

CHAPTER 4

COMBAT MANEUVERS, FORMATIONS, PATROLS, AND AMBUSHES

In this chapter, moving through enemy controlled terrain either on your own or in small groups is discussed. Usually in such instances, your movement must not be seen or heard. When this cannot be avoided, you must at least be able to move quickly with a minimum of exposure. Actions, such as moving, rushing, hitting the deck crawling, moving silently, and taking action under flares, are also discussed in this chapter.

MOVEMENT

When you move about, it is best to travel a short distance quickly; then stop, listen, observe, and move on again. Before moving from the concealment or cover of one position, always pick out your next position. In addition, look for an alternate new position in case you are unable to reach your first choice. Observe the area carefully for enemy activity; then select the best available routes to the new location. Take advantage of darkness, fog, smoke, or haze to assist in concealing your movement.

Change direction from time to time when moving through tall grass. When you move in a straight line, the grass waves with an unnatural motion that could attract attention. The best time to move is when the wind is blowing the grass.

When stopping between movements, you should observe briefly whether birds or animals are alarmed. Their flight or movement may attract the attention of the enemy, or they may provide a clue as to the location of the enemy.

Take advantage of distractions caused by noises, such as bombing, shelling, rifle fire, or vehicle movement.

Travel across roads, trails, and rivers where the most cover and concealment exist. Search for a large culvert, a low spot, or a curve; keep in mind that these are the most likely spots for enemy mines and booby traps.

Avoid steep slopes and areas with loose stones or gravel. Also, avoid ridges or clearings where you would make a good silhouette.

RUSHING

Rushing is the fastest means of moving from one position to another. It should always be used when you are moving but not concealed. Generally, you should start rushing from the prone position (fig. 4-1, view 1). Slowly move your head to select the new position to which you will move (fig. 4-1, view 2). Avoid raising your head too high, and always look around the side of an object rather than over the top, so you do not make a sharp silhouette. Slowly lower your head; then draw your arms in close to your body; keep your elbows down, and pull your right leg forward (fig. 4-1, view 3). With one movement, raise your body by straightening your arms (fig. 4-1, view 4). Spring to your feet quickly, step off with your left foot (fig. 4-1, view 5), and run to the new location by the quickest and shortest route. Keep low and use all available cover (fig. 4-1, view 6).

HITTING THE DECK

After reaching your new position at the end of the rush, you must quickly get into the prone position again. Getting into the prone position from rushing is known as hitting the deck or dirt. To do this, plant your feet firmly, about 18 inches apart, and while sliding your hand to the heel of the rifle butt (fig. 4-1, view 7), drop to your knees (fig. 4-1, view 8). Fall forward, breaking your fall with the butt of your rifle (fig. 4-1, view 9) unless you are armed with the M16; then, after shifting your weight to your left side, bring your rifle forward (fig. 4-1, view 10). Place the butt of the rifle in the hollow of your shoulder; then roll into a firing position (fig. 4-1, view 11). If your weapon has a stock made of plastic or fiber glass, such as the M16, you should not use it to break your fall. Instead, grasp your rifle in one hand and break your fall with the other.

Lie as flat as possible. If you think you were observed, move to the right or left, preferably where there is cover and concealment.

CRAWLING

There are times when you must move with your body close to the ground to avoid enemy fire or

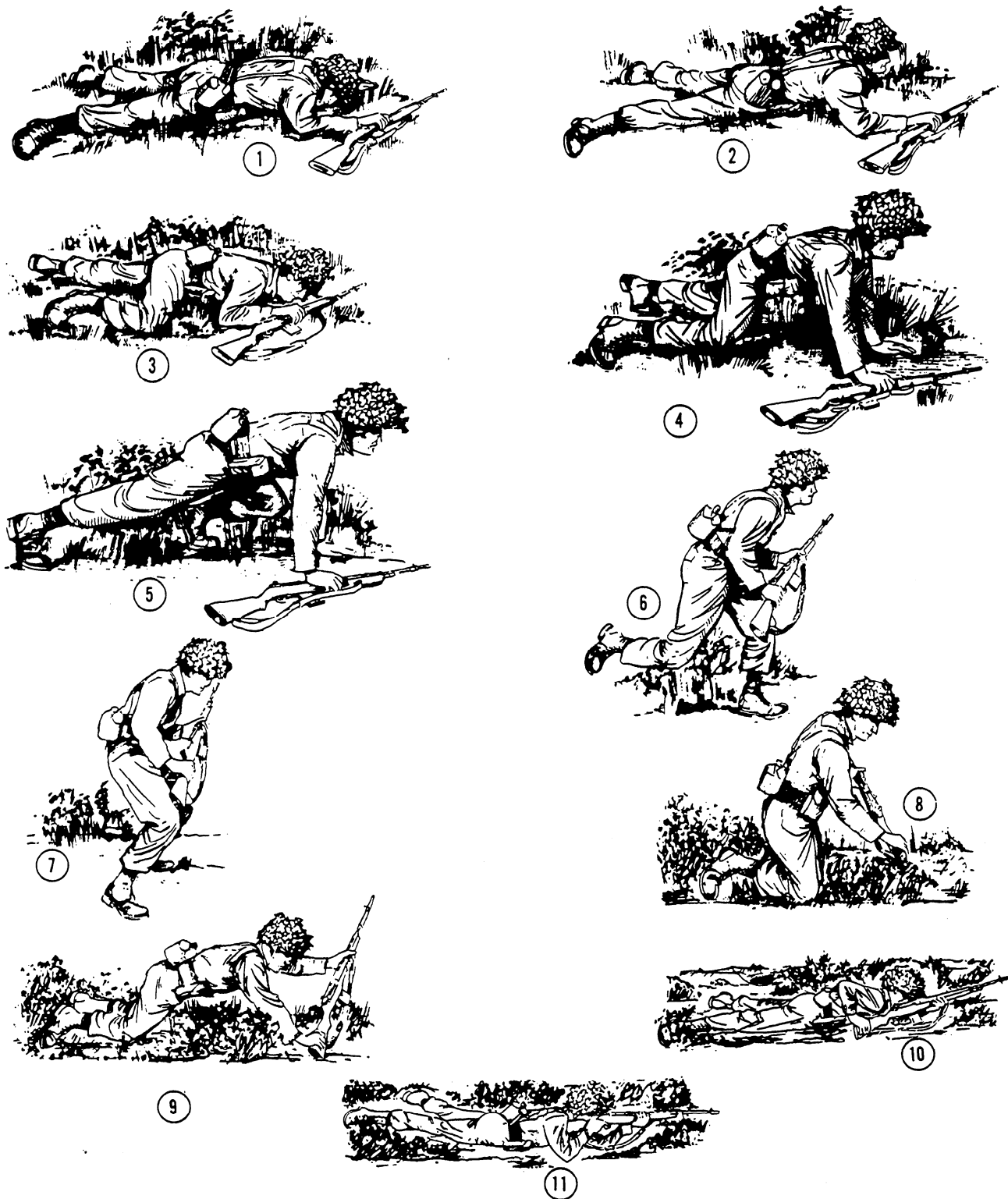


Figure 4-1.—Rushing and hitting the deck or dirt.

observation. There are two ways of doing this, the LOW CRAWL and the HIGH CRAWL. It is up to you to decide which method is best suited to the conditions of visibility, cover and concealment, and the speed required.

Use the LOW CRAWL method when cover and concealment are scarce, when visibility permits good enemy observation, and when speed is not essential. Keep your body as flat as possible against the ground. Grasp your rifle sling near the upper sling swivel. Allow

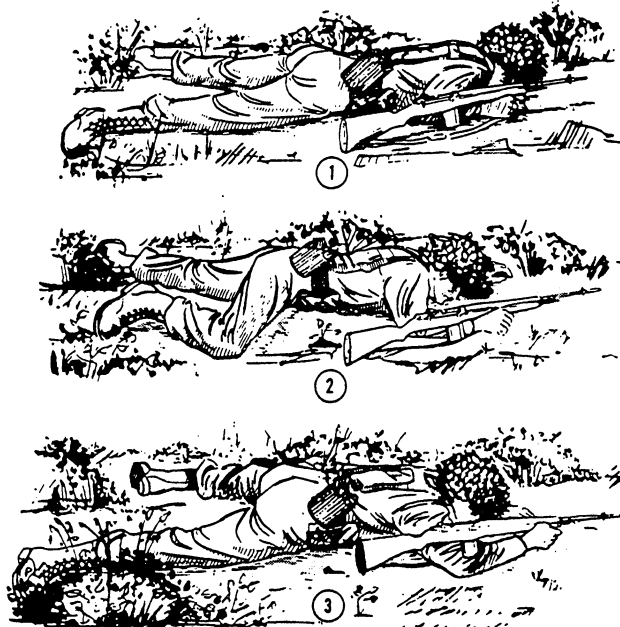


Figure 4-2.—The low crawl.



Figure 4-3.—The high crawl.

the balance to rest on your forearm, and let the butt drag along the ground. Keep the muzzle and operating rod clear of the ground (fig. 4-2, view 1).

To start forward, push your arms ahead and pull your fight leg forward (fig. 4-2, view 2). Move by pulling with your free arm and pushing with your right leg. Every so often, change your pushing leg to avoid getting tired (fig. 4-2, view 3).

Use the **HIGH CRAWL** method when cover and concealment are available, when poor visibility reduces enemy observation, and when more speed is needed.

Keep your body free of the ground and rest your weight on your forearms and lower legs. Cradle the rifle in your arms, keeping the muzzle off the ground. Keep your knees well behind your buttocks so your rump remains low. Move forward by alternately advancing your right elbow and left knee and then your left elbow and right knee (fig. 4-3).



Figure 4-4.—Crawling silently.

The low crawl and high crawl are not suitable for moving silently. To crawl silently, you must move on your hands and knees (fig. 4-4): Start by laying your weapon carefully on the ground to your side. With your right hand, feel or make a clear spot for your knee. While keeping your hand on the spot, bring your right knee forward until it meets your hand. Next, clear a spot with your left hand and move your left knee up in the same reamer. Be sure your weapon is always within reach! To move your weapon, feel for a place, clear it, and lift the weapon into position. Crawl very slowly and keep your movements absolutely silent.

MOVING SILENTLY

The movements just explained, rushing and crawling, are not particularly useful when you are close to the enemy because they often create a shuffling noise. When extremely quiet movement is necessary, especially when you are on patrol or stalking an enemy, you must use the movements described below. These



Figure 4-5.—Walking gently with your toe down first.

movements are particularly useful when you are moving at night. The movements must be made slowly; they are tiring and require extreme patience and self-control to be performed properly.

WALKING SILENTLY

While walking, hold your weapon at port arms. Make your footing sure and solid by keeping your weight on one foot as you step with the other. When stepping, raise your foot high. This enables you to clear the brush and grass. With your weight on the rear leg, gently let your foot down, toe first (fig. 4-5). Feel softly with your toe to pick a good, solid spot; then lower your foot. Shift your weight and balance to your foot that is forward and then continue. Take short steps to avoid losing your balance. At night and when moving through dense vegetation, you should avoid making unnecessary noise by holding your weapon with one hand and extending your other hand forward to feel for obstructions as you move.

ASSUMING THE PRONE POSITION SILENTLY

To assume the prone position silently (fig. 4-6), hold your weapon under one arm and crouch slowly. Feel for the ground with one hand, making sure it is clear by removing small twigs and other objects that make noise. Lower your knees one at a time until your weight is on both knees and your free hand. Shift your weight to your



Figure 4-6.—Assuming the prone position silently.

free hand and opposite knee. Raise your free leg up and back slowly; then lower it to the ground gently, feeling with your toe for a clear spot. Roll gently to that side and move your other leg into position in the same way. Roll quietly into the prone position.

ACTION UNDER FLARES

When you are caught in the open by an overhead flare, you should immediately hit the deck. Since the burst of light is temporarily blinding to the enemy also, there is a chance that you may not have been seen. If you hear the flare being fired, try to get down before it bursts. Resume movement as soon as the flare burns out.

When you are caught in the light of a ground flare, move out of the area of light as quickly and quietly as possible. Keep moving until you are well away from the area; then reorient yourself and continue on.

If you are caught by a flare when crossing an obstacle, such as barbed wire, crouch low and remain motionless until the flare burns out.

When you are assaulting a position and a flare bursts, continuing your assault is imperative.

COMBAT FORMATIONS

Combat formations are designed to group individuals into effective fighting teams that can move to and assault an enemy position with minimum confusion. The use of combat formations, with related arm-and-hand signals (as shown in chapter 8), enables a squad leader to control the fire and to maneuver his unit just as the quarterback of a football team uses plays and signals. A person who cannot remember the plays or signals on the ball field endangers the ability of the team to win the game. On the battlefield, the stakes are much higher. The success of your mission, as well as your survival, depends on teamwork.

When the situation, terrain, or enemy activity does not permit close formations, the unit leader should deploy his men in an extended formation. Deployment is executed on signals or commands. The leader may deploy his units in a variety of formations at any one time, depending on the situation. Relative positions within these formations are flexible, and the leader should take advantage of the cover and concealment offered by the terrain; however, he must take care not to mask the fire of another unit. Maintaining exact distances between individuals and units is unnecessary as long as control is not lost; however, under ideal conditions, the recommended space between individuals is 5 yards. All leaders and units must maintain sight and voice contact with each other. Any changes information should be by the shortest practical route. Leaders must take full advantage of cover and concealment and avoid backward or lateral movement.

FIRE TEAM MOVEMENT

The FIRE TEAM LEADER controls the use of the formations. He places himself in a position where he can best observe and control the fire team and, in addition, receive orders from the squad leader. The fire team leader must also be in a position to quickly and effectively control the employment of the automatic rifle.

The AUTOMATIC RIFLEMAN is an interior man. He should position himself between the fire team leader and rifleman No. 1. Here, he can quickly deliver fire to either flank, as directed by the fire team leader, and receive help and protection from the adjacent rifleman.

RIFLEMAN NO. 1 assists the automatic rifleman by supplying him with loaded magazines and by keeping the automatic rifle in action. He coordinates both his position and movement with those of the automatic rifleman.

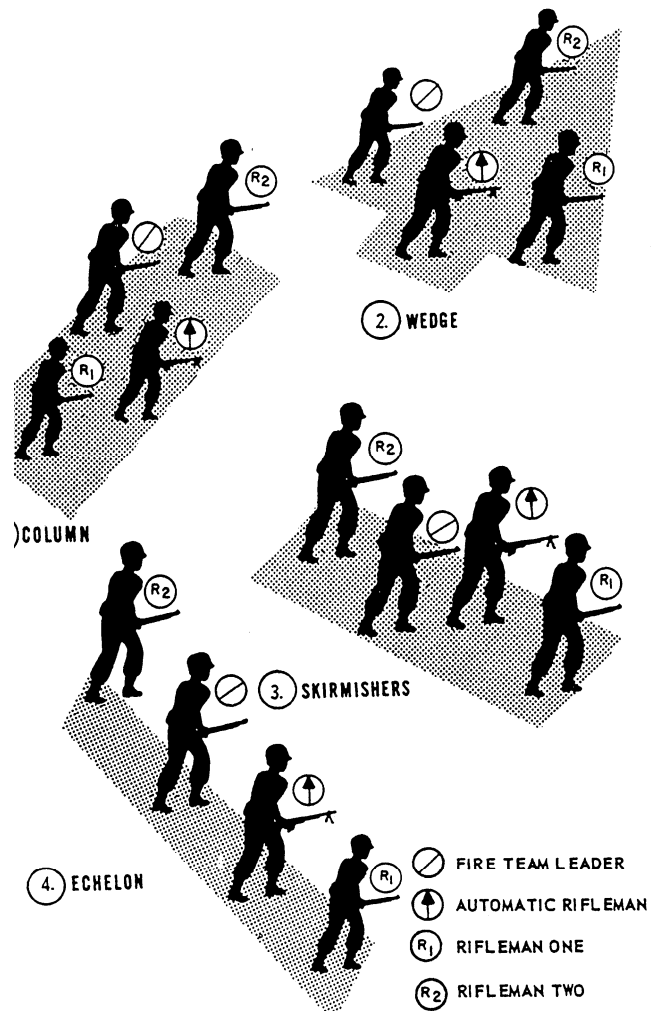


Figure 4-7.—Basic formations, fire team.

RIFLEMAN NO. 2 is at the place in the fire team formation that enemy action or probable enemy action threatens. He acts as a security element; for example, when the team is moving toward the enemy, he is in the foremost position.

The basic fire team formations are COLUMN, WEDGE, SKIRMISHERS RIGHT or LEFT, and ECHELON RIGHT or LEFT.

FIRE TEAM COLUMN

The fire team column formation (fig. 4-7, view 1) is used when speed and control are governing factors, such as moving through woods, fog, smoke, and along roads and trails. This formation is favorable for fire and maneuvers to either flank but is vulnerable to fire from the front because its own fire in that direction is limited.

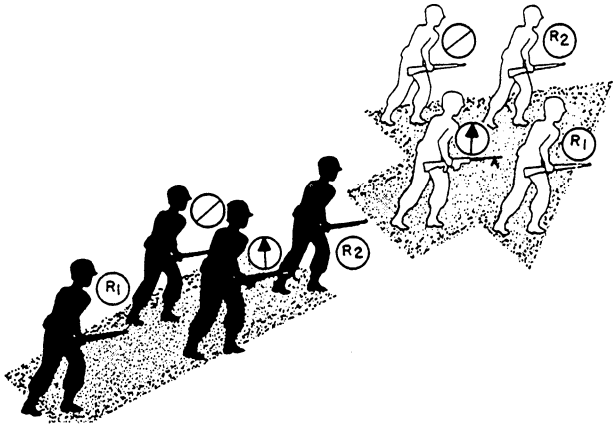


Figure 4-8.—Column to wedge.

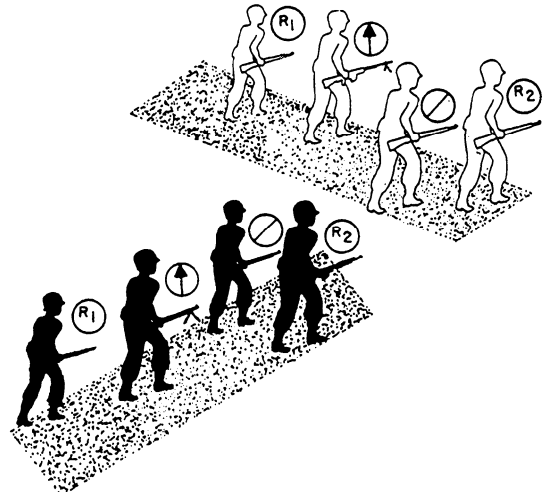


Figure 4-11.—Column to echelon left.

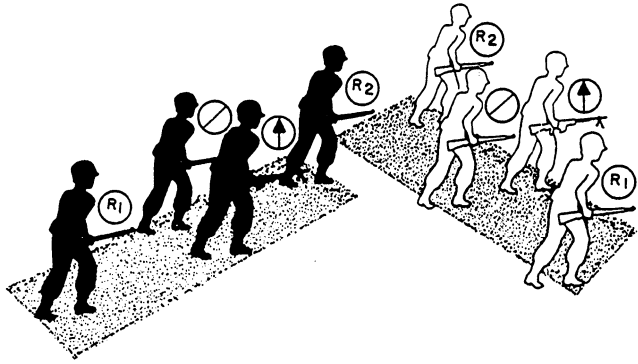


Figure 4-9.—Column to skirmishers right.

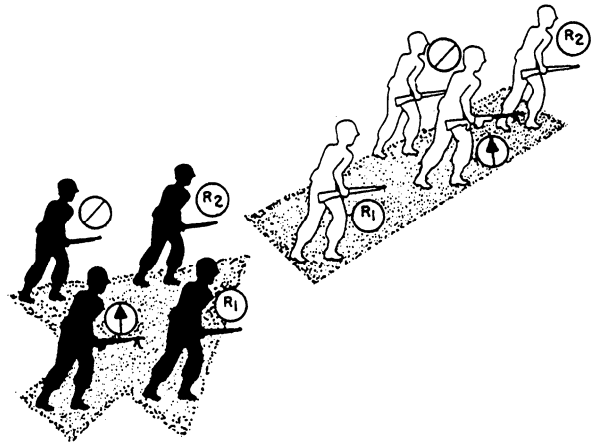


Figure 4-12.—Wedge to column.

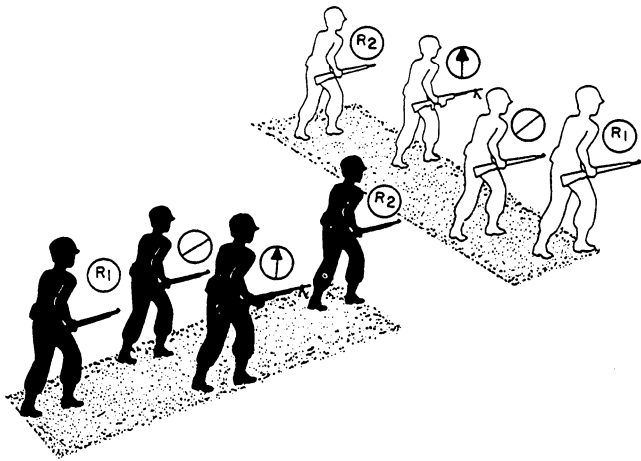


Figure 4-10.—Column to skirmishers left.

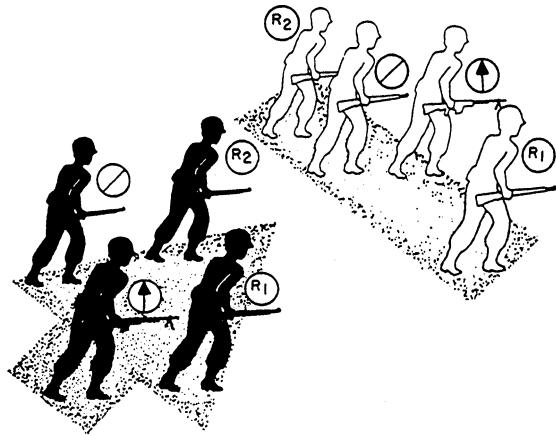


Figure 4-13.—Wedge to skirmishers right.

FIRE TEAM WEDGE

The fire team wedge formation (fig. 4-7, view 2) is used when the enemy situation is unknown but contact is possible. When the terrain and the visibility require dispersion of the men, the wedge formation provides

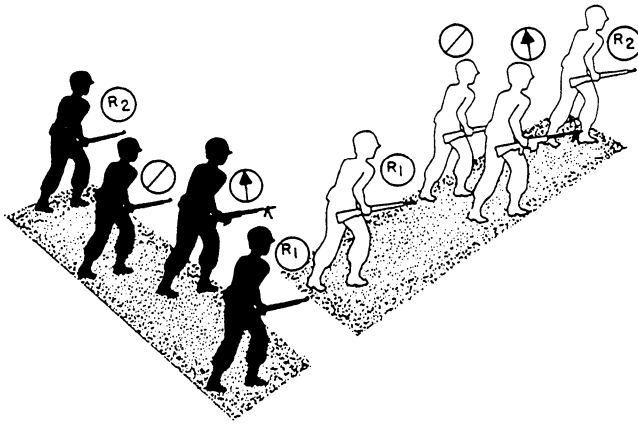


Figure 4-14.—Skirmishers right to column.

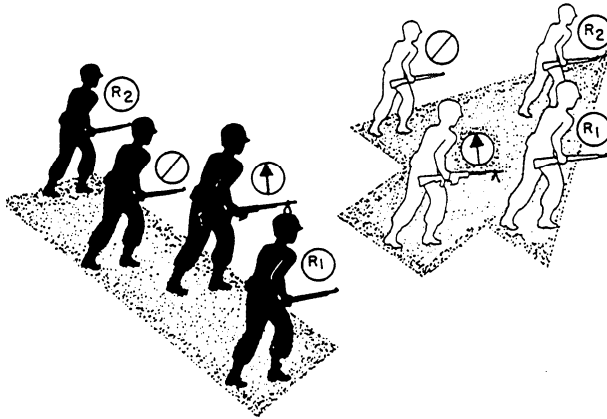


Figure 4-15.—Skirmishers right to wedge.

all-around protection and flexibility and is easy to control.

FIRE TEAM SKIRMISHERS RIGHT OR LEFT

Fire team skirmishers right or left (fig. 4-7, view 3) can be used most effectively when you are assaulting a known enemy position. It is also useful for “mopping up” operations (searching for enemy stragglers) and crossing short, open areas. Because the fire team is in a line, skirmishers right or left provides maximum firepower to the front. However, the formation is difficult to control.

FIRE TEAM ECHELON RIGHT OR LEFT

Fire team echelon right or left (fig. 4-7, view 4) is used primarily to protect an exposed flank. This formation permits heavy firepower to both the front and the direction of echelon. As with skirmishers, the formation is difficult to control; therefore, movement is

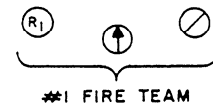
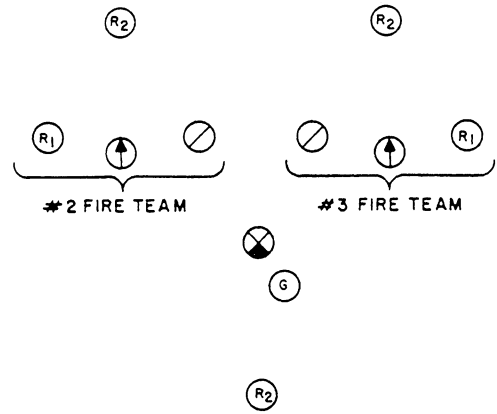


Figure 4-16.—Squad vee, fire teams in wedge.

generally slow, especially during conditions of reduced visibility.

CHANGING FIRE TEAM FORMATIONS

Depending upon the changing terrain features or the tactical situation, the fire team leader should change formations to meet these new conditions. Figures 4-8 through 4-15 show the manner in which each individual moves when changing from one formation to another.

RIFLE SQUAD FORMATIONS

The squad formations are similar to those of the fire team. However, an additional formation known as the SQUAD VEE is used by the squad, and skirmishers right or left is called SQUAD LINE.

The SQUAD LEADER designates the type of formation to be used, and he places himself in a location where he can readily observe his fire teams and the enemy. Normally, the fire team formation within the squad formation is left to the discretion of the fire team leader. For example, the squad may be in SQUAD VEE, but the fire team(s) may be in the fire team wedge (fig. 4-16). The exact formation is flexible at any level and is influenced by the terrain and the circumstances.

The grenadier always remains close to the squad leader regardless of the formation. His exact location in any formation depends upon the orders of his squad leader.

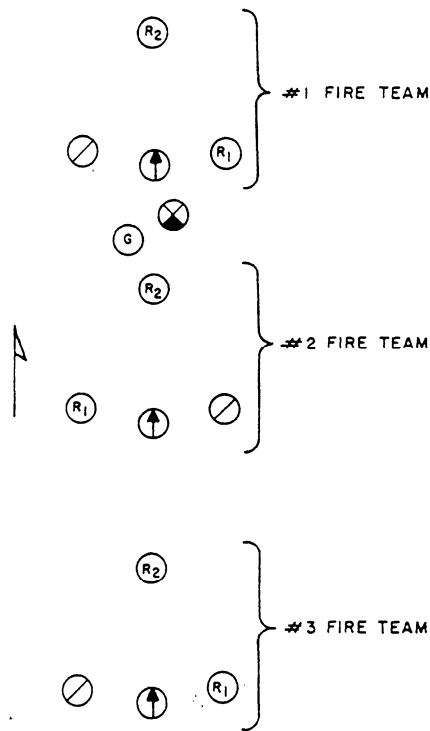


Figure 4-17.—Squad column, fire teams in wedge.

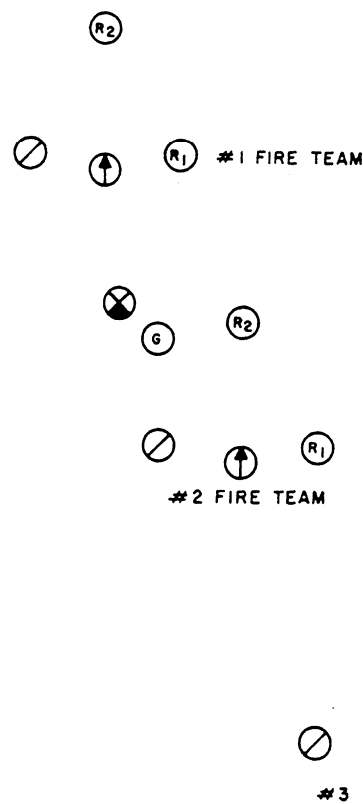


Figure 4-19.—Squad echelon right or left, fire teams in wedge.

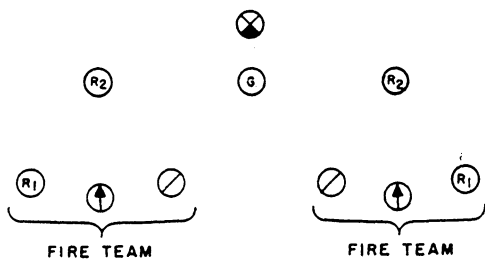
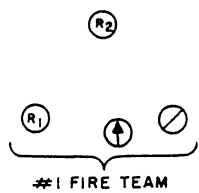


Figure 4-18.—Squad wedge, fire teams in wedge.

Squad Column

In SQUAD COLUMN (fig. 4-17), the fire teams are arranged in succession, one behind the other. This formation is vulnerable to fire from the front, but controlling and maneuvering are easy. It is especially suitable for wov, covered routes of advance; for maneuvering through gaps between areas receiving hostile artillery fire; for maneuvering through woods; and for moving in fog, smoke, or darkness.

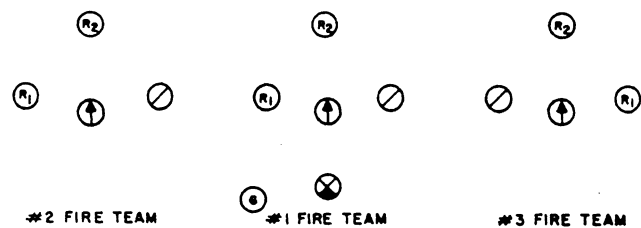


Figure 4-20.—Squad line, fire teams in wedge.

Squad Wedge and Squad Vee

The squad wedge (fig. 4-18) and squad vee (fig. 4-16) formations provide good security to both the front and the flanks. These formations are relatively easy to maneuver and control and can be quickly adapted to meet new tactical situations. The nature of the terrain generally determines which of the two formations should be used, the amount of frontage to cover, and the proximity and actions of the enemy.

Squad Echelon Right or Left

In squad echelon right or left, the fire teams are placed diagonally, one behind the other (fig. 4-19). This formation is used to protect an exposed flank, particularly when the enemy is known to be on that flank. From this formation, maximum firepower can be

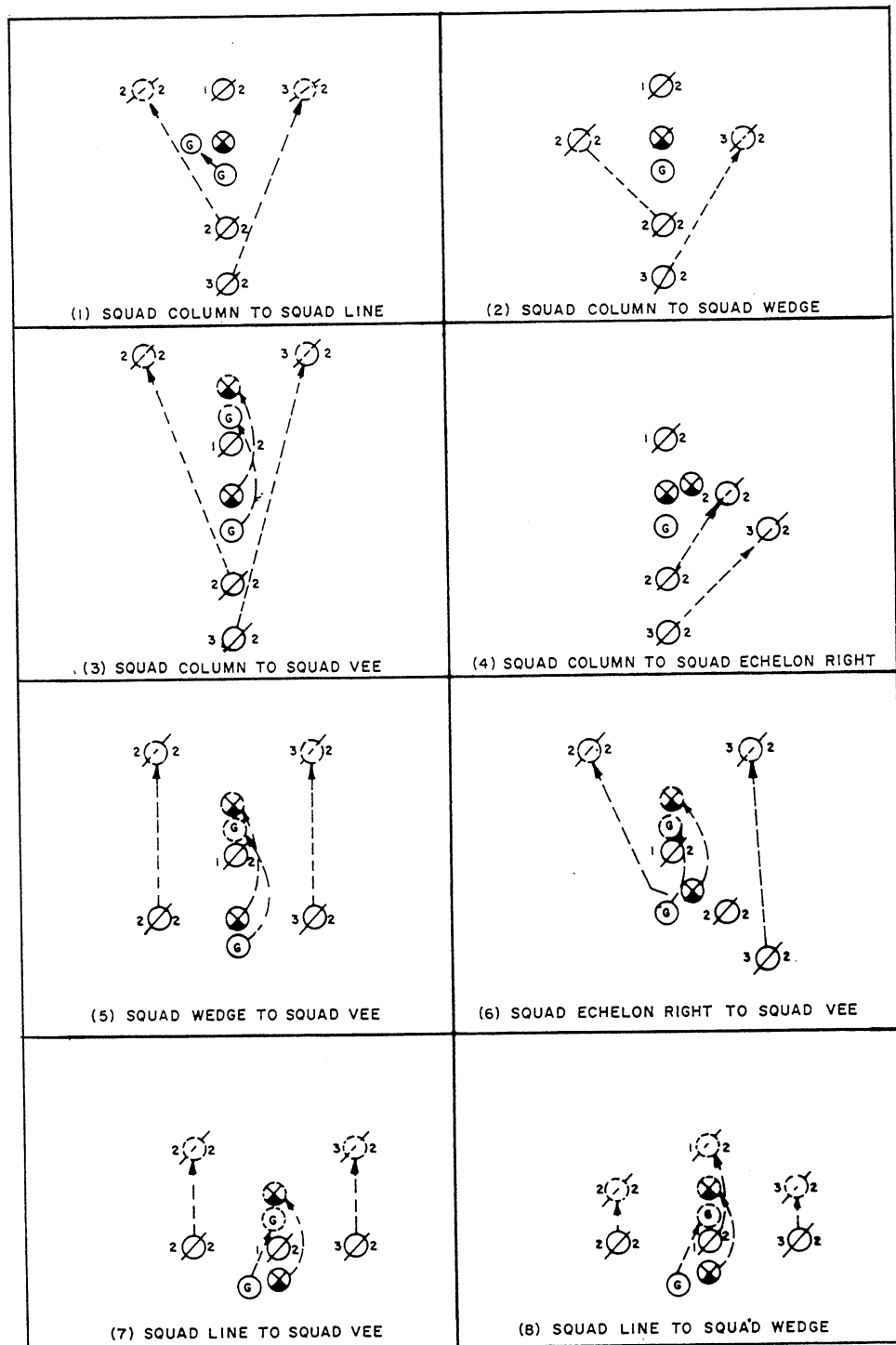


Figure 4-21.—Change squad formations.

promptly delivered to the right or left flank or toward the right or left front.

Squad Line

The squad line, as the name implies, places all three fire teams abreast of one another on a line (fig. 4-20). This permits maximum firepower to the front in the shortest time, so the squad line is used extensively

during an assault on a known enemy position. The squad line is suitable for rapidly crossing an unavoidable open area covered by enemy machine guns or artillery.

Changing Squad Formations

Squad leaders change squad formations in the same way and for the same reasons as the fire team leaders change the fire team formations. Figure 4-21 shows the

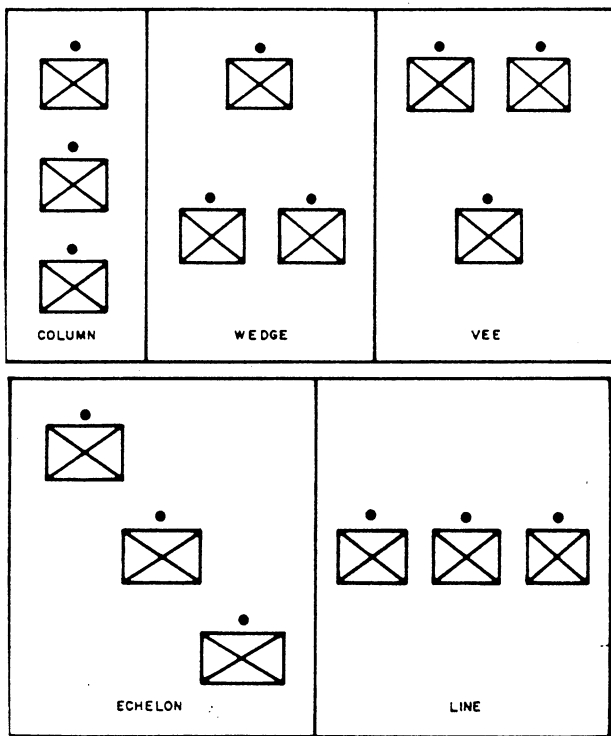


Figure 4-22.—Rifle platoon formations.

majority of these changes. Notice that the first fire team is used as a pivot for all formations and that the other fire teams take the most direct route to their new location. Although any formation shown can also be used to show the opposite movement, remember that all movement is to the front. For example, figure 4-21, view 1, shows a squad column moving to the squad line. To move from the squad line back into the squad column, fire teams two and three would not move to the rear and fall in behind team one. Instead, fire team one would move forward rapidly. Then teams two and three would move at a forward angle in behind it.

RIFLE PLATOON FORMATIONS

The platoon commander selects the initial attack formation for his platoon. However, he may change this formation as the attack progresses to meet a changing tactical situation. The available avenues of approach toward the enemy affect the platoon commander's choice to a great degree. Also, the need for security, control, flexibility, and speed influences his choice. On occasion, the platoon commander may prescribe the initial formation of the fire teams within the squads.

Platoon formations (fig. 4-22) are similar to squad formations and are described below.

Platoon Column

The platoon column makes control easier and action to the flanks favorable. It uses minimum firepower in a forward direction and is useful when speed and control are governing factors and when visibility is limited. The platoon column is suitable for advancing through narrow, covered avenues of approach with maximum speed and control.

Platoon Wedge

The platoon wedge makes control easier, provides good all-around security, and is extremely flexible. It permits reasonable firepower to both the front and the flanks. When the enemy is known to be in the area but his exact strength and location are unknown or not clear, the platoon wedge should be used. Also, it is useful when the terrain and visibility require a greater dispersion of the platoon. The wedge tends to keep the bulk of the platoon from becoming engaged with the enemy too soon. It also permits flexibility in the employment of squads when contact is established.

Platoon Vee

The platoon vee uses movement into the platoon line formation (fig. 4-22). The platoon vee provides excellent firepower to both the front and the flanks, and it is useful primarily when the strength of the enemy and their location to the front are known. The platoon vee is easy to control and provides good security but is less maneuverable than the wedge.

Platoon Echelon Right or Left

The platoon echelon formations are hard to control; therefore, movements are slow and maneuvering difficult. However, it does provide heavy firepower to the front and in the direction of echelon. The platoon echelon is used primarily in protecting an exposed flank either right or left.

Platoon Line

The platoon line formation allows the platoon to deliver maximum firepower to the front. It is difficult to control and is most often used in the coordinated assault of all three squads.

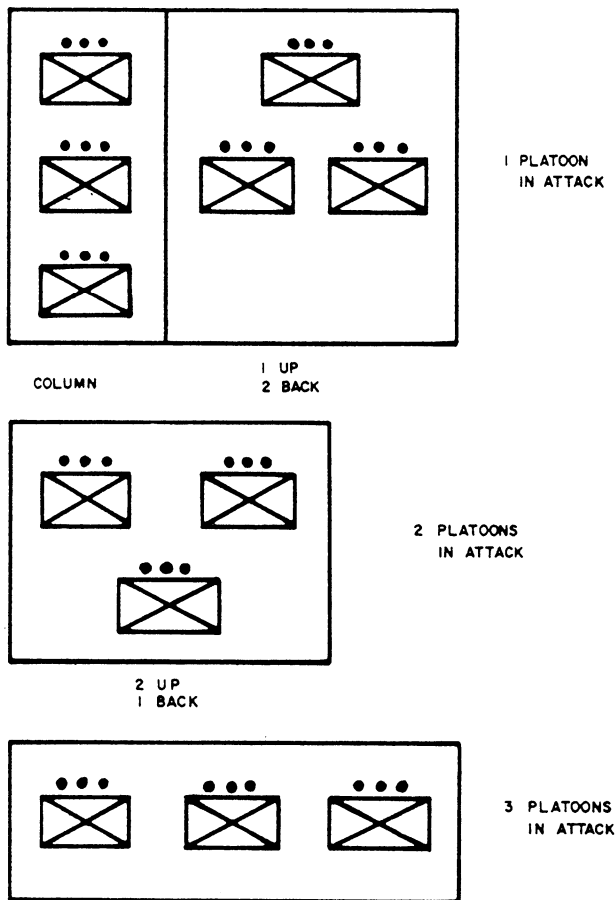


Figure 4-23.—Rifle company attack formations.

Changing the Platoon Formation

Generally, the relative positions of the squads within the platoon remain fairly constant. However, since combat is unpredictable, changes are often necessary. As usual, these changes must be made as rapidly and smoothly as possible.

Platoon formation changes are identical to those of the squads, as shown in figure 4-21. The platoon commander, along with his staff, tries to stay in a central location to best observe the situation and to control the attack

RIFLE COMPANY ATTACK FORMATIONS

The rifle company commander distributes his company into three elements: a main attacking force, a supporting attack force, and a reserve force. Attacking forces, fire support forces, and the reserves are all specifically designated in an ATTACK ORDER issued by the senior commander. Usually, the supporting attack is an attack by fire, whereas one or more rifle platoons maneuvering to seize the assigned objective(s) compose

the main attack force. The supporting attack force may contain units from the weapons platoon. In fact, the two major construction or rifle companies (Charlie and Delta) of a construction battalion each have their own weapons platoon. The reserve force is kept to the rear of the attacking forces where it can readily move to the attack should the need arise. There are no fixed conditions to determine the most appropriate formation for a given situation. The company commander must weigh all circumstances of terrain, the strength and location of the enemy, and the friendly fire support available to decide on one of the following attack formations (fig. 4-23).

One Platoon in Attack

A formation of one platoon in attack and two platoons in reserve provides limited firepower to the front and a strong reserve. This formation should be used when information about the enemy is vague or when the company attacking has one or both flanks exposed. This formation may be used when only a single, narrow avenue of approach is available or when you are attacking to seize an objective deep in enemy territory. The reserve platoons may follow the attacking platoon in company column, or they may be positioned to protect one or both flanks. This formation provides a lot of variety in positioning and moving reserve platoons and allows the company commander maximum flexibility in maneuvering and controlling these platoons.

Two Platoons in Attack

Two platoons in attack and one platoon in reserve provide moderate firepower to the front while retaining a reserve large enough to influence the action. This formation may be appropriate when relatively detailed information concerning the enemy is available.

Three Platoons in Attack

When formation has three platoons in attack and none in reserve, the company lacks a reserve force to influence the action. This formation provides maximum firepower to the front and is useful when a wide area must be cleared rapidly or when the enemy situation is known.

WEAPONS UNITS FORMATIONS

Weapons platoons provide maneuvering rifle units with machine gun, rocket, and mortar fire during the attack. This is normally done by deploying the weapons

units in strategic locations, so they can deliver a large volume of fire against the enemy position. This fire, known as the BASE OF FIRE, is intended to keep the enemy pinned down while the rifle units maneuver against them.

After a decision is made for a weapons unit to accompany a rifle unit in the assault, that unit (team, squad, or platoon) is directly under the command of the senior rifle unit leader. For example, one machine gun squad consisting of two machine gun teams could be attached to a single rifle platoon. Then the machine gun squad leader is directly under the control of the rifle platoon commander. During any advance or movement, the machine gun section leader positions himself within easy signaling distance of the rifle platoon commander. The positions of the two machine gun teams are well within the advancing unit in sight of their squad leader. Preferably, they are in a position to move quickly to either flank. The rifle unit leader must provide the weapons units with security in all directions. When possible, there should always be at least one fire team between a weapons unit and the enemy.

There are no combat formations specifically designed for the weapons units. However, the units should assume a formation similar to that being used by the unit to which they are attached. So, if the rifle unit leader forms his men into a line to cross an open area, the weapons unit leader should do the same with his men.

Once a position is reached where the weapons can effectively provide a base of fire, the rifle unit leader should order the weapons unit leader to set up his weapons. Targets should be designated by the rifle unit leader. Once the enemy is engaged, the rifle units can maneuver to overrun and destroy them. The weapons units should continue to deliver fire until the enemy is destroyed or until they are endangering their own troops.

PATROL AND AMBUSH

A patrol is a detachment of troops sent out from a larger body on a mission of combat, reconnaissance, security, or contact with friendly units. There are two general classes of patrols—reconnaissance and combat—either of which could have a mission of security. The classification is derived from the mission assigned to a patrol. In the Seabees you are primarily concerned with defensive combat; therefore, when training your men in patrolling, your emphasis should be on security patrolling, rather than aggressive patrolling.

In security patrolling, both reconnaissance (recon) and combat patrols are used. The typical Seabee defense is a static defense; therefore, the recon patrol is mainly used to detect enemy movement toward your position. The combat patrol is used to destroy enemy recon patrols and to delay and confuse an enemy attack.

RECONNAISSANCE PATROL

Reconnaissance patrols are sent out to gain information about the enemy or the terrain. These patrols engage in combat only when it becomes necessary to accomplish their mission or to protect themselves. In general, they should avoid combat and accomplish their mission by stealth.

Reconnaissance patrols have a variety of missions, but their primary mission is to obtain and report information in a timely manner to the commander who desires it.

A reconnaissance patrol might be dispatched to do the following:

1. Locate and observe the characteristics of a hostile position or installation
2. Reconnoiter a possible route of march for an enemy force.
3. Reconnoiter a certain terrain feature or the general nature of the terrain in a given locality.
4. Patrol the perimeter of the defense area in a static defense. Of primary importance is enemy troop buildup or movement and the type of weaponry in their possessions.

The missions mentioned above are by no means all-inclusive and are provided merely as examples.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY MISSIONS

A patrol should never be given more than a single primary mission. However, an ALTERNATE mission can be assigned that may be carried out if the primary mission cannot be achieved. In addition, SECONDARY missions may be assigned when they are consistent with carrying out the primary or alternate mission.

SIZE OF PATROLS

A patrol may consist of two men, a fire team, or a larger tactical unit. The size of a combat patrol or reconnaissance patrol depends on several influencing factors that must be considered before the patrol is dispatched. Sometimes, a small patrol may be able to

execute the mission. At other times, a strong combat patrol may be needed. In general, a patrol is comprised of the least number of men needed to carry out a given mission, with careful thought given to safety, time available, and messenger requirements.

The size of a patrol is influenced by the following factors:

1. Mission
2. Terrain and visibility
3. Distance from friendly troops
4. Time the patrol will be out
5. Number of messages the patrol may have to send back
6. Whether prisoners are to be captured and sent back

Patrols with missions requiring combat or a strong likelihood of combat are usually stronger than patrols on reconnaissance missions. Also, when a patrol intends to be gone for some time and is going to operate at a considerable distance from friendly troops, the patrol must be stronger because there is greater danger from enemy attack.

A reconnaissance patrol rarely exceeds a squad in size. Units larger than a squad are too noisy, more difficult to control, move more slowly, and have greater difficulty approaching the enemy without detection. The fire team is ideal for short-range reconnaissance patrols.

The patrol leader receives a **PATROL ORDER** containing all the instructions, information, and guidance needed to plan, prepare for, and accomplish a particular type of mission. Patrol orders are discussed further in chapter 11.

A patrol order varies according to circumstances, such as checkpoints, general route, and communications plan.

The **TIME OF DEPARTURE** may be in general terms: "Leave after dark" or "Leave before daylight." However, a patrol order may give a specific time of departure to avoid congestion in a particular area, to reduce the possibility of collision between patrols, to maintain strict control by the command, or for other reasons.

The **TIME OF RETURN** maybe either general or specific. Information obtained by a reconnaissance patrol can have a significant impact on future combat operations. Every effort must be made to provide reports at the time(s) specified.

CHECKPOINTS are points along the patrol route from which the patrol is expected to report in-usually by radio.

The **GENERAL ROUTE** is usually designated by checkpoints. An exact route is seldom feasible except in reconnaissance. When command desires to maintain strict control of the patrol, the order may specify an exact route.

The **COMMUNICATIONS PLAN** lists the reports the patrol must make and the medium (usually radio) by which they are to be sent.

PATROL FORMATIONS

A particular patrol formation. should provide for all-around security and good control. The formation chosen should be such that only a minimum number of men within the patrol are likely to be pinned down at any one time by surprise fire.

Patrol formations must be fluid and flexible. They must be changed to meet varying terrain and visibility conditions. The patrol leader designates the original formation. Individual members then maintain assigned positions as long as they can see each other and, at the same time, make full use of available cover and concealment.

Patrols use basic combat formations. For small patrols in open terrain, the wedge is a suitable formation. For larger patrols or when visibility becomes restricted, the column formation, with its necessary security elements, should be used.

When enemy contact is near or has already been made, patrol leaders should adopt more deployed formations.

Normally, the following factors influence and change a patrol formation:

- Mission
- Terrain
- Visibility
- Enemy situation
- Size of patrol
- Required speed of movement

The formations taken by a patrol are **ALWAYS** influenced by the need for maintaining

1. security,

2. the mission, and
3. the route of the patrol.

CONTROL

The patrol leader places himself where he can best maintain control. Normally, this is at, or near, the head of the patrol but depends somewhat upon the patrol route. When the route is clearly defined, the leader should take a position within the patrol wherever his signals can best be seen by patrol members. If the route is ill-defined as in dense woods, jungle, or at night, the leader must be in, or with, the leading group.

The second in command, the assistant patrol leader, assists the patrol leader in controlling the patrol. He helps the patrol leader by controlling the rear of the patrol and by preventing men from falling behind or getting out of position. He is continually alert for signals or orders and watches to see the other members receive those orders or signals. He observes the rear to prevent the patrol from attack from that direction. He is ready to assume command of the patrol if the leader becomes a casualty.

Patrols are controlled in the daytime by arm-and-hand signals and oral orders. Each member of a patrol must be thoroughly familiar with the standard arm-and-hand signals. These signals are discussed in chapter 11. Before contact with the enemy has been made, the patrol leader must issue his orders. Oral orders are a sure means of control. Commands should be just loud enough to be heard by patrol members. When near the enemy, you should halt the patrol before issuing orders. The leader moves from man to man and quietly provides instructions. Sound signals may be used if they will not be confused with other noises. When a sound signal is to be used, the patrol leader should rehearse it before beginning the patrol. Control by voice is usually better than by other sound signals.

Though darkness helps a patrol move close the enemy without being detected, it increases the problem of control. To overcome this, each man is required to keep in sight of the man to his front and flank. This procedure ensures everyone is in position to receive signals and orders.

SECURITY

All-around security must be maintained at all times. This is done within a patrol by using formations that provide protection to the front, flanks, and rear. These elements are the eyes, ears, and fingers of the patrol

leader. The patrol moves by following his signals. They must maintain contact with him at all times, except when a bush or small terrain feature briefly gets in the way. To maintain contact with the patrol leader, security elements must glance in his direction every few steps.

Point and Scouts

Small patrols may use only one man or as many as a fire team as the point. The size depends on the enemy situation, terrain, and patrol route. Normally, a squad-size patrol uses two riflemen as scouts; however, should the patrol come into a dangerous area or close to the enemy, the leader might increase the number in the point. The leader may use an entire fire team to cover the advance of the patrol.

The automatic rifleman moves slightly behind the rest of the fire team. From this position, he can cover the movements of the scouting element. The size of the point increases in relation to the size of the patrol.

The point is responsible for investigating the route of advance immediately to the front of the patrol. When visibility is good, it may precede the main body by as much as 100 yards. The point must always maintain visual contact with the patrol leader.

Flanks

One man on each side may provide flank security for a patrol the size of a squad, or less. The flanks move as directed by the patrol leader. In special instances, two-man groups may be necessary. Such a group keeps one man where he can see the patrol leader at all times. He remains within 100 yards of the leader. The man farther out remains in sight of the inside man, normally within 20 to 25 yards.

In open terrain, the flankers should investigate cover within 100 yards of the general route of march of the patrol. Flankers may become impractical because of reduced visibility in dense woods or jungle. Then the men normally assigned to flank protection move with the patrol itself. They maintain close observation to their assigned flank.

Rear Point

A small patrol normally has only one rifleman assigned as rear point. He remains in sight and within about 50 yards of the last man of the patrol. This rifleman maintains rear security for the patrol by constantly observing to the rear. If the patrol is ambushed, he stays out of the fire fight. If the patrol is annihilated or

obviously will be, he is the getaway man and returns to friendly lines to report the situation.

The rear point varies in size, depending on the enemy situation and the size of the patrol. Usually, keeping a sharp lookout to the rear to prevent a surprise enemy attack from that direction is necessary.

MOVEMENTS

Before leaving friendly lines, the patrol leader must select a route to his final destination. This may be done on a map, on an aerial photograph, or on the actual ground to be covered. He should select intermediate objectives along that route. These successive objectives regulate the progress of the patrol.

A patrol should always designate one or more rally points where it can reassemble if it is dispersed, ambushed, or surprised by enemy attack. Normally, an intermediate objective becomes the rallying point as the patrol moves beyond it. In this way, the patrol leader can be sure each individual of the patrol is thoroughly familiar with the rallying point locations.

Members of a dispersed patrol should try to reach the designated rallying point quickly so the mission may be readily resumed. If the patrol leader does not arrive within a reasonable period of time, the second in command must reorganize the patrol and carry out the mission.

SPECIAL ORGANIZATION

A special organization is simply a general organization varied to suit a particular mission or a particular set of circumstances; for example, in area reconnaissance, a patrol might be organized into several reconnaissance teams with each team providing its own security and NO separately organized security element; however, the patrol leader uses the same security techniques he uses for a day patrol, modifying them only as necessary.

PATROL PLANNING AND PREPARATION

The first requirement for a patrol leader is a thorough understanding of the patrol order. Be sure you understand all of the instruction clearly and take notes. After you have heard the order, if there are points on which you are not entirely clear, ASK QUESTIONS.

To make the best use of time, facilities, and personnel, the squad leader and the fire team leader

follow a standard procedure (listed below) while preparing for and executing assigned missions. Depending upon the circumstances and the type of operation, the leader may take some steps before he takes others. At times, some steps may not be required or may not be possible because of time limitations. Time is the governing factor in applying patrol planning steps. All steps should be considered, although the degree of consideration for each step may vary. The normal sequence is as follows:

1. Study the mission.
2. Plan use of time.
3. Study terrain and situation.
4. Organize the patrol.
5. Select men, weapons, and equipment.
6. Issue the warning order.
7. Coordinate (continuous throughout the patrol).
8. Make reconnaissance.
9. Complete detailed plans.
10. Issue patrol order.
11. Supervise (at all times), inspect, rehearse, and reinspect.
12. Execute the mission.

STUDY THE MISSION

The patrol leader carefully studies the mission. Through study of the mission, the terrain, and the situation, he identifies the essential tasks to be accomplished to execute the mission. These essential tasks become missions of the patrol's elements and teams for which the organization, personnel, and equipment must be considered.

PLAN USE OF TIME

The first step in planning is to allot (approximately) the available time remaining before departure. When you fully understand the order, mentally outline everything that must be done before you leave, and allot time for each item. Start with the time of departure and work backward. This procedure, titled BACKWARD PLANNING, helps to ensure that you have allowed sufficient time for each necessary action.

STUDY TERRAIN AND SITUATION

Study the friendly and enemy situation closely for the effect that troop dispositions, strengths, and capabilities may have on your mission. These factors will influence the route you take, the size and organization of your patrol, and the weapons and equipment the patrol will carry.

Study the map of the terrain over which the patrol intends to operate. The nature of the terrain in the vicinity of the objective will determine the number of security teams needed and the manner in which you will conduct your leader's reconnaissance of the objective.

ORGANIZE THE PATROL

Organizing consists of determining the elements and teams required to accomplish the mission of the patrol. Organization of the patrol, either special or general, is given in the patrol warning order.

SELECT MEN, WEAPONS, AND EQUIPMENT

The patrol leader selects patrol members from the platoon or squad he commands. He should maintain the regular fire team or squad organization when possible. No man who may interfere with the mission should be included in the patrol. An example is a man with a cold. His coughing or sneezing could give the patrol away to the enemy.

The patrol takes along only those weapons absolutely necessary for mission accomplishment. The same criterion applies to the equipment. Five categories of equipment are usually required. They are as follows:

- **OBJECTIVE AREA** equipment. This IS the equipment you need to accomplish the mission. It includes such items as weapons and ammunition, demolition charges, and fiber line (small stuff) for binding prisoners.

- **EN ROUTE** equipment. This is equipment that assists or enables you to reach the objective. It includes such items as maps, compasses, binoculars, flashlights, wire cutters, and stream-crossing lines.

- **CONTROL** equipment. This is equipment for maintaining communications and control. It includes telephones, whistles, pyrotechnics, flashlights, and luminous tape.

- **WATER AND FOOD.** Every man carries a canteen of water. On a long patrol, each man may carry

two canteens plus rations to cover mealtimes during absence. For a very long patrol, arrangements must be made to resupply food and water.

- **ROUTINE** equipment. This is the equipment patrol members carry. It includes the uniform and web equipment. Usually, each man carries a poncho and one extra pair of socks. Gloves should be worn, even in warm weather, to protect your hands from thorns, sharp rocks, and barbed wire.

ISSUE THE WARNING ORDER

To give individual patrol members maximum time to prepare, the patrol leader should issue a **WARNING ORDER** to **ALL** members as soon as possible after the patrol order is received. The warning order should include the following:

- A brief statement of the situation so patrol members will know what friendly and enemy units are doing.
- The mission of the patrol, given exactly as it was received.
- General instructions.

General instructions should include the following:

- The patrol's general or special organization; that is, assigning specific tasks to specific elements.
- The specified uniforms, including any camouflage and identification measures.
- The specific weapons, ammunition, and equipment.
- The individuals to accompany the patrol leader on reconnaissance and those individuals that are to supervise subcategories of preparation.
- Instructions for obtaining water, rations, weapons, ammunition, and equipment.

The chain of command. (In a patrol composed of personnel from different units, the patrol leader establishes a chain of command.)

The time schedule. (The time schedule includes mealtimes and the time, place, and uniform for receiving the patrol leader's order.)

COORDINATION

In general, coordination means the arrangements made by other units to cooperate in the mission of the patrol. Examples are as follows:

Friendly units in whose areas the patrol will operate must be informed so the patrol will not be endangered by fire from other friendly units.

To depart from or reenter a friendly area, the unit occupying that area may be required to provide guides to lead the patrol around obstacles, such as mines or wire.

Friendly units may be called on to give the patrol fire support. Fire support is fire delivered for the purpose of aiding another unit by doing the following:

- Inflicting casualties on the enemy
- Diverting the attention of the enemy from the patrol
- Concealing the movements of the patrol by smoke
- Providing illumination
- Giving the patrol directional guidance

You may be required to establish coordination with other units yourself, or some or all of your coordination may be established by the command. In the latter case, you must check to ensure that nothing required has been overlooked.

MAKE RECONNAISSANCE

While the patrol is preparing for the mission, the leader should make a visual reconnaissance, when possible, to get information not available on the map. This should be an aerial reconnaissance, if possible. Check the route to be followed, noting prominent features of the terrain and any signs of enemy activity. When aerial reconnaissance is impossible, try to find a good location from which to observe the area.

COMPLETE DETAILED PLAN

After the patrol leader has received the patrol order, issued the warning order, and made a reconnaissance, he prepares a detailed plan for accomplishing the mission. This plan includes the following:

The specific duties of each element.

The route of return and an **ALTERNATE** route in case of detection by the enemy.

Patrol conduct, such as

- the formation to maintain and the order of movement to follow,
- the points of departure from and reentry into friendly areas,
- the rallying points and the action(s) to take there,
- the action to take upon enemy contact,
- the action to take in danger areas, and
- the action to take at the objective.

Check to ensure that all the weapons, ammunition, and equipment specified in the warning order have been obtained.

Determine the disposition to be made of friendly forces that are wounded and enemy prisoners.

Signal system to use.

Report system to follow.

Challenge and password to use not only within the patrol but also in areas covered by other friendly units.

Check to ensure that everybody has a place in the chain of command.

Location of leaders—that is, where the leader plans to be in the formation and where the leader plans to station the assistant patrol leader.

ISSUE OF PATROL ORDERS

A patrol leader should issue orders in a clear, concise, and forceful manner. Follow the standard operation order format, as shown in figure 11-36 of chapter 11. All patrol members should be present. The patrol leader precedes the order with a complete oral description of the plan and answers all questions after completing the order.

SUPERVISE, INSPECT, REHEARSE, AND REINSPECT

The patrol leader should hold a **REHEARSAL** of the mission, even if the patrol is thoroughly experienced. Before the rehearsal, the leader should hold an **INSPECTION** to determine the state of readiness, both physical and mental, of the men. The patrol leader must satisfy himself as to the completeness and correctness of uniform, weapons, and equipment. Then he will

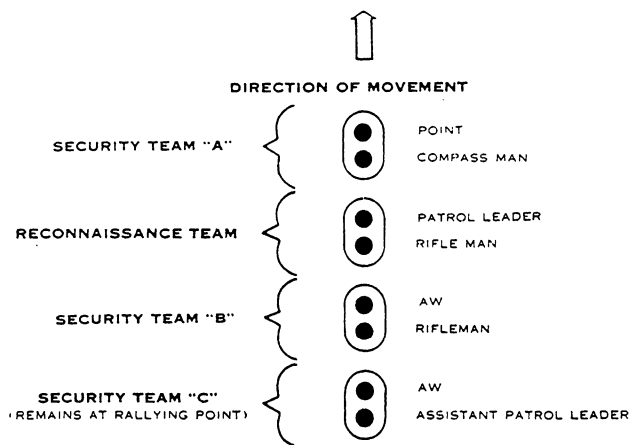


Figure 4-24.—Sample of reconnaissance patrol organization for movement.

question the men to ensure that each man knows the following:

- The planned operations of the patrol
- The part he will play
- What others will do, insofar as their actions relate to him
- All challenges, passwords, reporting times, and other significant details

A rehearsal improves the operational proficiency of the patrol and allows you to check the plans and to make needed changes. If the patrol is to operate at night, conduct both day and night rehearsals. When possible, use terrain similar to that over which you will operate. If time permits, rehearse all actions. Where time is limited, rehearse critical actions. Action at the objective is the most critical phase of the patrol and should always be rehearsed.

Supervision is continuous by all patrol leaders throughout the planning, preparing, and completing of the patrol mission.

EXECUTE THE MISSION

The successful completion of a patrol is the end result of the continuing efforts of every patrol member, including yourself, who has earnestly applied knowledge, skills, and ingenuity to accomplish the mission.

Some of the principles to follow in the conduct of your patrol and some of the techniques you may use are provided below. Remember, details vary with different circumstances.

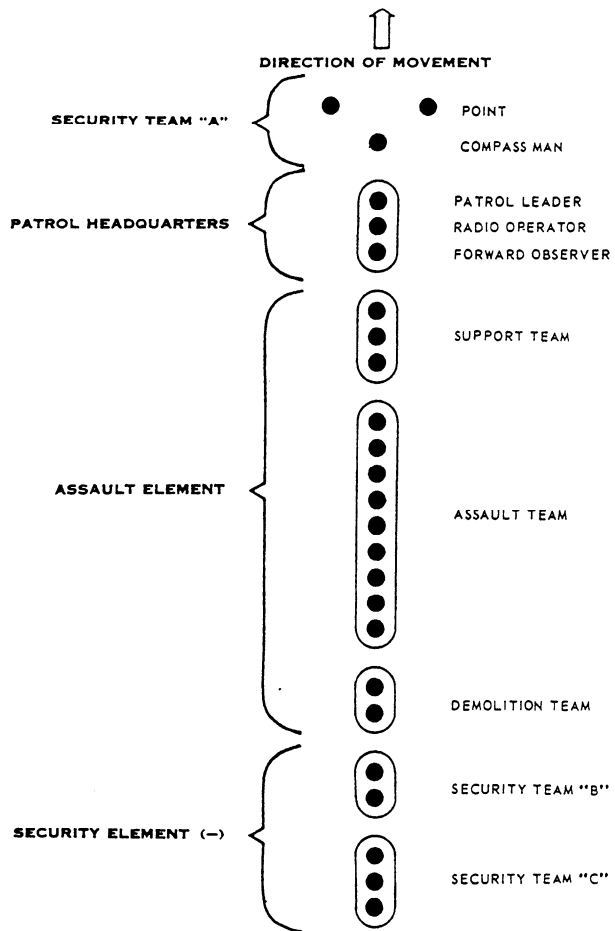


Figure 4-25.—Example of combat patrol organization for movement.

Formation and Order of Movement

The elements of the patrol are established by its general organization. The formation in which the patrol moves forward and the location of elements in the formation are called **ORGANIZATION FOR MOVEMENT**. An example of a reconnaissance patrol organization for movement is shown in figure 4-24. An example of a combat patrol organization for movement is shown in figure 4-25.

Departure and Reentry of Friendly Areas

Move cautiously when you approach positions in friendly areas; you will be regarded as an enemy until identified otherwise. The patrol leader should halt the patrol near the position; then go forward and contact the position and, if possible, the local **LEADER**. He takes at least one man with him. He may take more if the situation permits, but remember that unusual activity at a forward position may attract enemy attention. The

patrol leader tells personnel at the position the information they may need to assist him, such as the size of his patrol, his general route, and his expected time of return.

Request the latest information on the enemy, the terrain to the front, and any known obstacles or dangers. Check for communication facilities, fire support, and other assistance they can provide. Check the challenge and password, and determine whether the same personnel will be manning the position when you return. If not, ask them to relay information about your patrol to their relief. If you intend to be out longer than 1 day, obtain the challenge and passwords for each day you are out.

Rallying Points

A rallying point is a designated place where a patrol that has been dispersed can assemble and reorganize. It should provide cover, concealment, and be defensible for at least a short time. It must be easily recognizable and be known to all members of the patrol. Until a rallying point has been actually reached and found to be suitable, you should designate it as a **TENTATIVE RALLYING POINT**. To designate a definite rallying point, the patrol leader halts the patrol when he arrives there. He then announces, "This is a rallying point," and points out the identifying features.

There are three **TYPES** of rallying points:

1. **INITIAL** rallying point. This is a point within the friendly area where the patrol can rally if it becomes scattered before leaving the friendly area or before reaching the first tentative rallying point outside the friendly area.

2. **EN ROUTE** rallying point. This is a rallying point lying between the foremost friendly area and the objective.

3. **OBJECTIVE** rallying point. This is a rallying point near the objective where the patrol assembles after accomplishing the mission.

The patrol leader must select and designate a tentative initial and objective rallying point before the patrol starts off. If these points prove suitable when he reaches them, then he confirms them by declaring them rallying points. He will select other points en route as he reaches suitable locations.

The following are general rules for the use of rallying points:

1. Select the initial and the en route rallying points to prevent complete disintegration of the patrol if it is unavoidably dispersed before reaching the objective.

2. The objective rallying point makes it possible for the patrol to reassemble after it has dispersed to carry out the objective.

3. If the patrol is dispersed in friendly areas, it reassembles at the initial rallying point.

4. If the patrol is dispersed between the initial rallying point and the first en route rallying point, it will assemble at one or the other of these points. The patrol leader must designate in his patrol order whether he desires reassembly at the initial rallying point or the first en route rallying point.

5. If the patrol is dispersed between en route rallying points, it will assemble either at the last rallying point or at the next (tentative) rallying point. Again, the patrol leader must designate which of these alternatives he desires. In this and the former case, circumstances will control his decision.

Action on Enemy Contact

A patrol is subject to two types of enemy contact: (1) **CHANCE** contact and (2) **AMBUSH**. In chance contact, you come on the enemy unexpectedly, and the enemy is not prepared to deal with you. In ambush, you are subjected to an intentional surprise attack by an enemy that is concealed and lying in wait.

In a chance contact, you must break contact as quickly as possible and continue the mission. If you engage the enemy any longer than necessary, you could jeopardize the mission. The "clock" system is one way of breaking contact. The line of direction along which the patrol is moving is considered to be 12 o'clock. If the patrol leader called out "10 o'clock-200," that would order the patrol to move off 200 yards in the 10 o'clock direction. The patrol must, as far as possible, keep the original formation.

FIRE AND MOVEMENT is another way of breaking a chance contact. One portion of the patrol returns enemy fire while another portion moves off. The two groups alternate covering fire and movement until both have broken contact.

In an ambush, you may have the alternative of an assault in force to break through the ambush or a withdrawal like that used in a chance contact; however, a well-placed ambush usually prevents withdrawal by the flank. When you must break through by assault,

quickly determine the point of weakest enemy fire and assault this point with maximum firepower.

Action at Patrol Objectives

On a reconnaissance patrol, the patrol leader halts and conceals the patrol near the objectives; the place where he does this is usually the objective rallying point. He conducts a leader's reconnaissance to pinpoint the objective, then returns to the patrol and positions security teams according to the plan. He places these teams where they can best provide early warning of enemy approach and best cover the reconnaissance element. Then he reconnoiters the objective.

The patrol leader may be able to get the required information quickly and simply. Usually, the patrol leader must move to several positions, perhaps making a circle around the objective. In the event he must do this, the patrol leader instructs his assistant patrol leader to continue the mission if he does not return within a reasonable time. When reconnaissance is complete, the patrol leader assembles the patrol at the objective rallying point and tells everyone what he saw and heard. He has each man contribute anything significant that may have been seen or heard. He makes a preliminary report by radio whenever possible; then he returns to the unit as quickly as possible to make a full report.

AMBUSH

An ambush is a surprise attack from a concealed position upon a moving or temporarily halted target. The ambush is one of the oldest and most effective military operations. Ambush may include assault to close with, and decisively engage, the target or the attack may be by fire only. Ambush is highly effective in conventional operations but is even more suitable and effective in guerrilla and counter guerrilla operations.

Ambush is a favorite tactic of guerrilla forces because it does not require that ground be seized and held. Also, it enables small forces with limited weapons and equipment to harass or destroy larger, better armed forces. An ambush is an effective counter guerrilla measure because it forces the guerrillas to engage in decisive combat at unfavorable times and places. An ambush denies the guerrillas the freedom of movement on which their success so greatly depends. It also deprives the guerrillas of weapons, ammunition, and equipment that is difficult to replace; and the death or capture of "hard core" personnel greatly weakens the guerrilla force.

Ambushes are executed for the general purpose of reducing the overall combat effectiveness of the enemy and for the specific purposes of destruction and harassment. Destruction is the primary purpose because the loss of men killed or captured and the loss of equipment and supplies destroyed or captured critically affects the enemy. The capture of equipment and supplies may assist our forces.

Harassment is a secondary purpose. Though less apparent than physical damage, it is very important. Frequent ambushes force the enemy to divert men from other missions to guard convoys, troop movements, and carrying parties. When patrols fail to accomplish their missions because they have been ambushed, the enemy is deprived of the valuable contributions these patrols would make to the combat effort. A series of successful ambushes causes the enemy to be less aggressive and more defensive. They become apprehensive, overly cautious, reluctant to go on patrols, to move in convoys, or to move in small groups. After being ambushed, the enemy seeks to avoid night operations, are more subject to confusion and panic, and generally decline in effectiveness.

The two main types of ambush are point ambush and area ambush. A **POINT AMBUSH** is one where forces are deployed to support the attack of a single killing zone. An **AREA AMBUSH** is one where forces are deployed for multiple, related point ambushes.

In a deliberate ambush (an ambush planned as a specific action against a specific target), detailed information about the target is required: the size, nature, organization, armament, equipment, route of movement, and the times the target will reach or pass certain points on its route. There are two situations where deliberate ambushes should be planned. The first situation is when you receive reliable information on intended movement of a specific force; the second is when patrols, convoys, carrying parties, or similar forces establish patterns of size, time, and movement sufficient to permit detailed planning for this ambush.

The ambush of a target of opportunity is often the action of a search and attack patrol. When available information does not permit the detailed planning required for deliberate ambush, an ambush of opportunity is planned. Then the ambush force plans and appeals. A search and attack patrol, before departing, plans and rehearses the ambush of the types of targets that may be encountered. This force establishes and executes ambushes as targets of opportunity arise.

FUNDAMENTALS OF SUCCESSFUL AMBUSH

Surprise, coordinated fire, and control are the basic elements essential to a successful ambush.

Surprise must be achieved or the attack is not an ambush; surprise distinguishes ambush from other forms of attack. Also, surprise allows the ambush force to seize and retain control of the situation. When complete surprise cannot be achieved, it must be so nearly complete that the target is not aware of the ambush until too late for effective reaction. Surprise is achieved by careful planning, thorough preparation, and exact execution. Only through detailed planning and thorough preparation can you make a sound decision on when, where, and what type of targets you should or should **NOT** attack and how you will attack so the enemy is **LEAST** prepared.

All weapons, including mines and demolitions, must be positioned. All firepower, including that of available artillery and mortars, must be coordinated to achieve the isolation of the killing zone to prevent escape or reinforcement. An ambush must also achieve the surprise delivery of a large volume of highly concentrated fire into the killing zone. The fire must inflict maximum damage so, when desired you can speedily assault and completely destroy the target.

Close control must be maintained during movement to, occupation of, and withdrawal from the ambush site. The ambush commander must effectively control all elements of the ambush force. Control is most critical at the time of approach of the target. Control measures must provide for the following:

1. Early warning of target approach
2. Withholding of fire until the target has moved into the killing zone
3. Opening fire at the proper time
4. Initiation of the right actions if the ambush is prematurely detected
5. Lifting or shifting of supporting fires when the attack includes assault of the target
6. Timely and orderly withdrawal of the ambush force to an easily recognizable rally point

The men of the ambush force must maintain maximum control themselves so they do not compromise the ambush. They must use patience and self-discipline by remaining still and quiet while waiting for the target to appear. They may have to endure insect

bites, to thirst in silence, to resist the desire to sleep, to ease cramped muscles, and to perform normal body functions. When the target approaches, the men must resist the temptation to open fire before the signal is given.

POINT AMBUSH

A point ambush can be used independently or as part of an area ambush. In a point ambush, the attack force is positioned along the target's expected route of approach. The formation is an important consideration because it determines whether a point ambush is able to deliver the heavy volume of highly concentrated fire necessary to isolate, trap, and destroy the target.

The formation is determined by careful consideration of possible formations and the advantages and disadvantages of each in relation to the following:

1. The terrain, conditions of visibility, forces, weapons, and equipment
2. The ease of difficulty of control, and the target to be attacked
3. The overall combat situation

In this training manual, a few formations that have been developed for the deployment of point ambushes are discussed. Those discussed are identified by giving them names that correspond to the general pattern formed on the ground by the deployment of the attack force.

Line

The attack force is deployed generally parallel to the target's route of movement (road, trail, stream, etc.) This positions the attack force parallel to the long axis of the killing zone and subjects the target to heavy flanking fire. The area that the attack force can effectively cover with a heavy volume of highly concentrated fire limits the size of the killing zone that can trap the target. The target is trapped in the killing zone by natural obstacles, mines (Claymore, antivehicular, and antipersonnel), demolitions, and direct and indirect fire. A disadvantage of the line formation is the chance that lateral dispersion of the target may be too great for effective coverage. The line formation is appropriate in close terrain that restricts target maneuvers and in open terrain where one flank is restricted by natural obstacles or can be restricted by mines, demolitions, man-traps, or stakes. Similar obstacles can be placed between the attack force and the killing zone to provide protection from the target's

counterambush measures. When a destruction ambush is deployed in this reamer, access lines are left so the target can be assaulted. An advantage of the line formation is its relative ease of control under all conditions of visibility.

The L

The L-shaped formation is a variation of the line formation. The long side of the attack force is parallel to the killing zone and delivers flanking fire. The short side of the attack force is at the end of, and at right angles to, the killing zone and delivers enfilading fire that interlocks with fire from the other leg. This formation is very flexible. You can establish it on a straight stretch of a trail, stream, or at a sharp bend in a trail or stream. When appropriate, fire from the short leg can be shifted to parallel the long leg if the target attempts to assault or escape in the opposite direction. In addition, the short leg prevents escape in its direction and reinforcement from its direction

The Z

The Z-shaped formation is another variation of the line formation. The attack force is deployed as in the L formation, but with an additional side so the formation resembles the letter Z. The additional side may serve any of the following purposes:

1. To engage a force attempting to relieve or reinforce the target
2. To seal the end of the killing zone
3. To restrict a flank
4. To prevent envelopment

The T

In the T-shaped formation, the attack force is deployed across and at right angles to the target's route of movement so the attack force and the target form the letter *T*. This formation can be used day or night to establish a purely harassing ambush and, at night, to establish an ambush to stop or hamper enemy movement through open, hard-to-seal areas, such as rice paddies.

A small force can use the T formation to harass, slow, and disorganize a larger force. When the lead elements of the target are engaged, they normally attempt to maneuver right or left to close the ambush. Mines, man-traps, and other obstacles placed to the flanks of the killing zone slow the movements of the enemy. They also permit the ambush force to deliver

heavy fire and withdraw without becoming decisively engaged. An ambush established and executed in this manner is called a "bloody nose" ambush.

The T formation can be used to stop or hamper small groups attempting night movement across open areas; for example, you can deploy the attack force along a rice-paddy dike with every second man facing in the opposite direction. The attack of a target approaching from either direction requires only that every second man shift to the opposite side of the dike. Each man fires only to his front and only when the target is at very close range. Attack is by fire only and each man keeps the target under fire as long as it remains on his front. When the target attempts to escape in either direction along the dike, each man takes it under fire as it comes to his vicinity. The T formation is very effective at halting infiltration. But it has one chief disadvantage—there is a possibility that the ambush will engage a superior force at night while spread out; therefore, use of this formation must fit the local enemy situation.

The V

Deploy the V-shaped attack force along both sides of the target's route of movement so it forms the letter *V*. Care is taken to ensure that neither group nor leg fires into the other. This formation subjects the target to both enfilading and interlocking fire. The V formation is best suited for fairly open terrain but can also be used in the jungle. When established in the jungle, the legs of the V close in as the head elements of the target approach the apex of the V and open fire from close range. Here, even more than in open terrain, all movement and fire must be carefully coordinated and controlled to ensure that the fire of one leg does not endanger the other. The wider separation of forces makes this formation difficult to control, and there are fewer sites that favor its use. The main advantage of the V formation is the target has difficulty detecting the ambush until the ambush force is well into the killing zone.

COUNTERAMBUSH DRILLS

When a patrol is ambushed, the immediate action drill to use is determined by whether the ambush is near or far.

In a NEAR ambush, the killing zone is under heavy, highly concentrated, close-range fire. There is little time or space for men to maneuver or seek cover. The longer they remain in the killing zone, the more certain their destruction; therefore, if attacked by a NEAR ambush, the patrol should react as follows:

1. Men in the killing zone, **WITHOUT ORDER OR SIGNAL**, immediately assault directly into the ambush position, occupy it, and continue the attack or break contact as directed. This action moves them out of the killing zone, prevents other elements of the ambush from firing on them without firing on their own men, and provides positions from which other actions may be taken.

2. Men not in the killing zone must maneuver against the attack force and other elements of the ambush as directed.

3. To eliminate the ambush or to break contact, the men continue the attack as directed.

In a **FAR** ambush, the killing zone is also under heavy, highly concentrated fire but from a greater range. This greater range provides men in the killing zone some

space to maneuver and an opportunity to seek cover at lesser risk; therefore, if attacked by a Far ambush, the patrol should react as follows:

1. Men in the killing zone, **WITHOUT ORDER OR SIGNAL**, immediately return fire. They should take the best position available and continue firing until directed otherwise.

2. Men not in the killing zone must maneuver against the ambush force as directed.

3. To eliminate the ambush or to break contact, the men continued the attack as directed.

In each situation, the success of the counterambush drill used is dependent on the men being well trained in recognizing the nature of an ambush and well rehearsed in the proper reaction.

