destruction of crossing facilities until all security forces are withdrawn.

102. Defense of a Roadblock

A roadblock prevents or hinders enemy movement beyond a point or area along a road or other route of movement. It usually incorporates obstacles covered by fire. The force defending a roadblock (fig. 31) may vary from a few men to a reinforced company. In defensive operations, roadblocks are employed to the front, flanks, and rear of friendly units. Roadblocks are particularly effective in retrograde operations and against enemy exploitation. In offensive operations, roadblocks may be used to protect the flanks of advancing columns and in the enemy's rear area to prevent his withdrawal or reinforcement.

a. Desirability Characteristics of a Roadblock Site.

(1) *Blocks the avenues of approach.* The roadblock should be difficult to bypass.

(2) *Takes advantage of natural obstacles.* Roadblocks can be employed along the side of a steep hill, or across streams, marshes, or ravines to take advantage of natural obstacles. Artificial obstacles can then be constructed to reinforce, supplement, and tie in with the natural obstacles. This creates an effective obstacle with minimum effort.

(3) *Easily defensible.* The defensive position covering a roadblock should provide observation as well as fire coverage of the approaches to the obstacle to prevent its being breached. Further, the defensive position should be relatively inaccessible to the attacker.

(4) *Gains surprise.* Troops and artificial obstacles should be concealed until it is too late for the advancing enemy to react effectively. Mines (to include toxic chemical and flame mines), demolitions, and cratering charges are examples of effective, easily concealed obstacles. These also have the advantage of being quickly armed and disarmed as the situation changes. To gain surprise, obstacles may be located around a sharp bend in the road, just over the crest of a hill, or where a road passes through a heavily wooded area.

(5) *Good routes to the rear.* Good routes facilitate resupply and a rapid withdrawal. A slow or disorganized withdrawal of the roadblock force can lead to its destruction by a pursuing enemy.

b. Planning the Roadblock. In planning the construction and defense of a roadblock, the normal troop-leading steps are accomplished. The roadblock commander:

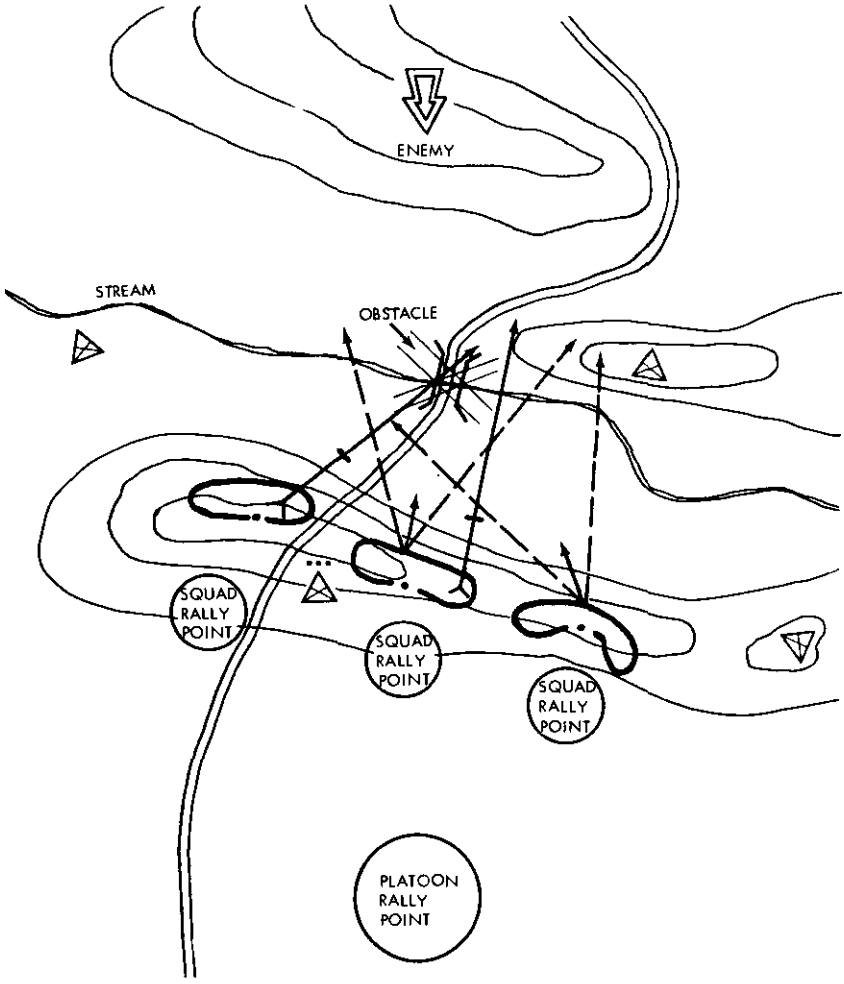

Figure 31. Defense of a roadblock (schematic).

(1) Makes a terrain analysis from a map and ground reconnaissance.

(2) Estimates material and special equipment needed to construct the obstacles and troop positions.

(3) Makes tentative tactical plans to include:

(*a*) A detailed fire plan and fire control measures, including specific sectors of fire and a signal for opening fire.

(*b*) Troop and weapons locations that can place effective fire on the flanks and on the obstacle and its approaches, and can prevent the enemy from deploying

around the obstacle. Troops should not be within hand-grenade range of the obstacle and its approaches.

(*c*) A withdrawal plan that includes covered and concealed routes of withdrawal, use of smoke if advantageous, indirect fires to break contact with the enemy and cover the withdrawal, and plans for the occupation of successive positions to cover movement to the rear. Rallying points are selected on the successive positions to maintain control.

(4) Completes his plan, issues orders, and proceeds to organize, prepare, and occupy the position.

c. Preparation. A recommended priority of work is:

(1) *Establish security.* All-round security is established to provide early warning and coordination for the passing of friendly elements.

(2) *Simultaneous construction of the obstacle, clearing fields of fire, and establishment of communication to the rear.* Obstacles which might impede the movement of friendly forces are not completed until a specific time or condition has been met. This permits rapid reinforcement or withdrawal of friendly forward forces.

(3) *Simultaneous construction of emplacements and shelters, secondary obstacles, and improvements of existing routes of communication.*

d. Conduct of a Roadblock Defense.

(1) As the enemy approaches the roadblock, the security element warns the roadblock commander. On order, the security is withdrawn to the defensive area along predesignated routes without becoming engaged.

(2) Since surprise is desirable, the defending force does not prematurely disclose its position but waits for the enemy to reach the blocking obstacle before firing. At that time, maximum fire is delivered on the obstacle and the approaches.

(3) As the enemy deploys, direct and indirect fires are shifted to likely enemy assembly areas, avenues of approach, and the flanks.

(4) Before the enemy can assault the defending force, permission is requested to withdraw. Secondary obstacles, artillery and mortar fires, and the occupation of successive positions to the rear are used to cover the unit's withdrawal.

103. Relief in Place

A relief in place (fig. 32) is the tactical replacement of one unit by another. Reliefs are made to restore or maintain the combat efficiency of the relieved unit or to employ the relieved unit elsewhere. Secrecy is essential in preparing and conducting a relief. Since darkness and reduced visibility help to preserve secrecy, reliefs are conducted most frequently at night. A relief is conducted as rapidly as control and secrecy permit. During a relief, units are vulnerable to enemy action. To avoid unnecessary concentration of troops and confusion, only portions of the forward platoon are relieved at one time.

a. Planning the Relief.

(1) *Reconnaissance.* Preceding the relief, the incoming platoon leader conducts a daylight reconnaissance of the defensive area, desirably with the platoon sergeant, all squad leaders, and the leader of any attached elements. Normally, however, the size of the reconnaissance party will be restricted for security reasons. The platoon leader should then take the FO and the weapons squad leader forward for the reconnaissance. The reconnaissance of the defensive area is conducted jointly with the outgoing platoon leader and includes a reconnaissance of the platoon release point, squad release point, squad assembly areas, routes to these areas, and routes to the forward positions. The outgoing platoon leader remains on position with his platoon and selects a representative from his platoon to make a reconnaissance of the outgoing unit's new position. This enables the outgoing platoon leader to be present if the enemy attacks, and it allows him to participate in a joint reconnaissance of the defensive area with the incoming platoon leader.

(2) *Coordination.* In conjunction with the reconnaissance, the incoming platoon leader makes detailed coordination with the outgoing platoon leader concerning the following items as well as general information concerning the conduct of the relief.

(*a*) *Command during the relief.*

1. The execution of the relief takes place under the direction of the commander of the unit being relieved.

2. Platoon leaders are usually together in the CP-OP of the outgoing unit. Squad leaders of both the incom-

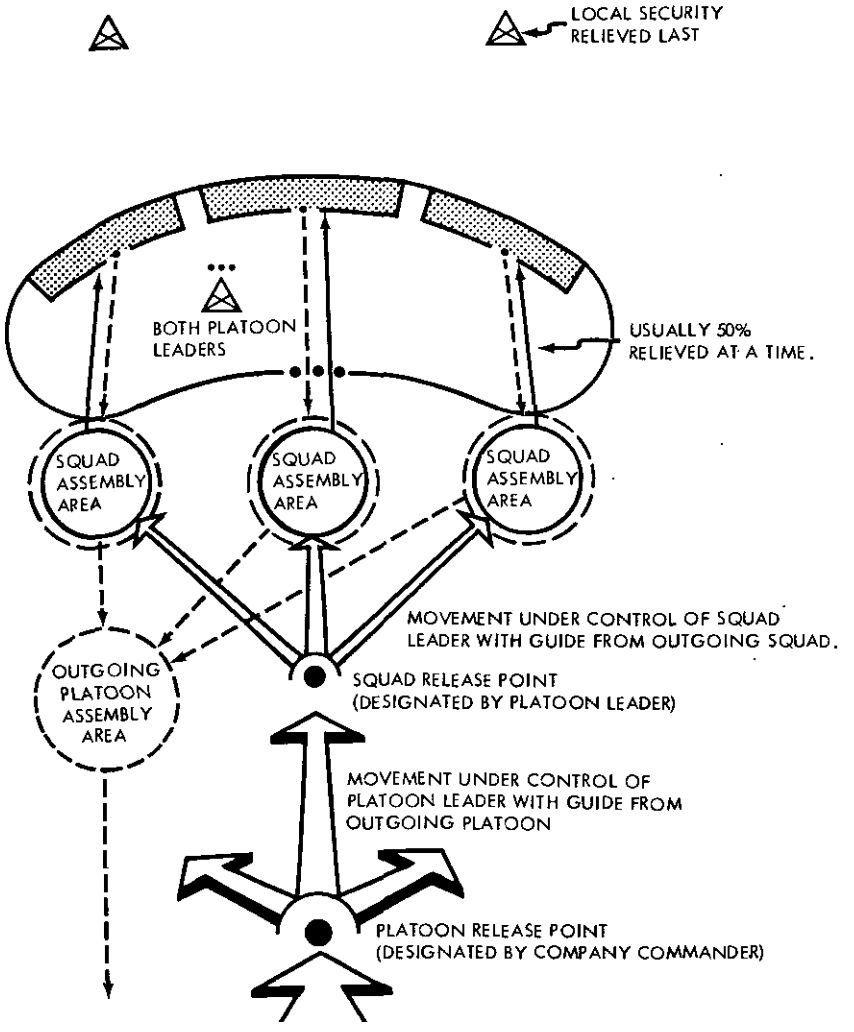

Figure 32. Relief in place (schematic).

ing and outgoing platoons remain together and actively direct the relief conducted by their squads.

3. During the relief, the outgoing platoon leader is responsible for the defense of the platoon area. The incoming platoon leader assumes responsibility for the platoon area when all of his platoon is in position and he has established complete control; or under conditions specified in the company commander's order. This is also true at squad level. When an

attack occurs before the incoming leader has assumed responsibility for the area, the outgoing leader conducts the defense with those elements of both the old and new units that are in position. When ready to exchange responsibility, the incoming and outgoing leaders notify their respective company commanders and receive verification of the exchange of responsibility.

(*b*) *Exchange of crew-served weapons and equipment.* To speed up the relief, to reduce noise in moving supplies and equipment, and to maintain the existing fire plan, it is desirable for incoming and outgoing units to exchange certain crew-served weapons, equipment, and supplies. The company relief order stipulates those items which will actually be exchanged. The weapons exchange is usually limited to those weapons which cannot be easily moved or which are necessary in order to insure the effective delivery of fires. Excess ammunition, range cards, rations, water, fortification materials, wire lines, and communication equipment (except radios) may be left on position by the outgoing unit.

(*c*) *Guides.* The incoming platoon is guided from the platoon release point to the squad release point by a guide from the outgoing platoon. Guides from the outgoing squads meet the incoming squads at the squad release point and lead each squad forward to the squad assembly area. Outgoing squads and platoons are guided to the rear by their own personnel. To simplify control and reduce the number of guides, the incoming and outgoing rifle platoon leaders attach the weapons squad personnel to the rifle squads in whose area they have been or will be employed. Attachments are made for the movement only and, upon completion of the movement, revert to normal control.

(*d*) *Liaison representatives.* One key NCO is designated as liaison representative by both the incoming and outgoing platoon leaders. The weapons squad leader is usually selected since his weapons are attached to the rifle squads for the relief.

1. *Incoming platoon.* The liaison representative of the incoming platoon accompanies his platoon leader forward on the reconnaissance and remains with

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the outgoing unit. He learns as much as possible about the defense of the area and changes in the enemy situation. When the platoon comes forward for the relief, the liaison representative informs the platoon leader of any change in the situation.

2. *Outgoing platoon.* The liaison representative from the outgoing platoon remains on the FEBA after the relief has been completed to assist the new platoon leader and provide information regarding the enemy situation, terrain, fire plans, communication, supply, security, and other matters which may arise relative to the defense of the position.

(*e*) *Security.* All possible security measures are employed to insure that the enemy is denied knowledge of the relief. Secrecy is gained by limiting the size and activities of reconnaissance parties, by establishing communication security, by restricting the movement of vehicles, by enforcing light and noise discipline, and by continuing such normal activities as supporting fires, patrols, and local security. The normal local security and patrol action is continued by personnel from the outgoing unit. Members from the incoming unit do not accompany local security elements or patrols forward of the position until completion of the relief. Local security is the last element of the outgoing unit to be relieved.

(3) *Detailed orders.* Delay and confusion during the conduct of the relief can be minimized by timely and detailed orders. The platoon leader's relief order should contain detailed information on dispositions on the new defensive position. This includes the location of squad foxholes and crew-served weapons positions. In addition, the relief order contains specific items such as times for the relief to begin and end, routes, march formations, method of relief to be utilized, security requirements, and the actions to be taken in the event of enemy action during the relief.

b. Conduct of the Relief.

(1) *Incoming units.* At the designated time, the incoming company moves to the platoon release point. At the platoon release point, the incoming company commander

turns over the control of the platoons to the platoon leaders. Guides furnished by the outgoing platoon lead each incoming platoon on separate routes from the platoon release point to the squad release point. Guides furnished by each outgoing squad will lead the incoming squads (and attachments) over separate routes from the squad release point to the squad assembly areas. The incoming and outgoing squad leaders briefly coordinate the final details of the relief and any changes in the squad defensive position. Normally, half of an incoming squad relieves half of an outgoing squad at a time until the relief is completed. Enough time is allowed for each member of the incoming squad to be thoroughly oriented by his counterpart on position. Squad leaders notify their platoon leader when their squads and attached weapons are in position. Platoon leaders keep the company commander informed of the progress of the relief in their platoons.

(2) *Outgoing units.* As each outgoing squad is relieved and the incoming squad leader assumes responsibility for the squad area, the platoon leaders are promptly notified and the outgoing squad is moved from the squad assembly area to the platoon assembly area without delay. Once the squads of the outgoing platoon are relieved and the outgoing platoon leader has turned over the responsibility for his area, he joins his platoon in the platoon assembly area and moves the platoon to the company assembly area.

104. Defense Against Tanks

Infantrymen strive to destroy enemy armor or canalize it into areas where it will be vulnerable to antitank fires. Infantrymen protect themselves by digging in, by constructing antitank and antipersonnel obstacles which can be covered by fire, by employing antitank weapons, and by directing artillery and mortar fires on advancing tanks. Platoon and squad organic and attached antitank weapons are employed to cover avenues of armor approach and to protect the infantry from enemy armor. Antitank weapons are emplaced for protection against enemy fires. Tanks are employed in hull defilade (or emplaced) and assigned alternate and supplementary positions. Range cards are prepared for

all antitank weapons to insure accurate fire during periods of limited visibility.

a. Defensive Position Overrun by Tanks.

(1) Every effort is made to stop tanks with antitank obstacles and destroy them with antitank weapons. Small-arms and indirect fires cover the obstacles to prevent the enemy from breaching them.

(2) When enemy armor penetrates the position, all riflemen fire on the accompanying infantry as they pass over or near their positions. The antitank means organic or attached to the platoon are used to destroy the armor.

(3) In defending against a tank attack, the entrenched infantry prevent any dismounted enemy infantry from breaching the obstacles and assaulting with the tanks. This is done by small-arms and indirect fires covering the obstacles and the approaches to them. If the enemy is mounted in carriers and succeeds in overrunning the FEBA, the enemy infantry are destroyed, as they dismount, by on-call friendly indirect fires falling on the defensive position and by automatic weapons firing at the carriers and carrier exits. As enemy tanks and carriers pass over or by foxholes, riflemen destroy them by using available tank-killing devices. Once the enemy armor has passed over the position, the platoon continues to defend the position.

b. Tank-Hunter Teams.

(1) Under all situations — particularly in rough or wooded terrain, cities and villages, or at night—tank-hunter teams are formed to destroy enemy tanks. These may be used either within or forward of the battle area and are particularly effective in enemy rear areas.

(2) The success of tank-hunter teams depends on surprise and taking advantage of a tank's inherent weaknesses. Surprise can be gained by ambush, maximum use of concealment, and stealth. Normally, the tank-hunter team will fire one or two rounds before being forced to evacuate the area.

(3) The tank-hunter team (fig. 33) ideally consists of a team leader, a tank-destroyer element, and an automatic-weapons element. The tank-destroyer element destroys the tank with antitank weapons or by closing in on the tank's rear or blind side and destroying it with a tank-killing device. The automatic-weapons element provides cover-

ing fire and support for the tank-destroyer element by surprising and killing nearby enemy infantry and dismounted or exposed crewmen.

(4) For missions in the enemy's rear area, the team leader should have a means of communication. This enables the team to combine many of the functions of patrolling. Radio communication can be used for calling and adjusting fires to cover the withdrawal of the team, firing on targets of opportunity, reporting enemy information, or requesting helicopter resupply evacuation.

Section VI. MECHANIZED RIFLE PLATOON IN DEFENSE

105. Reference

See also paragraphs 77 through 80, and FM 17–1.

106. General

The mechanized rifle platoon *when dismounted* is employed in the defense in much the same manner as any other rifle platoon. The major differences in employment are:

a. The firepower of the carrier-mounted weapon may be employed provided the carrier is not exposed unnecessarily to antitank fire, or the weapon may be dismounted and employed on tripod.

b. Maintenance must be performed on the carriers continuously.

c. The machinegun organic to each rifle squad is employed within the squad area, with riflemen in the squad manning the weapon.

d. Because of the mobility of its organic carriers, the mounted platoon may be shifted rapidly and frequently to take advantage of changing situations. The mounted platoon is capable of shifting rapidly from the defense to the offense or to retrograde.

107. Employment of Carriers in Defense

Carriers may be positioned on the reverse slope of the defensive position to provide security to the flanks and rear; or they may be held in covered and concealed positions in the rear of the platoon until time to move. They may also support by fire from hull-defilade positions; however, the primary purpose of carriers is to provide mobility and they should not be placed in firing positions which may expose them to antitank fire or air attack.

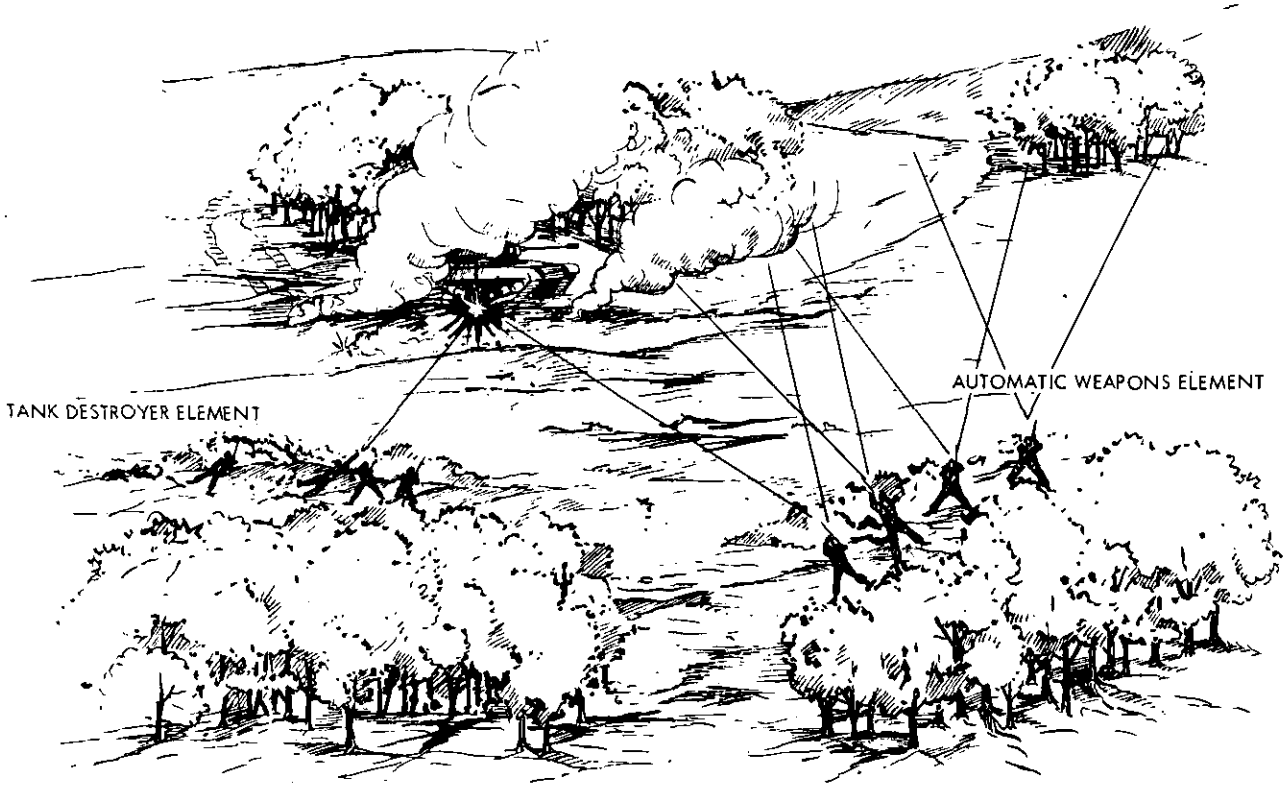

Figure 33. Tank-hunter team.

a. When carriers are used to protect the flanks and rear, the driver mans the mounted weapon, and the carrier is positioned to the rear of the squad, taking maximum advantage of cover and concealment. The carrier weapon may be employed against tactical aircraft if the unit comes under air attack.

b. When carriers are placed in a covered and concealed area, they should be positioned to provide all-round security and should be close to the rear of the platoon. Normally, the platoon will not provide additional security for carriers. They should be camouflaged, and track marks which may disclose their position should be concealed.

c. When supporting by fire, carriers should be emplaced so that only the weapon is visible. Sandbags can be used to protect carriers provided they do not hinder rapid movement. Maximum use is made of available camouflage. The platoon leader will assign alternate and supplementary positions.

CHAPTER 4
RETROGRADE OPERATIONS

Section I. GENERAL

108. General

This chapter provides guidance for the rifle squad and platoon leaders in conducting retrograde operations. It is applicable to the rifle platoon of the infantry, airborne, and mechanized rifle company.

a. The rifle platoon normally conducts retrograde operations as a part of the company, requiring the platoon leader to have an understanding of company retrograde tactics as discussed in FM's 7–11 and 17–15.

b. The mechanized rifle platoon when dismounted will function much the same as any other rifle platoon. Paragraphs 124 through 127 outline the major differences in the employment of the mechanized rifle platoon.

c. A retrograde operation is any organized movement of a unit to the rear or away from the enemy. It may be forced by the enemy or made voluntarily.

d. A retrograde operation may be classified as a *withdrawal*, a *delaying action*, or a *retirement*.

e. Movement during retrograde operations may be by foot, ground vehicle, aircraft, or a combination of these means. For a discussion of withdrawal by air, see chapter 5.

f. The enemy may be expected to follow up any retrograde operation relentlessly by air and ground action to include the use of nuclear fires. The platoon executes retrograde operations with as much secrecy and deception as the situation will allow, taking advantage of cover and concealment, and providing security to the front, flanks, and rear at all times.

g. During retrograde operations, leaders strive to keep the morale of their men high. Members of the platoon will be informed of the reason for the action and the part each man will play in the accomplishment of the mission. Rumors and exagger-

ated reports are counteracted by keeping the men informed. The presence of leaders with the troops actually engaged with the enemy, providing for the welfare of the platoon, forceful leadership, strict discipline, control, and planning will assist in maintaining good morale and preventing panic.

h. Terrain is exploited to the maximum. Good observation and fields of fire are sought to permit engaging the enemy at long ranges. Emphasis is placed on denying avenues of approach and key terrain features to the enemy.

i. Detailed reconnaissance is accomplished to the rear by as many men as the situation permits. Each member of the squad should reconnoiter his route to the squad assembly area or initial rallying point. All leaders should reconnoiter the route to the assembly area of the next higher unit. Reconnaissance parties are sent to the rear to organize the next rearward position before guiding the platoon into that position. Guides are posted when unfamiliar routes are used.

j. Detailed plans, to include alternate plans, are made by all units. Clear, complete, and concise orders are issued as rapidly as possible. Fragmentary orders are issued to insure concurrent action at all levels. Leaders at all echelons must be thoroughly familiar with the concept of the operation so they can make sound decisions if they lose contact with higher commanders. Close combat is avoided unless required to accomplish the mission.

k. The use of natural and artificial obstacles to the front, flanks, and rear will assist in the conduct of retrograde operations. Extensive use must be made of all available fires. Leaders at all echelons must be capable of calling for and adjusting these fires.

l. Every effort will be made to prevent wounded men from being captured during the conduct of retrograde operations.

m. The platoon leader insures that there is sufficient ammunition within his platoon to accomplish the mission, keeping in mind that when the retrograde movement starts, all supplies (except medical) which cannot be carried to the rear must be destroyed.

109. Communication

All available means of communication are used to maintain control and provide flexibility. Although radio and wire are the primary means of communication, alternate means are established. These may include messengers, visual and sound signals, and radios of tanks and FO.

110. Withdrawal Through Friendly Units

a. During the conduct of retrograde operations, the platoon will be required to withdraw through or around friendly units. This action should be coordinated in advance.

b. When effecting coordination, the following must be considered:

(1) Mutual recognition: signals to be used by the moving unit and the reply to be given.

(2) Routes around or through the friendly unit.

(3) Points of passage through the friendly unit.

c. When withdrawal through or around a friendly unit has been accomplished, that unit must be notified when it has freedom of fire to its front.

111. Retirement

Retirement is an operation in which forces not in contact move away from the enemy according to their own plan and without pressure by the enemy. When a withdrawal from action precedes a retirement, the retirement begins when contact with the enemy has been broken and march columns formed. See chapter 6 for a discussion of tactical movements.

112. Withdrawal

a. A withdrawal is an operation by which all or part of a deployed force disengages from the enemy in order to position itself to initiate some other action. It may be followed by a retirement, a delaying action, defense of another position, or an attack in a different sector.

b. Withdrawals may be made voluntarily or be forced by the enemy. Whenever possible, withdrawals are made voluntarily with as much secrecy and deception as possible.

c. Unless otherwise noted, the term "night withdrawal" as used in this manual connotes a *night-type* withdrawal without serious enemy interference, usually during periods of reduced visibility. The term "daylight withdrawal" as used in this manual means a *daylight-type* withdrawal conducted under enemy pressure, normally during periods of good visibility.

d. There are two techniques of executing withdrawals, the *night withdrawal* and the *daylight withdrawal.*

(1) *The night withdrawal* is executed during periods of limited visibility, or in the absence of definite enemy

pressure. When using night withdrawal techniques, a portion of the force is left on position to simulate normal activities while the remainder of the force withdraws to the rear. This technique affords the most secrecy and deception.

(2) *A daylight withdrawal* is used when a unit is forced by enemy action to execute a withdrawal. Units disengage from the enemy by fighting their way to the rear, passing through or around forces positioned to the rear which cover the withdrawal of forward units.

e. If enemy pressure forces a withdrawal at night, daylight withdrawal techniques are used.

Section II. NIGHT WITHDRAWAL TECHNIQUES

113. General

a. A night withdrawal (fig. 34), or voluntary withdrawal during periods of limited visibility, is executed with secrecy and deception. All units move to the rear at the same time with the exception of detachments left in contact, which protect the withdrawal of the main body by deception and resistance. Night withdrawal techniques may be used during daylight when visibility is poor and there is a lack of definite enemy pressure.

b. The company commander's night-withdrawal order will include the following:

(1) *Time of withdrawal.* To insure coordinated action by all units, a time is given for the withdrawal to start. The main body of the platoon will actually start to move from individual positions at this time.

(2) *Platoon assembly areas.* The company commander may assign the platoon an assembly area as close to the rear of the platoon position as possible.

(3) *Routes.* Routes are designated from platoon assembly areas to the company assembly area and then to the next position.

(4) *Attachments of supporting weapons to supported unit.* To facilitate control and to insure protection by supporting weapons during the withdrawal, these weapons are normally attached to the rifle platoon in whose area they are located. Platoon leaders may further attach them to the rifle squads. These attachments are normally effective only for the withdrawal.

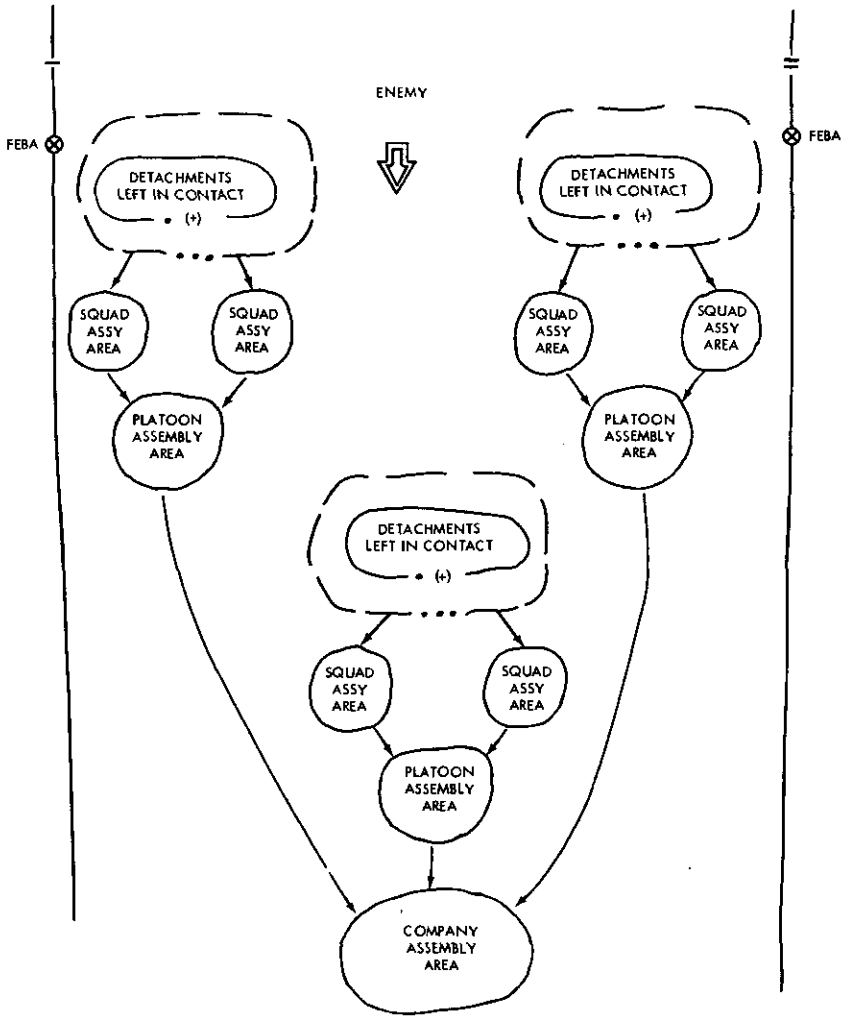

Figure 34. Night withdrawal techniques (schematic).

(5) *Action to be taken in event of enemy attack.* Plans are made to counteract enemy interference with the withdrawal. These plans may include alternate routes and assembly areas, a platoon occupying a blocking position to protect the withdrawal of the remainder of the main body, a counterattack to extricate a unit which has been cut off, or the utilization of daylight withdrawal techniques (paras. 117 through 120).

(6) *Detachments left in contact.* The strength, composition, commander, and instructions pertaining to the actions and withdrawal of the detachments left in contact will be specified.

(7) *Mission following withdrawal.* The mission to be accomplished following the withdrawal is given in as much detail as possible to aid planning.

c. Based on the company commander's order, the platoon leader will include the following in the platoon order:

(1) *Time of withdrawal.* The time individuals start moving from their positions to the squad assembly areas.

(2) *Squad assembly areas.* Each squad is assigned an assembly area located to the rear of its position.

(3) *Routes.* Each squad is assigned a route from its assembly area to the platoon assembly area.

(4) *Attachments of supporting weapons to supported unit.* Elements of the weapons squad which are located in a rifle squad area are attached to the rifle squad when the withdrawal starts. Squad and section-size units attached to the platoon may be further attached to the rifle squads for withdrawal.

(5) *Detachments left in contact.* The strength, composition, and commander of the detachments left in contact are announced. Instructions concerning the mission and the plan for withdrawal of this force are given in detail.

(6) *Mission following the withdrawal.*

114. Planning and Preparation

a. After receiving the company commander's order, the platoon leader starts his planning (paras. 8, 9, and 10) and issues a warning order immediately. Maximum use is made of available daylight for reconnaissance. The platoon leader makes a reconnaissance of the platoon assembly area and the route to the company assembly area. He selects squad assembly areas and routes from these assembly areas to the platoon assembly area. Squad leaders reconnoiter the route from their squad position to the squad assembly area and, time permitting, the route to the platoon assembly area. Troops within the squad reconnoiter the routes from their positions to the squad assembly area.

b. The reconnaissance of a new position to the rear will be conducted by a reconnaissance party designated by the company commander. The party, under control of the weapons platoon leader,

will depart for the new position as soon as possible after receipt of the order. At least one representative of the rifle platoon, usually the platoon sergeant, will accompany this reconnaissance party. The company reconnaissance representative (weapons platoon leader) will assign the platoon mission to the platoon representative at the new position. The platoon representative will select squad and crew-served weapons positions, the location of the platoon CP-OP, and local security positions. He will then meet the platoon and the detachments left in contact when they arrive at a designated release point and guide them into the new position.

115. Detachments Left in Contact

a. The mission of the detachments left in contact is to protect the withdrawal of the main body by deception and resistance. The composition of the detachments left in contact is designated by the company commander. Normally, one rifle squad and one-half of the crew-served weapons, under command of the rifle squad leader, are left as platoon detachments left in contact. The rifle squad selected will normally be the center squad, so lateral movement will be reduced. The crew-served weapons selected to remain are those with the best fields of fire.

b. When the withdrawal starts, detachments left in contact are redisposed to block the most likely approaches leading into the platoon position. Machineguns are assigned sectors of fire to accomplish their mission. The company executive officer is normally designated commander of the company detachments left in contact; the squad leader commanding the platoon detachments left in contact will receive his instructions from the commander of the company detachments left in contact when the withdrawal begins.

c. If there is a definite enemy armor threat or if deception would be jeopardized by the sound of moving tanks and vehicle-mounted antitank weapons, these vehicles may be left with the detachments left in contact.

d. The commander of the platoon detachments left in contact will have wire, radio, and messenger communication with the commander of the company detachments left in contact. Wire, radio, sound, and visual signals provide communication to control the actions of the detachments left in contact. Existing communication facilities are maintained in the old position. The minimum of communication personnel remain in the old position to operate the communication system for the detachments left in

contact. If at all possible, unused wire lines are recovered or sections are removed to prevent their use by the enemy. Deceptive measures include using dummy radio stations and maintaining normal radio activity in the old position.

e. Infrared, radar, binoculars, and other night-surveillance devices will assist the detachments left in contact in detecting enemy movement and adjusting direct and indirect fires on the enemy.

f. Detachments left in contact from the reserve platoon of a forward company may be used to patrol in the rear, block dangerous approaches into the flanks, patrol to the front, or add depth to the position by remaining in position.

116. Conduct of the Night Withdrawal

a. Rearward movement of all elements of the rifle company, less detachments left in contact, begins at the designated time. Individuals move to squad assembly areas, squads move to platoon assembly areas, and platoons move to company assembly areas.

b. Column formations, which aid control, are used at all levels. The company commander will usually send the platoons immediately to the rear as they reach the company assembly area. A platoon must have security to the front, flanks, and rear during all phases of this movement. If the company assembly area is occupied, the platoons set up a perimeter defense and occupy sectors in direct relationship to their forward defensive posture.

c. When transportation is available, the platoon leader will have his loading plan prepared in advance and issued to his subordinate leaders. When possible, an individual from the platoon should locate the vehicles which the platoon will use, and he should guide the platoon to these vehicles without delay. Care should be exercised to reduce or eliminate unnecessary noise, use of lights, or delay in loading vehicles and moving out. Plans should be made for protection to the front, flanks, and rear while mounted on the vehicles and for action to be taken when forced to dismount by enemy action. When vehicles in column are halted, the platoon leader should move forward along the column to determine the cause of the delay and eliminate the cause so movement to the rear is not delayed.

d. When the withdrawal of the main body starts, the detachments left in contact move to predetermined positions and protect the withdrawal of the main body by deception and resistance.

The normal pattern of fires is continued to aid in deception. Plans are made for maximum use of all available direct and indirect fires and for illumination in case the enemy attacks. If the enemy forces the platoon detachments left in contact of their position, they must fight their way to the rear and delay the enemy as much as possible in order to protect the rearward movement of the main body. When the detachments left in contact have accomplished their mission, they will be ordered to withdraw to the rear. Platoon detachments left in contact withdraw to the platoon assembly area and then to the company assembly area. This movement is executed rapidly. The use of indirect fires will greatly assist in the withdrawal of the detachments left in contact. Every effort is made to move the detachments left in contact to the rear in sufficient time so they move into the new position prior to daylight.

e. Both the main body and the detachments left in contact are guided to the rear from the company assembly area to a platoon release point. The platoon reconnaissance representative meets both the main body of the platoon and the detachments left in contact at a designated release point and leads them into position. There must be no delay in moving through the release points. The platoon reconnaissance representative will have a preliminary fire plan prepared for the new position in addition to a tentative defensive plan. The platoon leader will verify this plan as soon as possible after the platoon is in position. The platoon leader issues a complete order and prepares a fire plan as rapidly as possible.

Section III. DAYLIGHT WITHDRAWAL TECHNIQUES

117. General

a. A daylight withdrawal (fig. 35) is executed by forward units fighting to their rear and with units positioned to the rear covering the withdrawal of the forward units. The degree of enemy pressure dictates the method of withdrawal. A daylight withdrawal is usually not desirable but may be forced by enemy action.

b. The platoon normally participates in daylight withdrawal as part of the company. The company commander's daylight-withdrawal order will include all or part of the following:

(1) *Time of withdrawal.* Frequently, this time will not be known in advance and the withdrawal will start on order.

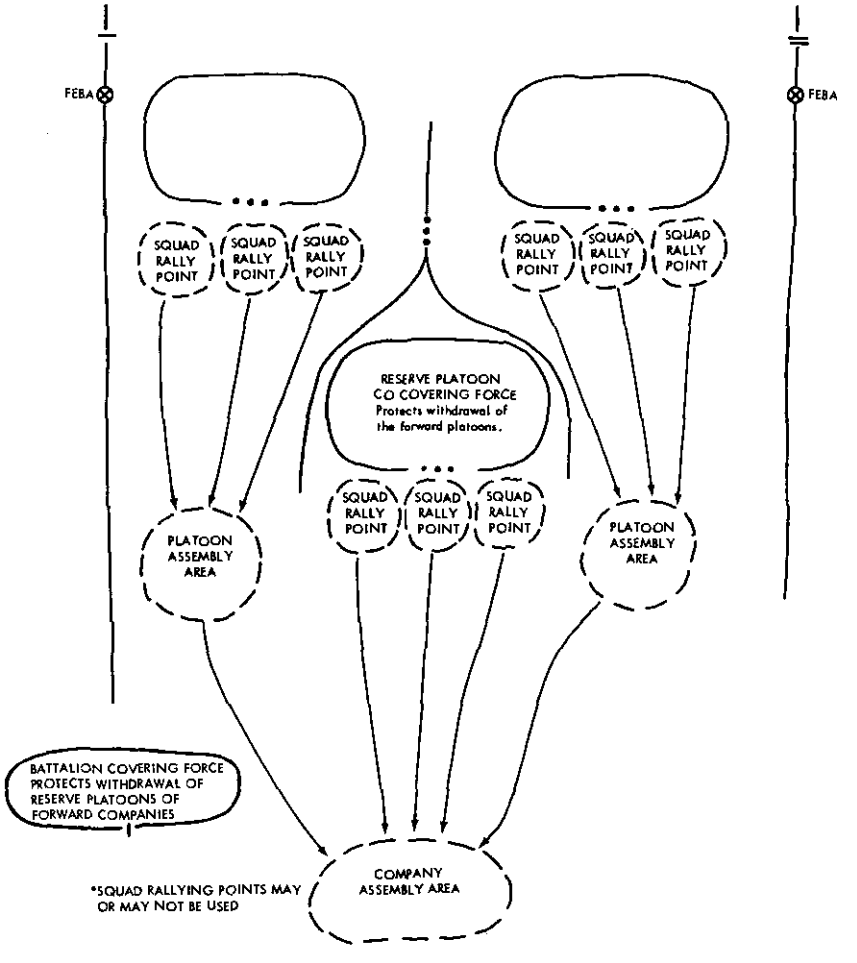

Figure 35. Daylight withdrawal techniques (schematic).

(2) *Sequence of withdrawal for the forward platoons.* This will be dictated by the degree of enemy pressure. Normally, the least engaged platoons will be withdrawn first.

(3) *Zone of withdrawal for each platoon.* The platoon is usually assigned a zone of withdrawal which extends to the rear as far as it is anticipated the platoon will be deployed. In the event it is necessary for the platoon to fight its way to the rear, the action will be conducted within this zone.

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(4) *Route of withdrawal for each platoon.* The platoon is assigned, within a zone, a route of withdrawal from the platoon assembly area to the company assembly area.

(5) *Phase lines.* These are lines running perpendicular to the direction of movement and are terrain features easily recognized on the ground.

(6) *Company assembly areas.* The company assembly area is usually in the rear of the battalion covering force. The company commander selects platoon assembly areas in the rear of the company covering force.

(7) *Attachments of supporting weapons to the supported units.* Normally, supporting weapons, such as antitank weapons, located in a platoon area are attached to that platoon when the withdrawal starts.

(8) *Company covering force.* This is the reserve platoon of the company. Its mission is to cover the withdrawal of the forward rifle platoons.

(9) *Mission following the withdrawal.*

c. Based on the company commander's order, the platoon order will include the following:

(1) *Time of withdrawal.* Frequently, this time will not be known in advance and the action will start on order.

(2) *Method of withdrawal.* (For discussion, see para. 120.)

(3) *Rallying points.* Squad rallying points are selected by the platoon leader immediately to the rear of the squads' positions. Here, the squad leader regains control of his squad and if necessary prepares to continue fighting from this position. The minimum amount of time is spent at these points. Additional squad rallying points are selected along the squad routes of withdrawal.

(4) *Platoon assembly areas.* These are designated by the company commander. At this location, the platoon will have broken contact with the enemy and will move rapidly to the rear.

(5) *Routes of withdrawal.* The platoon leader selects routes from the squad rally points to the platoon assembly area. These routes are within the platoon zone of withdrawal.

(6) *Attachments of supporting weapons to the rifle squads.* Elements of the weapons squad located in the rifle squad position are attached to the rifle squad when the withdrawal starts to insure coordination and control. Units

attached to the platoon are not normally further attached to rifle squads.

(7) *Mission following the withdrawal.*

118. Planning and Preparation

a. Planning is as detailed as time permits. Thorough reconnaissance by all leaders of routes of withdrawal, zones of withdrawal, subsequent positions, rallying points, and assembly areas is not desirable. Time will normally permit only limited reconnaissance therefore, maximum use must be made of reconnaissance parties. The platoon leader issues a warning order as soon as possible to permit concurrent planning and reconnaissance by his subordinate leaders. Fragmentary orders are issued as plans are made.

b. The platoon leader will designate the method of withdrawal. Squad routes of withdrawal, initial squad rallying points, the formation to be used when contact with the enemy has been broken, and alternate plans to insure flexibility are all covered by the platoon leader in his order.

c. Tanks may protect the rearward movement of the platoon. They may withdraw with the platoon or move to a position to the rear to support the withdrawal.

119. Covering Force

a. The reserve platoon acts as the company covering force. It remains in position until the forward platoons have withdrawn to its rear. The covering force protects the withdrawal of forward platoons by fire. Supporting weapons, such as antitank weapons, are normally released from attachment to the forward platoons when they withdraw in the rear of the covering force and these weapons are then attached to the covering force.

b. The covering force may remain in its prepared position or move to a different position to afford protection for the withdrawal of the forward platoons. When the forward platoons have moved far enough to the rear, the company commander will order the covering force to withdraw to the rear of the battalion covering force.

120. Conduct of Daylight Withdrawal

a. Depending upon the situation, the company commander may order the simultaneous withdrawal of all forward platoons or he may order the least engaged platoons to withdraw first. The

platoon starts the withdrawal on order: Normally, the least engaged squads and supporting weapons are withdrawn first. Direct and indirect fires, to include smoke, assist in the withdrawal.

b. When enemy pressure is heavy, the platoon must withdraw from position by fighting its way to the rear. Control during this phase is extremely important. Three methods the platoon may use in withdrawing from position or in maneuvering to the rear are listed below. These methods are given as guides only. The method used will vary with the situation and terrain. In each of these methods, the platoon sergeant withdraws first to coordinate the actions of individuals and elements as they withdraw, while the platoon leader remains in position, withdrawing with the last element.

(1) *Withdrawal by thinning the lines, automatic weapons withdrawing last.* When this method is used, men armed with rifles are withdrawn first. The squad leader withdraws with the last element. Depending on the enemy armor capabilities, antitank weapons may be withdrawn at any time. As one element is withdrawn, the elements remaining in position increase their rate of fire to preclude the enemy overrunning the position. Squads withdraw to the squad rallying point or to the next position to the rear. This method provides maximum firepower over the entire platoon position during the conduct of the withdrawal from position.

(2) *Withdrawal by squad.* In using this method, one squad, with crew-served weapons attached, is left on position as a rear guard. The rest of the platoon is withdrawn to the rear. The rear guard is withdrawn when the remainder of the platoon has reached the next terrain feature to the rear, or is in position to cover the withdrawal of the rear guard. If the enemy pursues closely, it may be necessary for the platoon to fight its way to the rear, leapfrogging squads and crew-served weapons. When tanks are available, they should be left with the rear guard or in a position to protect the withdrawal of the rear guard. The squad left as rear guard must be able to cover by fire all approaches leading into the platoon position in order to prevent the enemy from overrunning the position and outflanking the rear guard.

(3) *Withdrawal by fire team.* Using this method, one fire team from each squad moves to the rear and takes up a position from which it is able to support the with-

drawal of the fire team left on position. Machineguns are leapfrogged to the rear in the same way as fire teams. The situation will dictate when antitank weapons withdraw. When tanks are available, they remain in position with the portion of the platoon in contact with the enemy. This method is best used when the enemy is in extremely close contact and may be expected to follow up the withdrawal.

c. At rallying points, squads pause only long enough to regain control. The platoon usually does not assemble until the platoon assembly area is reached. Fire and maneuver should be utilized only until such time as the platoon gains freedom of movement. Then the platoon moves rapidly in a tactical formation which provides security to the front, flanks, and rear.

d. Withdrawing units are careful not to mask the fires of covering forces. Withdrawing tanks fire on the enemy during the withdrawal. Platoons, when assembled, move immediately to the company assembling area which is usually in the rear of the battalion covering force. After withdrawal of the forward platoons, the company covering force is withdrawn in a similar manner to the rear of the battalion covering force. Platoons may be dispatched individually to the next designated position upon reaching the company assembly area.

Section IV. DELAYING ACTIONS

121. General

a. A delaying action (fig. 36) is an operation in which a unit trades space for time and inflicts maximum casualties on the enemy without becoming decisively engaged in combat. Although the underlying principle of a delaying action is to gain time without fighting a decisive engagement, the platoon may be forced to accept close combat in order to accomplish the overall mission. The enemy is taken under fire when he comes within range of available weapons and is kept under an increasing volume of fire as he advances. Prior to the time the enemy launches an assault on the delaying force, it is withdrawn to the rear of covering forces or to another delay position.

b. The echelons of a delaying force consist of a forward defense echelon and reserve echelon. The platoon usually participates in a delaying action as part of the company.

c. A delaying mission usually directs the holding of an enemy force beyond a definite line until a stated time. The reason is

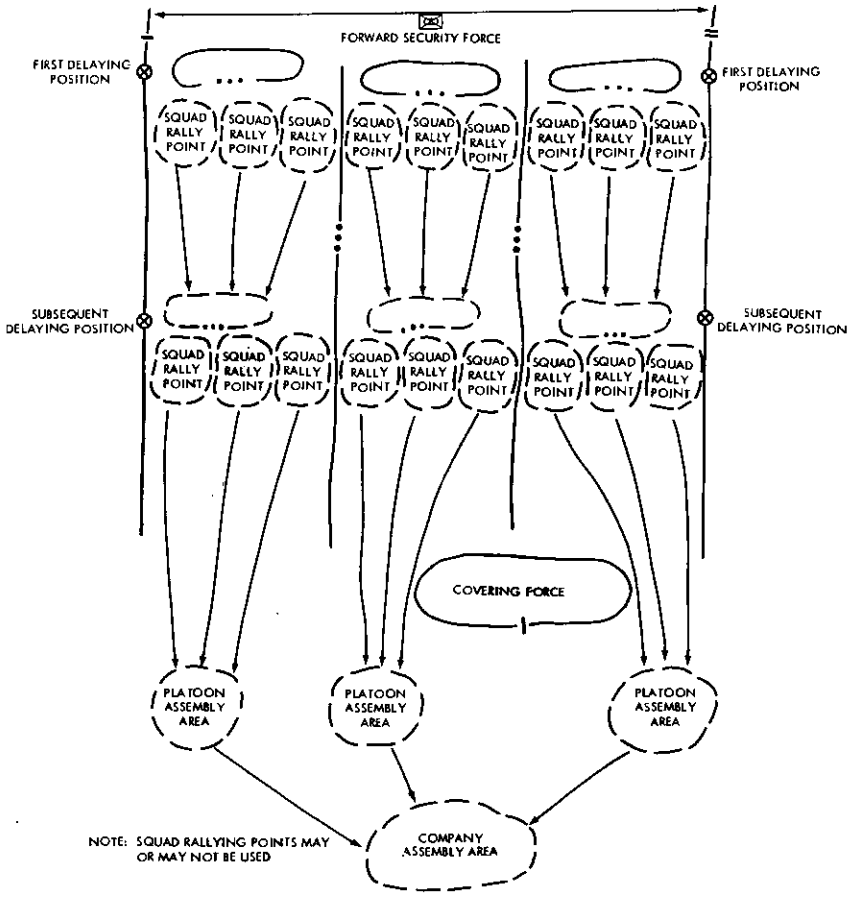

Figure 36. Delay from successive positions (schematic).

normally announced. The delay may be accomplished from one position or a series of positions. In selecting terrain for a delaying action, the following characteristics are desirable:

(1) Good observation and long fields of fire. Positions on topographical crests will normally afford long-range fires.

(2) Concealment and cover for the forces on the delaying position.

(3) Obstacles to the front and flanks. Where natural obstacles do not exist, or to supplement natural obstacles, artificial obstacles such as barbed wire, abatis, craters, and minefields will be utilized.

(4) A series of parallel ridges across the axis of enemy advance in order to conduct delay from successive positions.

(5) Concealed routes of withdrawal.

d. The company commander will assign platoon areas as he would in the defense. Because of the wide frontage assigned in a delaying action, all rifle platoons of the company will generally be employed forward. There will be unoccupied areas between platoons which will be covered by fire, obstacles, patrols, and surveillance devices. The platoon may physically occupy an area up to 400 meters wide under ideal conditions.

e. The company order for the delaying action will include:

(1) *Platoon positions and areas of responsibility.* The company commander will designate the general location of platoon positions as well as areas to be covered by fire and observation. Platoon positions are normally on or near the topographical crest to provide long-range fires and observation and to facilitate withdrawal.

(2) *Local security.* The platoon will be required to establish observation and listening posts and to conduct patrols in accordance with the company security plan.

(3) *Zone of action.* In order to conduct delay from successive positions, or if delaying action is necessary while moving to the rear, the platoon will be assigned a zone of action.

(4) *Successive positions.* When the delay is to be accomplished from successive positions, the positions will be designated in advance.

(5) *Company and platoon assembly areas.* Normally, the company commander selects platoon assembly areas in the rear of the first echelon of the covering force. The company assembly area is located farther to the rear.

(6) *Routes.* Routes are designated from the platoon assembly area to the company assembly area.

(7) *Priority of withdrawal.* Normally, the time of withdrawal from the initial delay position will not be known. The withdrawal from position will be on order. The company commander will designate a sequence of withdrawal in the event he desires one or more platoons to remain on position to protect the withdrawal of other platoons. Normally, the least engaged platoons are withdrawn first.

(8) *Phase lines.* If it is necessary to coordinate the action of platoons between delay positions and to report progress of the delay, phase lines are designated. Ideally, these phase lines are located on easily recognized terrain features running perpendicular to the direction of withdrawal.

(9) *Attachments of supporting weapons to supported unit.* To facilitate control, supporting weapons located in the platoon area are attached to the platoon when the withdrawal from the initial delay position begins.

f. The platoon order for the delaying action will include:

(1) *Squad positions and areas of responsibility.* The platoon leader will select positions for each squad and organic and supporting weapon, and he will assign overlapping sectors of fire and observation. Sectors of fire are assigned to automatic weapons, tanks, and other antitank weapons. Positions are selected on terrain which insures long-range fires and observation and which provides routes of withdrawal.

(2) *Security measures.* The platoon leader will designate the position of local security elements and specify other security measures in accordance with the company security plan.

(3) *Routes.* Squads are assigned routes of withdrawal to the rear within the platoon zone of action.

(4) *Rallying points.* Squad rallying points may be assigned along the squad route of withdrawal, with the initial rallying point being in the first covered location to the rear of the squad position.

(5) *Successive positions.* When successive delay positions or tentative delay positions are selected, each squad and supporting weapon will be assigned a position and a mission on each subsequent position.

(6) *Method of withdrawal.* The method of withdrawal from position will be designated in advance.

(7) *Attachment of supporting units.* Elements of the weapons squad located in the area of a rifle squad are attached to that rifle squad when the withdrawal from a delay position begins. Normally, squad and section-size supporting weapons units attached to the platoon are not further attached.

122. Planning and Preparation

a. Planning is as detailed as time permits. Detailed reconnaissance is conducted by all leaders of withdrawal routes, subsequent positions, rallying points, and assembly areas. The platoon leader will issue detailed orders for the occupation of the initial positions and subsequent delay positions and specify how the delay will be conducted from each of these positions. He will also direct the positioning of local security, the method of withdrawal, routes to be used to the rear, squad and platoon rallying points if used, and alternate plans to provide flexibility.

b. Platoon and squad leaders should prepare detailed fire plans to include indirect fires and insure adequate firepower on all possible enemy approaches into the position. Alternate and supplementary positions should be selected for squads and crew-served and supporting weapons to insure flexibility and the ability to mass fires on the enemy at extreme range.

c. Withdrawal plans should provide for pyrotechnics in the event wire or radio communication is lost.

d. Tanks may be utilized in the conduct of the delay, taking advantage of their firepower, to include the long range of the main gun.

123. Conduct of the Delaying Action

a. The rifle platoon's withdrawal from a delaying position is directed by the company commander after receipt of orders from the battalion commander. The platoon leader must keep the company commander informed of the situation at all times. If communication with the company commander is lost, the platoon leader makes the decision to withdraw, based on his assigned mission, the overall concept of operation, and the enemy situation. At the earliest opportunity, he informs the company commander of his actions.

b. The enemy is engaged by fire at long range. Every effort is made to force him to deploy in order to achieve maximum delay. Normally, forward elements are withdrawn on order before they become engaged in close combat with an enemy unit of sufficient size to force them off position. The withdrawal from a delay position is normally conducted using daylight withdrawal techniques.

c. In withdrawing from the delay position, the first elements of the platoon withdraw rapidly and occupy the next position to

the rear. This position may be a rallying point or another delay position from which these elements are able to support the withdrawal of the remainder of the platoon. The withdrawing element may join on the intermediate position or be leapfrogged to the rear. The platoon sergeant (or weapons squad leader in the absence of the platoon sergeant) usually moves with the first element to move to the rear, while the platoon leader remains with the portion of the platoon actually engaged with the enemy. Elements of the weapons squad should be attached to the rifle squads in whose areas they are located during the conduct of the delay.

d. The platoon leader controls the actions of his platoon to comply with the instructions of the company commander. The rifle platoon may be required to engage in decisive combat with the enemy in order to accomplish the company mission, or it may be required to counterattack in order to extricate another platoon. During the conduct of the delay, the platoon must utilize prior planning, the terrain, available firepower, all available means of communication (primarily radio), and flexibility to the maximum in order to accomplish its mission.

Section V. MECHANIZED RIFLE PLATOON IN RETROGRADE OPERATIONS

124. General

The mechanized rifle platoon will execute retrograde operations as part of a mechanized rifle company or a tank company team. The considerations in sections I through IV of this chapter will apply to the mechanized platoon in either case. The mechanized platoon leader must be thoroughly familiar with retrograde operations as discussed in FM's 7–11 and 17–15. The mechanized platoon is able to move more rapidly and over greater distances because of its inherent mobility. Maintenance and resupply of fuel will be a constant consideration.

125. Night Withdrawal

The considerations discussed in paragraphs 113 through 116 will apply to the mechanized platoon, with these differences:

a. Carriers must be moved to the rear in a manner that will not prematurely disclose the fact that a withdrawal is being conducted. Three techniques of withdrawing carriers are outlined

below. The company commander will prescribe the technique to be used.

(1) Carriers, except those provided for detachments left in contact, may be withdrawn shortly after dark to the company assembly area. Artillery and mortar fires are used to cover the noise of movement. This technique may be used when routes to the rear are limited and when early movement of carriers can be made without compromising secrecy.

(2) All carriers may remain initially in their forward positions. The main body moves on foot to the rear to a predesignated assembly area or along a route where they may later be picked up by carriers remaining on position. Immediately prior to the withdrawal of the detachments left in contact, carriers for the main body begin their movement to the rear where they pick up designated elements of the main body. (It is essential that plans provide for loading of dismounted elements on specifically designated carriers. This will facilitate loading and insure retention of tactical integrity during the remainder of the move and on the next position.) Until the carriers begin their withdrawal, the carriers' weapons may be used to provide additional firepower to the detachments left in contact. One man may be provided to fire the weapon on each carrier. This technique is appropriate when multiple routes to the rear will enable a quick and orderly withdrawal of all carriers and when there is danger of compromising the secrecy of the withdrawal by earlier movement.

(3) All forces on position may withdraw simultaneously without using detachments left in contact.

(4) Selected carriers may be withdrawn to company assembly areas during daylight using infiltration techniques, unless movement is restricted by higher authority. This technique may be used to vary the pattern of withdrawal, when the unit is delaying on an alternate position, when an enemy attack is probable or secrecy is not a predominant factor, or when a night attack is imminent.

b. Because of the distances which can be quickly covered and the difficulty in maintaining orientation when moving mounted at night, it is extremely important that all drivers and vehicle commanders be thoroughly oriented on the route of withdrawal

and measures used to control the movement. Specific control measures which can be used are:

(1) Establishment of a maximum speed and distance between vehicles to prevent elements of a column from becoming split in rough terrain. These factors are determined by the degree of visibility, the skill and level of training of drivers in night movement, and the degree of enemy pressure.

(2) The use of guides at critical road junctions and turnoff points. These guides can be picked up by the last vehicle passing through.

(3) The use of flashlights with infrared filters placed on trees or stakes at critical points along the route. These flashlights can be seen by drivers through the infrared scope. The flashlights can also be picked up by the last carrier passing through.

c. All drivers must be thoroughly trained in night-driving techniques and in the use of the infrared driving system on the carrier.

d. Individuals are designated to observe from the hatches in all directions. If the column is halted more than momentarily, sufficient troops dismount to provide all-round security.

e. Because of the large number of radios organic to the platoon, radio discipline must be emphasized to prevent compromise.

f. The commander of the platoon detachments left in contact may consider equipping his force with the machineguns organic to the mechanized rifle squads in order to provide automatic fire coverage of the entire position. He will also be able to use the weapon mounted on the carrier in the conduct of the action. The infrared equipment mounted on the carrier may also be used for surveillance.

126. Daylight Withdrawal

The considerations discussed in paragraphs 117 through 120 of this chapter will apply to the mechanized platoon, with these differences:

a. Contact with the enemy can be broken more rapidly and movement to the rear expedited.

b. Carriers must not be exposed unnecessarily to antitank fire.

c. In the event a carrier becomes disabled, the platoon leader must have plans to transport the load normally carried on that carrier.

d. The mounted weapon on the carrier may be used in the conduct of the action, as well as the machineguns organic to each mechanized rifle squad.

127. Delaying Action

The considerations discussed in paragraphs 121 through 123 will apply to the mechanized platoon, with these differences:

a. The mechanized platoon will frequently employ offensive action, in conjunction with tanks, in conducting the delay.

b. Care must be exercised to insure that carriers do not move laterally in the face of the enemy.

c. Carriers should be moved to the rear over concealed routes.

d. The mechanized platoon will frequently employ the tactics and techniques for delaying actions discussed in FM 17–15.

CHAPTER 5

AIRBORNE/AIRMOBILE OPERATIONS

Section I. GENERAL

128. Purpose and Scope

a. This chapter provides guidance to the platoon and squad leaders in the conduct of airborne and airmobile operations.

b. The term "airborne operations" in its broadest sense describes any movement of combat forces and logistics by air and covers the spectrum of delivery possibilities: parachute, airlandings by fixed- or rotary-wing aircraft, and low-altitude delivery. The word "airborne" when associated with a unit describes a unit capability for entry into combat by parachute. Airborne operations covered in this chapter will deal with entry by parachute or landing by fixed-wing aircraft. (See AR 320–5 and JCS Pub 1 for complete definitions of terms.)

129. Definitions

a. Airborne Operations. An operation involving the movement and delivery of combat forces and their logistical support by airlanding or airdrop into an objective area. Airborne operations include joint airborne operations (parachute or airlanded) and airmobile operations (parachute or airlanded).

b. Airmobile Operations. An operation in which combat forces and their equipment move about the battlefield in Army aircraft, under the control of a ground force commander, to engage in ground combat. One of the primary differences between airmobile operations and joint airborne operations is that in airmobile operations the transport is under the control of the ground force commander. These are usually tactical operations limited in mission, range, and duration. Airmobile operations are normally unilateral, but they may be conducted as part of a joint airborne operation.

c. Joint Airborne Operations. An operation conducted by Army forces together with forces of another service, usually the Air Force. They may be either strategic or tactical in nature. They

may be either parachute operations or airlanded operations, or a combination of the two using medium-transport and assault aircraft.

130. Tactical Employment

a. In parachute operations, the rifle platoon normally fights as part of the rifle company. The rifle platoon may be required, however, to fight independently or semi-independently during all or a part of the operation. This may occur in the performance of a separate mission appropriate to a platoon or may occur as a result of aircraft failure or inaccurate delivery separating the platoon from other troops.

b. The rifle platoon can land in unprepared, lightly defended terrain relatively free of obstacles that are hindrances to the selected delivery means. The landing may be made during periods of reduced visibility. Immediately after assault landings, individuals can fight to protect themselves and elements can fight if they have retained tactical integrity or as they gain it. However, the platoon must assemble as a tactical unit under control of the platoon leader before it is capable of effective employment. The time required to regroup following parachute operations is normally greater than for airlanded operations.

c. After an airborne assault landing, the rifle platoon operates tactically in substantially the same manner as discussed in previous chapters. Following the assault phase in which initial objectives are seized, the platoon may defend as part of the company until linkup with friendly ground forces, or until buildup of forces by air delivery permits resumption of the offensive. In some situations, it may continue offensive operations immediately after the assault phase with a subsequent linkup or withdrawal overland or by air.

131. Echelonment

The rifle platoon is usually a part of the assault echelon. For further explanation of echelonment, see FM 7–11.

132. Organization for Combat

The platoon will often be reinforced for airborne operations. These reinforcements may include FO teams, antitank weapons, medical personnel, indirect fire means, and communication equipment and personnel. For a discussion of airborne patrols, see FM 21–75.

Section II. PLANNING

133. General

a. Although the tactical principles for airborne operations are applicable to both joint airborne and airmobile operations, airmobile operations can be planned and executed with far greater simplicity because of unity of command.

b. Planning, as it is outlined in this section, applies to all airborne operations. Differences are indicated where they exist between joint airborne operations and airmobile operations.

c. For a detailed discussion of planning, see FM's 7–11 and 7–20.

134. Planning Sequence

For details, see FM's 7–11 and 7–20.

135. Ground Tactical Plan

a. General. Based on the order from the company commander, the platoon leader develops his plan of attack to seize the assigned objective and the plan to defend his assigned area. When directed by the company order, he develops a plan for subsequent offensive operations, linkup, or withdrawal.

(1) *Objective area.* For ease of control, all members of the platoon must be thoroughly familiar with the physical characteristics of the objective area. Squads should be assigned definite, easily recognized sectors. The attack should be planned so that, during the assault and reorganization, adjustment and shifting of forces is kept to a minimum. Positions for the fire support elements and routes for the maneuver force should be selected and announced so that each man knows exactly where to go and what to do. Detailed rehearsals should be conducted by the platoon on terrain which approximates as closely as possible the objective area. Maps and aerial photographs, terrain models, and sketches provide some means of familiarizing individuals with the area of operations. All known information to include depth of rivers and types of roads, bridges, and buildings in the area should be provided to squad and platoon members. Troops frequently become disorganized on landing. Knowledge of the expected direction of landing in relation to the objective or assembly area and close coordination with pilots prior to and during flight and landing in airmobile

operations will reduce this disorganization. Pathfinders can provide assistance in marking assembly areas.

(2) *Security.* The location for the security detachments for the company will be designated in the company plan as will platoon responsibilities for the security detachments.

(3) *Reserve.* One or more rifle platoons may be given reserve missions to be accomplished on order.

b. Assault Plan. The assault plan consists of a scheme of maneuver and a plan of fire support. It is designed to capitalize on the surprise gained by the assault landing and to provide for rapid seizure of the assigned objective. The scheme of manuever provides for seizing the assigned objectives and clearing the assigned zone of responsibility. In a parachute operation, the platoon normally assembles and reorganizes in its portion of the company assembly area and attacks to seize its objective on order of the company commander. The platoon may be directed to attack before it is completely assembled. The movement from the assembly area to the objective is characterized by speed to take advantage of the element of surprise and to prevent strong enemy reaction. Platoon objectives are selected to insure the seizure and control of the assigned company objective(s) and to accomplish other missions.

c. Defense Plan. The platoon is normally assigned a portion of the company sector to defend. The organization of the defense is similar to that discussed in chapter 3. Platoons are located to protect key terrain features and cover the most likely avenues of approach into the company sector of responsibility. Emphasis is placed on covering armor approaches into the area. Until the arrival of long-range antitank weapons with the heavy drop, the platoon is extremely vulnerable to armor attack.

d. Plan of Fire Support. Fire support planning for an airborne operation at platoon level consists essentially of determining the best locations and method of employing organic weapons, such as machineguns and antitank weapons, and determining what types of nonorganic fire support are available and how they can be obtained. The platoon leader should brief his subordinate leaders on methods of obtaining fire support, to include location, call sign, and frequencies of FO and FAC teams in the area. Furthermore, airborne and airmobile operations are likely to place the unit beyond the range of its normal air defense cover. In this case, the platoon must be prepared to protect itself by active and passive measures. Cover and concealment from hostile aircraft must be employed in addition to maximum dispersion commensurate with

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the primary ground mission. Personnel manning automatic weapons must remain alert to the possibility of air attack and should be prepared to engage hostile aircraft at the discretion of the commander.

e. Linkup. Linkup coordination will normally be accomplished at higher levels unless the platoon is given an independent mission. The information which the platoon leader should receive includes:

(1) A system of mutual recognition (armbands, pyrotechnics, vehicle markings, and panels).

(2) Coordination of communication (knowledge of linkup force call signs and frequencies).

(3) Point and expected time of linkup, if linkup is to occur in his area. All members of the platoon should be thoroughly briefed on the details of linkup coordination and operations of other friendly units in the area to avoid mistakes in recognition.

f. Withdrawal.

(1) A withdrawal by air (para. 149) may be executed as a planned phase of an airborne operation, or it may become necessary due to unforeseen tactical developments. The company plan of withdrawal is the basis of the platoon leader's withdrawal plans.

(2) For withdrawal by land, see chapter 4.

136. Landing Plan

Based on the company commander's order, the platoon leader assigns landing areas, designates assembly areas, and prescribes assembly aids. Also on the basis of the company order, the platoon leader plans for necessary security of his portion of the assembly area during reorganization and assigns each squad a definite sector of responsibility to include security posts and roadblocks when necessary.

137. Air Movement Plan

a. Joint Airborne Operations. At platoon level, the leader's concern with the air movement plan consists primarily in assisting the company commander in preparing airloading tables for the platoon. These will be based on the type of aircraft to be used, with consideration given to maintaining the tactical integrity of the squad and platoon. If it is necessary to load the platoon in more than one aircraft, the platoon leader insures distribution of

leaders, weapons, crews, and communication equipment consistent with tactical integrity and the mission to be accomplished.

b. Airmobile Operations. In airmobile operations, the air movement plan covers such details as flight routes, speed and altitude of the aircraft, location of checkpoints, and aircraft formations. All leaders within the platoon must be familiar with these details so that, during the flight, they can keep themselves oriented on the terrain and know the position of the aircraft relative to the objective and other elements in the flight or serial. In case of a forced landing short of the objective area, leaders will be able to evaluate their situation and take appropriate action based on their assigned mission.

Section III. CONDUCT OF JOINT AIRBORNE OPERATIONS

138. Marshaling

Marshaling is a process used to complete final preparations for combat, move to departure airfields or airlanding facilities, and load for take-off. For detailed discussion, see FM's 7–11 and 7–20.

139. Actions in Marshaling Area

a. Briefing. All troops are briefed in as much detail as time permits. The platoon leader's briefing covers the entire tactical operation. In case of inaccurate landings, this insures that the squads can conduct themselves in accordance with the overall plan of the platoon and company. A platoon leader may also be a jumpmaster, in which case he must give a final briefing to the parachutists prior to entering the aircraft. The platoon leader first briefs his squad leaders and then, when time permits, the entire platoon. Squad leaders, in turn, brief their squads. The platoon is briefed in detail from all available aids such as terrain models, aerial photographs, and maps. The briefing includes a detailed orientation on the enemy situation, terrain, mission, objective, plan of the attack, fire support, and reorganization. It thoroughly covers movement to the aircraft and loading; aircraft characteristics; safety instruction; air movement; landing; and assembly. In addition, all personnel are briefed on escape procedures in the event an aircraft makes an emergency landing in enemy territory and the troops aboard are not able to join a friendly unit. The success of the operation lies in the effectiveness of the small-unit leader's briefing. Security is emphasized to prevent individuals from carrying items of intelligence such as plans and orders into the objective area.

b. Preparation of Equipment for Air Delivery. For parachute operations, the preparation of accompanying supplies and equipment for aerial delivery is completed during marshaling. Air-delivery containers, cargo parachutes, and related equipment are issued to the platoon as necessary for packing equipment that is to be carried by individuals or delivered as door bundles. In the company area, troops prepare equipment for airdrop. They mark the bundles distinctively to make them easier to identify and recover. The platoon and squad leaders must actively supervise these activities and continuously check to see that bundles are properly marked, that all equipment is present and properly packaged, that any additional equipment prescribed by the company commander is included, that troops are completely familiar with the loads they are to carry, and what equipment is to be included in door bundles. Platoon personnel may be assigned to heavy drop "rigging lines," which are supervised by quartermaster parachute riggers, to assist in the preparation of the company or platoon heavy drop equipment or vehicles. The platoon leader will designate men to recover supplies and equipment not carried by individuals.

c. Concurrent Actions in the Marshaling Area. In addition to the actions already listed, the following actions take place in the marshaling area.

(1) Issue of special items of equipment which may include maps, photographs, and escape kits.
(2) Issue of parachutes.
(3) Security inspections for diaries, letters, or other unauthorized documents.
(4) Conduct of joint pilot-jumpmaster briefings on the operation.
(5) Religious services.

d. Loading of Equipment and Jumpmaster Inspection. The platoon leader is responsible for loading his personnel, supplies, and equipment in accordance with the company loading plan. Personnel parachutes are drawn and equipment is loaded and secured early. Troops load at the last possible moment to reduce mission compromise and to minimize the period that they will be massed at the departure site. Aircraft crews supervise and provide technical assistance in the lashing of equipment. The pilot, loadmaster (Air Force), and jumpmaster (Army) inspect the loaded aircraft. In addition to this inspection, the jumpmaster must inspect and brief personnel prior to boarding the plane. For details pertaining to duties of the jumpmaster, see TM 57–220.

e. Loading of Troops and Equipment. The platoon moves from the assembly area by planeload(s) to loading areas designated by the company plan. On arriving at the loading area, each planeload moves directly to its assigned aircraft and boards it. In air-landed operations, planeloads are assigned to insure that enough men are placed in each loaded aircraft to unload and unlash the equipment at the objective, that unit integrity is kept by tactical loading, and that every towed load is accompanied by a suitable prime mover.

f. Conduct of Troops and Vehicles on Airfields. Troop commanders are responsible for insuring that troops on the airfield (whether dismounted or in vehicles):

(1) Obtain permission from the departure air control officer before moving onto an airfield.
(2) Cross runways, taxi strips, and ramps at double time.
(3) Do not smoke within 50 feet of aircraft on the ground.
(4) Remain away from propeller arc at all times even when engine is not running.
(5) Do not approach within 150 feet of jet exhaust or within 50 feet of jet intakes.

140. Air Movement

a. During the air movement, the pilot is the aircraft commander and is in absolute charge of the aircraft, all crew members, and all passengers.

b. The jumpmaster in each aircraft is designated as the aircraft troop commander and is responsible for the discipline and conduct of the troops and preflight inspection of aircraft safety equipment. If the aircraft aborts in flight, the jumpmaster, to insure that action is being taken, will ask the pilot to contact the departure air control officer to determine if another aircraft is available to deliver his cargo. If the answer is negative, the jumpmaster will request that his unit commander be notified of the abort.

c. Emergency conditions which may arise during flight and actions to be taken are as follows:

(1) Mechanical failure; await orders from the pilot.
(2) Human error: await orders from the pilot.
(3) Fire:
  (*a*) Engine fire: extinguish by pilot.
  (*b*) Wing fire: await orders from the pilot.
  (*c*) Fuselage fire: extinguish immediately.

(*d*) Collision in flight: await orders unless ship is obviously out of control.

d. Actions to Take in an Emergency.

(1) Standby for emergency landing: fasten seat belts.

(2) Lighten ship: throw out all equipment not essential to the continued navigation of the aircraft or safety of the passengers.

(3) Prepare for crash landing: as directed by pilot or his representative.

(4) Abandon ship (parachute operations): exit aircraft.

141. Landing

a. The platoon lands on, or as close as possible to, its objective to achieve maximum surprise and to avoid unnecessary movement of troops, supplies, and equipment. It is desirable to land directly on an undefended objective. A landing directly on a *defended* objective increases the problems or reorganization and control.

b. In parachute operations, heavy drop equipment and supplies are normally delivered on the same drop zone that the platoon uses, but in some situations a different drop zone may have to be used.

142. Assembly and Reorganization

a. The assembly and reorganization period during the initial assault is critical because of the unit's vulnerability to attack. The operations are executed with maximum speed and precision.

b. When a unit lands directly on, or immediately adjacent to, its initial objective(s), an assembly area may not have to be used. Squads, platoons, and special teams assemble on the drop zone and proceed to their objectives immediately. In this type of assault, reorganization is accomplished concurrently with, or immediately after, the seizure of initial objectives. Briefing for this type operation must be extremely detailed for each man. Units assigned a reconnaissance or a security mission may employ these methods.

c. When an assembly area is designated, individuals move directly to it. No attempt is made to assemble units on the drop zone or landing areas. In parachute operations, men designated by the platoon leader to recover supplies and equipment do so immediately and move to the assembly area. Radios are put into operation as soon as the operators land.

d. If the platoon is engaged by the enemy on the drop zone or landing areas, troops return fire immediately. Leaders take con-

trol of groups of men, regardless of unit, and eliminate the enemy force by small-unit action. Aggressiveness is necessary in gaining control and in attacking the enemy force without hesitation.

e. Assembly aids are used as planned. If enemy action so requires, aids are set up to direct the troops to an alternate assembly area. Security is posted as planned.

f. Communication is established with the company and within the platoon. Squad leaders keep the platoon leader informed of the status of their squads during assembly and reorganization. An SOP should be developed within the platoon so that periodic reports reach the platoon leader when each squad reaches certain percentages of assembly. The platoon leader must, in turn, report his platoon's percentage of assembly periodically to the company commander.

143. Conduct of the Attack

a. Immediately after landing, the platoon may be required to send patrols to reconnoiter the objective area in order to provide the company commander with accurate information as to enemy strength and dispositions. Planning and briefing for these patrols should be accomplished in the marshaling area, but the platoon leader's plan must be flexible enough to permit use of men immediately available in the assembly area. Based on what the patrols learn of the enemy, the company commander determines the extent of reorganization necessary before the attack is launched. Consequently, the platoon may begin the assault before assembly is complete, especially if the objective is lightly defended.

b. The conduct of the attack is generally as described in chapter 2. The platoon leader modifies his original plan of attack according to the degree of assembly of the platoon and newly acquired information of the enemy and terrain. Aggressiveness and rapidity of movement are necessary to capitalize on surprise. After seizure of the initial objective, the platoon consolidates to defend the assigned sector or takes whatever action is indicated by the mission.

144. Subsequent Operations

a. When the assault phase is followed by a defense of the objective area, the platoon normally defends a portion of the airhead. Antitank defense of the objective area is emphasized. For organization and conduct of the defense, see chapter 3.

b. When the ground forces are to link up near the platoon's sector of the objective area, the platoon leader insures that co-

ordination measures are circulated to, and carried out by, members of the platoon. The measures may include coordination of fires, a system of mutual recognition, and coordination of communication.

c. Subsequent offensive action after the assault is conducted as described in chapter 2.

d. For a discussion of withdrawal from the objective area, see paragraph 149.

Section IV. CONDUCT OF AIRMOBILE OPERATIONS

145. Marshaling

a. Prior to the arrival of transporting aircraft, platoons prepare for the attack as described in chapter 2. Briefings and rehearsals are conducted and all equipment is prepared for loading. The platoon is organized into aircraft loads in accordance with the loading plan.

b. Aircraft loads are disposed in the loading area for quick loading. Exact touchdown points as designated by the company commander are established and marked for each aircraft.

c. Men not accompanying the airmobile force are employed as ground hookup teams to sling loads.

d. If communication security permits, unit or aircraft radios may be used to control loading; otherwise, visual signals are used.

146. Air Movement

The platoon leader must keep the company commander informed of the progress of the loading and of any changes (in serial composition, delays, etc.) prior to or during take-off. During the flight to the landing area or drop zone, the platoon and squad leaders keep themselves oriented with the terrain and mentally review what their actions will be upon landing. Personnel in the aircraft should be questioned as to their actions upon landing and should be briefed on any action or changes to the landing plan which may have occurred during flight. Just prior to landing, the troop leader alerts his men and prepares for the assault phase of the operation.

147. The Assault

a. General

(1) The assault phase of an airmobile operation begins with the landing of the lead elements and continues through

the seizure of the objective area and the initial occupation of the security positions.

(2) Ground combat in airmobile operations is conducted along conventional lines but under unusual conditions.

(3) The fact that an airmobile force usually lands where there are few fixed defenses and few well-organized combat troops facilitates rapid seizure of initial objectives. The enemy may be expected to react rapidly. He will usually employ armor units in these attacks, if available. The early preparation of a defense against armor is therefore a major consideration. Attack by enemy close support aircraft can also be expected.

(4) In an airmobile assault, the platoon may land within or near the objective area.

(*a*) Landing within the objective area involves the simultaneous landing of assault units directly upon, or immediately adjacent to, initial objectives, and this tactic is used whenever feasible.

(*b*) Landing near the objective area involves landing, assembly, and reorganization and attack to seize initial objectives. This tactic is used if the terrain and enemy situation do not permit landing on, or immediately adjacent to, initial objectives.

b. Landing and Reorganization.

(1) *General.* The period between the start of the landing and the end of the reorganization of the assault elements is the most critical one as far as vulnerability to enemy attack is concerned. When the platoon lands on, or immediately adjacent to, the initial objective, it may have to delay reorganization until the objective has been seized.

(2) *Landing.*

(*a*) The rifle platoon and squad will land on dispersed landing sites according to the planned tactical employment. Supporting weapons land as close as possible to their planned initial firing positions.

(*b*) All individuals and units land with essential weapons, equipment, and ammunition to insure their combat readiness, and to reduce the time required for assembly. Additional equipment and supplies are delivered in later serials.

(*c*) Troops and equipment are unloaded from aircraft quickly and cleared from the landing areas. This

facilitates control of incoming aircraft, reduces danger of accidents, and reduces casualties from enemy fires.

(*d*) When enemy fires interfere with the landing, prompt countermeasures are taken by all available means.

(3) *Reorganization.*

(*a*) When the platoon lands directly on, or immediately adjacent to, initial objectives, squads proceed to their objectives immediately, with little or no reorganization. In this type of assault, they reorganize concurrently with, or soon after, seizure of the initial objectives.

(*b*) When assembly areas are required, they are located within, or adjacent to, landing areas but clear of landing sites. The platoon elements that land first may be charged with gaining and maintaining security of the landing areas. Succeeding elements move intact directly from the landing sites to the predesignated assembly areas, assisted by guides and other appropriate assembly aids. All elements carry with them the equipment they immediately require for their missions. Upon arrival in assembly areas, small-unit leaders report the status of their units, receive any new instructions, and continue their missions. These reports of readiness for action permit the company commander to make any changes in missions that are warranted.

(*c*) Individuals may be designated to remain on landing areas to protect the area, care for casualties, or handle incoming supplies.

(*d*) Reorganization is complete when assault elements of all units are assembled and communication is established.

c. Seizure of Initial Objectives.

(1) The initial ground combat stresses the coordinated action of small units to seize initial objectives rapidly before the advantage of surprise is lost. All units attack as rapidly as the situation permits, using all available fire support. The attack is conducted as discussed in chapter 2.

(2) Units or personnel landed in areas other than those planned direct their efforts to the general mission and establish contact with their parent unit as soon as practical.

(3) After initial objectives have been captured, the platoon may seize additional objectives that make a coordinated defense easier to establish.

148. The Defense

a. The period of time involved in the defense (ch. 3) following an airmobile operation may vary from a few hours to a few days.

b. Defense measures against armor and aircraft attacks and nuclear weapons are of particular importance in airmobile operations.

c. Defense of the objective area at platoon level is accomplished by organizing and occupying the dominant terrain along the airhead line to cover main routes of approach into the position; by covering unoccupied terrain between defended localities by fire, mines, and obstacles; by patrolling; and occasionally by withholding a reserve. Enemy attacks are countered by shifting squads, reinforcing threatened areas, employing massed fire support, and counterattacking. The interior lines of communication in the all-round defense facilitate shifting troops, massing fires, and committing reserves, including units from portions of the airhead not under attack. Reserve platoons are held in readiness to reinforce, to counterattack, to occupy defense positions, or to execute blocking missions.

d. Continuing emphasis must be placed on improving and extending antitank defense in the objective area because of vulnerability of troops to enemy armor. Organic antitank weapons, obstacles, and tactical air and other available support must be used to maximum advantage.

e. During the defense, all or part of the platoon may occupy positions forward of the airhead line to supplement security positions. Units withdraw to the airhead line only when ordered to or when forced by enemy pressure. The conduct of the defense from these forward positions is similar to the conduct of a delaying action (ch. 4).

Section V. WITHDRAWAL BY AIR

149. General

a. This section covers special considerations for withdrawal by air. Withdrawal overland is covered in chapter 4.

b. A withdrawal by air is an operation in which all or part of a deployed force disengages from the enemy and moves by aircraft

to another location. It may be conducted as the last phase of an airmobile operation, or it may be a means of extricating a ground unit which has become isolated on the battlefield. In the latter case, heavy equipment beyond the lift capability of available aircraft will be destroyed.

c. The rifle platoon may withdraw as a part of a larger force, or as an independent unit after conducting an independent operation.

d. A withdrawal by air may be conducted by day or night. Each method requires special techniques and both require well-trained personnel and maximum control by leaders at all echelons.

150. Concept

To withdraw a force by air, part of the force must cover the withdrawal of the main body from contact, its movement to loading areas, and its evacuation. It is desirable to maintain unit integrity for control purposes and for subsequent operations. At times, a unit will withdraw intact; at other times, it may be required to leave detachments in contact or a covering force. Normally, least engaged units are withdrawn first. After the main body has been evacuated, the detachments left in contact withdraw, using night-withdrawal techniques, to the platoon assembly area and/or loading area and are evacuated, preferably by helicopter. When there is enemy pressure, the main body will withdraw under the protection of a covering force, using daylight-withdrawal techniques, to the platoon assembly area or loading area for evacuation. After the main body has been evacuated, the covering force, using daylight-withdrawal techniques, breaks contact with the enemy and is evacuated, preferably by helicopter.

151. Reconnaissance

Detailed ground reconnaissance of squad and platoon assembly areas, routes of withdrawal to the loading site, and the loading area itself are highly desirable and should be conducted as soon as possible after occupation of the positions. Reconnaissance is conducted by leaders down to fire-team level if time and the enemy situation permit. If possible, especially at night, guides should be used and routes marked.

152. Conduct of the Withdrawal

When the platoon leader receives the order to withdraw, he must insure that movement is conducted in an orderly manner and that

security is maintained. He controls the movement of squads, and attachments if any, so that movement is rapid and continuous through the squad and platoon assembly areas. He may use his platoon sergeant to assist by controlling movement through the platoon assembly area, or the platoon sergeant may be left with the detachments left in contact or covering force. Movement to the loading area is timed to avoid any delay in boarding aircraft. For further information concerning withdrawal by air, see FM 7–11.

CHAPTER 6

RIFLE PLATOON IN TACTICAL MOVEMENTS

Section I. GENERAL

153. General

a. A tactical movement is made when contact with the enemy is anticipated. The rifle platoon may participate in tactical operations such as movement to contact, retrograde operations, and movements to relocate troops according to operational plans. These movements may be mounted, dismounted, or by air. During all tactical movements, the platoon is prepared for enemy ground or air attack. The likelihood of enemy contact will vary from remote to imminent.

b. The formation adopted by the platoon is based on how soon enemy contact is anticipated. When anticipated contact is remote, the platoon is deployed in the column formation to facilitate ease of control, rapid movement, and other administrative considerations. Adequate dispersion is maintained to provide protection from air attack and artillery fires. When anticipated contact is imminent, the platoon formation is determined by the mission, situation, terrain, weather, visibility, desired rate of speed, and the desired degree of flexibility (app. II).

c. The platoon leader and his subordinate leaders are responsible for the close-in security of their units regardless of security measures taken by higher commanders. Security against hostile air, CBR, and ground attack must be provided during both movements and halts. Security measures during movements vary from observation to the use of small security elements. During short halts, sentinels and small security elements are positioned to provide all-round security. During longer halts, additional measures may include disposition of platoon elements to permit all-round defense. To be effective, security must provide adequate warning to permit the platoon to take such action as is necessary to protect itself against attack.

d. All available facilities, consistent with security considerations, are used to assist in maintaining control. During mounted

movement, the principal means of communication are visual signals and radio.

e. Start points, checkpoints, phase lines, contact points, march objectives, and release points may be used by higher commanders to assist in controlling subordinate units. Unless otherwise directed, platoon leaders report to the company commander their arrival at these locations, and units continue the march without a halt.

154. Security Missions

Security missions normally assigned to the rifle platoon include employment as the advance party for the advance guard company, or employment as a flank guard or rear guard for the battalion. To accomplish its assigned security mission, the rifle platoon may be required to attack, defend, or delay.

155. Night Movement

a. Night movement provides increased concealment from hostile observation, and it aids in maintaining secrecy. Difficulty of control at night dictates more detailed planning, a slower rate of movement, and more control measures. Formations are similar to those for a daylight movement; however, difficulty of control will often require reduction of distance between individuals and squads.

b. Techniques for control at night may include the posting of guides, marking of routes, marking of men for ease of identification, increased use of connecting files, surveillance equipment, and more frequent reporting of the platoon location.

c. Emphasis is placed on maintaining secrecy by rigid enforcement of noise and light discipline and by using covered routes.

Section II. TACTICAL FOOT MARCHES

156. Rifle Platoon as Advance Party

a. The mission of a rifle platoon as the advance party (fig. 37) is to prevent unnecessary delay in the movement of the advance guard and to protect it from surprise attack from the front. The advance party covers the deployment of the support, if necessary, and, within its capability, denies the enemy ground observation of the main body from the front.

b. The advance party is provided by the advance guard company and is organized, from front to rear, into the point and the ad-

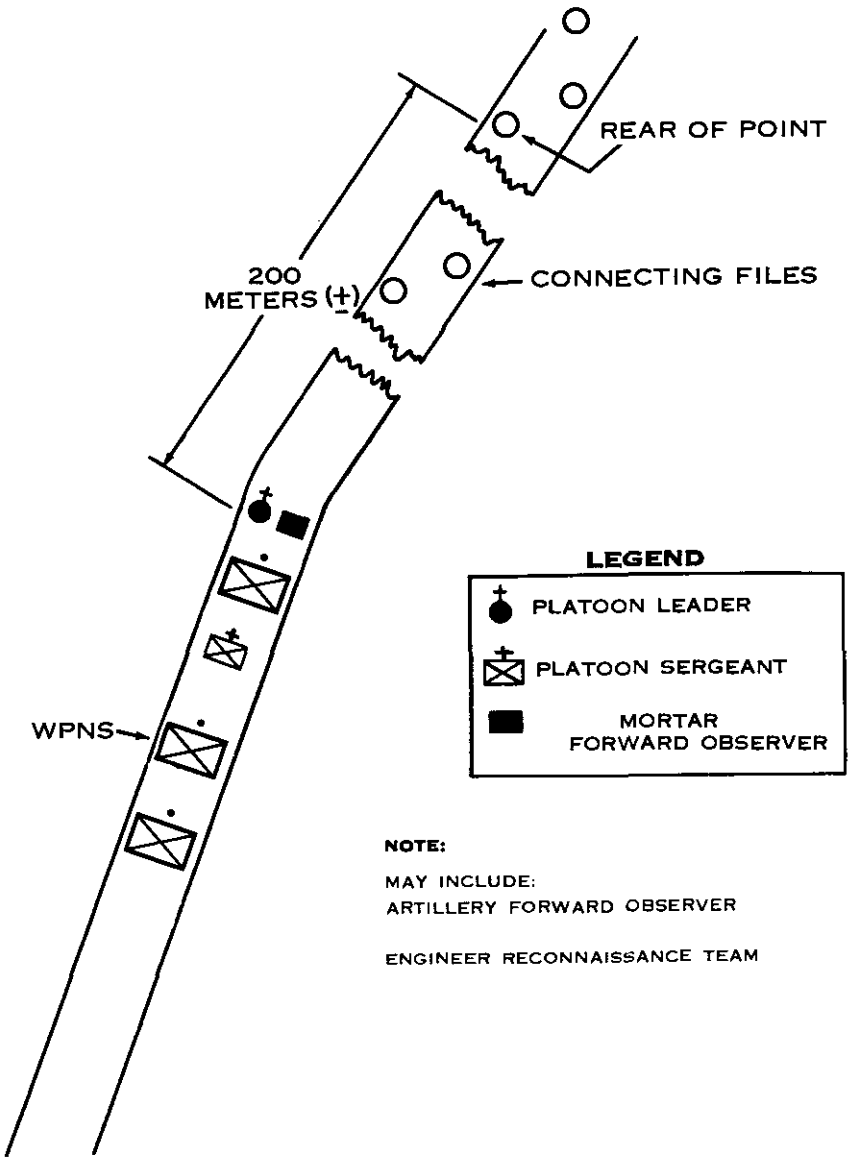

Figure 37. A type formation for the advance party (schematic).

vance party minus. The advance party commander sends forward one rifle squad to serve as the point. Distances between elements of the advance party indicated in figure 37 are given as a *guide only* and will vary according to the terrain and visibility. These distances are prescribed initially by the commander of the advance guard and should be great enough to allow each succeeding element to deploy without serious interference from the enemy when contact is made. However, the distances are not so great as to prevent each element from rapidly assisting the element to its front.

c. All elements of the advance party take maximum advantage of available cover and concealment during the advance, consistent with the prescribed rate of march. If the advance is along a road, movement may be made a short distance to either side of the road for maximum concealment from enemy ground and air observation. As a unit passes crosstrails or crossroads, automatic riflemen are posted to cover its passage.

d. The advance party minus normally moves in a column formation with the platoon headquarters leading, followed by a rifle squad, the weapons squad, and the remaining rifle squad. The column relies on observation for its flank security except when the terrain and visibility dictate the need for small security detachments to the flanks. When it becomes necessary to send out flank security, the advance party commander will normally send out two or three men to each flank. Attachments are placed in the column where they can best be utilized by the platoon. Connecting files from the advance party minus maintain contact with the point at all times. The platoon sergeant's position will be as directed by the platoon leader.

157. The Point

Along a road, the point moves in a squad column, fire teams abreast, with approximately ten paces between men (fig. 38). The leading two or three men are approximately 20 meters apart to give more security to the front. When moving cross-country, the point normally moves in a squad column, fire teams in column (fig. 39). Terrain permitting, the lead fire team will be well out in front for maximum security. Because of its small size, the point does not send out security to the flanks; it relies on dispersion and observation. When contact is imminent, or in places favoring ambush, the point will move by bounds, one fire team covering the movement of the other. The squad leader will position himself at all times where he can best control his squad.

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158. Conduct of the Advance Party

a. Advance party actions are characterized by rapid estimates of the situation and aggressive action. Unless otherwise ordered, elements of the advance party attack without hesitation to destroy the enemy. Upon encountering enemy resistance, the point returns fire immediately, deploys, and attacks. The advance party commander moves forward to a vantage point, makes a reconnaissance and an estimate of the situation, determines where to commit the advance party, and informs the company commander of the situation and his plan of action. If the point has been unsuccessful in reducing the enemy resistance, the advance party commander attacks with the entire advance party, preferably on the enemy flank, using all available firepower. When the enemy withdraws or is destroyed, the advance party reorganizes and resumes movement with all possible speed so the advance guard does not halt unnecessarily. If the advance party is unable to reduce the enemy resistance, it continues to fire on the enemy positions and reports the situation to the company commander.

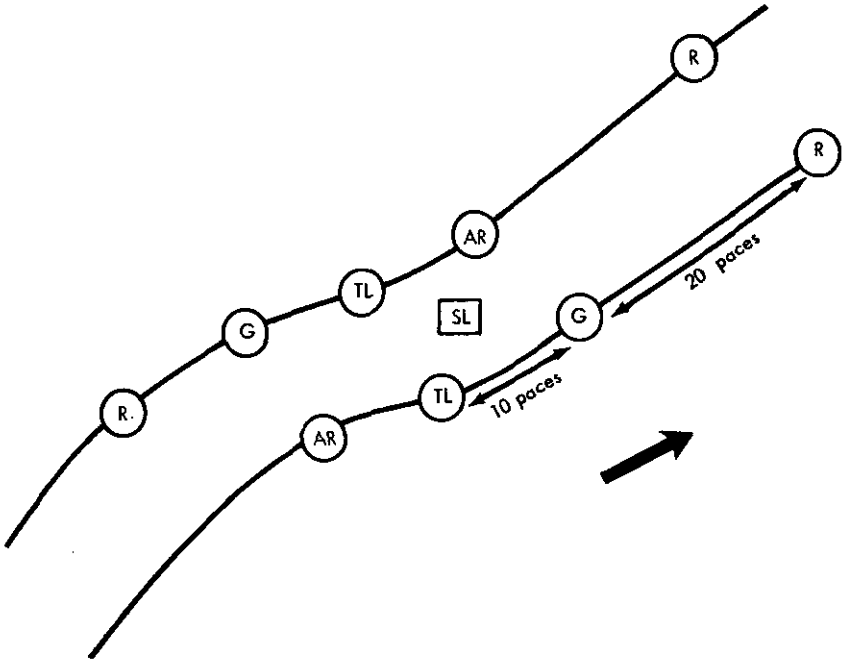

Figure 38. Point of the advance guard, fire teams abreast (schematic).

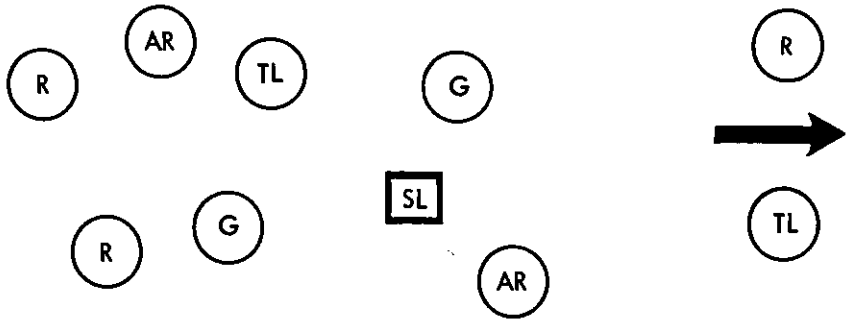

Figure 89. Point of the advance guard, fire teams in column (schematic).

b. If the battalion commander has tanks available, he will normally attach tanks to the advance guard company, though seldom will more than a platoon of tanks be attached to the advance guard for a dismounted movement to contact. These tanks will normally move with the advance party. All of the tanks may remain with the advance party minus or a portion of these tanks may move in support of the point and the remaining tanks move with the advance party minus. The tanks will normally move by bounds, either alternate or successive, based on the recommendations of the tank platoon leader.

c. If an engineer platoon is in direct support of the battalion, it may move with the advance guard: one squad with the advance party and the remainder of the platoon with the support. An element of the squad with the advance party may travel with the point, searching for mines and removing or marking them. They also remove all other obstacles within their capabilities. Removal of large obstructions may require additional engineer effort.

159. Rifle Platoon as Flank Guard for the Battalion

a. The mission of a flank guard platoon is to protect the main body from ground observation and surprise ground attack from the flank. In the event of an attack from the flank, this mission may require the platoon to attack, defend, or delay to give the main body time to pass from the area or time to deploy and maneuver.

b. The responsibility assigned to a flank guard platoon may be designated as a series of terrain features which block likely enemy approaches into the flank of the main body, or to screen the flank by moving along parallel routes.

c. The selection of blocking positions for the flank guard is coordinated by the flank guard commander with the protected unit commander. These blocking positions are on or near the route of the flank guard and are astride likely avenues of enemy approach. They are occupied on order or when enemy action forces their occupation.

d. The formation used by a flank guard is designed to meet enemy threats at any point on the protected flank. When the area of responsibility is extensive, the platoon consequently is widely dispersed. Mortar squads, tanks, antitank squads, and other elements may be attached to the platoon to provide additional support. When the platoon is less widely deployed, these weapons may be kept centrally located under company control ready to fire or move to meet enemy threats wherever they occur.

e. Movement of the flank guard is based upon movement of the protected unit. Successive blocking positions are occupied on order by successive or alternate bounds. The flank guard maintains close liaison with the protected unit by radio, patrols, light aircraft, and helicopters. When the main body halts, the flank guard occupies blocking positions which best protect the flank.

f. The nature of the flank guard mission—to furnish flank guard from the rear of the support to the rear of the rear guard—makes its effective accomplishment by a dismounted force extremely difficult. Because of the requirement for rapid movement, a flank guard platoon will usually be mounted or provided with helicopter transportation. If the terrain will not permit the use of the available type transportation, the flank guard platoon should be rotated periodically to reduce fatigue.

160. Rifle Platoon as Rear Guard for the Battalion

The rifle platoon may be assigned the mission of rear guard for the battalion. The rear guard prevents enemy interference with the main body by stopping or delaying enemy forces attacking the rear and by preventing enemy direct fire and, within their capability, ground-observed indirect fire from harassing the main body. The organization of the rear guard is similar to the advance party except that it is oriented toward the rear. Enemy action may force the rear guard to deploy in width so that effective defensive or delaying actions may be conducted.

161. Rifle Platoon as Part of the Advance Guard or Main Body

a. Platoons of the advance guard (support)or main body move in column formations in the order of anticipated use. Platoon

leaders march at the head of their platoons. To help control the formation and keep it from becoming unduly long, an approximate two-meter interval is maintained between men.

b. The company commander specifies the measures taken to provide flank security for the support. Normally, foot detachments from the support operate on the flanks and abreast of the support, maintaining contact by connecting files. Motorized security detachments from the support are used when possible to screen likely enemy approaches until the advance guard has passed. The size of these detachments may vary from that of a fire team to a reinforced squad.

c. Larger units are always responsible for sending connecting files forward to smaller units to maintain visual contact and relay information between units. The number of connecting files and the distance between them will vary, depending on terrain and visibility. Connecting files use arm-and-hand signals for communication.

Section III. TACTICAL MOTORIZED OR MECHANIZED MOVEMENTS

162. Rifle Platoon as a Motorized or Mechanized Advance Party

a. The organization of the company as a mounted advance guard is generally the same as an advance guard conducting a foot movement. The company commander sends out an advance party which precedes the support by a sufficient time interval (approximately five minutes) to permit deployment of the support without serious interference from the enemy once the advance party gains contact. This time interval varies depending on the enemy and the terrain and should not be so great as to prevent the support from assisting the advance party if necessary. An FO normally accompanies the advance party to facilitate calling for and adjusting fires.

b. The advance party may or may not send out a point, depending primarily on the enemy resistance anticipated and the availability of vehicles for this purpose. If a point is established, the use of two or more vehicles is desirable to permit movement by bounds. The point precedes the advance party by approximately two minutes. This time interval also varies.

c. The point and advance party minus normally do not deploy elements to the flanks but rely on observation and reconnaissance

by fire for security. Maximum security of movement is obtained when lead elements move by successive positions rather than by continuous movement. If friendly reconnaissance elements are not operating to the front, reconnaissance by fire may be used to provide additional security and information of the enemy.

d. When enemy resistance is encountered, the actions of the advance party minus and point are similar to those described for a dismounted operation. Close coordination and control are required to insure that elements of the column do not close on one another. When the column halts pending development of the situation to the front, vehicles are moved off the road to nearby concealment and local dismounted security is established.

e. In a mounted movement, a rifle platoon adequately reinforced with tanks may be designated as advance party. Because of their armor protection and firepower, tanks of the advance party normally lead though they are seldom separated from the advance party to act as point. Tanks and infantry must be positioned within the formation so as to permit close mutual support between them.

163. Rifle Platoon as a Mounted Flank Guard for the Battalion

a. The discussion of a dismounted flank guard in paragraph 159 is also applicable to a mounted flank guard; however, a mounted flank guard, because of its ability to rapidly move elements to a critical locality, has a greater flexibility than a dismounted flank guard and thus may be assigned a larger area to cover than would a dismounted force. When assigned a large area, the flank guard blocks the most critical approaches and screens areas containing less critical approaches. If a sizable enemy threat develops in an area being screened, elements of the flank guard are shifted to the critical area as required.

b. When the rate of movement of the main body will permit, the flank guard platoon occupies a series of blocking positions as described in paragraph 159. Such action provides strong flank security, since most elements of the flank guard are in position at all times. When the movement of the main body is rapid, continuous movement of the flank guard may be required. The distance between squads of the flank guard is based primarily on the area of responsibility, enemy threats on the flank, and the location of critical areas along the route.

164. Attack From March Column

The attack from march column differs from the coordinated attack in that there is no time for detailed reconnaissance and planning. Leading elements attack swiftly and in mass. An attack from march column demands speed and aggressiveness. The initiative must be seized and kept. Lacking specific orders, the platoon leader takes whatever action is required to carry out his assigned mission, and he keeps the company commander informed of his progress.

a. For speed and aggressiveness and to keep the initiative, elements are placed in the column in their expected order of employment. The tank and mechanized rifle platoons are distributed throughout the column in positions to lead the attack, maneuver to the flanks, and protect the column against enemy counterattacks. A tank platoon normally leads a mechanized rifle company which is an advance or flank guard for a larger unit.

b. The platoon leader places himself well forward in the column. He is accompanied by the mortar FO and the commanders of any attached units. By following the leading squad, the platoon leader is in a position to keep abreast of the situation, to make prompt decisions, and to issue orders that quickly implement his decisions.

c. The mortar section normally stays under company control but may be attached to a platoon on a separate mission when it is required to move beyond supporting distance. The mortars are placed in the column where they can give immediate fire support to the leading platoon.

165. Attack From March Column Against Light Resistance

a. Against light resistance, tanks lead, using their speed, firepower, and shock effect to confuse, overrun, and destroy the enemy. The platoon leaders of the leading tank and mechanized elements work together, each commanding his own platoon.

b. When initial contact is made, the lead elements deploy with the mechanized elements normally remaining mounted while the tank and carrier-mounted weapons take the enemy under fire. The company team commander, normally just behind the lead platoon, makes a quick estimate and decision, usually resulting in an immediate maneuver of both tank and mechanized elements. The base of fire in support of this maneuver should, whenever possible, consist of organic and supporting indirect fire weapons.

c. Tanks and mechanized elements conducting the maneuver in an attack from march column function together in the same man-

ner as in any offensive action, except that there is little time for planning and reconnaissance since speed and aggressiveness of attack are of prime importance. The maneuvering element moves mounted as far as possible. The leading elements either overcome the resistance, or develop the situation in order that the remainder of the company may be employed if necessary to overcome the resistance.

166. Attack From March Column Against a Roadblock

Roadlocks consisting of abatis, craters, or other obstacles emplaced by the enemy normally will be covered by small-arms and antitank fires. These obstacles usually will be located at defiles or other areas which severely restrict the maneuver of tracked vehicles. The most desirable action upon encountering a roadblock is to report its location and attempt to bypass it; however, bypassing will seldom be possible and reduction of the roadblock will generally require a dismounted infantry action. Tanks move into the best available positions from which they can deliver direct fire on the obstacle and its defenders. All available organic and supporting indirect fires are brought to bear on the forces defending the obstacle. Under cover of this direct and indirect fire, dismounted infantry move by covered routes to a position to assault the defenders of the obstacle. Upon the signal of the maneuvering infantry element, the supporting fires are lifted or shifted and the assault is launched. Because of the danger of antitank mines located forward of the obstacles, care must be taken not to move vehicles too close to the obstacle prior to its clearance. Attacks against roadblocks are primarily infantry missions with tanks supporting by fire. After elimination or withdrawal of the defender, the obstacle is cleared by infantrymen, supporting engineers, and, if necessary, the crews of tanks.

APPENDIX I

REFERENCES

AR 55–355	Military Traffic Management Regulation
AR 59–8	Air Transportation Space and Capability
AR 220–58	Organization and Training for Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Operations
AR 320–5	Dictionary of United States Army Terms
AR 320–50	Authorized Abbreviations and Brevity Codes
AR 345–5	Personnel Management, Personnel Records
AR 600–30	Character Guidance Program
AR 735–35	Supply Procedures for TOE Units, Organizations, and Non-TOE Activities
AR 750–5	Organization, Policies, and Responsibilities for Maintenance Operations
AR 750–8	Command Maintenance Management Inspections
FM 1–100	Army Aviation
FM 3–5	Chemical, Biological, and Radiological (CBR) Operations
FM 3–10	Chemical and Biological Weapons Employment
FM 3–12	Operational Aspects of Radiological Defense
FM 3–50	Chemical Smoke Generator Units and Smoke Operations
FM 5–1	Engineer Troop Organizations and Operations
FM 5–144	Engineer Shore Assault Units
FM 6–20–1	Field Artillery Tactics
FM 6–20–2	Field Artillery Techniques
FM 6–115	The Field Artillery Searchlight Battery
FM 7–11	Rifle Company, Infantry, Airborne, and Mechanized
FM 7–20	Infantry, Airborne Infantry, and Mechanized Infantry Battalions
FM 7–30	Infantry, Airborne, and Mechanized Division Brigades
FM 8–35	Transportation of the Sick and Wounded
FM 17–1	Armor Operations
FM 17–15	Tank Units, Platoon, Company, and Battalion
FM 20–32	Land Mine Warfare

FM 20–33	Ground Flame Operations
FM 20–60	Battlefield Illumination
FM 21–5	Military Training Management
FM 21–6	Techniques of Military Instruction
FM 21–10	Military Sanitation
FM 21–15	Care and Use of Individual Clothing and Equipment
FM 21–18	Foot Marches
FM 21–20	Physical Training
FM 21–26	Map Reading
FM 21–30	Military Symbols
FM 21–40	Small Unit Procedures in Chemical, Biological, and Radiological (CBR) Operations
FM 21–41	Soldier's Handbook for Chemical and Biological Operations and Nuclear Warfare
FM 21–48	Chemical, Biological, and Nuclear Training Exercises and Integrated Training
FM 21–50	Ranger Training and Ranger Operations
FM 21–60	Visual Signals
FM 21–75	Combat Training of the Individual Soldier and Patrolling
FM 21–76	Survival
FM 21–77	Evasion and Escape
FM 21–150	Combatives
FM 22–100	Military Leadership
FM 23–8	US Rifle, 7.62-mm, M14
FM 23–12	Technique of Fire of the Rifle Squad and Tactical Application
FM 23–30	Grenades and Pyrotechnics
FM 23–32	3.5-Inch Rocket Launcher
FM 23–35	Pistols and Revolvers
FM 23–65	Browning Machinegun Caliber .50 HB, M2
FM 23–67	Machinegun 7.62-mm, M60
FM 23–71	Rifle Marksmanship
FM 23–82	106-mm Recoilless Rifle, M40A1
FM 23–90	81-mm Mortar, M29
FM 24–18	Field Radio Techniques
FM 24–20	Field Wire and Field Cable Techniques
FM 27–10	The Law of Land Warfare
FM 30–5	Combat Intelligence
FM 30–30	Aircraft Recognition Manual
FM 31–10	Barriers and Denial Operations
FM 31–15	Operations Against Irregular Forces
FM 31–16	Counterguerrilla Operations

FM 31–22	US Army Counterinsurgency Forces
FM 31–25	Desert Operations
FM 31–30	Jungle Operations
FM 31–50	Combat in Fortified and Built-up Areas
FM 31–60	River-Crossing Operations
FM 31–70	Basic Cold Weather Manual
FM 31–71	Northern Operations
FM 31–72	Mountain Operations
FM 44–2	Light Antiaircraft Artillery (Automatic Weapons)
FM 57–10	Army Forces in Joint Airborne Operations
FM 57–35	Airmobile Operations
FM 57–100	The Airborne Division
FM 61–100	The Division
FM 100–5	Field Service Regulations; Operations
FM 101–31–1	Staff Officers' Field Manual: Nuclear Weapons Employment
DA Pam 108–1	Index of Army Motion Pictures, Film Strips, Slides and Phono-Recordings
DA Pam 310-series	Military Publications Indexes (as applicable)
TC 5–9	Near Infrared Night Vision and Detection Equipment and its Application
TC 7–3	Antipersonnel Weapons (CLAYMORE) M18 and M18A1
TC 23–3	40-mm Grenade Launcher, M79
TC 23–5	90-mm Recoilless Rifle M67
TC 23–7	Rocket, High Explosive, 66-mm Antitank, M72
TC 23–9	Techniques of Fire and Tactics, Rifle Squad
TM 3–210	Fallout Prediction
TM 3–220	Chemical, Biological, and Radiological (CBR) Decontamination
TM 57–210	Air Movement of Troops and Equipment
TM 57–220	Technical Training of Parachutists
JCS Pub 1	Dictionary of United States Military Terms for Joint Usage
STANAG 2047	Emergency Warning of Hazard or Attack (see FM 21–40)
STANAG 2088	Battlefield Illumination (see FM 6–115 and 20–60)

APPENDIX II
COMBAT FORMATIONS

Section I. GENERAL

1. General

Platoon and squad combat formations are groupings of individuals and units for efficient tactical employment. Combat formations have the following characteristics in varying degrees: security, control, flexibility, and speed of reaction. The factors influencing the leader's decision as to the selection of any particular formation are the mission, terrain, weather and visibility, situation, desired rate of movement, and the degree of flexibility desired. This appendix is a guide for the infantry small-unit leader in dismounted, mounted, and integrated combat formations. It covers the various types of platoon and squad formations and prescribes a uniform method of conducting drill in these formations over open ground and varied terrain. Figure 40 gives the symbols used in this appendix.

2. Relationship of Dismounted and Mounted Formations

The formation for a mechanized rifle platoon in carriers closely approximates dismounted platoon formations. When going from a mounted to a dismounted formation, the mounted formation should be the same as the anticipated dismounted formation to avoid delay and unnecessary movement. Similarly, when going from a dismounted to a mounted formation, the carriers should be brought forward to the squads in the same formation that the platoon is using on the ground. Tactical considerations and terrain, of course, may prevent the application of this technique.

3. Training

Training in dismounted formations should be conducted initially on open terrain similar to a parade ground; then on varied terrain when individuals and units become proficient in assuming these formations; and finally, in integrated mounted and dismounted formations with tank units. On completing this training, units

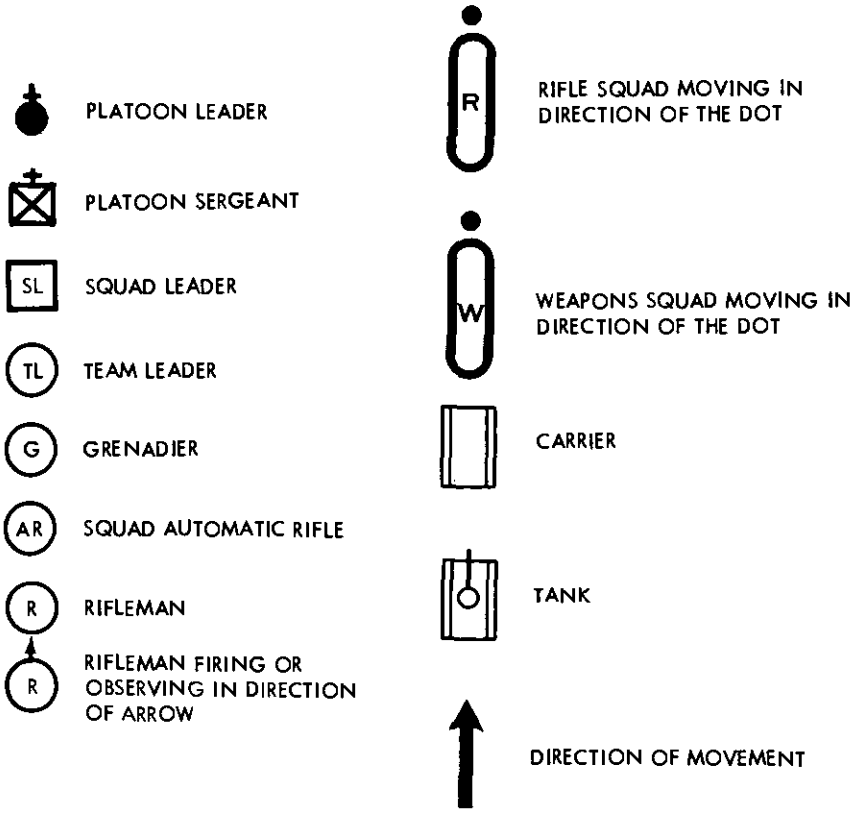

Figure 40. Symbols used to illustrate combat formations (app. II) and battle drill (app. III).

progress to tactical exercises involving Aggressor forces, either actual or simulated.

Section II. DISMOUNTED SQUAD FORMATIONS

4. General

a. The rifle squad is organized for combat into two fire teams, ALFA and BRAVO (fig. 41). In this discussion, the ALFA team consists of four men; the BRAVO team, five men.

b. The rifle squad combat formations are the squad column, squad file, and squad line. The squad column is the basic formation from which the others are derived. When the weapons squad moves as part of the platoon, it usually moves in column formation.

c. When the squad moves as part of the platoon, the initial squad combat formation may be selected by the platoon leader. The squad leader may alter his formation to meet changes in the situation and terrain.

d. The squad leader places himself within the formation where he can best exercise control. The fire team leaders place themselves in the designated formations as directed by the squad leader. Other members of the squad take their appropriate positions based on the location of the fire team leader, or as he directs.

e. The squad leader controls the squad by oral commands, audible battlefield signals, arm-and-hand signals, and through his fire team leaders.

f. The squad maintains observation to the front, rear, and flanks. While moving or halted, squad members are responsible for observing in definite directions.

g. The distances between men within a formation vary, depending on visibility and terrain. While maximum dispersion is desirable to reduce vulnerability to direct and indirect fires, effective control must be maintained. When visibility is good, formations are more dispersed. During conditions of reduced visibility or in close terrain, distances between men are reduced.

h. In selecting or modifying squad formations to conform to a particular situation, or because of reduced strength, the following fundamentals generally apply:

(1) Fire team integrity is maintained.
(2) The fire team leader is located so as to facilitate control of the fire team, especially in its tactical employment.
(3) The squad automatic weapons are located within each fire team to provide fire to the front, rear, and flanks of the squad.
(4) When changing from one combat formation to another, the automatic weapons should be required to move the shortest distance.

i. Changing from one combat formation to another is accomplished without halting the squad, following the above as a guide.

5. Squad File

The squad file (fig. 41) is used for moving over terrain which is so restrictive that the squad cannot adopt a column formation, or when visibility is so reduced that control becomes extremely difficult. Deployment of the squad to the front or rear from this formation is not as easy as from the squad column.

1. LIMITED FIREPOWER TO FRONT AND REAR.
2. MAXIMUM FIREPOWER TO FLANKS.
3. FACILITATES CONTROL AND MOVEMENT.
4. COMMONLY USED IN DENSE TERRAIN AND REDUCED VISIBILITY WHEN SPEED AND CONTROL ARE ESSENTIAL.

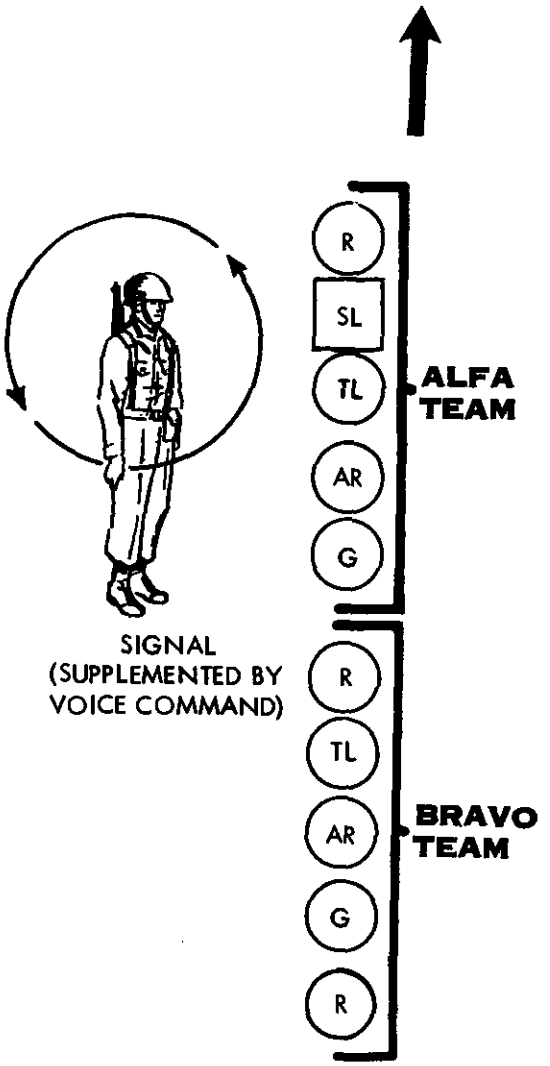

Figure 41. Squad file, ALFA leading.

6. Squad Column

The squad column is the primary formation for movement. Squads normally use this formation as part of the platoon. It provides good dispersion laterally and in depth without sacrificing control. In this formation, the squad can deliver a large volume of fire to the flanks but only a limited amount to the front. The squad column is a flexible formation which facilitates battle drill.

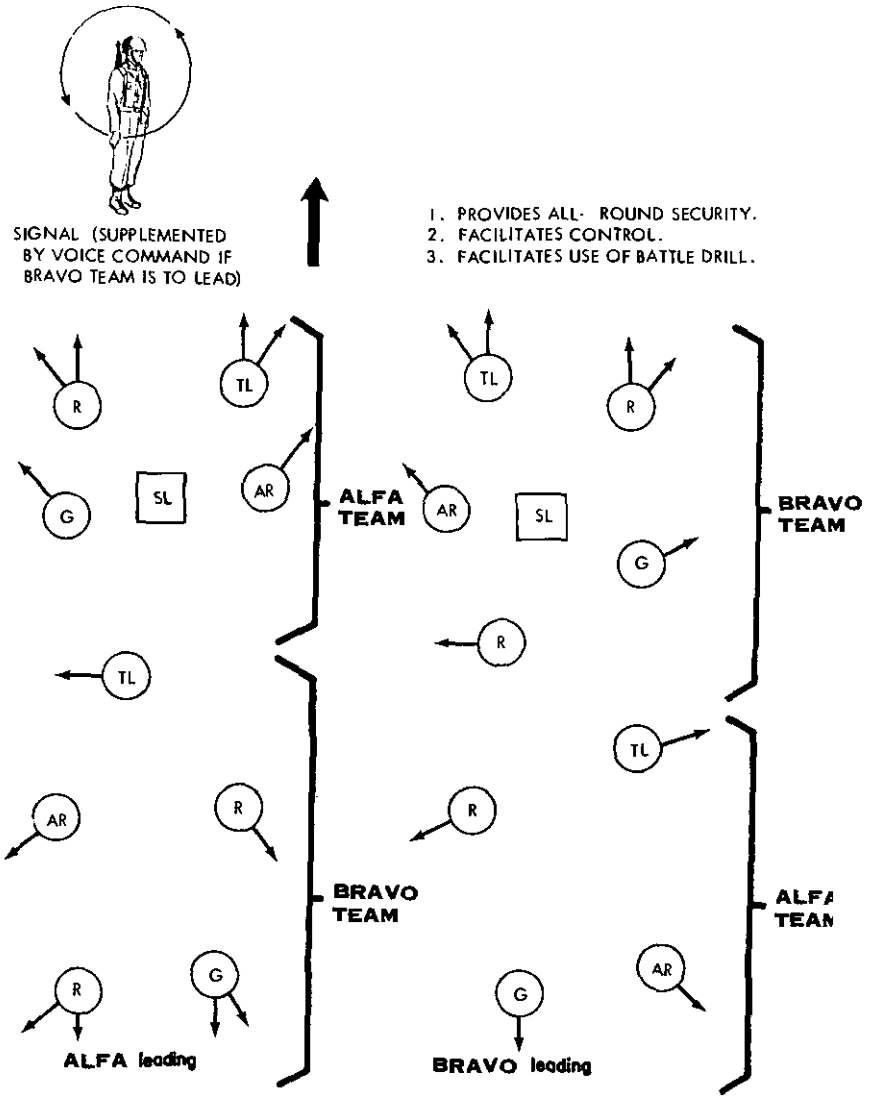

Figure 42. Squad column, fire teams in column.

Its two variations are fire teams in column and fire teams abreast. Both of these may be modified for greater dispersion, all-round security, and increased firepower to the front.

a. Squad Column with Fire Teams in Column. This variation (fig. 42) is used most frequently in areas where maneuver of the rear (trailing) fire team is unrestricted. The teams may be closed, or the rear team may follow at a specified distance. The squad column may be modified by the squad leader as necessary to conform to the terrain and to provide a greater capability to deliver fire immediately to either the front or rear. Such modification consists of the squad leader instructing those men in the center of the formation to move farther to the flanks. This variation is used most frequently when the squad is separated from other elements of the platoon.

b. Squad Column with Fire Teams Abreast. This variation (fig. 43) of the squad column is for movement in areas where maneuver of the fire teams is restricted. It is used most frequently when the squad is moving along a road or trail. Here, the enemy may have the road covered by fire which will frequently prevent troops from moving across the road once the squad is under fire. Consequently, fire teams are placed abreast to facilitate their deployment on each side of the road without having anyone cross it. This formation may also be modified.

7. Squad Line

The squad line (fig. 44) is the basic assault formation of the squad and provides for the delivery of maximum fires to the front. Specific locations of men within the formation may be changed by the squad leader as desired. In the assault, the squad leader designates a base fire team, usually the team that has been leading.

Section III. DISMOUNTED PLATOON FORMATIONS

8. General

a. The company commander ordinarily decides on the company formation and allows the platoon leader to select the formation for his platoon.

b. In the platoon formation, as in the squad, each squad within the platoon observes to its front, flanks, and rear. Squad leaders observe and control their squads, staying within sight of the platoon leader if possible. The leader of the last squad is responsible for keeping the formation closed. The platoon leader goes where

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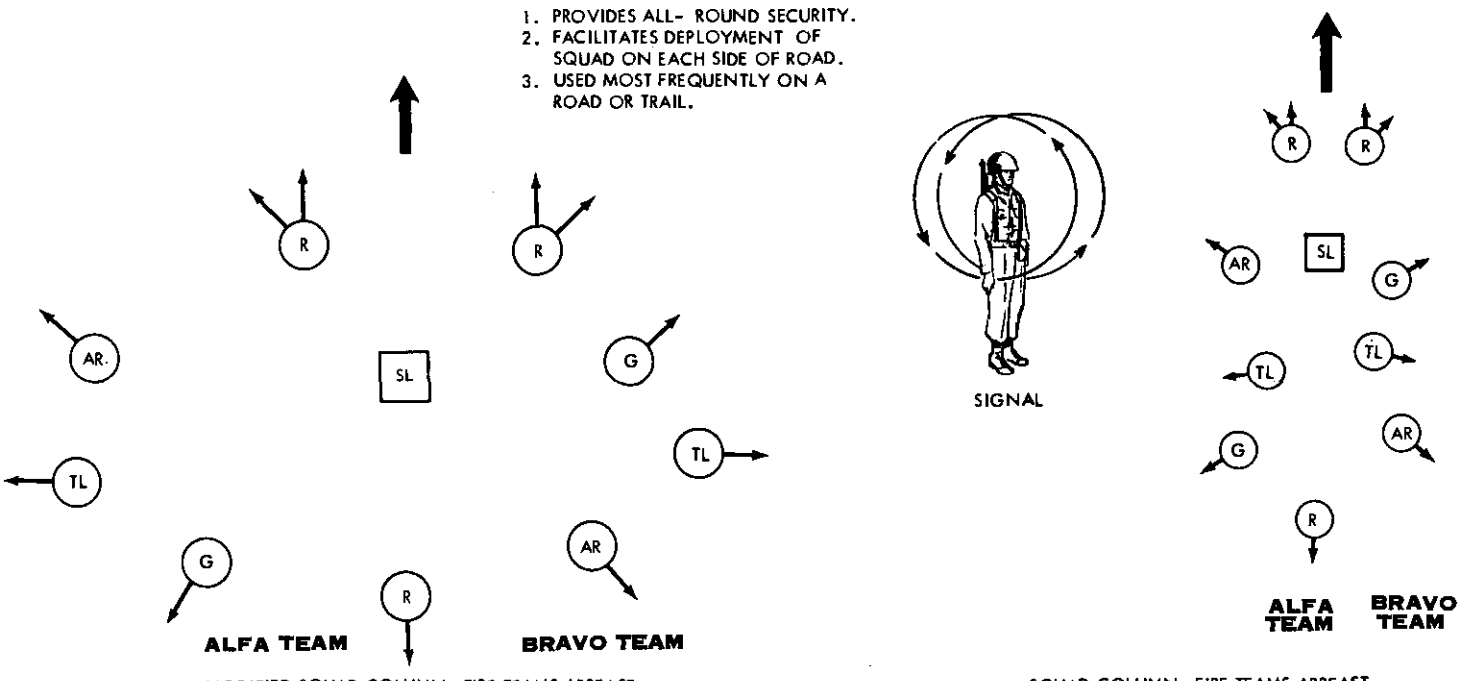


Figure 43. Squad column, fire teams abreast.

he can best control the platoon. The platoon sergeant assists him in the control of the platoon.

c. Unless otherwise specified, the base squad for the platoon formation is determined as follows: when three squads are abreast, the center rifle squad is the base squad; in all other formations, the leading or right leading rifle squad is the base squad. Change of base squad takes place upon completion of formation change. The squad formations within the platoon formation may vary. The platoon leader places the weapons squad where it can best accomplish its mission of close fire support and antitank protection.

d. The distance between men and squads may be increased or decreased and the men staggered right or left according to the situation and terrain.

9. Formations

The usual formations employed by the platoon leader are the column (fig. 45), wedge (fig. 46), vee (fig. 47), echelon (fig. 48), and line (fig. 49).

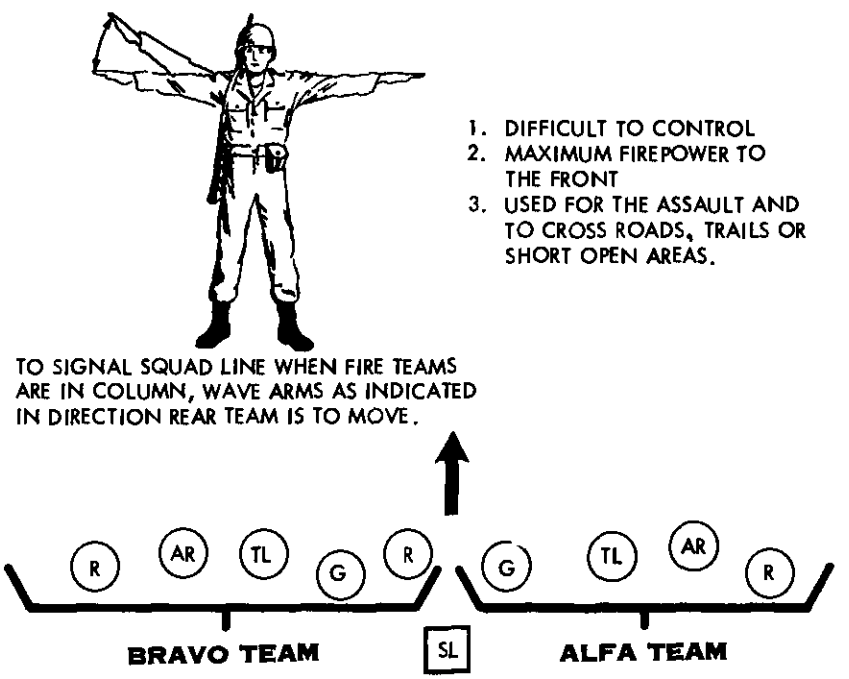


Figure 44. Squad line.

10. Formation Changes

The platoon will constantly change formations (fig. 50) to take advantage of the terrain and to accomplish the assigned mission. Formation changes should be accomplished without halting. The platoon leader will control formation changes by arm-and-hand signals and the designation of the base squad.

Section IV. MOUNTED FORMATIONS

11. General

a. Mounted platoon combat formations are used during the movement from the attack position to the LD and beyond. The formations are flexible. Formations for the mechanized rifle platoon are similar to those for the tank platoon. The type of terrain and available cover and concealment govern the position of each vehicle in the formation.

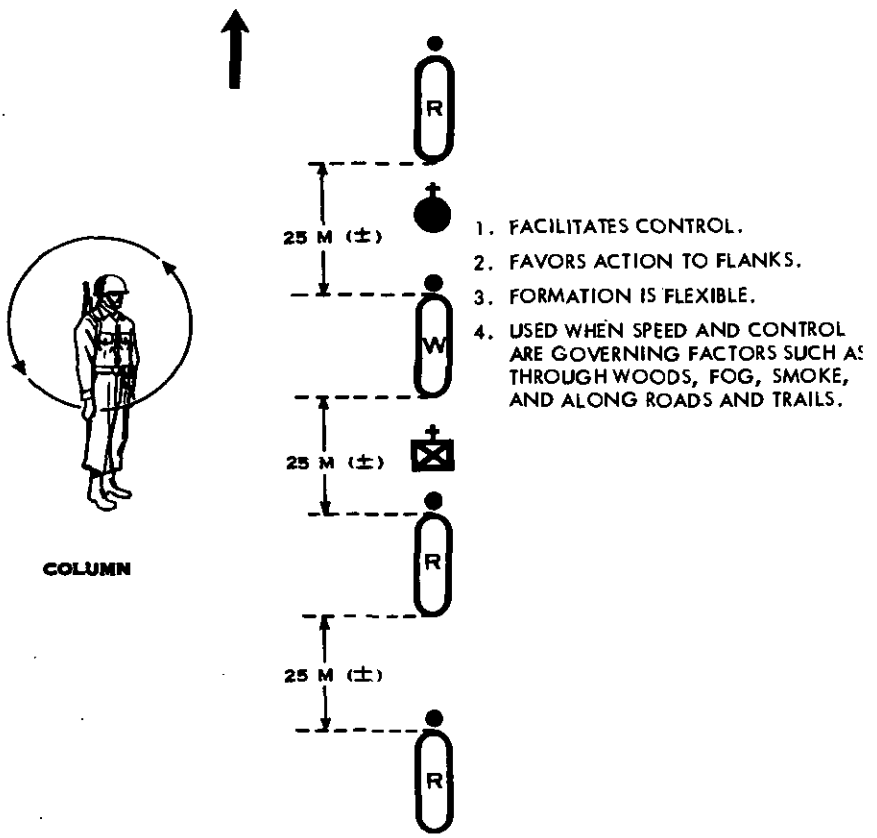
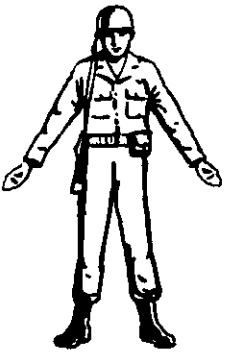


Figure 45. Platoon column.



WEDGE

1. FACILITATES CONTROL.
2. PROVIDES ALL- ROUND SECURITY.
3. FORMATION IS FLEXIBLE.
4. USED WHEN ENEMY SITUATION IS OBSCURE AND TERRAIN AND VISIBILITY REQUIRE DISPERSION.

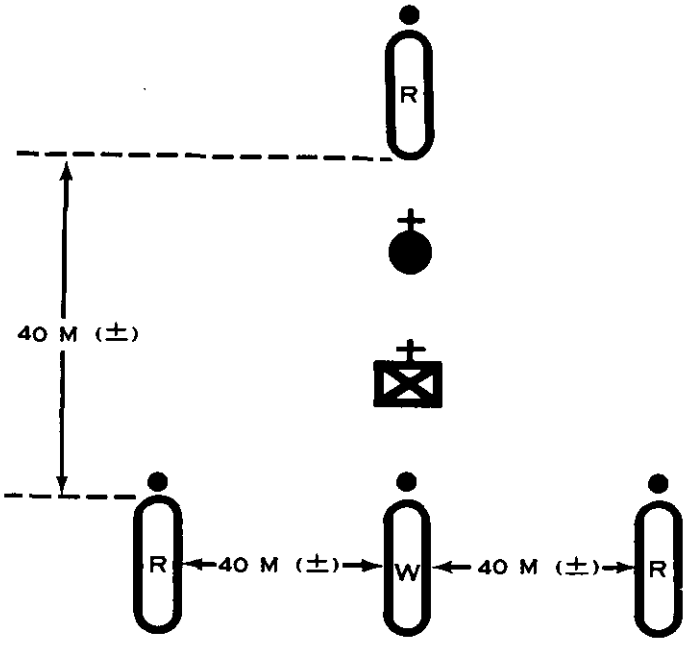
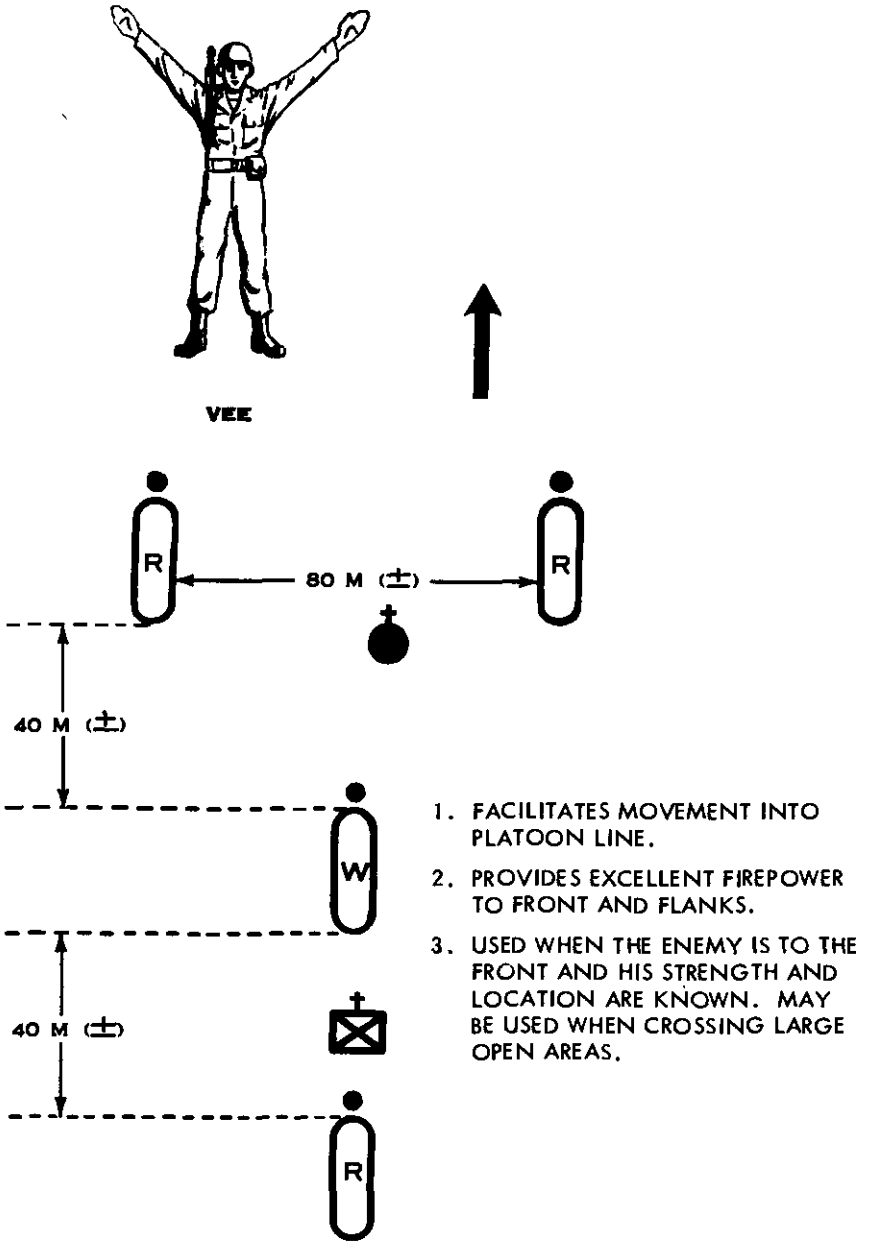


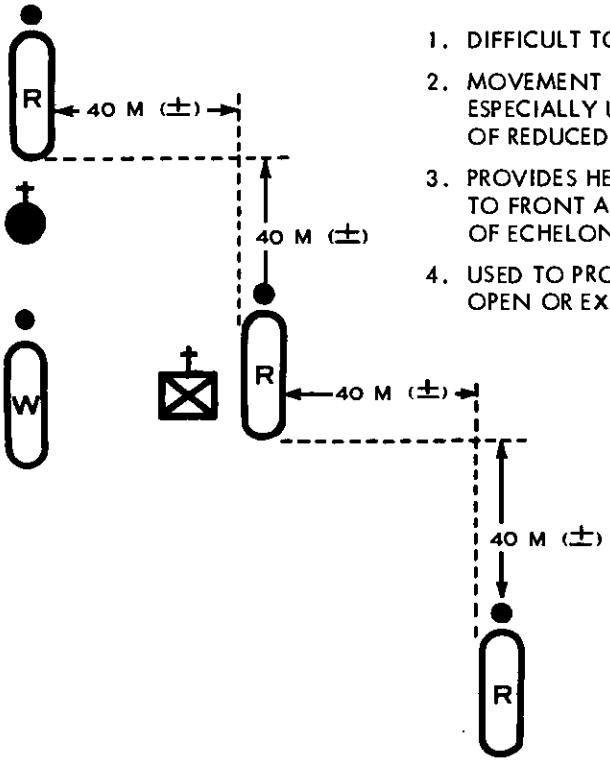
Figure 46. Platoon wedge.



1. FACILITATES MOVEMENT INTO PLATOON LINE.
2. PROVIDES EXCELLENT FIREPOWER TO FRONT AND FLANKS.
3. USED WHEN THE ENEMY IS TO THE FRONT AND HIS STRENGTH AND LOCATION ARE KNOWN. MAY BE USED WHEN CROSSING LARGE OPEN AREAS.

Figure 47. Platoon vee.

ECHELON RIGHT (LEFT)
(LOWER ARM EXTENDED ON SIDE TOWARD WHICH THE UNIT IS TO BE ECHELONED.)



1. DIFFICULT TO CONTROL.
2. MOVEMENT IS SLOW, ESPECIALLY UNDER CONDITIONS OF REDUCED VISIBILITY.
3. PROVIDES HEAVY FIREPOWER TO FRONT AND IN DIRECTION OF ECHELON.
4. USED TO PROTECT AN OPEN OR EXPOSED FLANK.

Figure 48. Platoon echelon.

b. The platoon leader moves where he can best control his platoon. This normally places him in the lead vehicle.

c. In selecting the formation to accomplish his mission, the platoon leader considers the enemy, control, security, firepower, terrain, and visibility. As the platoon advances, he may change formations to fit the situation. During movement in formation, platoon security is achieved by giving each carrier commander a definite area or sector of observation. When an attack is expected from a known direction, formations are chosen that permit rapid concentration of fire in the direction of known enemy locations.

d. The weapons squad vehicle is placed in a central location to provide protection and ease of control. The position of the weapons squad may be changed to conform to any and all situations.

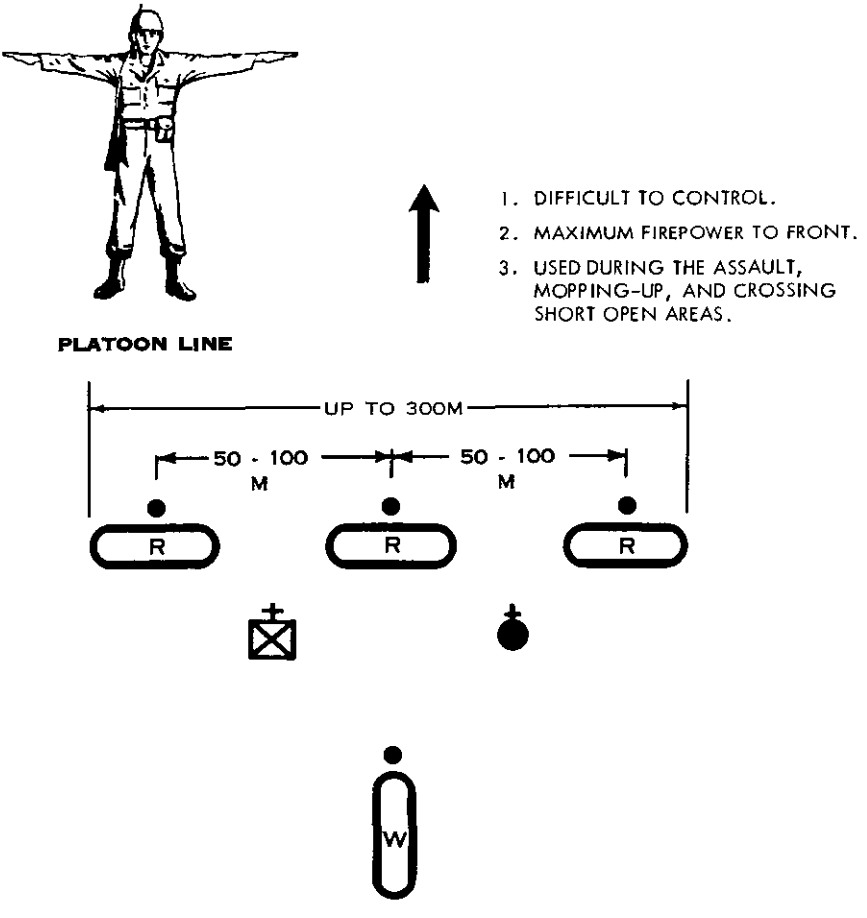


Figure 49. Platoon line.

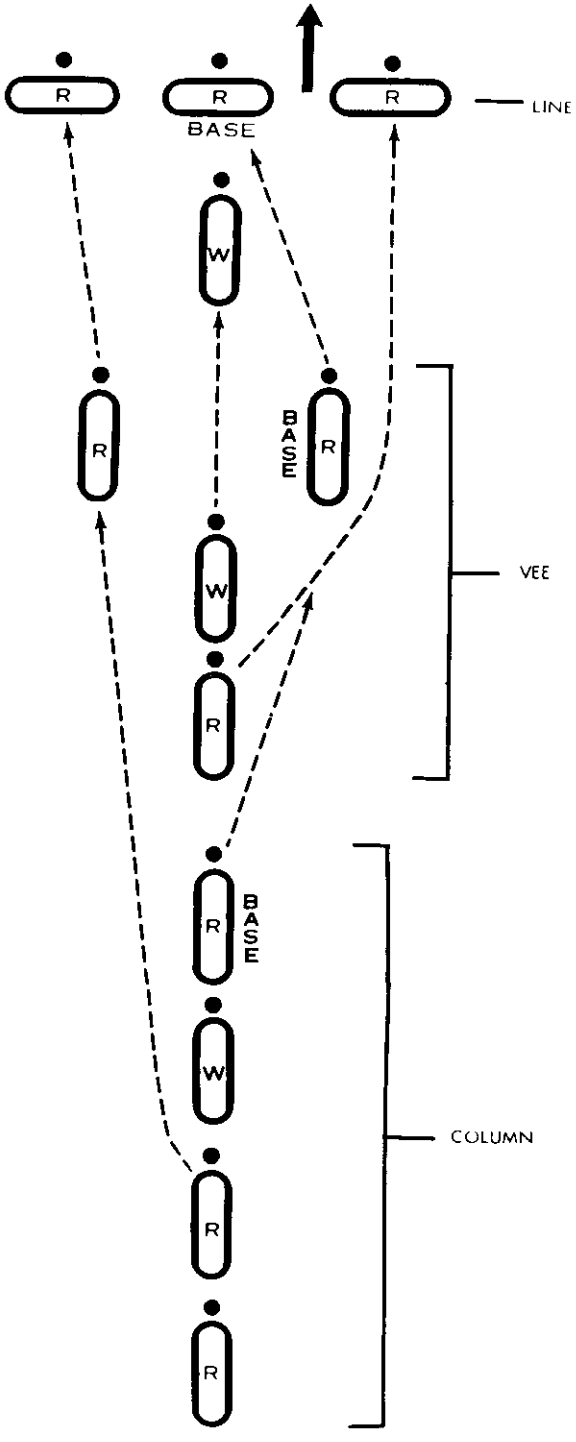


Figure 50. Dismounted platoon formation changes.

12. Formations

The line, column, echelon, and wedge formations shown in figure 51 are the normal formations employed by the mounted platoon. The vee formation is not shown because it is seldom used in conjunction with mounted formations.

13. Mounted Platoon Formation Changes

Changing from one mounted formation to another must be accomplished smoothly, in minimum time, and without loss of momentum. Techniques for changing from one mounted formation to another are shown in figure 52. The base vehicle is the platoon leader's vehicle in formation changes.

Section V. FORMATIONS WITH TANKS

14. General

The mechanized rifle platoon normally operates with tanks as a part of a team. The infantry and airborne rifle platoons will frequently operate with tanks in the conduct of offensive action. This section is concerned with both mounted and dismounted formations with tanks. When operating with tanks, the infantry leader adopts the combat formation consistent with the formation of the tanks and the situation. This coordination takes place in the planning phase of the attack. He must anticipate changes in tank formations and adopt the formation suitable to the situation. The infantry must not interfere with the maneuver of the tanks. Intermingling of carriers and tanks is avoided.

15. Squad Formations With Tanks

a. When operating with tanks, the squad leader may adopt squad column formations (fig. 53) to take advantage of the tank firepower and the protection of the tank itself. For example, the squad leader (his squad being part of a rifle platoon) may adopt the squad column until moving into the line formation for the assault phase of the attack.

b. Modified squad column formations (fig. 54) are especially useful when enemy tank-hunter teams are active and the tanks with dismounted infantry are moving through wooded areas, high grass, or rough terrain.

c. When infantry is operating with tanks in the assault phase of the attack, the squad line (fig. 55) is normally adopted. It con-

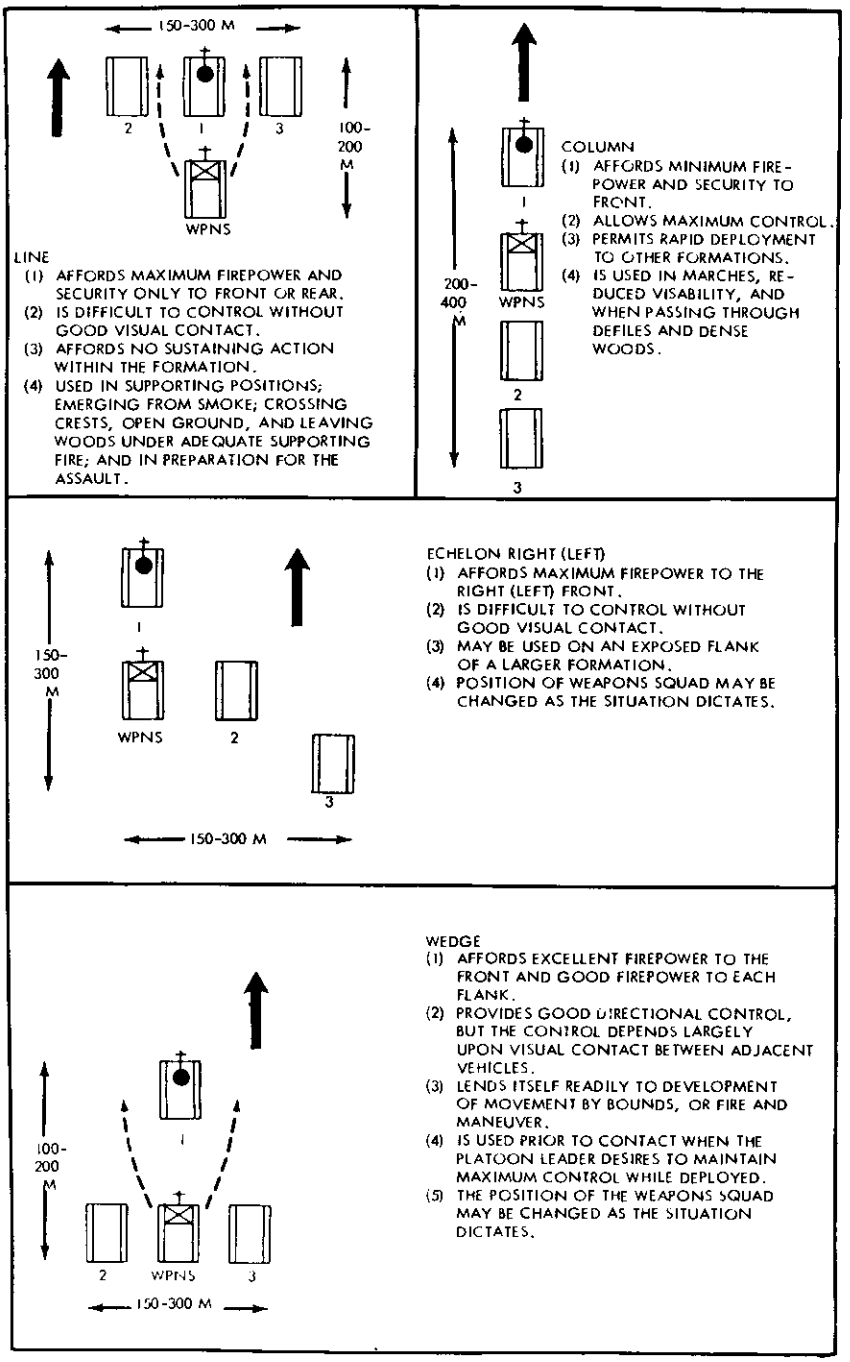


Figure 51. Mounted platoon formations.

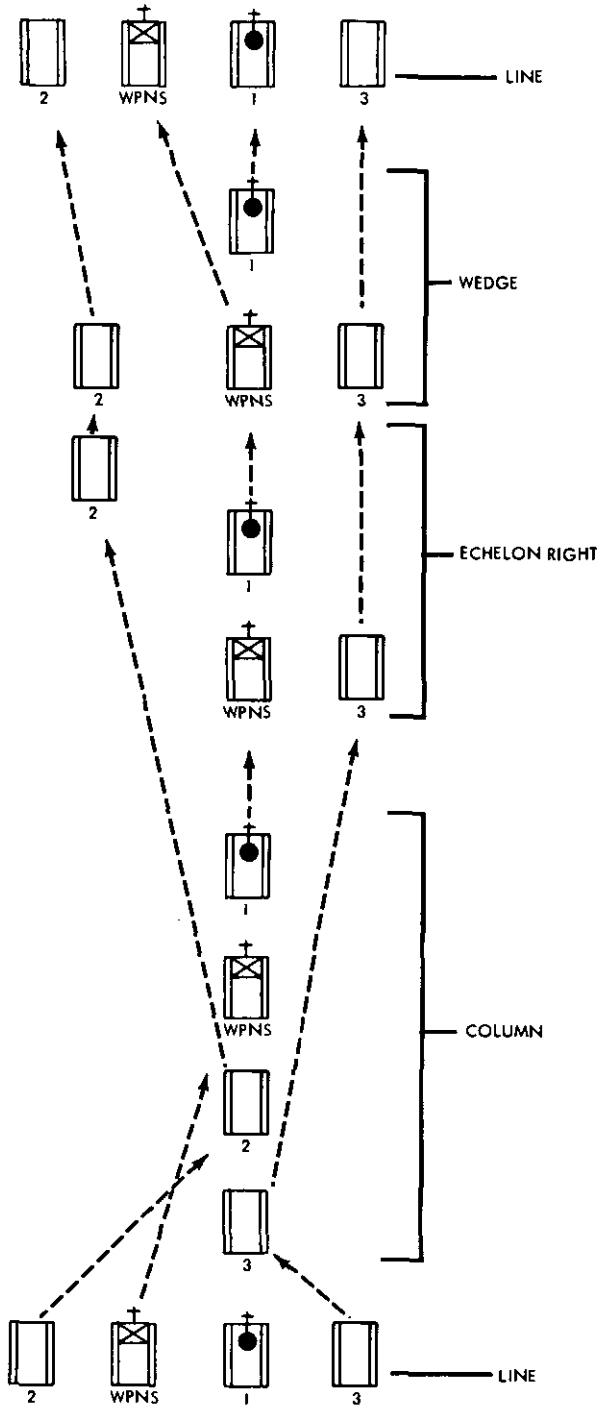


Figure 52. Mounted platoon formation changes.

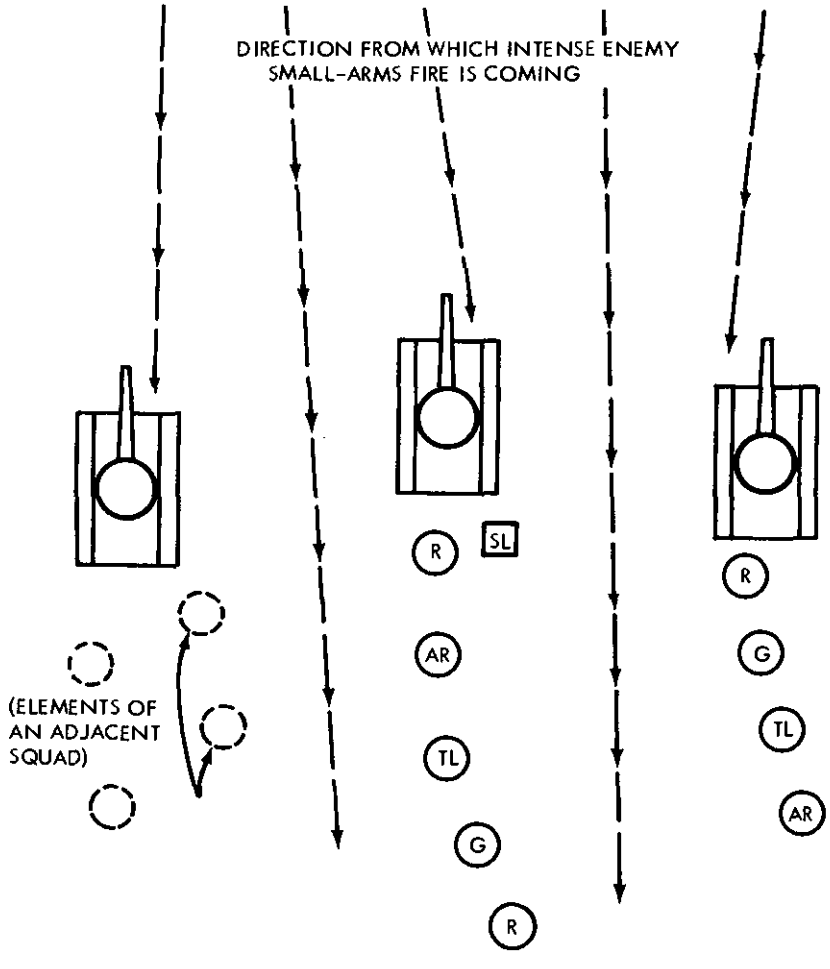


Figure 53. Squad column in formation with tanks.

forms to the basic assault formation employed by the tanks (the line), and it enables dismounted infantry to move in an integrated formation with tanks.

d. A squad advancing in a direction generally parallel to a nearby advancing tank platoon which is echeloned to counter an enemy threat may adopt a line formation (fig. 56) to take advantage of the physical protection which the tanks provide.

16. Dismounted Platoon Formations With Tanks

a. When operating with tanks, the platoon leader may adopt the column formation (fig. 57) to take advantage of the firepower of the tanks and the protection of the tanks themselves.

b. The wedge formation (fig. 58) is frequently employed by tank units. The platoon leader may employ the wedge formation for the dismounted rifle platoon for better coordination.

c. The echelon (fig. 59) may be employed to protect the flanks of tank units and for better protection for the dismounted platoon.

d. The platoon line formation (fig. 60) is employed in conjunction with tanks during assault.

17. Mounted Platoon Formations With Tanks

The formations used by the mechanized rifle platoon depend on the employment technique adopted for the tanks and infantry. When the mounted rifle platoon follows the tanks by bounds, the platoon will use the formation best suited for the accomplishment of the mission. The mounted platoon leader keeps uppermost in his mind the employment of his unit when it dismounts, the formation at the dismount area conforming to his plan of attack. Figure 61 depicts the normal mounted formations used with tanks. The vee formation is rarely used in integrated formations.

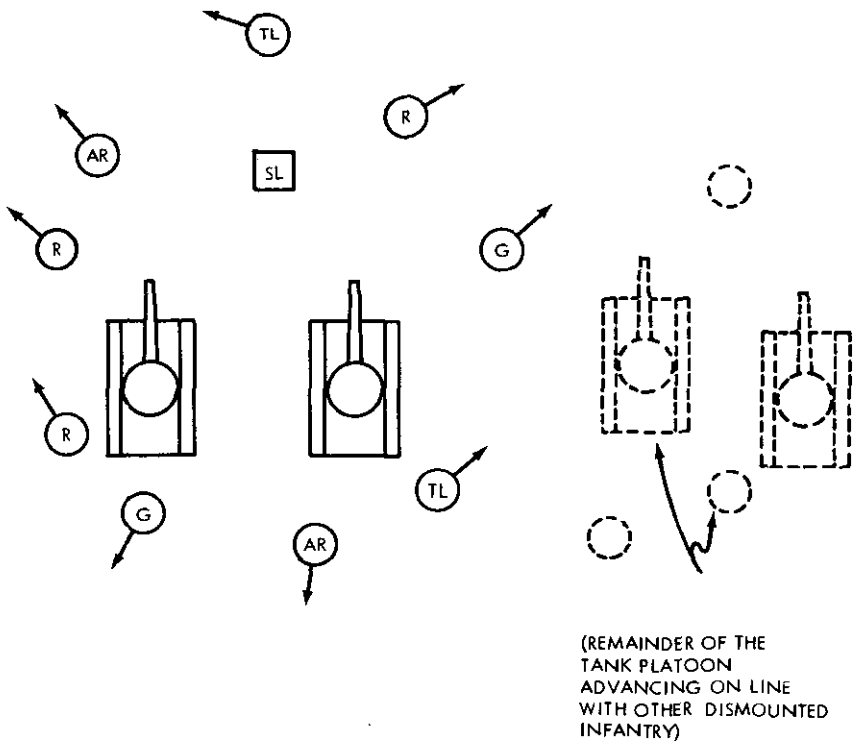


Figure 54. Modified squad column formation (fire teams in column).

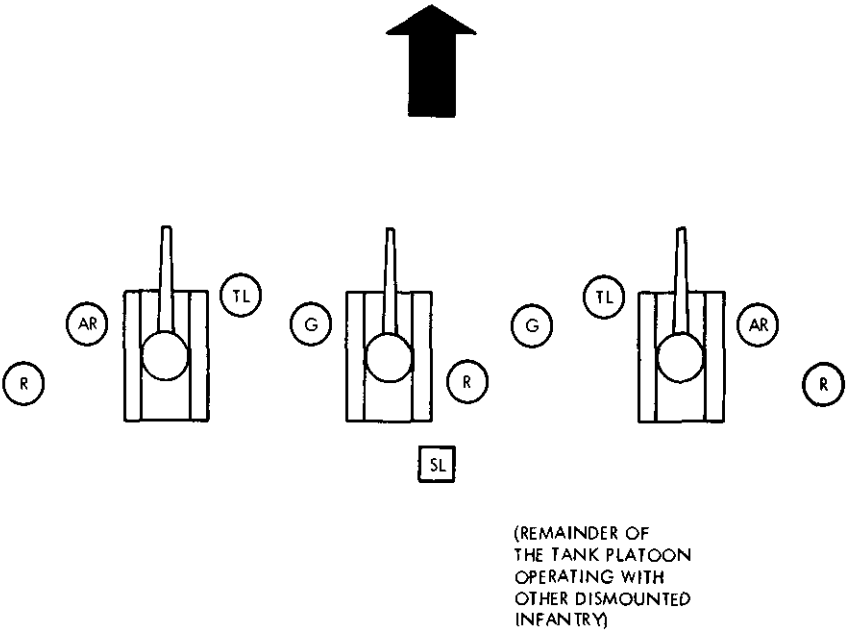


Figure 55. Squad in line formation with a portion of a tank platoon in line.

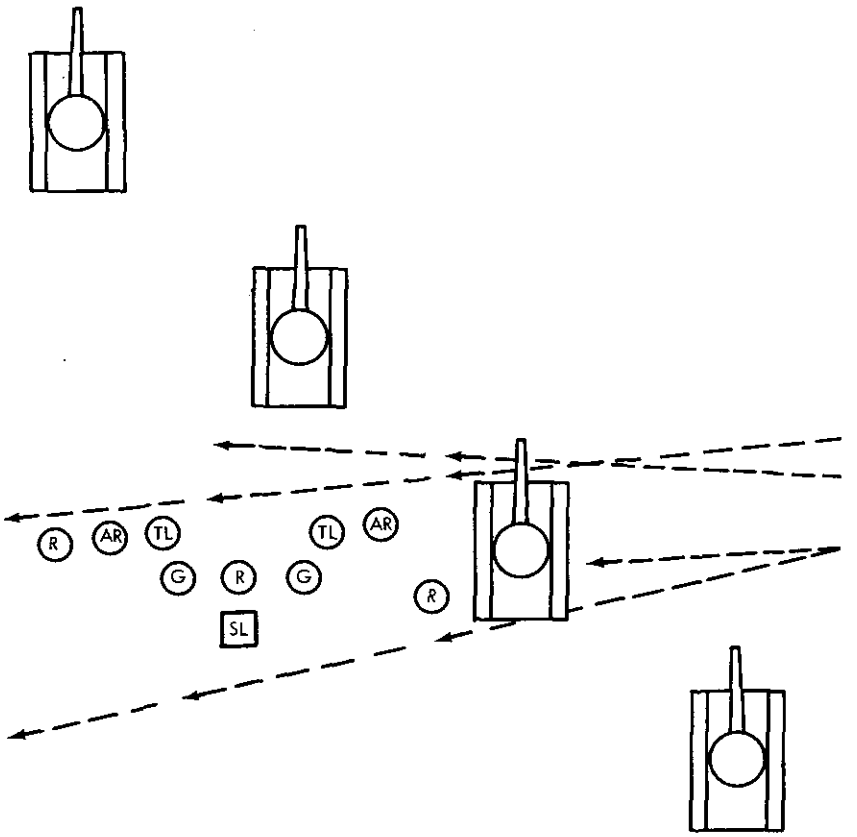


Figure 56. Line formation adopted to take advantage of a tank platoon echeloned to counter an enemy threat from the right front.

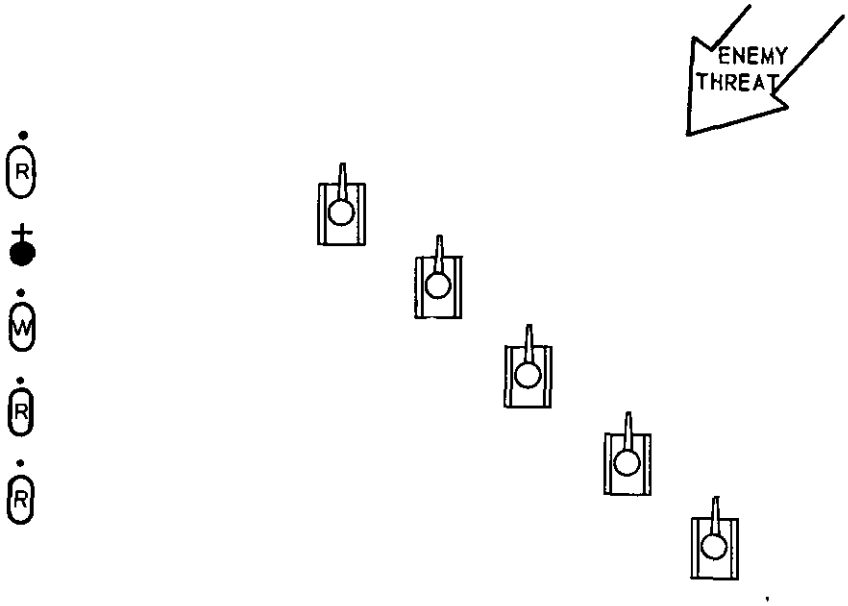


Figure 57. Column formation because of the echelon of tanks to the flank (schematic).

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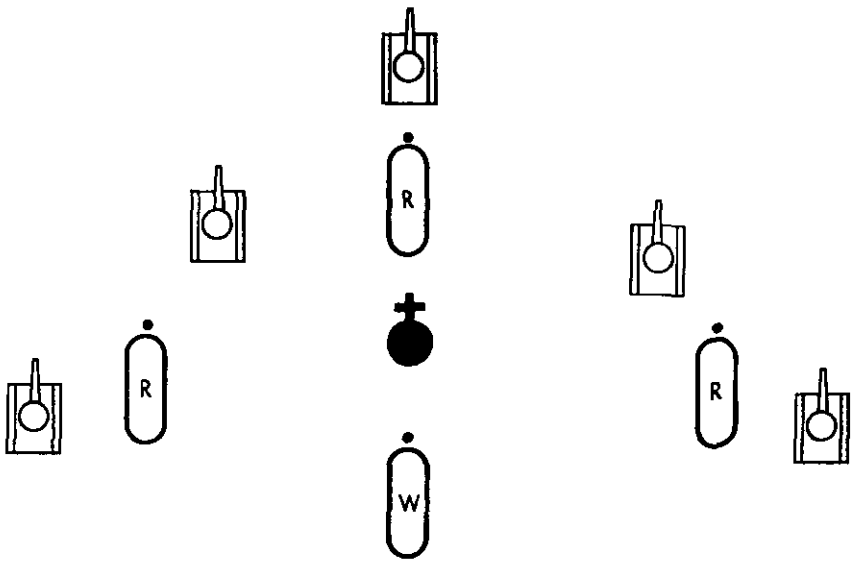


Figure 58. Tank platoon moving with a dismounted rifle platoon in a wedge formation (schematic).

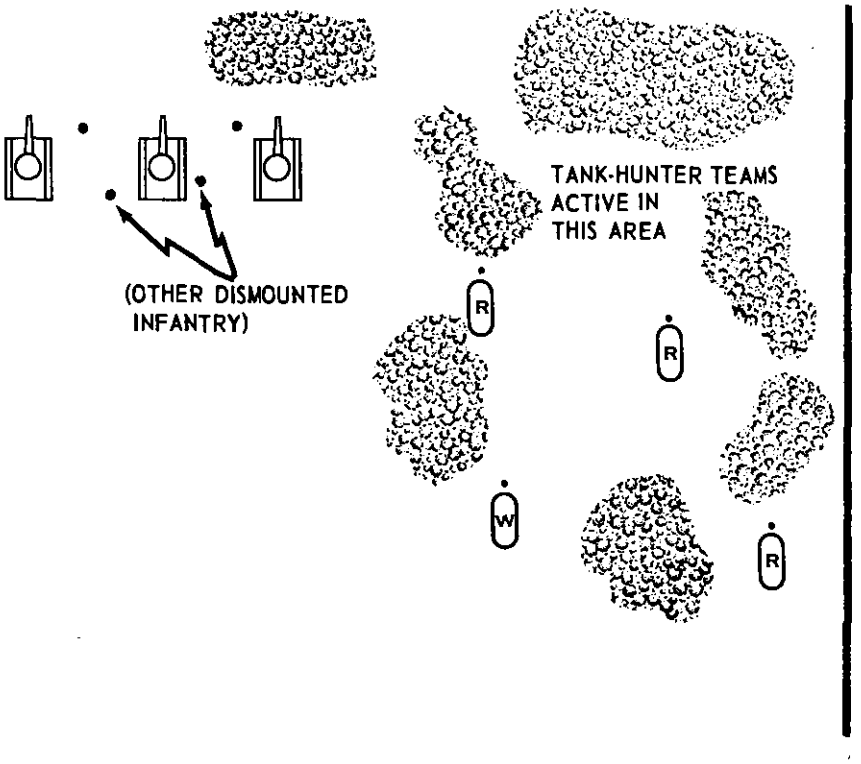


Figure 59. Platoon echelon adopted to provide protection for tanks (schematic).

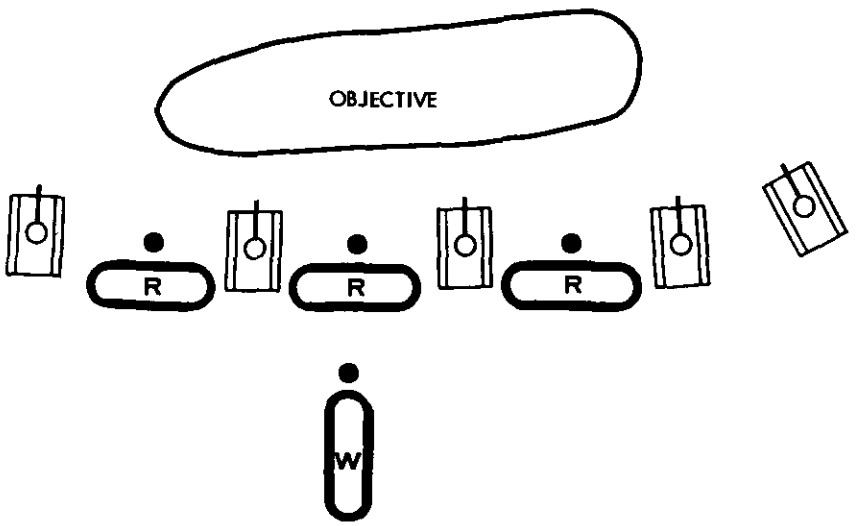


Figure 60. Dismounted rifle platoon and tank platoon in line formation for the assault (schematic).

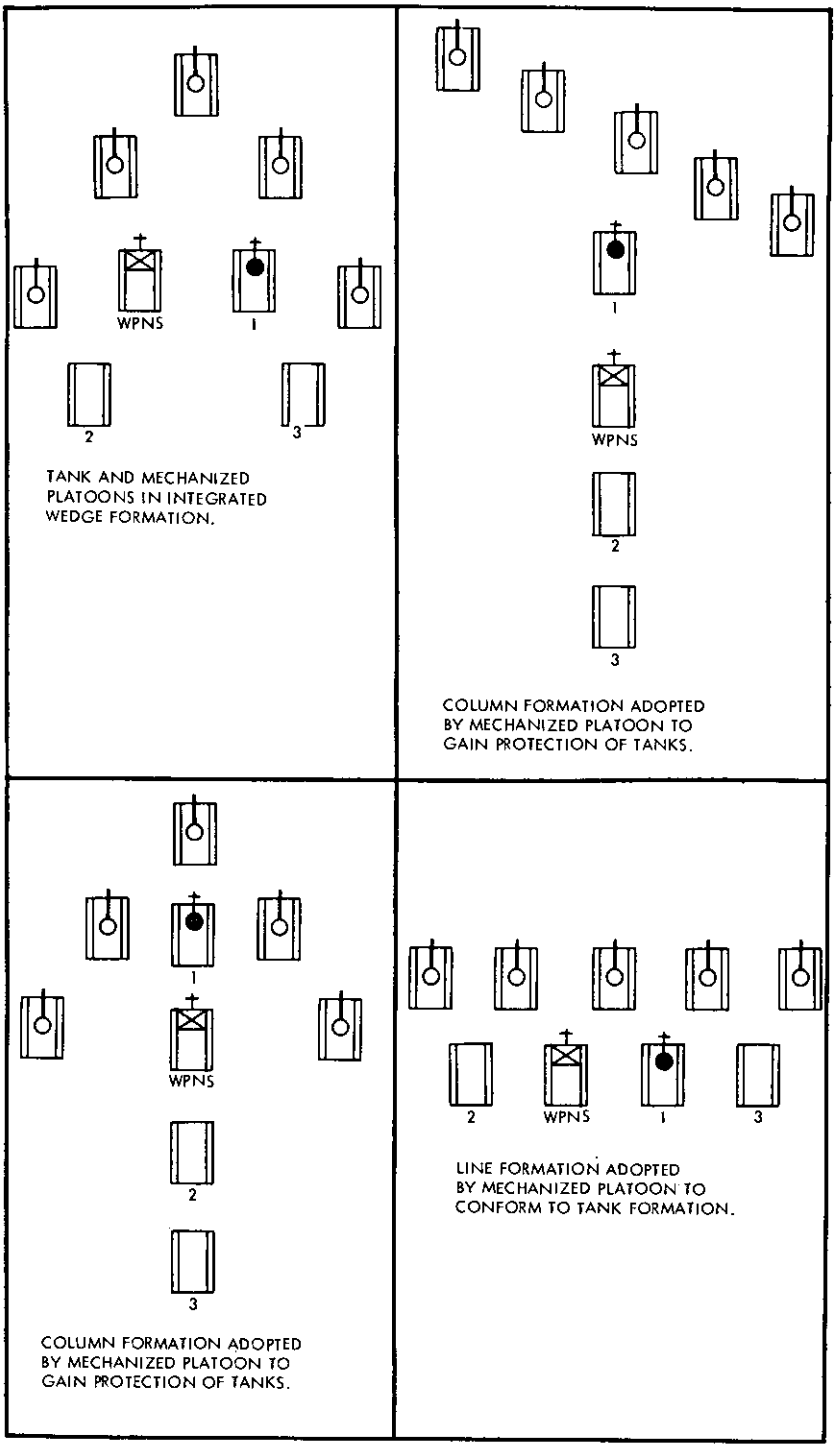


Figure 61. Typical mechanized infantry-tank formations (schematic).

APPENDIX III
BATTLE DRILL

1. General

Battle drill is the immediate action taken by a squad or platoon to return fire and deploy against the enemy in any situation without issuing lengthy orders. At squad and platoon level, battle drill results in immediate fire and movement or fire and maneuver (para. 26). In mechanized operations, platoon leaders often rely almost exclusively on battle drill. The symbols in figure 40 apply to this appendix.

2. Squad Teams

a. The organization of the rifle squad into two fire teams provides the squad leader with two elements to execute fire and maneuver. Essentially, one fire team is the maneuver element, while the other is the fire support element. The role of each fire team may change during the conduct of any particular action. For example, if the maneuver element is prevented by enemy action or terrain from closing with the enemy, it assumes the fire support role to cover the advance of the other team, which then becomes the maneuver element.

b. Although the rifle squad is organized into two teams, this organization does not prevent the squad leader from altering the organization of his maneuver and fire support elements to conform to a specific situation. When the terrain offers excellent firing positions and more firepower is required in the fire support element than can be provided by one fire team, the squad leader may designate both automatic weapons, one or two grenadiers, and one of the fire team leaders to act as the fire support element, with the remainder of the squad acting as the maneuver element. However, such a subdivision of the squad takes time to accomplish and loses some of the squad's precision and interchangeability of fire teams.

3. Fire Support Element

a. The fire support element assists the maneuver element in its advance toward the enemy position by engaging all known or

suspected targets. It continues its fire until masked by the maneuver element (fig. 62).

b. This element is aggressive in its action. While delivering fire on the enemy, if necessary, it continues to move closer to a more favorable firing position without losing continuous fire support. When the maneuver element masks its fires, the fire support element moves forward to assist in consolidation.

4. Maneuver Element

a. The mission of the maneuver element is to close with and destroy or capture the enemy. It advances and assaults under the close fires of the fire support element.

b. The maneuver element's principal job is to maintain the advance toward the enemy. It uses available cover and concealment to the maximum, creeping and crawling when necessary. Depending upon the terrain and effectiveness of the supporting fire, the maneuver element advances by fire team movement, fire and movement within the team, or creeping and crawling. Regardless of how it moves, it must continue to advance. If terrain permits, the maneuver element may be able to move forward, under cover and concealment, to positions within hand-grenade range of the enemy (fig. 62).

5. Control of the Squad

a. The squad leader is assisted in the control of the squad by the fire team leaders. The organization of the squad into fire teams in no way prevents the squad leader from directly controlling individual squad members. The squad and fire team leaders display positive and forceful leadership when executing battle drill.

b. The squad leader gives the necessary command or signal to execute the desired battle drill action. Fire team leaders initiate the action directed by the squad leader. If necessary, they repeat the command signal. Fire team leaders act as fighter-leaders, controlling their fire teams primarily by example. Fire team members base their actions on their fire team leader. Throughout the action, fire team leaders exercise such positive control as is necessary to insure that their fire teams function as directed. The squad leader locates himself where he can best control and influence the action. Normally, he will move with the maneuver element.

c. In a situation in which the squad is brought under effective small-arms fire while advancing, certain actions are automatic.

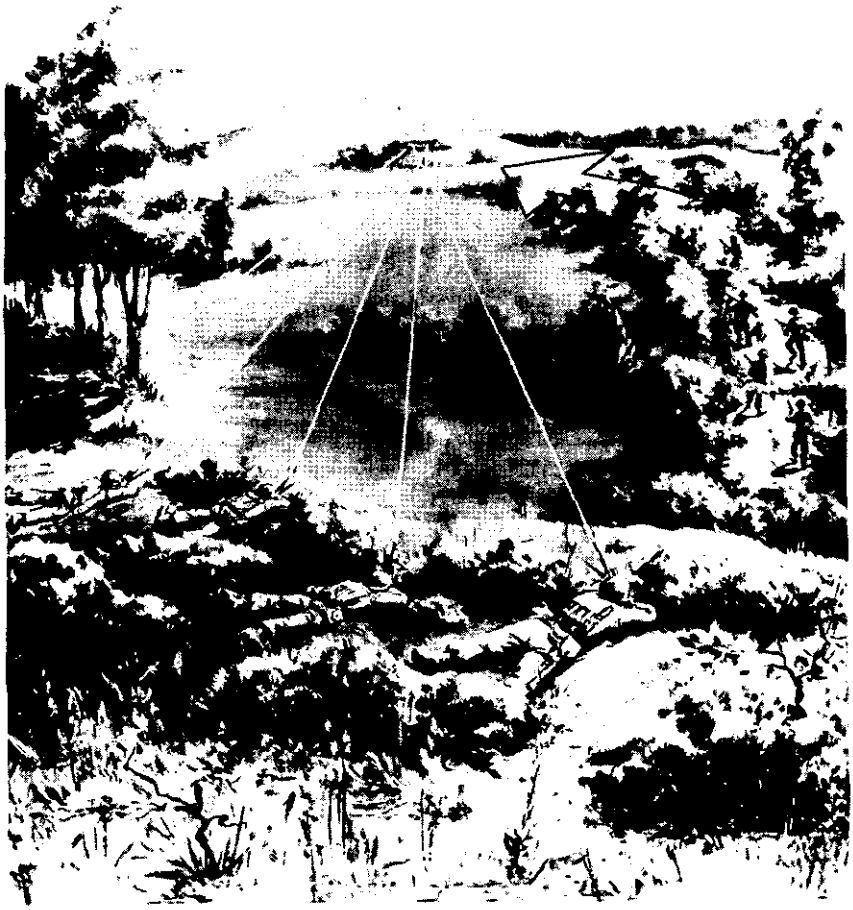


Figure 62. Battle drill (maneuver right).

Those in position to return fire do so immediately. Members of the leading fire team move by individual rushes, or by creeping and crawling, to take advantage of all available cover provided by the terrain and supporting fire. They move to positions generally abreast of their fire team leader and attempt to gain fire superiority over the enemy (fig. 63). The squad leader quickly makes an estimate of the situation, decides his course of action, and signals his plan. His plan provides for gaining fire superiority (fig. 64) before entering the assault phase, and may include the following:

(1) Fire and maneuver (maneuver right, left, front) (fig. 65 and 66).
(2) Fire and movement by fire teams (fig. 66).
(3) Individual fire and movement (fig. 63).

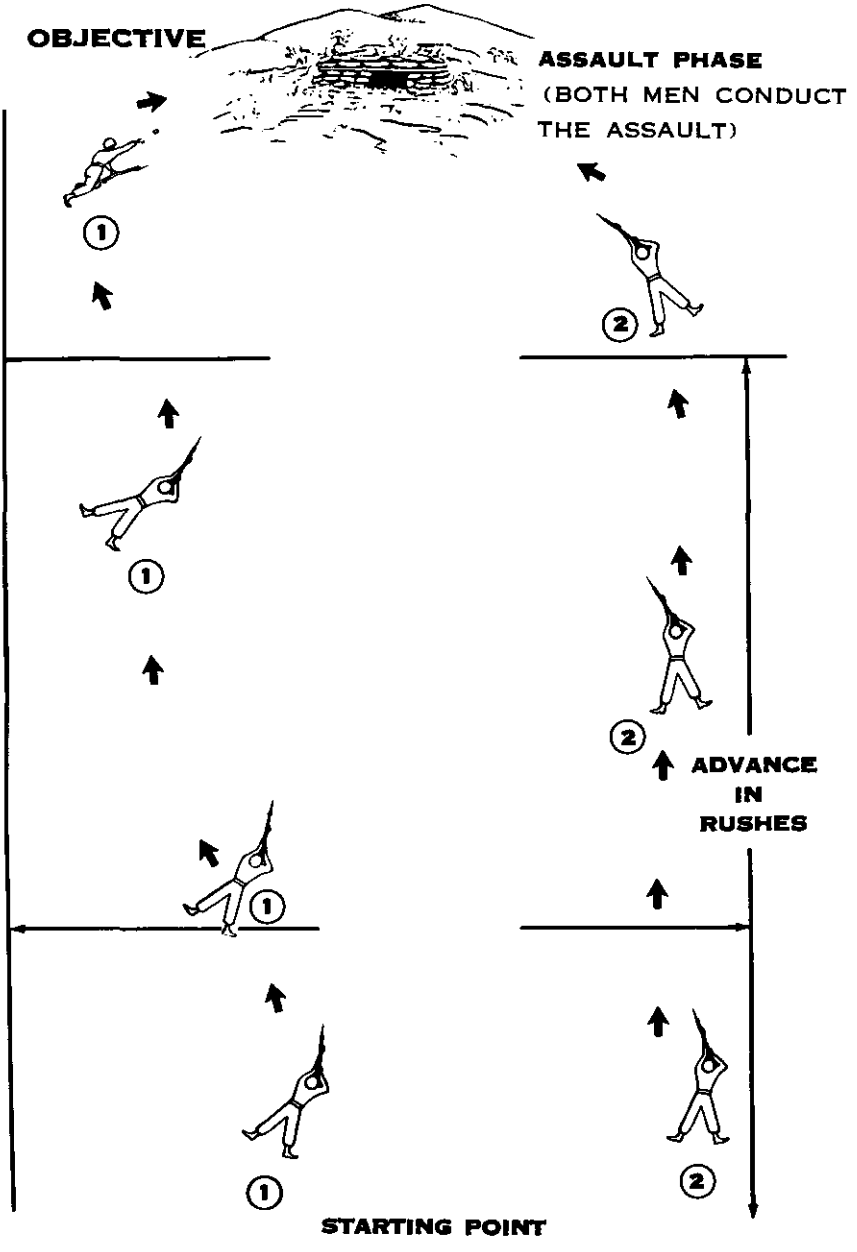


Figure 63. Individual fire and movement.

d. It may be necessary to employ more than one of the methods discussed above to reach a point where assault fire techniques can be employed. The choice of any of the above methods is entirely dependent on the effectiveness of enemy fires from the objective.

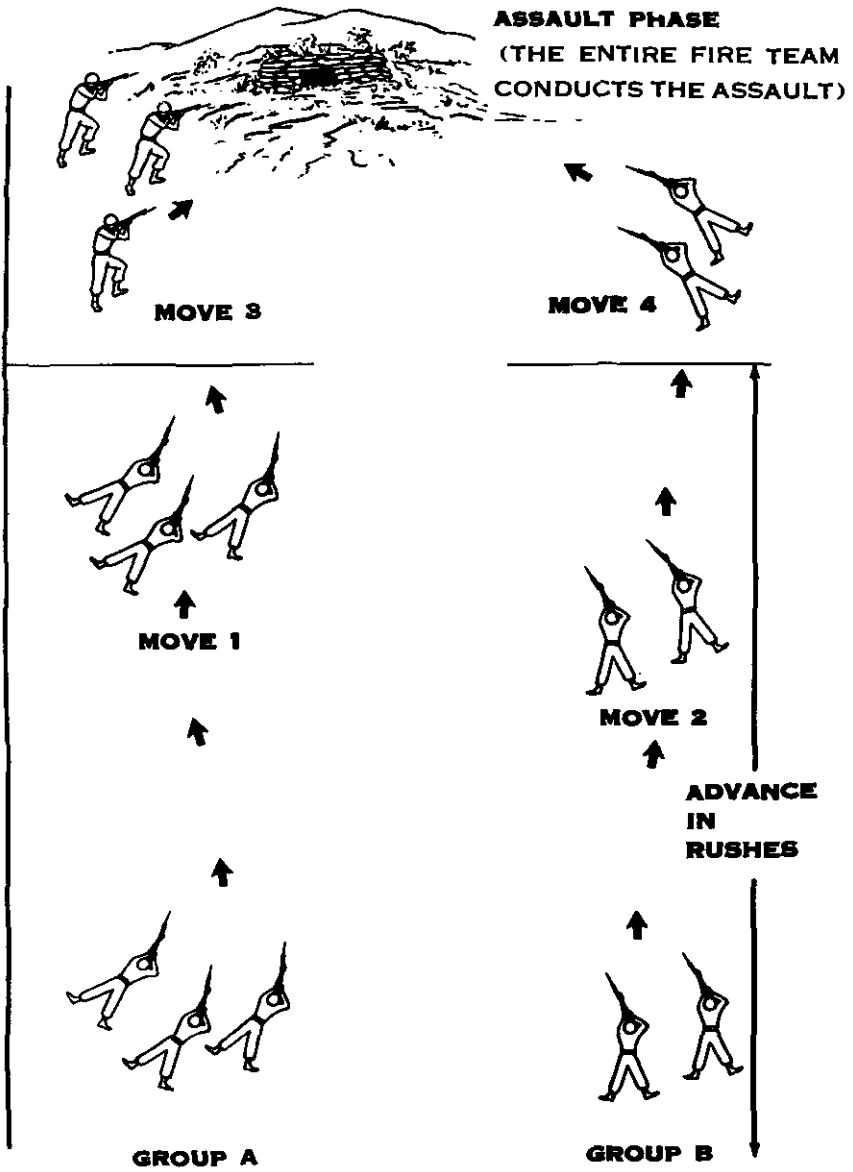


Figure 64. Individual fire and movement at fire team level.

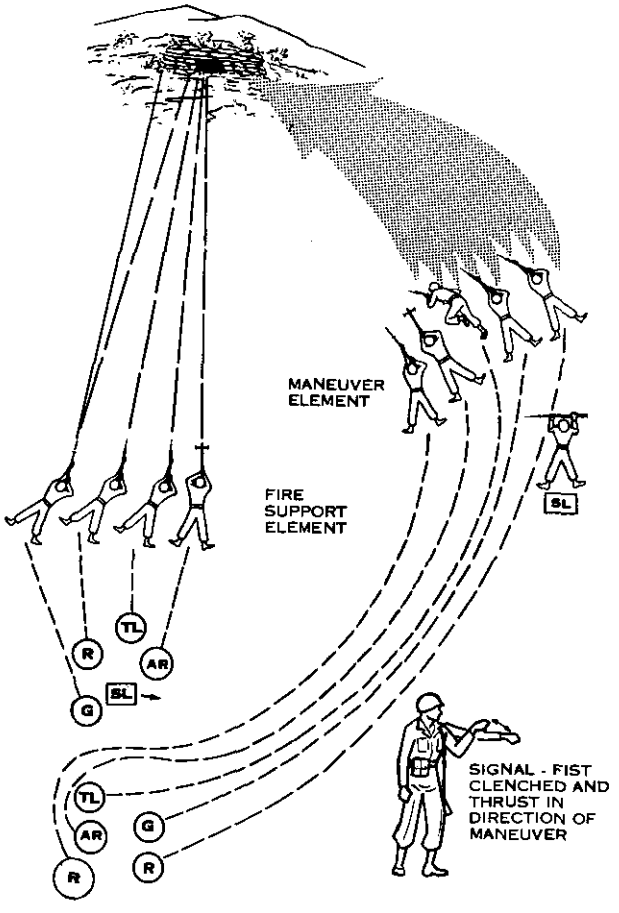
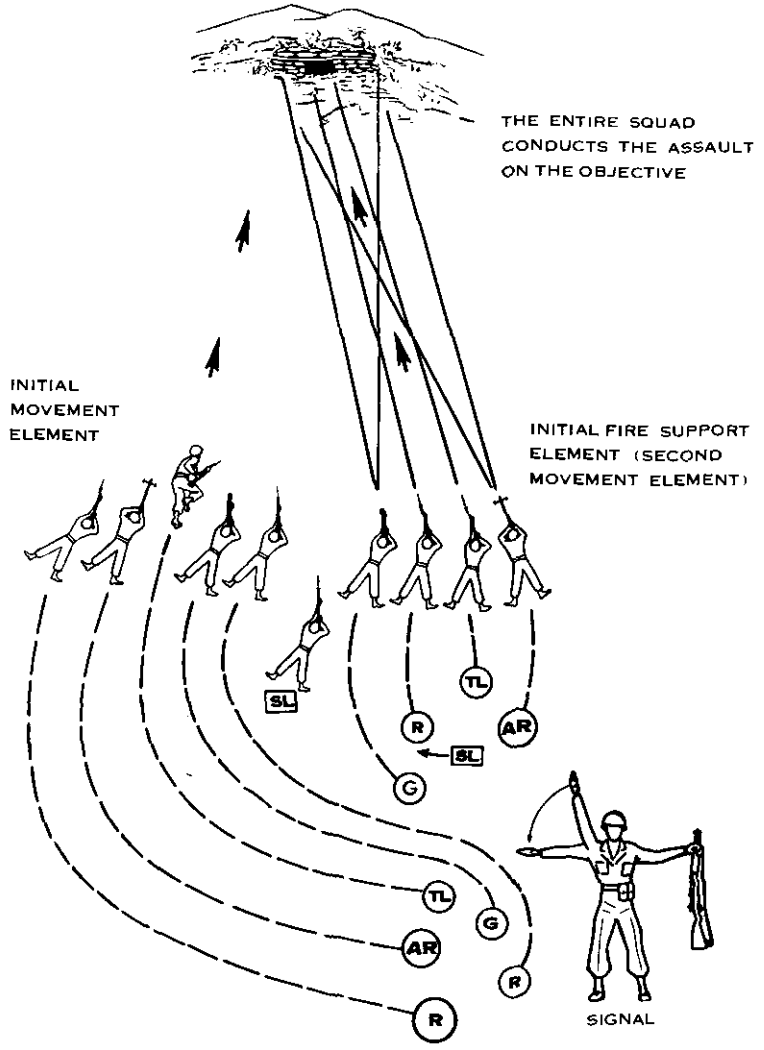


Figure 65. Maneuver right (left) from squad column, fire teams in column.

6. Squad Battle Drill

a. Squad battle drill includes squad fire and movement and squad fire and maneuver (maneuver left, maneuver right, and maneuver front). These maneuvers are executed from the squad formations.

b. The maneuver used in a particular situation is decided by the squad leader, based on his rapid estimate of the situation. He quickly considers such factors as the terrain (covered and concealed routes available for maneuver, and positions available for fire support), enemy dispositions and capabilities, his own dispositions, and the courses of action open to him. When the resistance is isolated and has exposed flanks, the squad leader attempts



NOTE: MANEUVER FRONT IS USED TO FORM THE BASIC ASSAULT FORMATION (LINE). FROM THIS FORMATION INDIVIDUAL OR FIRE TEAM FIRE AND MOVEMENT MAY BE EMPLOYED PART OR ALL THE WAY TO THE OBJECTIVE. THE EFFECTNESS OF ENEMY FIRES WILL DETERMINE THE METHOD OF ASSAULT USED.

Figure 66. Maneuver front, left, (right) from squad column, fire teams in column.

to move his maneuver element over a covered and concealed route to strike the enemy resistance in the flank or rear. When this is not possible, a frontal attack requiring fire and movement may be required.

7. Battle Drill From Squad Column (Fire Teams in Column)

To execute maneuver right, maneuver left, or maneuver to the front, the squad leader gives the appropriate command and signal, and the squad executes a maneuver similar to that in figures 65 (maneuver right or left) and 66.

8. Battle Drill From Squad Column (Fire Teams Abreast)

To execute maneuver right, maneuver left, or maneuver to the front, the squad leader gives the appropriate command and signal, and the squad executes a maneuver similar to that in figures 65 (maneuver right or left) and 68.

9. Battle Drill From Other Squad Formation

a. Battle drill can be executed from the squad line formation in a manner similar to that depicted in maneuver front (fig. 66). The action executed will usually be fire and movement, since disengaging a fire team to maneuver to either flank will normally be very difficult.

b. Battle drill can be executed from the squad file formation in a manner similar to that depicted by fire teams abreast (fig. 67 and 68).

10. Platoon Battle Drill

The platoon employs battle drill when it encounters unexpected enemy resistance. There are three basic maneuvers: maneuver left, maneuver right, and maneuver front. These maneuvers can be executed from any of the platoon formations. In addition, the rifle platoon may employ fire and movement from the line formation at squad, or team, or individual level, depending on the effectiveness of the enemy's fire from the objective area.

a. Maneuver Left or Right. To execute maneuver left or right, the platoon leader commands and signals, "MANEUVER LEFT (RIGHT)," and the platoon maneuvers as shown in figures 69, 70, and 71.

b. Maneuver Front. To execute maneuver front, the platoon leader commands "PLATOON LINE," and the platoon executes

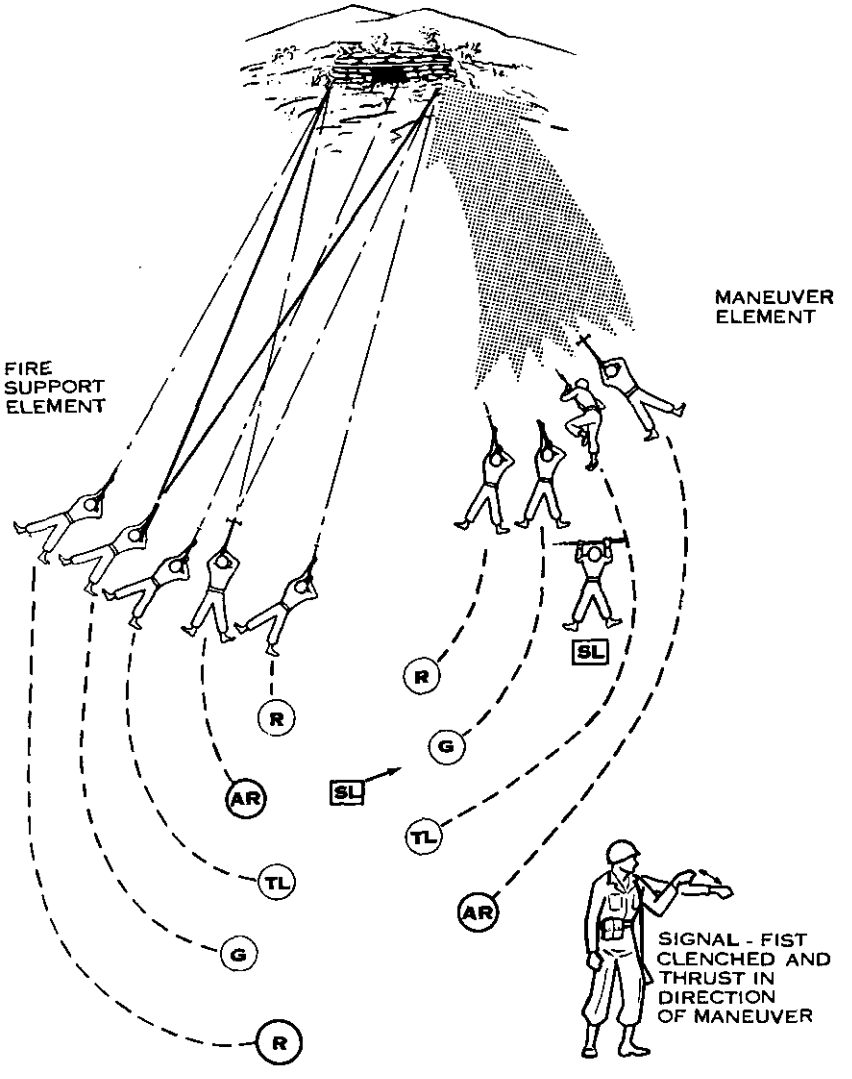


Figure 67. Maneuver right (left) from squad column, fire teams abreast.

the maneuver as shown in figure 72. The maneuver element in this case normally employs fire and movement.

11. Rifle Squads

The rifle squad leaders, upon receiving a signal or order from the platoon leader, control their squads by signaling and commanding "CHANGE DIRECTION," or "FOLLOW ME," and set the example by moving in the desired direction. The squads move in

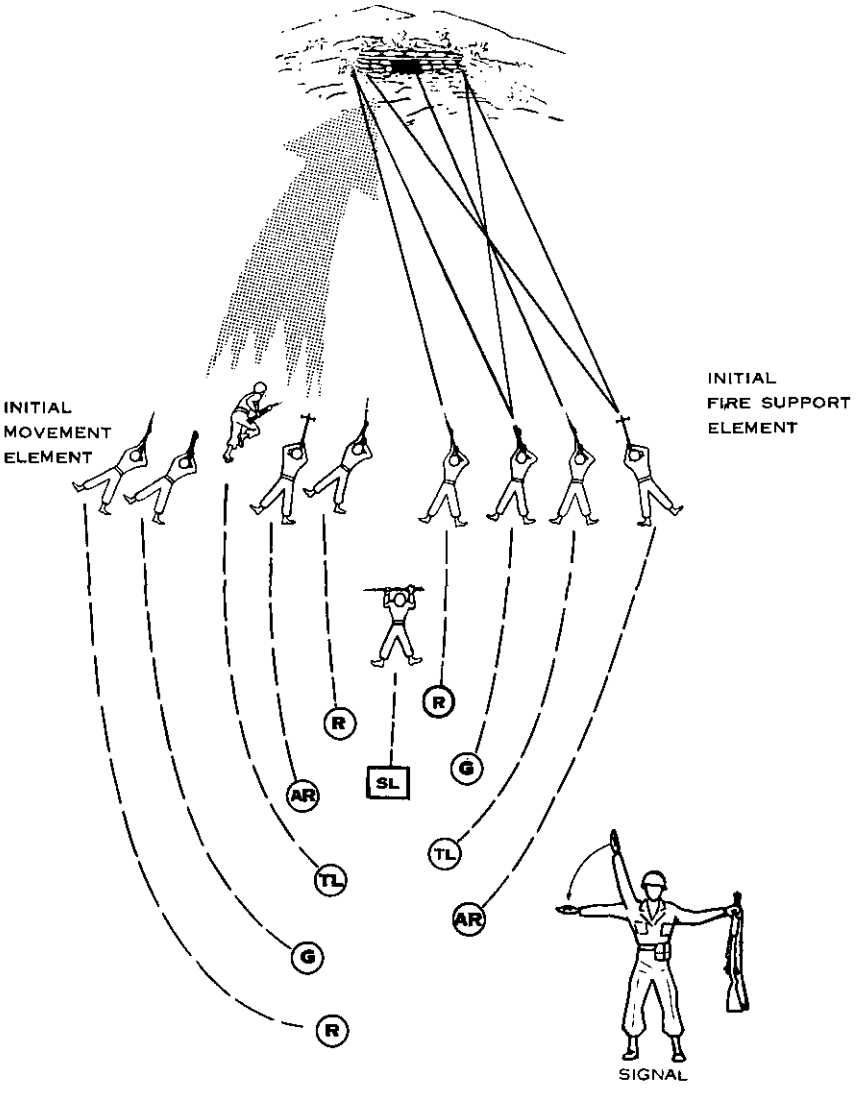


Figure 68. Maneuver front, left, (right) from squad column, fire teams abreast. (See figure 66.)

formation under cover, or by fire and maneuver, until they are able to take the enemy under effective fire. Here, they either form an assault line under supporting fires or execute squad battle drill.

12. Weapons Squad and Attached Crew-Served Weapons

The platoon leader must issue a fragmentary order to the platoon sergeant and weapons squad leader in order to most efficiently

employ the organic and attached crew-served weapons. Normally, attached crew-served weapons are employed with the weapons squad. The platoon sergeant usually remains with the fire support element.

13. Battle Drill for the Mechanized Platoon

During movement, tanks and artillery provide the primary firepower and protection for the carriers, with the carrier-mounted weapons supplementing these fires. Leaders must be alert for quick changes of formation to counter enemy action or to properly use the terrain.

a. The platoon leader controls his platoon while mounted by the use of radio, flag signals, and arm-and-hand signals. The platoon must be immediately responsive to the platoon leader's orders in changing mounted formations to adapt to existing circumstances. When the platoon leader gives the command to adopt a certain formation, his carrier is the base vehicle in all cases and the other carriers will base their positions on that of the base vehicle. See appendix II for mounted platoon formations and changes.

b. When dismounted action is required, the platoon leader uses radio, flag signals, or arm-and-hand signals to cause the platoon to dismount and assume the required formation. The platoon sergeant normally controls the movement and actions of all carriers when the platoon has dismounted. This is done by issuing instructions to the drivers. A platoon SOP should be established as to the actions taken by the driver when the platoon dismounts. One driver should be designated to be in command in the absence of leaders.

c. Mounting and dismounting from carriers is SOP within the platoon and is a part of battle drill. Normally, a squad is mounted in each carrier with the platoon leader being the commander of the lead carrier, and the platoon sergeant the commander of the weapons squad carrier. The squad in the carrier in which the platoon leader is riding is normally the base squad for the initial dismounted formation.

(1) *Mounting techniques.* In mounting, tactical integrity of fire teams is maintained to facilitate control upon dismounting. One fire team, or weapons team, is seated on each side of the carrier. Fire team leaders sit next to the ramp. Normally, the squad leader will act as vehicle commander. In cases where the platoon leader or the

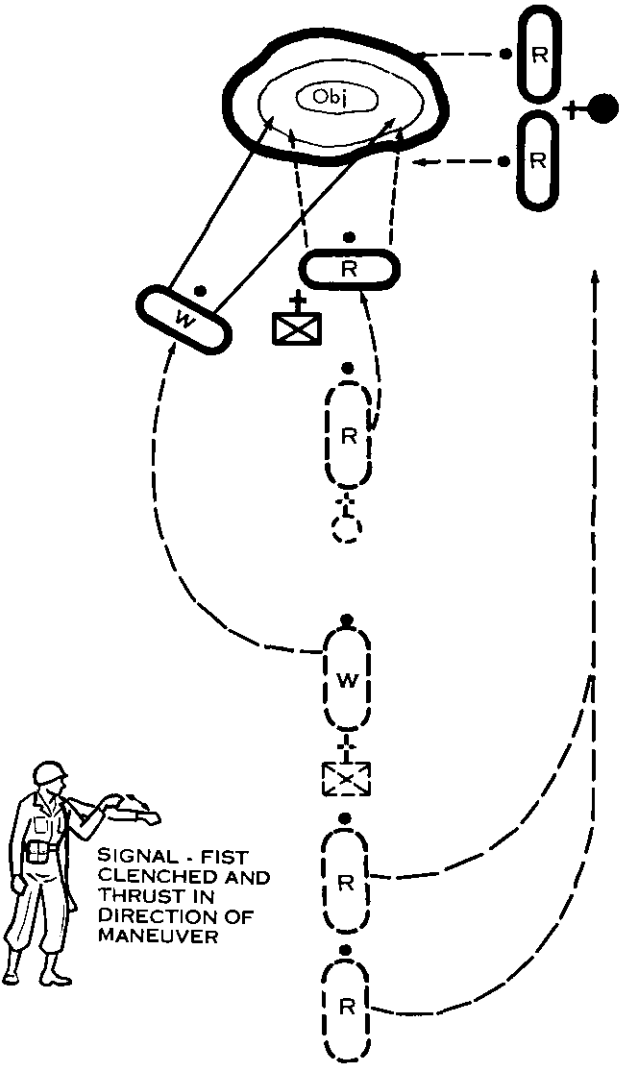


Figure 69. Maneuver right from platoon column.

platoon sergeant is acting as vehicle commander, the squad leader will sit next to the ramp on the left side of the carrier. The squad leader gives the command to mount. The fire team leaders lead their fire teams to the ramp, stop and allow the fire team members to load; the fire team leader then seats himself next to the ramp and reports to the squad leader that his fire team is loaded.

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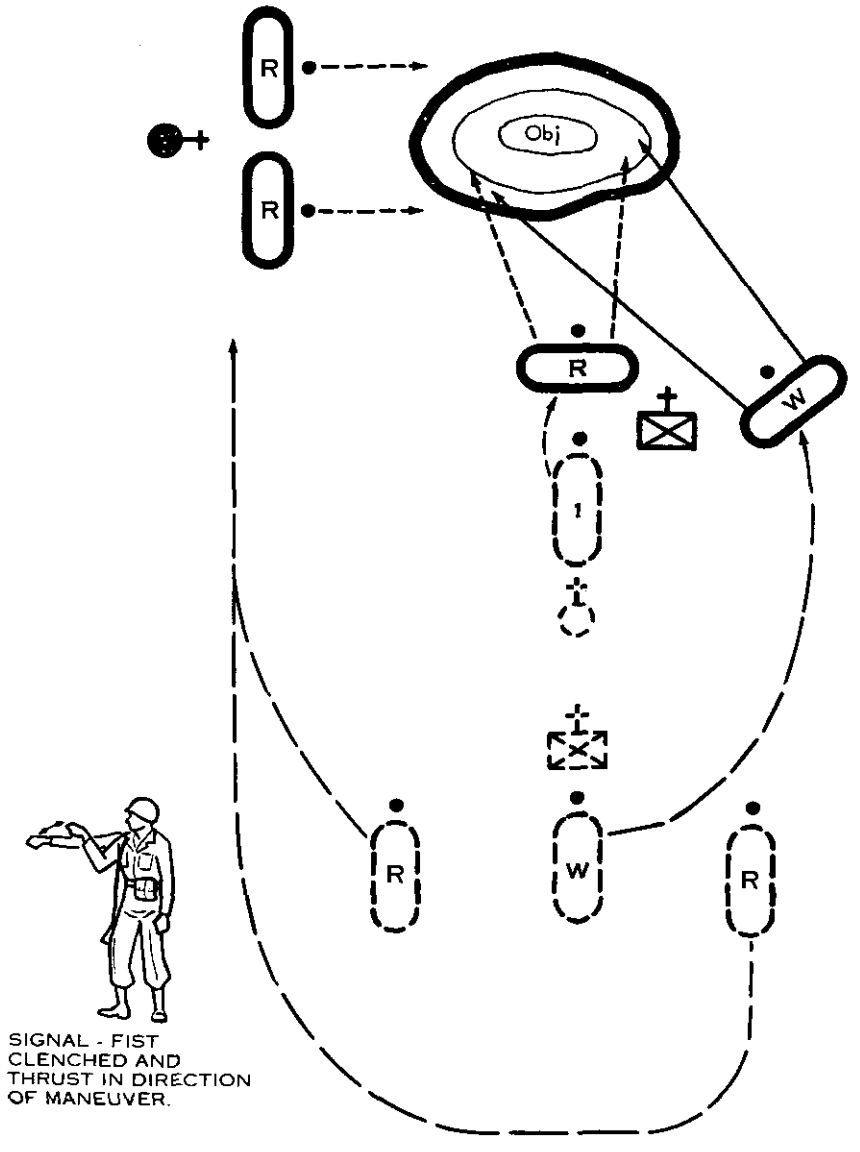

Figure 70. Maneuver left from platoon wedge.

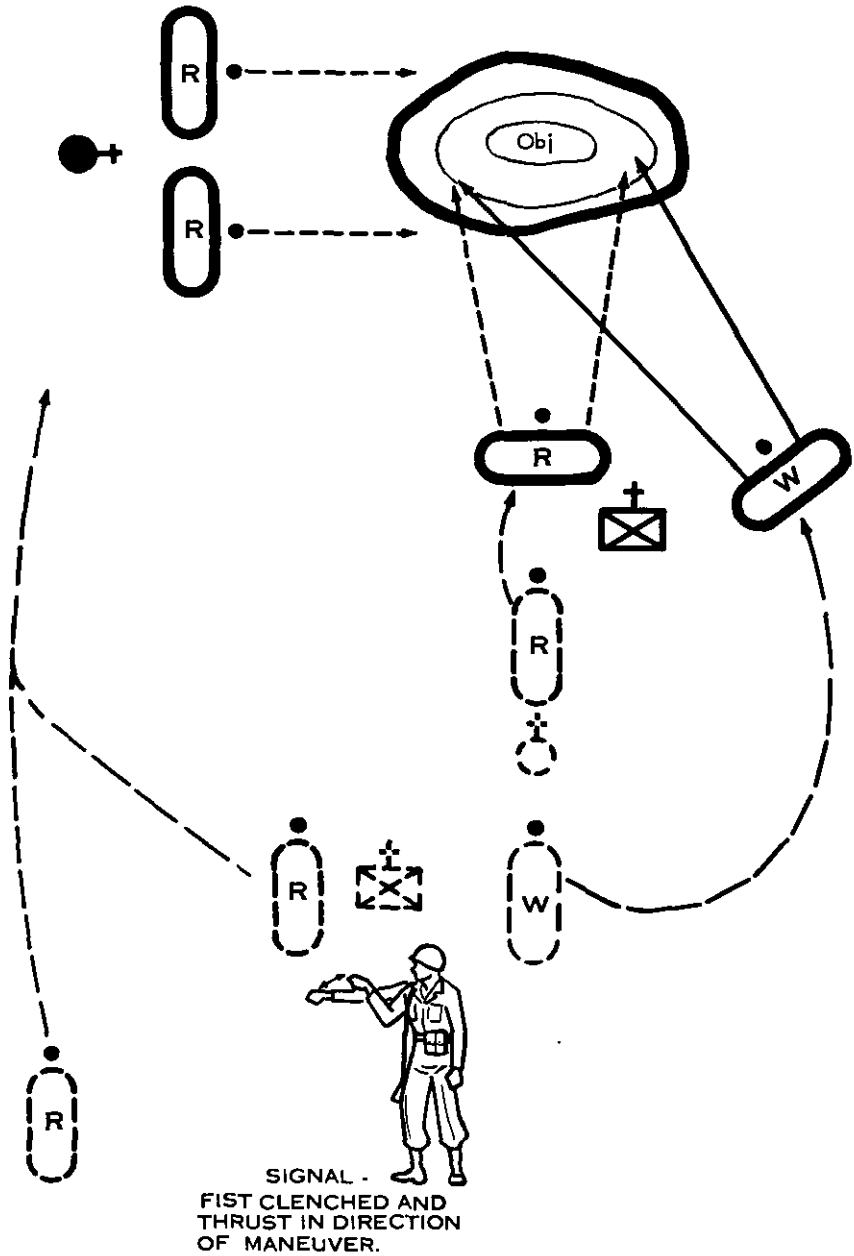

Figure 71. Maneuver left from platoon echelon.

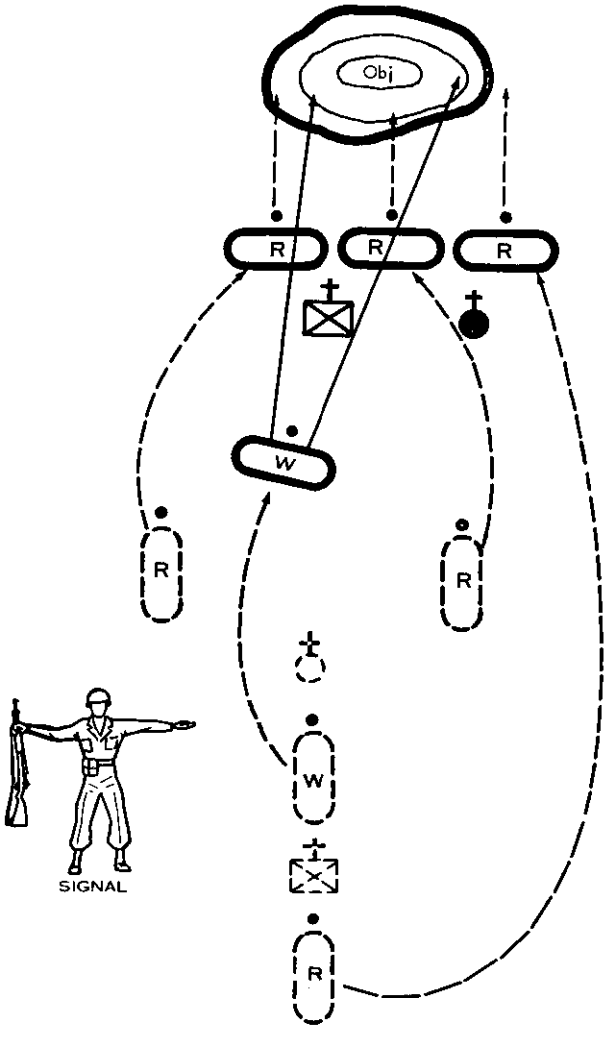

Figure 72. Maneuver front from platoon vee.

The squad leader may either precede the squad into th carrier or mount from the front if he is vehicle commander. If the squad leader is not the vehicle commander, he mounts last and seats himself next to the ramp on the left side, reporting to the vehicle commander that the squad is loaded. The vehicle commander insures that all men are clear of the ramp and commands "RAISE RAMP" to the driver.

(2) *Dismounting techniques.* The rapid dismounting and deployment of the squad and the immediate establishment of control by the squad leader are essential. Dismounting is often accomplished under fire with only the driver and vehicle commander being able to see the terrain and enemy. Consequently, the vehicle commander must orient the individuals in the carrier prior to dismounting. When the carrier halts, the vehicle commander orients the squad in the following manner:

ALERT ..... "PREPARE TO DISMOUNT"
DIRECTION ..... "ACTION FRONT"
ENEMY ..... "ENEMY INFANTRY"
FORMATION ..... "SQUAD LINE"
FRIENDLY TROOPS ..... "TANKS AND INFANTRY BOTH FLANKS"
EXECUTION ..... "DISMOUNT"

(*a*) Upon receiving the command *"DISMOUNT,"* the driver lowers the ramp and the fire team leaders immediately lead their fire teams out of the carrier and assume the desired formation. The vehicle com-

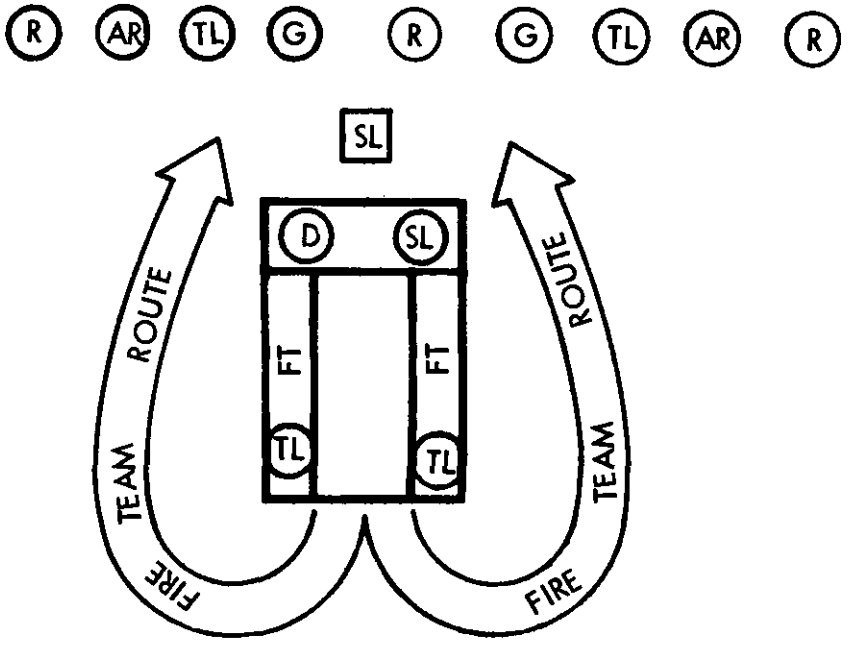

Figure 73. Dismounting into line formation.

mander may dismount either through the rear or through the top. In either case, he joins his unit to assume control.

(*b*) Normally, the carriers are oriented in the direction of the expected action to facilitate dismounting.

(*c*) Figures 73 and 74 depict typical squad actions in dismounting. The squad should be drilled in the dismounting technique for all directions and formations.

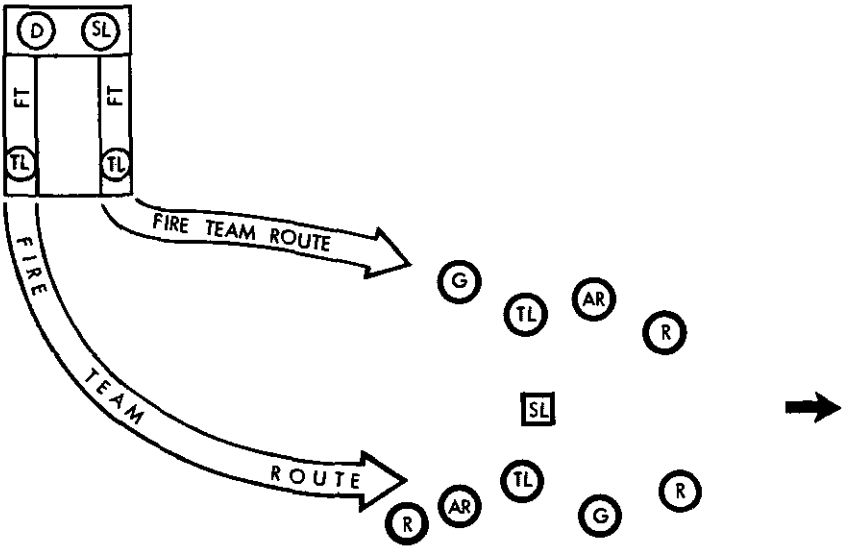

Figure 74. Dismounting into squad column, fire teams abreast.

APPENDIX IV
EXAMPLES OF RIFLE PLATOON AND SQUAD ORDERS

Section I. GENERAL

This appendix contains an example attack order for a rifle platoon and for a squad, and an example defense order for a rifle platoon and a squad. These orders are normally issued orally; consequently, the leader issuing the order is not bound to formal language such as may be used in a written order. The leader elaborates and explains his order as necessary. He bases the order on that of his parent unit and an estimate of the situation. Paragraph titles, numbers, and letters are shown in these example orders only for instructional purposes. The leader, in each example, has already pointed out terrain features, including objectives, either on the ground or on a sketch or map. Since a mortar FO is normally attached, no mention is made of him in the orders.

Section II. EXAMPLE OF RIFLE PLATOON ATTACK ORDER

(*Note.* This order is issued by platoon leader, 2d Platoon.)

1. Situation

a. Enemy Forces. Estimate an enemy two to three-man OP on HILL 394 and rifle squad on HILL 413. Enemy armor has been observed in the area, and the enemy is improving positions. Indications are the enemy will continue to defend.

b. Friendly Forces.

(1) *Mission of next higher unit.* Company A attacks at 190500 April to seize HILL 401 (Objective 4) and HILL 413 (Objective 3); continues attack north on order.

(2) *Mission and location of adjacent units.* 3d Platoon attacks at 190500 April on our left to seize HILL 391 (Objective 2) and HILL 401 (Objective 4). 1st Battalion, 67th Infantry, attacks at 190500 April on our right to seize Objective 167. 1st Platoon follows us by bounds, on order, prepared to assist in seizure of Objective 3 or Objective 4, on order.

(3) *Supporting units.* Artillery and heavy mortars fire preparatory fires on Objective 3 and Objective 4 from H—5 to H-hour. 81-mm Mortar Section fires preparatory fires on Objectives 1 and 2 from H—5 to H-hour. Priority of fire to 2d Platoon. Tank platoon supports company attack initially by fire, then joins us in assault on Objective 3 and Objective 4. Company AT squads are in GS, provide AT protection to left flank.

c. Attachments and Detachments.

2. Mission

Our platoon attacks at 190500 April to seize HILL 394 (Objective 1) and HILL 413 (Objective 3).

3. Execution

a. Concept of Operation. We'll cross the LD in a platoon column; order of movement: 1st Squad, Weapons Squad, 2d Squad, 3d Squad. 1st Squad will seize HILL 413, 1st Squad will be on the left, 2d Squad in the center, and 3d Squad on the right.

b. 1st Squad.

c. 2d Squad.

d. 3d Squad.

e. Weapons Squad. Machineguns displace to HILL 394 to support assault on HILL 413. One AT weapon with 1st Squad, one with me. During consolidation, one machinegun and one AT weapon with 1st Squad, and one machinegun and one AT weapon with 3d Squad.

f. Coordinating Instructions. LD is LC. Base squad during assault is 2d Squad. Final coordination line for assault on HILL 413 is Red Trail. 6–12 o'clock axis from HILL 394 to HILL 413. 1st Squad consolidates from 9–12, 2d Squad from 12–2, and 3d Squad from 2–5.

4. Administration and Logistics

a. Supply and Services. Breakfast 0330 on position. Individual type C-ration issued with breakfast meal. Riflemen carry one extra bandoleer of ammunition. Company trains located at the rear of HILL 301.

b. Medical Evacuation. Company aid post in woods near RJ 274 displace to rear of HILL 381.

5. Command and Signal

a. Signal. Emergency signal to lift supporting fires is ONE GREEN SMOKE STREAMER.

b. Command. I will be with the 1st Squad initially and with the 3d Squad during the assault. Platoon sergeant will be with the 2d Squad throughout the attack. Are there any questions? The time is now ____ hours.

Section III. EXAMPLE OF RIFLE SQUAD ATTACK ORDER

1. Situation

a. Enemy Forces. (Same as platoon example.)

b. Friendly Forces.

(1) *Mission of next higher unit.* Our platoon will attack at 190500 to seize HILL 394 (Objective 1) and HILL 413 (Objective 3).

(2) *Mission and location of adjacent units.* 2d Squad will attack on our right to seize the center of the platoon objective. 3d Platoon will attack on our left to seize HILL 391 (Objective 2) and HILL 401 (Objective 4).

(3) *Supporting units.* We will have artillery and mortar support. Both machineguns will support our attack on HILL 413 (Objective 3) from HILL 394 (Objective 1).

c. Attachments and Detachments. One platoon antitank weapon.

2. Mission

Our squad attacks at 190500 April to seize HILL 394 (Objective 1) and the left portion of HILL 413 (Objective 3).

3. Execution

a. Concept of Operation. We will cross the LD in squad column, fire teams in column, ALFA leading. We will be first in the platoon column. We will move along this ridge (point out) until we are 200 meters from the top of the hill. We will deploy on line with ALFA on the right, BRAVO on the left. After we seize the objective, we will drop off the hill, rejoin the platoon, and be on the left for the assault on HILL 413 (Objective 3).

b. ALFA Team.

c. BRAVO Team.

d. Coordinating Instructions. We will assemble at 0450. LD is LC. Final coordination line for the attack on HILL 394 (Objective 1) is 100 to 150 meters from the top of the hill. Final coordination line for the attack on HILL 413 (Objective 3) is Red Trail (point out). 2d Squad is base squad for the assault of HILL 413 (Objective 3). ALFA is base team for us. 6–12 o'clock axis from HILL 394 to HILL 413. We consolidate from 9 to 12 on HILL 413 with one machinegun and one AT weapon in our area.

4. Administration and Logistics

a. Supply and Services. Breakfast at 0330. Pickup one individual type C-ration. Riflemen draw one extra bandoleer of ammunition.

b. Medical Evacuation. Company aid post will remain in present location and then will displace to the rear of HILL 381.

5. Command and Signal

a. Signal. Emergency signal to lift supporting fire is ONE GREEN SMOKE STREAMER.

b. Command. I will be with ALFA initially. Are there any questions? Time is now ____ hours.

Section IV. EXAMPLE OF RIFLE PLATOON DEFENSE ORDER

1. Situation

a. Enemy Forces. Enemy continues to counterattack 5,000 meters to our east. The enemy which previously occupied HILL 401 (Objective 4) and HILL 413 (Objective 3) is now believed located 1,000 meters to our front. Enemy patrols have been contacted 500 meters to our front.

b. Friendly Forces.

(1) *Mission of next higher units.* Our company will defend on line along the forward slope of HILL 401 (Objective 4) and HILL 413 (Objective 3).

(2) *Mission and location of adjacent units.* 3d Platoon defends on our left, HILL 401; 1/67 Infantry defends on our right, HILL 395. 1st Platoon is in reserve and will install antipersonnel minefields to our front.

(3) *Supporting units.* Artillery will have a 105-mm barrage in the wooded draw to the right front of our area. Battalion mortar barrage is located on our left in front of

3d Platoon. 81-mm Mortar Section barrage located along the edge of the woods in front of our area. 81-mm Mortar Section priority of fires to our platoon. Company AT squads in GS. One squad in our area. Engineers will assist 1st Platoon in installation of minefield to our front.

c. Attachments and Detachments.

2. Mission

Our platoon defends by 1400 hours the north slope of HILL 413, along line extending from here on the left (point out) to here on the right (point out).

3. Execution

a. Concept of Operation. We will defend employing three squads on line: 1st Squad on the left from the fallen tree, right to the bush (point out); 2d Squad in the center from the bush to 40 meters right of the draw; and 3d Squad on the right, tie in with the 2d and extend to the burned vehicle on the right.

b. 1st Squad.

c. 2d Squad.

d. 3d Squad.

e. Weapons Squad. Place one machinegun in 1st Squad area firing FPL across front of 1st and 2d Squads. Other machinegun in 3d Squad area, firing principal direction of fire covering the ridge approach. One AT weapon in 2d Squad area with principal direction of fire toward woods here (point out) and other AT weapon in 3d Squad area with principal direction of fire toward that ridge (point out).

f. Coordinating Instructions. Each squad will have one local security post. Priority of work: post security, position weapons and squads, clear fields of fire, prepare positions, and establish early-warning devices. By that time, I will assign supplementary positions and you can begin work on them.

4. Administration and Logistics

a. Supply and Services. Supper will be fed on position after dark. 2d Squad furnish a guide/or carrying party. Have him at CP-OP at 1700 hours. Company trains are located at the rear of HILL 381 (point out). Insure we have 2,500 rounds of ammunition on position for each machinegun.

b. Medical Evacuation. Company aid post is located in company trains area.

5. Command and Signal

a. Signal. Emergency signal to fire final protective fires is RED STAR CLUSTER at night and RED SMOKE STREAMER during daylight.

b. Command. CP-OP will be located just forward of our present location. The platoon sergeant will be with me. Are there any questions? The time is now _____ hours.

Section V. EXAMPLE OF RIFLE SQUAD DEFENSE ORDER

1. Situation

a. Enemy Forces. (Same as platoon order, section IV.)

b. Friendly Forces.

(1) *Mission of next higher unit.* Our platoon will defend by 1400 hours along the north slope of HILL 413 along a line extending from here (point out) to here (point out).

(2) *Mission and location of adjacent units.* 2d Squad defends on our right, 3d Platoon defends on our left.

(3) *Supporting units.* Artillery and mortars have barrages planned to our front. Engineers are going to assist the 1st Platoon in putting antipersonnel mines to our front.

c. Attachments and Detachments.

2. Mission

Our squad will defend by 1400 hours, the left portion of the platoon front on the north slope of HILL 413.

3. Execution

a. Concept of Operation. Our squad will be on the left from the fallen tree, right, to the bush. One machinegun and one AT weapon will be located in our area. ALFA team on the right, BRAVO team on the left.

b. ALFA Team. Automatic rifleman and grenadier assigned a principal direction of fire to cover the draw.

c. BRAVO Team. Automatic rifleman assigned principal direction of fire to exchange fire with 3d Platoon.

d. Coordinating Instructions. We will have one local security post. As soon as I check your positions, start clearing fields of fire and then prepare positions.

4. Administration and Logistics

a. Supply and Services. Supper will be fed on position after dark. ALFA team leader, send me a guide at 1640 hours. I will check ammunition and equipment after I finish this order.

b. Medical Evacuation. Company aid post located in the company trains area at the rear of HILL 381 (point out).

5. Command and Signal

a. Signal. Emergency signal for final protective fires is a RED STAR CLUSTER at night and RED SMOKE STREAMER during the daylight.

b. Command. I will be located between fire teams. Are there any questions? The time is now _____ hours.

APPENDIX V
FIGHTING AND EXISTENCE LOADS
(TEMPERATE ZONE)

1. *Fighting Load.* (Actual weight, approximately 44 pounds; ideal weight, 34 pounds.)

*a. Clothing.**

	Pounds (1963)
(1) Helmet w/liner (combat headgear)	3.00
(2) Trousers and jacket, utility	2.56
(3) Underwear (summer) and socks	.63
(4) Boots	4.00
(5) Poncho	2.57
Total	12.76

b. Equipment.

	Pounds (1963)
(1) Rifle w/sling, M14	9.08
(2) 5-magazine 7.62 w/100 rds	7.85
(3) 2-pouch, ammunition 7.62, M14	1.50
(4) Canteen (filled) w/cup and carrier	3.60
(5) Belt, M14 w/first-aid pouch, packet and suspenders	2.00
(6) Intrenching tool w/carrier	4.00
(7) Bayonet w/scabbard	1.07
Total	29.10

c. Rations.

	Pounds (1963)
1 Meal	1.67
Total	1.67
CLOTHING	12.76
EQUIPMENT	29.10
RATIONS	1.67
FIGHTING LOAD TOTAL	43.53

2. *Existence Load.** (Actual weight, approximately 29 pounds; ideal weight, 16 pounds.)

	Pounds (1963)
a. Armor vest	8.50
b. Protective mask w/carrier	3.00
c. Bedroll w/carrier and inflatable pad	12.96
d. Pack w/underwear, socks, toothbrush and shaving gear	4.19
e. Field jacket w/o liner	----
EXISTENCE LOAD TOTAL	28.65**

* Comprises items as determined by environment and operational conditions. For equipment required in varying climates and terrains, see FM's 31-25, 31-30, 31-70, 31-71, and 31-72. The more difficult the terrain, the lighter the load. For other than riflemen, the weight of the weapon, ammunition or equipment that must be carried makes adjustment of loads mandatory.

** Does not include weight of field jacket and liner, which is 3.40 pounds.

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Chief of Staff.

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USACDCCSSG (5)
USACDCSWCAG (5)
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USACDCCISG (1)
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USAARMS (25)
USASCS (20)
USASWS (10)
USACGSC (50)

NG: State AG (3); units—same as Active Army except allowance is five (5) copies to each unit.

USAR: Units—same as Active Army except allowance is one copy to each unit.

For explanation of abbreviations used, see AR 320–50.

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