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COVER: 'The Embarkation of the Sudan Contingent at Circular Quay, Sydney 3 March 1885,' by Arthur Collingridge. At the Australian War Memorial.

ARMY JOURNAL

A periodical review of military literature

No. 262, MARCH 1971

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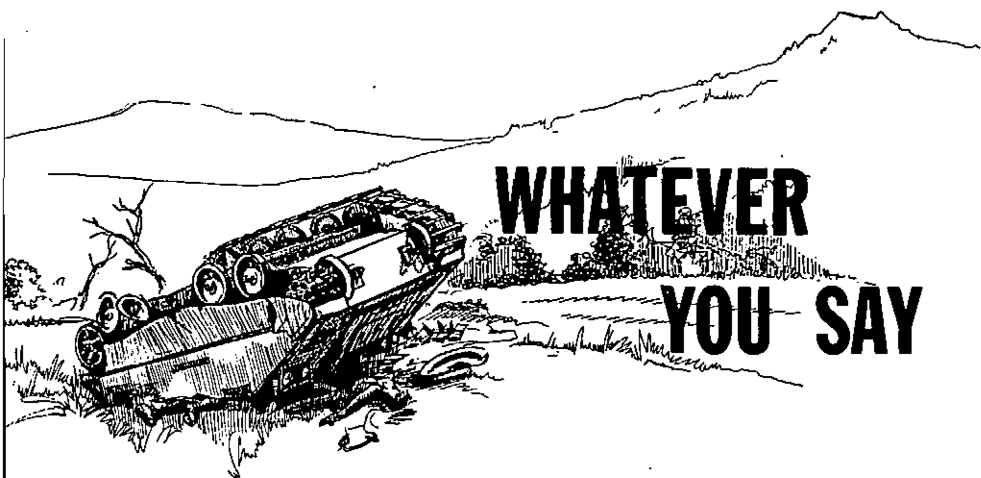
(Army Public Relations)

Men of the 8th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, supported by Centurion tanks and armoured personnel carriers, prepare to sweep through thick scrub in the Long Hai mountains in South Vietnam, October 1970.



Captain J. F. Crossman
Royal Australian Armoured Corps

If one could always be acquainted beforehand with the enemy's designs, one would always beat him with an inferior force.

—Frederick the Great

The Man

THE small, thin man stirred uncomfortably in the afternoon sun. He glanced at the watch on his wrist — 1300 hours. In another three hours the dark monsoon clouds would gather to drench the countryside with huge warm drops, and an enervating humidity would follow.

Ngo Van Phong looked around him. He sat in the edge of a thicket which totally concealed him save for a small opening to his front. Beside him lay his personal equipment, an AK 47, a pack, his web belt with water bottle, hammock, a cellophane wrapped bundle of rice, magazines and knife attached. In front of him lay a notebook, a

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Captain Crossman joined 4/19 PWLH (CMF) in 1961 and entered OCS in 1965. After graduation he served with two cavalry squadrons before joining A Squadron 3 Cavalry Regiment (SVN) in 1968. During his tour in Vietnam he served as a Troop Officer, Squadron and TF Liaison Officer. He was awarded an MID in 1969. On return to Australia he served in Battle Wing at JTC before taking up his present appointment as an instructor at the Armoured Centre Puckapunyal.

pair of binoculars and an ANPRC 25 radio with speaker fitted. Ngo yawned, pulled a crumpled cigarette pack from his shirt pocket, lit one, and looked through the opening to his front through the brush.

About 500 metres away, and 200 feet below him, the main road ran across his front, shimmering in the afternoon heat. He could see about 2 kilometres of the highway in either direction. There had been a deal of civilian traffic on the road that day, but no significant military traffic.

A large green bus came into view from his left, crawling like a child's toy across the green panorama. He picked up his binoculars and focused on the bus. It was obviously returning from the market — packed with people and the roof festooned with baskets of produce, bicycles and small boys.

He continued to watch the bus as it made its way across his field of view — past the first hamlet, the military post with its yellow and red flag fluttering bravely, the second hamlet, over the bridge, past the pagoda, the cemetery, and out of sight.

Ngo lit another cigarette, lay back and stared at the green canopy above him. He dozed.

A faint but abrupt stuttering from the radio jerked him back to full wakefulness. He sat up and turned up the volume control. The set was tuned to the frequency of the road convoy escort, comprising M113 vehicles from a nearby cavalry unit. They had changed their frequency only a few days previously, but it had not taken Ngo long to locate their new one. Radio transmissions from a carrier-borne vehicle have a characteristic background noise, and besides, whilst they had changed frequencies, their callsigns had remained the same.

Ngo had been observing and monitoring the convoy escort for a week now, noting movement patterns, composition, order of march, tactics and other relevant details. He had not been specifically told why he, an intercept specialist, had been assigned this task, but he could guess. The convoy escort had only been running for two weeks on a regular basis but already it was restoring confidence to the local villagers and denying the Viet Cong (VC), a valuable source of revenue, namely road-blocks. He guessed also, that other observers were involved in the same task.

The carriers were getting closer now, their transmissions much clearer. There was little talk on the radio, most of the transmissions

consisted of orders to adjust speed or spacing. Most of the detailed orders, he surmised, must be given prior to the move, probably when the escort married up with the convoy.

About ten minutes later the first M113 came into view. Ngo picked up his binoculars and watched intently. Two more carriers became visible, evenly spaced at about 100-metre intervals. They looked workmanlike and competent, each gun covering its arc and the crews alert. The third one, he mused, should be the commander — yes, three radio antennae. There should be one more carrier with a ten-man infantry section on board, followed by the convoy and lastly a 3-carrier section at the rear. The fourth carrier came into view followed by the first of the cargo trucks.

The first APC was now approaching the military post. Ngo listened attentively; if they ran true to form — yes, there it was. 'Six, this is Six One, Tom Thumb over'. 'Six roger out'. They had been using that report line for days. They were using another about ten minutes travelling time up the road. He would check that one in due course. He pulled an enemy military map from his pack and spread it over his knees. (Marvellous what children could steal when you let them into your positions.)

The trucks were passing now and Ngo counted them off. The last APC section came into view and Ngo started to make some notes in his notebook.

The radio crackled into life again and Ngo stopped writing to listen, 'Six Three (a new callsign Ngo noted), this is Six, when you get about 500 plus of Tom Thumb you'll see a track going off to your right — that's where we turn off on the way back, over'. 'Six Three, roger, we're going to have to step on it or we won't get that job done before it's time to go home, out.'

Ngo stiffened and swivelled his gaze to the Military Post. Through his glasses he followed the line of the road north through the dust raised by the passing vehicles. Just short of the second hamlet a dusty track ran off to the east and disappeared into the dense vegetation. He swept further north — there was no other track. He changed the frequency on the radio set and spoke into the handpiece in a rapid sing-song voice.

The Woman

Some thirty minutes later, down in the undergrowth adjacent to the track, deft brown hands were completing a deadly circuit which had lain dormant for some time waiting for such an occasion. A cheap torch battery was connected to two wires. The wire ran to a crude bamboo switch and thence to a plastic wrapped package about the size of a 'C' ration box, both of which were buried beneath the white dirt of the track.

Satisfied, the woman sprinkled leaves over the battery and walked out onto the track. Some twenty yards down the track her yoked oxen waited patiently. The oxen were harnessed to a large cart piled with chopped wood. The woman looked up and down the track; dense clumps of bamboo made this portion of the track a natural defile. She smiled thinly, showing gold-capped teeth, and padded to the cart. Taking four lengths of the cut wood she first went to one end of the green passageway, then the other. In each position, on the side of the track, she arranged two pieces of wood in an 'X' formation. Unhurriedly, she made her way back, mounted the cart and chided the oxen into reluctant motion.

The Result

As the sound of the departing DUSTOFF helicopter receded, the lieutenant looked grimly around. The 40 pounds of Chicom TNT had done its deadly work in one blinding, shattering instant. The M113 lay on its back, its road wheels in the air like a stranded beetle. The back door hung drunkenly askew and the interior was a smashed mess of radios, ammunition, rations and sandbags. The hull was bent and twisted by the force of the explosion and a gaping hole was visible in the floor. The area around the wrecked vehicle was littered with debris.

The lieutenant felt a hand on his arm and wheeled to face his sergeant. The NCO looked at him appraisingly for some seconds and then said consolingly, 'Don't blame yourself skipper, it was just bad luck that's all. It must have been there for ages and they were just unlucky'.

From his vantage point on the hill Ngo had seen the flash of the explosion and heard the reverberating echo. He shook his head ruefully. Perhaps some day they would learn.

The Silent Non-partner

It has been suggested by some that intelligence should be included as a principle of war. Certainly the war in South Vietnam, more so than ever before, is being fought on the basis of intelligence. With the massive overall allied superiority in the air, and on land and sea, the only advantage remaining to the enemy is the tactical surprise achieved by his very anonymity and ubiquity. There can be no doubt that the enemy rates intelligence as a principle in his war, for it is only through his intimate intelligence knowledge that he can muster the local superiority to achieve success in battle.

In pursuit of this aim, the enemy exploits every possible intelligence source to enhance his knowledge of the allies. Not the least fruitful of these intelligence sources is radio intercept.

There has been a tendency in recent years to disassociate guerilla warfare with radio intercept, and to think of this form of intelligence gathering only in association with a conventionally organized and highly sophisticated opposition. On current indications nothing could be further from the truth. Prisoners of war and captured documents indicate that the VC/NVA may have upwards of 4,000 personnel employed in a radio intercept network covering South Vietnam and its immediate environs. That this number of enemy personnel should be committed to this function is an alarming indication of the importance placed by the enemy on radio intercept, and must surely reflect the quantity of intelligence gained by the network.

A recent American operation in the Third Corps Tactical Zone (III CTZ) uncovered an enemy intercept unit which had been monitoring the nets of American ground units in the area. Recovered from the camp were some of the most comprehensive documents on the subject captured so far in Vietnam. They revealed that the enemy possessed a remarkable in-depth knowledge of these units, particularly in regard to:

- Groupings
- Tactics
- SOPs
- Equipment
- Personalities
- Logistics
- Electronic defensive measures.

All this information had been accrued from radio-intercept.

The Nature of an Intercept Organization

In keeping with his counterparts the world over, the enemy interceptor is a specialist, and the mere fact that the current enemy does not necessarily possess the same sophisticated equipment in no way detracts from his danger to us.

The normal intercept station, regardless of its size or equipment, will generally contain the following functional groups:

The Listeners. These are the members who actually monitor the radio transmissions. They will normally be allotted a unit or sub unit to monitor. They will all possess a good language capability appropriate to their assigned nets. They monitor and record radio transmissions.

The Plotters. This group receives the information from the listeners and physically plots such tactical information as is readily apparent from these reports. Such information would be Artillery DFs, Contact Reports, Heavy Artillery warnings etc.

The Code Breakers. The function of this group is self-explanatory.

The Analysts. The members could be described as the *élite* of the intercept team. They would be highly experienced in the ways of the enemy and highly trained in their role. The function of the analyst is to translate the information gained by intercept into intelligence. This intelligence may be of immediate tactical significance, i.e., short term, or it may be of long term tactical or strategic importance.

The above is obviously in general terms only. In some cases all the above functions may well be vested in one individual. An example would be an enemy interceptor walking alongside his company commander with his manpack tuned to the opposition's command frequency, and providing his commander with a running commentary on the orders issued to the opposing force.

This then is the intercept organization. It is emphasized that the enemy interceptor is no mere passive eaves-dropper, but rather an organic, vital, and major contributor to the enemy intelligence apparatus. This would be particularly true in South Vietnam, where two normally fruitful sources of enemy intelligence, namely prisoners and air reconnaissance, are virtually denied him. The intelligence gained from the intercept effort is speedily passed to the enemy battle commanders. The intelligence of immediate tactical significance may, or may not be reacted to, depending on the enemy intentions, dispositions

and strengths. What is important is that whether there is an enemy reaction or not, all the intelligence gained is consolidated together with intelligence from other sources, in a comprehensive reference system, adding to the enemy's overall knowledge of the opposition, and increasing his chances of success in any future action. Radio intercept is then, a cumulative function; the mistakes of yesterday will therefore manifest themselves not only today, but for a long tomorrow.

The Insidious Nature of Intercept

Several factors combine to make radio intercept one of the most consistently lucrative forms of intelligence gathering. Notable amongst these factors are:

- It requires no highly sophisticated or extensive equipment.
- It does not necessitate observation of, or contact with, the enemy.
- It is impossible to detect, and unless enemy documents or personnel are subsequently captured there is no actual proof that intercept was ever conducted in any particular area. Similarly, there may be no immediate enemy reaction to indicate that a breach of security has occurred. Subsequent hostile action, therefore, based on a security breach, may not appear to be connected with intercept.
- The need for speed in modern mobile operations often dictates that communications security must be sacrificed to some degree, in order to achieve the immediate aims.

The Danger

It behoves us all to fully realize the very real threat posed to us by an enemy intercept organization. Some of the factors which render us susceptible to the enemy interceptor's attentions are listed below:

- Our heavy dependence on voice radio as a means of control of all levels.
- The proliferation of high powered radio equipments in the modern army. (An example of this exists within the APC Troop, which would contain at least 13 RT 524/VRC Sets capable of being received anywhere in Phuoc Tuy Province, regardless of the location of the Troop).

- The great usage made of aircraft to achieve battlefield mobility. If the range of a radio set is considerably increased by raising the antenna, then the results at 3,000 feet must be very good indeed.

The enemy interceptor, in the long run, poses no less of a threat to us during training than he does in actual operations. It is during training that the awareness of the threat and the preventive security measures are inculcated. One cannot pay lip service to security in training and expect good security in war. Communications security, like marksmanship, must be the subject of training, supervision and practice.

It is known that the Germans started to monitor their potential enemies' training nets as early as 1921. They consequently possessed, at the outbreak of World War II, a tremendous fund of intelligence concerning the enemy forces. To suggest that foresight of this nature is a purely Germanic speciality would be to grossly underestimate those who wish us ill.

Unless we do realize the dangers inherent in the use of our communications, and take steps to enforce security, we too will present the enemy, both in peace and war, with a deal of information which would otherwise have been denied him. At best this will cost us unnecessary personnel and material casualties — at worst the cost could be immeasurable.

The Road to Security

In the foregoing we have examined radio intercept in general terms. A consideration of the above should lead us to the first step in achieving our aim of security, that is; a realization of the danger. Unless we first take this step, we can go no further along the road.

Simple rules for the preservation of communications security are contained in most Service publications relating to signals training, and it is not proposed to duplicate them here. It is thought however, that some of these points merit discussion or amplification in the light of our current military involvement.

The correct use of Radio Telephone Procedure (RTP) is not in itself any guarantee of security, the fixed callsign system in the RAAC and RAA, for example, renders units from either of these corps readily identifiable. What is important is the content of the message. The onus lies with individual operators or users, regardless of rank, to

ensure that what they transmit is secure. One method of inculcating the awareness of this responsibility might be to train individuals in the habit of applying the following simple test to proposed transmissions: Could I, as an enemy interceptor, gain anything from this transmission?

During World War II, the Australian forces employed an extensive system of coastwatchers whose visual observation of enemy shipping and air movement provided a wealth of extremely valuable intelligence. It is known that the enemy in South Vietnam employs a similar technique in respect of ground and air movement. In addition it must be assumed in South-East Asia that a large percentage of the enemy are local indigenes who have an intimate knowledge of their geographical environs.

If we accept the above, then certain conclusions become apparent:

- The time honoured 'Meet me at the same time/place as yesterday' has little security merit. This would also apply to many other forms of veiled speech.
- It must be assumed that report lines, bounds and objectives have no security value once used.
- Extreme caution must be exercised when describing terrain features which may, for example, relate to a projected line of advance an ambush position, or an overnight harbour.

The longer one spends on the radio, the greater are the chances of a security breach. In addition, the more idle chatter and unnecessary traffic, the more opportunities are afforded the intercept operator to 'get the feel' of a net; to note idiosyncrasies, to work out the composition of the net etc. Comprehensive preparation and detailed verbal orders, issued prior to any activity will obviate a lot of traffic on the net. Whenever time and space permits, orders should be given at a verbal orders group, as opposed to over the radio.

Few people are in a position to render greater service to the enemy than the control operator who represents the terminal for all radio communications within the unit or sub-unit. For this reason, only the best operators available should be used for this function, and 'dog watches' must not be left to personnel with little or no radio experience.

Care must be exercised when working with allies, whose security procedures may be different to ours, and who may inadvertently jeopardize information transmitted to them. A case in point would be an Australian element co-operating with an Allied Headquarters. The

Australian night locations would be sent to the Allied HQ using numeral code, but might well be passed onto allied elements in Point of Origin Code.

Our frequency management must be borne in mind. Monthly frequencies allotted to units should be well spread over the frequency spectrum to render the enemy's job of locating them more difficult. In addition, old frequencies should not be reallocated to the same unit until some months have elapsed. Units should carry out snap frequency changes at irregular intervals. It is desirable that no warning be afforded the enemy that a frequency change is imminent. Frequency changes could be executed on a time, rather than a nickname basis; the details of frequency changing having been given at the daily order group.

Two nets which will inevitably have the enemy's unremitting attention are artillery and air warning nets, on which the majority of co-ordinates are sent in clear. This brings us to a consideration of the current use of numeral code. It has been the policy not to encrypt the co-ordinates of artillery strikes, air strikes or contact locations etc., as the concurrent or subsequent activity will compromise the encryption. Whilst this is true to a degree, it is felt that the following warrants consideration:

- The current numeral code provides two different twelve-hour panels for use each day. In effect then a different code is used every half day. An examination of the panels indicates that the number of possible permutations is immense. In view of this it is suggested that the enemy would have practically no chance of breaking the code even though a great many co-ordinates were compromised.
- From the enemy standpoint, when dealing with projected artillery or air activity, time is the essential factor. Time to plot the planned hostile activity, time to advise their own elements, and time for those elements to take evasive action. Whilst we are undoubtedly saving ourselves time by sending co-ordinates in clear, we must assume that we are in many instances giving the enemy the vital headstart which he needs. Add to this the time which we often spend in obtaining the necessary clearances. A further consideration is the enemy communications apparatus. As his communications improve, and of necessity they must, so his reaction time will decrease proportionately.

- Another potential source of intelligence to the enemy is provided by the plotting of allied artillery DFs. If three or four DF tasks are plotted in close proximity to each other, then it would be reasonable to assume that an allied unit is located somewhere within the pattern formed by these DFs. The enemy may well not react offensively to this information, but he will surely evade us if he does not choose to fight. In short, we have given him the initiative.
- Our experience in SVN indicates that many, indeed perhaps the majority of contacts, occur with small parties of enemy, who are unlikely to possess a radio capability. The absence of this capability means that the enemy are unlikely to be aware of the detailed dispositions of many of their elements at any given time. The lack of radio also means that, should an element make contact it may be some time before this fact becomes known to the remainder of the enemy organization. By transmitting our contact locations in clear we are overcoming the enemy's communications problem for him. We are sending him our locations, and progressively marking his battle map.

The above points are not intended as a complete answer to our problem but rather are designed to highlight some factors not generally considered, and to promote thought on the subject. The implications of many of the factors listed have not been explored to their full extent; either from an allied or enemy viewpoint. Nor does space permit the inclusion of many factors, such as the possible exploitation of radio intercept as a double-edged weapon by the deliberate leakage of wrong information.

Conclusion

Customs authorities in Australia recently stated that whilst they would do all in their power to prevent the smuggling of narcotics into the country, they could not possibly hope to stop it all. A major share of the responsibility therefore rests with the individual members of the community to assist in stopping this menace. The same may be said of radio intercept. There has been a regrettable tendency at times to regard the enforcement of radio security as the province of experts. The author has attempted in this article to point out the dangers inherent in this belief, and to indicate where the responsibility ultimately lies. □

Notes on Company Operations in Vietnam

Major R. F. Sutton, MC
Royal Australian Infantry

Introduction

THE following quotation by Field Marshal Lord Slim appears on the first page of *Infantry Training*, Volume Four, Part Two, 'The Platoon': '. . . the four best commands in the Service — a platoon, a battalion, a division and an army'. Some readers of this quotation have expressed surprise at the omission from the group of any reference to that most valuable command, the company, and have asked themselves whether Lord Slim regarded it as of minor importance in relation to the other four. I feel strongly that the company — the first missing link — should not be under-rated and my aim in writing this article is to discuss in note form the many and varied aspects of company operations in Vietnam, highlighting the major problem areas encountered, and recommending solutions.

The company commander in Vietnam has a great deal of flexibility in the command and control of his three platoons. When he is allotted a task in an AO, he can normally operate his three platoons without

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Major Sutton graduated from RMC, Duntroon in 1960 and served as a Platoon Commander with 3 RAR for 2 years. He then served as a Platoon Commander at the Infantry Centre for 1 year. Following this he was the Mortar Platoon Commander 4 RAR and served with this battalion in Malaysia. On return to Australia in 1967 he was appointed a Company Commander/Instructor at RMC. In 1968 he joined 5 RAR and served with it in Vietnam. His present posting is in the Office of the Adjutant General, AHQ, Canberra.

undue interference from his battalion commander unless a certain pattern develops, normally based on intelligence, which necessitates the CO thinking 'two down' and 'buying in' to enable him to implement his plan.

A company is capable of operating independently of the battalion as long as there is adequate fire support or a limited threat. This supports the view of Sir Robert Thomson who has stated: 'The Army should operate in units of platoon and company sizes, although there may be a few occasions when battalion operations are necessary.' This, of course, is generally how battalions do operate in Vietnam — the company commander is given a task to perform within the framework of the CO's overall plan.

This article is written in three parts:

Part 1 — *Types of Operation.* The types of operation a company must be prepared to undertake during its tour in Vietnam and a brief discussion on associated problems.

Part 2 — *Reconnaissance in Force (RIF) Operations.* The primary role of a company during its tour. Emphasis has been placed on the conduct of ambush operations.

Part 3 — *General Considerations and Recommendations.*

I have two stipulations to make about this article. First, it is stressed that the article relates to the conditions and enemy threat pertaining in Phuoc Tuy and neighbouring provinces from January 1969 to February 1970.

Secondly, statements I make in the body of this article which go against accepted training policy are made after weighing up the circumstances under which and about which I am writing. In the next war, as was the case in past wars, certain aspects may be different and these statements should therefore be judged accordingly.

TYPES OF OPERATION

General

The types of operation a company can be expected to participate in during a tour of duty are:

- Defence.
- Defence of Night Defensive Position (NDP).
- Protection of Land Clearing Teams.

- Cordon and Search.
- Search without Cordon.
- Village Fighting.
- Village Patrolling and Searching.
- Airmobile Operations.
- Convoy Protection.
- RIF, which includes attacks on bunker systems and ambush operations.

Defence

Battalion lines in Nui Dat, the Horseshoe, and various operations conducted in Bien Hoa/Long Binh all emphasize the need for a thorough knowledge of the conduct of defence.

Our procedures, as written in *Infantry Training*, Vol. 4, are good. However, with constant RIF we tend to forget the importance of range cards, mutual support, the art of sand-bagging and wiring and the many other associated aspects.

Defence should still be a high priority subject during our training in Australia and not allowed to become integrated with harbour drills or ambush techniques.

Defence of NDP

The following is the US definition of an NDP: 'Normally a hastily prepared position for a company sized unit on a sustained operation.' This definition does not cover the NDP discussed here.

During the large land clearing operations carried out in Phuoc Tuy and neighbouring provinces in 1969, US Land Clearing Team (LCT) companies operated with protective elements provided from both US and 1ATF resources.

Prior to a land clearing operation commencing, a position (NDP) was sited and occupied by the combined force. One position in Long Binh Province was occupied by an Australian company, an LCT company and thirty APCs (US). This NDP was extremely big as the enemy threat necessitated a large protective element. Other positions in Phuoc Tuy Province were smaller. When a segment of vegetation was cut out the NDP was moved to a new location. The need for

security also played a part in these moves. The company commander is responsible for the defence of the NDP. He must site the position where it can best be defended and supervise its construction.

No two NDPs are the same and it is suggested that a 'doughnut' is the best solution to the problem. This means leaving a fringe of jungle encircling a cleared area which houses the LCT equipment, machinery and administrative areas. The jungle fringe can be used by the infantry for all purposes and does afford some deal of protection and shade. Should armoured vehicles be occupying the perimeter, then there is a need for a 'bund' to surround the position just forward of the fringe. This necessitates the infantry fighting positions being moved forward from the jungle fringe.

Our soldiers must be made aware of the problems facing the Americans in maintaining their machinery during the night — the noise and lights are unavoidable and we must tolerate this. The task of maintaining security is inhibited by the noise and light so that the advantage is on the side of an aggressive enemy. Portion of the force must be outside the noise limit ambushing likely areas of enemy activity.

The company commander and the senior American should discuss aspects of defence routine and administration to obtain mutual agreement on policy.

Protection of Land Clearing Teams

The Americans have a tremendous capability for work during land clearing operations and concentrate solely on clearing the jungle by day and working on their machinery by night.

The company commander providing the protection for the defence of the NDP may also be tasked with protection of the work site and clearing the area ahead of the 'Rome Plows'. If not, then another company, or portion thereof, would be allotted this task.

I feel the problem area in this type of operation is in the command and control aspect. Who controls the tanks and APCs which are normally integrated with the platoons to provide adequate protection? It should be considered at battalion level during planning and clearly stated in the orders issued.

On numerous occasions troops have been injured by trees being felled by the armoured vehicles or 'Rome Plows'. There is a require-

ment for detailed siting of all protection elements to avoid any 'clash by fire', or injury by misjudgement.

The commander of the LCT is often airborne directing the operations of his 'Rome Plows'. There is also a requirement for the ground commanders of this type of operation to be airborne at least once a day.

Cordon and Search

There has been much written on this subject and most of the doctrine is straightforward. However, I do stress that the Australian soldier is not a good searcher of either the inside of a house (which he should only search in association with the Vietnamese) or the exterior grounds. Cordon and Search operations find our soldiers bored very easily and certainly we are not capable of cordon and search for seven days (which supposedly should be the minimum length of an operation as directed by the American Headquarters).

The second area of concern is the positioning of the cordon. Closing a cordon prior to last light appears to me to be an easier method than closing it before first light. Closing a cordon at night has many inherent disadvantages:

- The movement at night of reconnaissance parties, guides etc. ahead of the main body is fraught with danger as is the 'marrying-up' that must take place.
- The enemy will generally be moving into and out of the village by night and movement times may coincide.
- RF/PF Posts, which may or may not be aware of the operation, are likely to react to movement or noise.
- Navigation is more difficult.
- The initial cordon is 'loose' and needs readjustment at first light.
- The detailed siting of weapons is almost impossible and it is difficult to point out arcs of fire. The soldier can easily become disorientated.
- Command and control problems increase at all levels.

It is realized that with all these disadvantages the chance of achieving surprise is good (provided there are no mishaps) and the search would probably be more successful than if the cordon was closed in full view of the villagers.

When the cordon is closed at dusk the above disadvantages are overcome. However, there remain some problem areas:

- Positioning the cordon prior to curfew creates the problem of civilian control, especially if there is a highway or major road through the village.
- Depth ambushes and rear protection become more necessary as the enemy will normally attempt to enter the villages soon after last light.
- Surprise is lost as the villagers are aware of the cordon — villagers outside the cordon can 'lay up' and warn the enemy of our presence.

COs and company commanders will be faced with the task of choosing the method to adopt. The following factors should be studied in conjunction with those already mentioned before making a decision:

- Curfew timings and movement habits of civilians.
- Time of year, moon phase and first and last light.
- Harvest times.
- Type of vegetation on approaches to and surrounding a village.
- VC infrastructure.
- Known guerilla movements.

No matter which method is adopted a great deal of attention must be paid to 'tying-up' the flanks of platoons and companies and the siting of depth ambushes.

Accidents can occur during a night cordon as a direct result of uninvolved troops becoming 'edgy' after a contact has taken place in a segment of the cordon — this is natural as their position is somewhat different from being in a platoon harbour or ambush.

If contact does occur during the night cordon then the passage of information both up and down must be quick and accurate. If everyone knows what is happening then tension is relieved and accidents are less likely to take place.

Search Without Cordon

During many operations along Route 44 companies were required to search all the villages down to the coast. No cordon was used and the company would arrive at the selected village in early morning and search throughout the day. 'Possum' was used to circle the village

perimeter to watch for movement of any VC that might be flushed out. Road blocks also were established to check movement in and out of the village.

After the search a platoon would be left behind to ambush either inside the village or on the outskirts. Platoons did not like ambushing inside the village as their protection was limited and no matter how much stealth they used they were always sighted by the inhabitants.

The ever present threat of mines affected the soldiers even though they used mine detectors and wore flak jackets and steel helmets.

Another problem was that the District Chief was warned of the operation the day before it commenced to enable Field Force Police, National Police, interpreters etc. to be "warned out'. This loss of security was unavoidable and was reflected in the poor results during the searches. This type of operation, however, certainly restricted VC movement in the area.

Village Fighting

The need for training in village fighting does exist, as shown by operations conducted in Baria, Binh Ba, Hoa Long and other villages.

After Action Reports show that the problem is really that of waiting for the District Chief to clear the area of civilians and then advise that it is clear, and Free World Forces are free to operate. There is a need to double check that the civilians are clear and that the local authorities have given the clearance to 'operate' and understand fully what this means.

Preparation for village fighting should include the issue of grenades, M72 and M79 rounds on a large scale and the prior stocking of 'back-ups' for OPDEM requests.

Tanks and APCs have been extremely successful when employed in village fighting. If available, armour should be employed — the actual tasks will be dictated by the commander's appreciation of the situation. Combined infantry/armour exercises should include this type of operation.

Village Patrolling and Searching

This has now become a normal task allotted to companies during operations. At the time of the construction of bunkers and a wire fence around Dat Do Village, a company was used to protect the engineer

effort, while at the same time patrolling and searching the village by day and patrolling and ambushing by night.

Areas of the village were allotted to the company for all these activities after a bid was made to Sector Headquarters twenty-four hours ahead. Everyone knew just where the company would operate at any given time. The only answer to this problem was to 'bid' for very large segments of the village and then choose the 'hot' areas to operate in. At least some security was achieved. Further security can be achieved by changing ambush locations after dark as long as mine clearing drills are right and there is no movement close to RF/PF posts.

Mines were always a problem and constant vigilance was necessary, including the precautionary measures of wearing steel helmets and flak jackets and the methodical and continual use of mine detectors. Compounds and bunkers manned by RF/PF and police are normally surrounded by minefields and booby-traps. The occupants are naturally on the alert for movement outside the compound.

Airmobile Operations

These are straightforward at company level and our laid down drills are sound. There is a tendency at times to neglect these drills and refresher training at regular intervals is necessary.

The RAAF pilots will land their helicopters almost anywhere should there be an urgent requirement. During normal operations they should not be required to land on a 'pad' which is unsafe. The ground commander should choose 'pads' that are of the required size and free from obstacles. Marshalling jackets and Marker Panels should be carried within each platoon and used during airmobile operations. Steel pegs should be used to secure the panels to the ground — not sticks or the like.

Pilots are often forced to change the helicopters' direction of approach, actual landing positions and so forth. This creates problems for the ground commander who must readjust his plan for securing the area, change his loading plans and issue orders all in the space of moments. This is something for which the company commander and platoon commanders must be prepared. Admittedly, with the CO in the Command and Control Helicopter, ground commanders should know of changes early enough to comply. However, the CO cannot be present at every LS during a large airmobile operation.

Convoy Protection

This has proved to be a simple enough task provided communications are established correctly. Companies committed to this task must be given adequate information on convoy nets, air protection nets etc., and also the necessary radio equipment to operate on each net. Task Force should provide this information before the company moves and this may require constant pressuring on the commander's behalf.

RECONNAISSANCE IN FORCE (RIF) OPERATIONS

Employment of Companies

The majority of company operations are RIF and I feel the best method is to move within the allotted AO with three independent platoons, and company headquarters attached to one. Unless it is absolutely necessary, movement as a full company should be avoided — it is slow, cumbersome, and does not cover the ground.

Platoons are capable of handling most situations. They should always have the necessary artillery support and the ability to request air support. The limited enemy threat allowed for this type of movement. If there were a good chance of meeting a formed enemy battalion then these small groups would not have been used.

Movement

Air reconnaissance prior to RIF operations is an advantage provided one can read the vegetation. Often the seemingly open country has the most dense ground vegetation. Practice in this aspect when training would not go unrewarded.

Vegetation will dictate the pace and formation to be used. Most movement is in single file, except of course in open country, and also during a sweep when the force must adopt extended line. 'Snaking' is a problem when moving in single file and especially so with a large force. Forward elements will deviate from a compass bearing for various reasons and here lies the danger, as sometimes they head-off at something more than right angles to the laid down direction of movement. Rear elements see movement or hear noise and can be placed in two minds as to whether it is friendly or enemy activity. Should the forward element be forced to deviate for any reason this information should be passed to the rear.

The sweep is constantly used when clearing likely bunker areas. A sweep of eight hundred metres could take two hours or more with platoons and sections leap-frogging every twenty metres. This is slow, but safe, and control can be maintained.

Battalions are usually pressed by higher headquarters to cover more ground and so the kick travels down to the forward scout who ends up running. I feel that the platoons will do their best to cover as much ground as possible and the speed at which they travel will be dependent on the 'Sign', vegetation and terrain. A lesson to all is not to press too hard unless there is a sound reason.

I suggest that stopping movement no later than 1530 hours is a good idea and that movement should continue after this time only if in contact. This allows time to set up ambush or harbour and more importantly, it lessens the possibility of a bunker contact late in the afternoon and the chance of sustaining casualties that have to be evacuated in darkness. Bunker contacts are a problem at any time and we are certainly playing into the enemy's hands if we run out of daylight.

Navigation is always difficult in jungle and there is a continual requirement for checking bearings and distances. The lessons of navigation taught in Australia are sound, and as long as we use the compass correctly there should be no major problem. I believe that commanders at all levels should travel with their compass in their hand 'twenty-four hours a day' and refer to their maps continually. If fire support is to be used effectively and if accidents are to be prevented, accurate navigation is the duty of every commander.

When infantry are moving in APCs the responsibility of all commanders does not decrease and certainly the concentration must increase.

Bunkers

'Sign' is a very important factor in locating systems. Soldiers are well aware when they are in bunker country and their movement rate and state of alertness will quickly change. Once bunkers are found, the big problem is whether they are occupied or not and generally the only way to find out is to have a look. It would be a fair statement that only five per cent of the large number of systems encountered are occupied but this five per cent causes us all the worry.

'Pepperpotting' or fire and movement using a single axis is relatively simple compared with moving an element around to a flank. The

old principle of the fire support element being at right angles to the assaulting troops is all very well and good in open country. In practice it is difficult in jungle, as once the two elements are twenty metres from each other they have lost visual contact. Once they have lost this contact it is very difficult to know relative positions, especially when fire in coming from all directions. I feel that an assault on a wide front is a better answer and the movement of flanking elements, in close contact, is fraught with danger. Bunker systems are usually sited in complexes. Flanking sub-units often run into other systems and the problem is magnified.

Once the soldiers are inside a bunker system all is not over by any means because it may stretch for some hundreds of metres and therefore, whether it is occupied or not, the task is long and painstaking. There is only one answer and that is careful movement through the system, securing flanks and rear at all times.

Bunkers are a problem and we need to train extensively in all aspects of locating, taking, clearing and searching bunker systems. There is also a great need to train and retrain in the use of organic weapons as well as the M60 so that there is no hesitation or loss of confidence using the Grenade Projector, M72, M79 etc. at close range and quickly.

Ambush

Company commanders should endeavour to have all platoons in ambush whenever not engaged in active patrolling or searching ground. If platoons have been moving by day and are required to ambush almost every night, it stands to reason that they will be tired and require adequate time for rest. For this reason deliberate ambush of the 100 per cent 'switched on' type is difficult to achieve during sustained RIF operations. It is sufficient to say that the platoon should sit astride the track or in linear ambush alongside the track with the MGs and Claymores being the main weapons sited to cover the killing ground. I realize that it is a slight on the Australian ambush technique to think that every man is not fully awake all night, ready in a fire position and so forth; but it is impossible to do this and platoons do need rest after a hard day's movement with possibly a contact.

I have found in talking to a number of platoon commanders that they are well aware of the need for flank protection and are well versed in present teachings — almost too well, I think. If the MGs and

Claymores are the weapons that do the most damage, then why not have the majority of them covering the track along which the enemy will come? Yet there still is a tendency to site too many Claymores to the flank and lose out in the end. It is most unlikely that an enemy is going to come from a flank against a dug in Australian platoon without prior reconnaissance. I feel strongly that all MGs and the bulk of the Claymores should be sited to cover the killing ground. This does not mean we should overuse Claymores by, say, using five when three would do the job. A fuller understanding of the killing ground would enable all to use them to better advantage.

Some say that by digging in an ambush we defeat the purpose. I disagree. A soldier feels far more confident when his body is below ground level and I consider that shellscrapes are a good thing and should be dug whenever possible. If the threat is greater, then dig deeper. Certainly MGs should be dug in at all times. I doubt that shellscrapes provide overmuch protection from tree burst RPG rounds — but then what does? Perhaps this matter requires a close examination.

I have also found that the most hazardous time of an ambush is either during the occupation or when leaving the position. Fate plays funny tricks.. After you have been in a position for three days and are just about to leave, along comes the enemy; or as you move in and are setting up, along he comes again. These are our most vulnerable periods and we need to prepare for the situation.

It is suggested that, immediately we occupy an ambush site covering a track, MGs are pushed up and down the track and manned by double sentries with an SLR and M79, and two Claymores quickly positioned forward of the post. The post should remain there until the ambush is fully developed and then withdrawn and the MGs fitted into the ambush site. The MG posts are no more exposed than a single sentry would be and the fire power is far greater. Considering that it is the initial burst in an ambush that does most of the damage I regard this as sound policy. Too often single sentries, posted during an ambush occupation, miss when the enemy does appear. I also consider the morale factor important in having two men out front rather than one — there is comfort in having a mate alongside. A similar procedure should be adopted when preparing to depart from an ambush site.

Resupply, when in continual ambush, does not present a big problem and the rations can be dropped without too much worry. Similarly, water can be lowered through the canopy. At first I was

unduly worried about helicopters giving the game away. This is not such a worry because once the helicopter is low over the tree tops it is very difficult to pick up even from two hundred metres away. It is also amazing how often the enemy will walk into an ambush shortly after a resupply has been taken.

When leaving an ambush or resupply site it may be a good technique to leave an element behind to ambush the old position. The enemy have a habit of watching an area and moving in to dig up the trash pits once we have left. This of course means the splitting of a platoon but it can be fruitful at times. Certainly HF tasks onto old ambush sites and resupply sites do not go astray.

Ambush operations have been our most successful to date and the figures (1ATF) for the period November 1968 to July 1969 bear out the fact — 209 enemy killed, 95 wounded and 14 prisoners of war. Our casualties have been 7 killed and 26 wounded. All other types of operations during the same period only produced 202 enemy killed and 104 wounded.

The above data makes the ambush figures seem marvellous until we take into account that 141 ambushes have produced the 209 enemy killed — an average of just under one and a half per ambush. Admittedly KIA(BC) is a very false figure and we do not know how many enemy died as a result. The US figures prove that every VC who became stretcher-borne eventually died. Notwithstanding, there is still need for improvement.

I can only suggest that the answer to the problem of achieving an improved result lies in my previous comments and a more constant use of the linear type ambush rather than the squat astride track type. Ambushes based on intelligence are more successful than speculation ambushes; but good intelligence is hard to come by. Improved intelligence will go further to achieving better results.

Resupply

I have mentioned resupply briefly during ambush, however there are a few other factors which cause concern during RIF operations. The commanding officer and most company commanders dread resupply day — hot buns and 'goffas' all tend to make it a picnic and no matter how much you try to hurry, something always goes wrong. I suggest one half day be written off for MAINTDEM and this be accepted as a

constant interruption to operations. If you hurry too much you end up feeding a VC company with the rubbish and unused rations that are left behind. Without doubt these should be burned and every tin should be punctured twice to prevent it bursting.

How many days' rations should a company carry? Most company commanders have their own ideas on this subject. I have only one comment to make, and it is that over a 3-day period someone nearly always visits the company, so if it is security that influences the time gap chosen for reception of supply, forget it. Water, mail, RMO, Investigating Officers, CMF attachments, reinforcements, Second-in-Command coming back — there is a constant stream of people trying to get in. Of course, if the company commander does not have a pad, all is okay!

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

My recommendations arise from a study of what I believe to be a good cross-section of the problems confronting us.

Command Post Stores

There is no need for CP stores at platoon or company level during normal RIF operations. The commander can live without lights, tentage, and other luxury items and still work effectively, although a good torch with filter is a must. It is also considered unnecessary to dig a CP. Normally shellscrapes will suffice and save a considerable amount of time and effort on the part of support section who have other tasks to perform.

Map Issues

Company and platoon radio operators should carry maps. They can then follow the battle and the movement of all other sub-units/platoons in the battalion/company if necessary. They can decode and plot locations and then brief the commander at any given time. A good radio operator is a tremendous asset; with a map he is an even greater one. Maps are normally available on sufficient scale to allow adequate distribution down to platoon level.

Sleeping Position

For a laugh — or not? I suggest that commanders in night locations should sleep with their head facing a (constant) direction, preferably North, and of course their compass at their side. This allows for quick orientation and quick assessment of any situation that should suddenly occur when fire support is required.

Ambush of Fire Trails

Fire Trails are difficult to ambush. They are one hundred metres or more wide and normally are covered with chest high vegetation and grass. A thorough reconnaissance is necessary before siting an ambush to cover a Fire Trail and this may require movement over a considerable distance to gain a suitable plot of ground as a killing area. APCs are possibly more suited to this role because their weapons are raised and the firer's vision less impaired than that of their infantry counterpart.

Combined APC/Infantry Ambush

There are many problems associated with a combined APC/infantry ambush even though many have obviously produced excellent results. To my mind each should be used on separate tasks so they can employ their capabilities to best advantage without being disruptive to each other. Points of non-compatability are the APC radios being too loud, infantry being used as flank and rear protection while the APCs cover the killing area, differing occupation procedures and routine during the task. The APCs obviously have similar dislikes about the infantry procedures and this point is accepted.

If we are to continue with combined ambushes then there is a need to develop an understanding during training in Australia and evolve techniques and procedures prior to being employed together in combat. Training orientation in theatre is also important. To my knowledge there has been little done in this regard.

Fire Control During Ambush

It has been proven that the initial bursts of fire during ambush contact cause the most casualties. Therefore the initial burst from all automatic weapons covering the killing area should be a sustained one. Semi-automatic fire should also be quick.

When a jungle track is being ambushed, the visibility of the flank and rear protection groups is restricted. Once the killing group has initiated contact I believe there is at least a requirement for the flank protection groups to fire within the bounds of previously laid down arcs in order to engage enemy who may have broken to a flank and who cannot be seen.

Claymore Leads

It is my belief that the Claymore lead is far too short and that an additional two hundred feet should be added, provided the electrical circuit will function. At present numerous firing devices are under examination, some of which could surely fill this need. The Claymore with the present lead can be positioned one hundred feet from the firing device and it would be an advantage if this could be extended.

To effectively use Claymores at one hundred yards it is presupposed that the area they cover must be in full view of the firer. This also means that they should be employed at such a distance during daylight hours only. This will prevent the enemy detecting and lifting the Claymores. It also reduces the possibility of the enemy ambushing our Claymore locations.

It is well known that the enemy are normally well spaced when moving on tracks. Should the enemy be a large force then Claymores leading out to one hundred yards could be very rewarding. I realize that care would have to be taken in siting these Claymores and the possibility existing that the enemy may detect them before entering the main killing area. However, this chance I think is acceptable and the rewards I am sure would be far greater than any disadvantage we may feel exists.

Laying of Claymores, even at present, is a potentially dangerous situation. Any movement outside the perimeter must be treated as such. The extended leads would pose a slightly increased danger in this regard. Provided orders, briefings and warnings are definite the problem decreases.

Harbour

The times a full company will harbour (except for resupply) are negligible and when it does it would be advisable to follow generally the procedures laid down for the platoon. If forced to harbour as a

company I suggest a suitable method is to halt the forward platoon, which deploys in an arc facing the direction of movement and then adjust the remaining two platoons to flanks and rear as they enter the area. Unless you are on the edge of a bunker system or near a track there should be no reason for enemy presence. By virtue of the fact that a company is harbouring surely there is no indication that the enemy is around; otherwise we would be in ambush. This still does not take away the responsibility for pushing forward sentries, clearing patrols and normal security at halts routine. Platoon harbour drills are sound with the exception of sentry procedures which I will discuss soon.

Night Positions in Rubber

Night positions in rubber plantations should be sited and prepared with the utmost deliberation. The perimeter of a position in rubber trees should be roped or vined-off so that no man can possibly wander outside the perimeter, even if this means placing double vines around the position. The lane configuration of rubber plantations is a great disorienter.

Track plans are a waste of time in rubber and should be replaced by communications cord so that each man can travel around inside the perimeter with ease.

Sentries

'Sentries are to be sited in pairs by day and by night.' This statement from the SOPs of a battalion at present serving in Vietnam should become standard training policy throughout the Army and all training pamphlets amended accordingly. I have previously stated my main reasons during the discussion of ambush operations.

Under the present teaching the only time a soldier is required to be on his own is when performing sentry duty by day. Why? I am sure there are no good reasons forthcoming and yet we have persisted in positioning one man forward of the perimeter in the jungle — a lonely and jittery experience that could only be improved by the siting of the sentries in pairs.

Sentry Relief by Night

The present system of sentry changeover by night is considered to be both wrong and dangerous. The standard procedure of double sentries on a staggered shift is considered sound. However, I feel strongly

that the outgoing sentry should physically awaken the oncoming sentry and escort him back to the MG post. Accidents have occurred too often during sentry changeover at night and I therefore recommend a change to the present system outlined in our training manuals. The reasons for my recommendations are:

- Sentries too often are awakened and then go back to sleep (after the outgoing sentry leaves them).
- Oncoming sentries lose their way at night and wander outside the perimeter — especially in rubber trees. This is despite the precautions taken in cutting track plans and laying perimeter/ track cords, etc.
- Two men — one fully awake, accustomed to 'night light' and having 'walked the course' before — are safer than one man without any of the three advantages.

Sentry changeover policy has always been subject to criticism, and rightly so. Incorrect procedures have resulted in numerous accidents and near accidents both in Borneo and Vietnam. The doctrine contained in *Infantry Training*, Vol. 4 has not helped matters. Battalion SOPs are not the starting point of training doctrine, yet too often procedures are re-written to amplify sentry changeover — normally after an accident has occurred.

The sooner this pressing matter is resolved and preliminary teachings become orientated to battle learnt lessons, the quicker the number of casualties caused during sentry changeover at night will be reduced.

Weapon Changeover during Sentry Relief

'.... The difficulty arises from the rotation of weapons throughout the section that is necessary to keep the MG manned throughout the night, and at the same time ensure that every soldier has a weapon readily at hand. The method suggested is:

a. First nominated relief on the MG takes his weapon to the gun position and hands it over to the man he is relieving as his personal weapon.

b. Subsequent reliefs do the same ....'

How did the above ever come to be included in our training manuals? Surely the MG No. 1 is the only person we should worry about and if he is sleeping to the rear of his pit or alarm post, then he should be no

more than ten feet from his MG. At this time he should be armed with the M79 and buckshot rounds. Soldiers are prepared to use this as a personal weapon on operations and I am sure the MG No. 1 would not complain. If there is contact or a 'Stand To' he has the choice of manning the MG or taking up the personal weapon of the sentry manning the MG at the time — the latter being the more likely until he was accustomed to the 'night light' and aware of the enemy situation.

The method as written in the training manual should be deleted. There is enough worry with sentries without creating further difficulties. A soldier should always be armed with 'his own' personal weapon, MG No. 1 excluded.

Splitting of Platoons

Often platoons are forced to operate with between 15 and 20 men and this makes it difficult to split the platoon into two elements. The reasons for the shortage of numbers are well known and possibly cannot be overcome unless an in-theatre increment is added to each company or to each section. As we know this is not forthcoming, I suggest that platoons do not like to be split and prefer to operate as a full platoon with the knowledge that they have a radio set, three MGs and, in addition, the added morale factor associated with strength of numbers. They also do not have the worry and loss of sleep associated with the splitting of the platoon for any length of time, especially if in continual ambush.

Should a platoon be split for any task it is considered the minimum strength to be employed should be a full section with a radio set and MG. No platoon should be forced to employ other than security patrols without communications to their parent body.

'Marrying-up' Procedure

This is a constant worry to all commanders. Clashes can be avoided and everyone must be made well aware of the procedure to be adopted. There can be no relaxation. Company and platoon commanders must attend their set at all times when 'marrying-up' is taking place between platoons. Platoon commanders have the added responsibility of issuing detailed orders for 'marrying-up' when an element leaves the platoon base. Training time in Australia will be more than repaid if procedures become automatic. Special care must also be taken when

a sub-unit is operating close to an element of another. There is a requirement for them to operate on the same internal net and CPs and gunners must assist by double checking locations, movement details and future intentions.

Movement in APCs

The movement of a sub-unit by APCs is an everyday affair and possibly one of the main problem areas we should look at. A company fully laden for operations is vulnerable when loading or unloading from APCs and it would be desirable to formulate a drill for these activities. Loading or unloading a section at a time is possibly a simple answer. Certainly the APCs have a good drill for their own protection. The infantry should consider suitable and compatible drills.

Packs stacked inside the APCs are no great problem, apart from the discomfort to the infantry. Provided the soldier carries his weapon and ammunition he can react to any situation that may require his deployment from the APC. Perhaps racks on top, similar to those in which APCs carry their ammunition, would reduce the problem.

Engineer Combat Teams

The combat teams provide invaluable service to the company during operations. However, there is one problem area. It is not reasonable for a company or platoon commander to be approached by a member of the team who states it is against engineer policy to man the MG. This position needs clarifying. The sensible approach, to my mind, is that members of the team should man the MG as part of normal rostered duty — they should not be used as sentries forward of the perimeter. On occasions, when the team has been under continual strain because of such tasks as tunnel clearing or mine clearances, they could be rested from manning the MG. Normal common sense should prevail.

The above is also tied up with Man Management. If the sapper has had a particularly bad day then he shouldn't go on sentry duty — anymore than a forward scout. There can be only one rule.

If the above, or something similar could be promulgated as an SOP it would eradicate the problems that exist, including the constant embarrassment at all levels of command.

Track Data

The number of tracks shown on most maps bears no relationship to those that really exist. Yet battalions have been through these areas time and time again. I suggest that battalion commanders should endeavour to have their companies, at the end of an operation, produce details of the positions of tracks in areas over which they have operated. I realize that inaccuracies could occur, but at least other forces tasked to operate in the area could be briefed on track patterns and a record would exist.

Field Signals

I am completely in agreement that field signals are necessary. They provide security and enable information to be passed speedily throughout a small element such as a section. However, I know of one occasion when a soldier was killed by the enemy when he turned around to give the 'thumbs down' signal. If he had shot first everyone would have known there was enemy. On other occasions similar type incidents have occurred. Soldiers should not take any chances by turning their back to a known enemy to pass field signals.

HF Tasks

Company commanders should select HF tasks and 'bid' for them daily. These tasks may be chosen from previously occupied ambush positions, MAINTDEM areas, LS etc. The company commander, being the man on the ground, should know the pattern of enemy movement in his AO and therefore should have a voice in the selection of HF tasks. The CO can dismiss the 'bids' if need be.

Helicopter Downdraft

Downdraft can blow trees and limbs over when a helicopter is entering or leaving an LS. There is a need to check thoroughly the periphery of all helicopter pads for possible dangerous trees and limbs. Troops should also be warned to look up whenever helicopters are entering or leaving pads.

Shooting Practice

Shooting is a must at all times and practice should be conducted whenever the soldiers are back in base and also during lull periods of

operations. If a platoon has not had contact for a lengthy period of time the men should be allowed to fire in order to maintain their confidence and test their weapons. Of course, security must be taken into account and the right time chosen.

Flak Jackets and Steel Helmets

These are cumbersome and uncomfortable articles and training in Australia should include their use. During village searches along Route 44 these items of equipment were worn for weeks on end.

Water

This is no problem during the wet season. However, I think that during the dry season six water bottles should be carried by each member of the company. This quantity is bulky and heavy but gives the platoons sufficient to cater for the most strenuous of tasks for a twenty-four hour period. Milbank Filters are issue items of equipment. Platoon commanders should check that every soldier carries this item on operations and uses it for its designed purpose.

During manufacture, plastic jerrican screw tops should be securely fastened to the body of the container. At present they are lost very easily and this creates many problems throughout the supply chain. This is simple advice which should have been taken ages ago.

Care of Equipment

Care of Army equipment is not good, as most have the thought in their minds that anything lost can be obtained on MAINTDEM. Soldiers must be made aware that equipment and clothing care is an individual responsibility and a loss is not an everyday matter. There is also a requirement for memories to be jogged in regard to the packing away of personal gear, and the cleaning of various items such as radio sets, machetes, bayonets, mess tins, knife, fork and spoon etc. Junior officers and NCOs and QM and staff must check every item/or excuse for replacement during MAINTDEMS.

Latrines

There is no doubt in my mind that latrines should always be inside the perimeter no matter what the disadvantages are in regard to odour. The fewer troops who move outside the perimeter the less is the likelihood of accidents occurring.

Commodity Code

I have my doubts as to the effectiveness of this code in some cases and this statement is made taking into account the number of resupplies received in Vietnam which saw the wrong items being forwarded on MAINTDEM. Others do have different ideas on this matter; however, I feel strongly that any request over the radio for ammunition, explosives, or spare parts for weapons should always be given in CLEAR. It does not matter if you receive underpants instead of socks but it certainly does matter if you receive a pull-through instead of a vital weapon part. Errors will always occur when using Commodity Code, as transmissions pass from platoon to company and then through to the AQ Cell and finally to base.

Secateurs

This is an invaluable item of equipment and should be on issue to every soldier. The present meagre scale of issue is not sufficient to cater for all the tasks for which it could be used — forward scout cutting through vines, cutting track plans and preparing night rest positions etc. Every soldier has a requirement to use this item. Why not make it a personal issue and stop the present situation where we have soldiers buying the item when or R and R?

Shirts

It is disturbing to see the number of photographs that appear showing soldiers with shirts off or sleeves rolled up. It would be good publicity if the covering caption read, 'Troops relaxing in base'. However, on many occasions these photographs are of soldiers on operations engaged in ambush or active patrolling. The law of the jungle is simple — keep shirts on at all times with sleeves rolled down.

Armalite Rate of Fire

The life of the armalite barrel is comparatively short compared with that of other weapon barrels. The weapon should only be fired in long sustained bursts in an emergency. My main point of concern is that most soldiers will use long sustained bursts in initiating ambushes or returning fire in most situations. The question is: Should we stop them using the inbuilt capability of the weapon in order to preserve the life of the barrel for which a replacement is readily available and easily

interchangeable? I prefer to see the weapon used without any restriction being placed upon the user.

Weapon and Ammunition Maintenance

Nothing has changed to alter the requirement to clean weapons and ammunition at least twice daily. The dust problem during the dry season is magnified when operating with helicopters or APCs, and during the wet season the rain and mud pose a constant problem.

It is the duty of every commander to conduct the inspection of weapons, ammunition, cleaning kits and oil bottles. Cleaning kits contain many small tools and devices which are easily lost if not cared for. Soldiers must be made conscious of the need to maintain their personal kit.

Keeping M60 ammunition clean, and at the same time having it ready for use, has been a problem which I doubt has yet been solved to the satisfaction of all. Perhaps the introduction of the magazine fed machine-gun for use in the mobile role will alleviate the problem.

Detonating Cord

The use of detonating cord for establishing 'banks' of Claymores would appear to have increased. The present white colour of the cord necessitates it being camouflaged or 'dug-in'. The production and issue of a drab coloured cord would take away this need.

Sighting of Lights

The number of sightings of lights reported to CPs when in base or on operations is very high. Most sightings amount to nothing more than a fire, village lights, stars, flares and the like. Often these reports cause undue alarm and even result in artillery engagement.

Recruit Training includes the detection and identification of noise. I can see a need for training along similar lines, but at far greater distances, in the identification of lights and their distance from the observer. Generally the enemy can, and does, move at night without the aid of torches. □

'THE noble Duke of York, he had ten thousand men. He marched them up to the top of the hill, and he marched them down again . . . . '

The despatch and return 86 years ago of Australia's first expeditionary force, the Sudan Contingent, was of such short duration that this jingle seems to sum it up rather aptly.

On 11 February 1885, Sydney received news of the death of General Gordon at Khartoum, in the Sudan. The following day Sir Edward Strickland, a retired British army officer living in Sydney, published a letter suggesting Australia should offer military assistance to Britain for service against 'England's and all Christendom's old enemies, the Saracens.'

A special Cabinet meeting called by the acting Premier of New South Wales, Mr W. B. Dalley, decided to offer 500 infantry and two batteries of field artillery with ten 16-pounder guns, to be landed at Suakin on the Red Sea within 30 days of embarkation.

The offer was well received in London, and on 15 February the British Government accepted the infantry and one battery, on condition the contingent should be under the commanding officer in the Sudan. Victoria, South Australia and Queensland, not to be outdone, also volunteered assistance but the British Government preferred to avoid further delay and declined the offers.

The force was assembled within a very brief time and was the subject of remarkable scenes of patriotism and great eloquence in Parliament.

There was, however, another response — from the critics, foremost among whom was Sir Henry Parkes. At a time when politicians and

churchmen vied with each other in emotional rhetoric, the sharp knife of Parkes' realism earned him bitter attacks by Government supporters.

Parkes called the expedition 'uncalled for, unjustifiable and quixotic.' He remarked: 'I deny the existence of any national crisis calling for the interference of a colony of 900,000 souls in the military movement of the Empire.'

The Sydney *Bulletin* was more to the point and spoke of 'England's degenerate generals.' In verse it made no bones:

To strike a blow for tyranny and wrong,
To crush the weak and aid the oppressing strong.

Another small matter to be resolved was the fact that Dalley, in his enthusiasm, had proffered help which the Government was not empowered to give. Within the Constitution, the Government had no power to enlist soldiers for overseas service and no authority to spend the money needed to send a contingent away.

However, the public was spontaneously enthusiastic and it was taken for granted that the Mother Colony would, through its Parliament, redeem the pledge made by Dalley.

There were only two dissentients to the Indemnity Act sanctioning the action. The enthusiasm and response of the people was witnessed by the contributions to a patriotic fund from every quarter of the colony and every section of society.

On 3 March 1885, fifteen days after it had been raised and prepared, the Sudan Contingent marched through the streets of Sydney to Circular Quay.

The city was packed. In addition to the normal quarter-of-a-million population, 100,000 country folk had streamed into Sydney. Many hardy miners and bushmen, unable to find accommodation in any dwelling-house, or disliking the heated air of the narrow streets, camped out in the Domain, much to the embarrassment of the regular boarders in that area.

Remarkable scenes of patriotism and emotion witnessed the march through the city. To the tune of *The Girl I Left Behind Me*, the contingent was furiously kissed as it passed. There was a Gilbert and Sullivan flavour to the whole atmosphere.

At the Quay 2,300 volunteers and cadets formed a guard of honour. Under the command of Colonel J. S. Richardson, the contingent of 750 men and 200 horses boarded the troopships *Australasian* and *Iberia*.

At 3.20 p.m. the *Iberia* moved out into the stream and 20 minutes later the *Australasian* joined her. Moving through a mosquito fleet of

well-wishers on the harbour, the two ships drew away from the quay, to the tremendous roar of the crowd on the shore.

As one witness to the scene described it, 'Farther and farther from the shore, louder and louder the cheering. Handkerchiefs waving wildly; sober and reverent, and sage and venerable men with eyes alight and faces aglow: women in varied phases of ecstatic suffering, and wider and wider and higher and higher the roar of the multitude.'

Only one painful incident marred the magnificence of the occasion. The *Iberia* collided with the sight-seeing steamer *Nemesis* and two women were killed. One of them was the wife of a member of the contingent.

On 29 March the contingent reached Suakin and the men joined the Imperial troops. By this time, however, the British Government was preparing plans to withdraw its forces into Egypt, leaving the Mahdi to his conquests.

The Australians packed away their red coats and put on the khaki fighting dress supplied by Imperial quartermasters. On 3 April, just a month to the day from their memorable flower-strewn march to the ships, the Australians brigaded with the best troops of Old England, the Guards, and marched to their first battle.

The advance to Tamai, 21 miles away, was made under General Graham to attack the force of Osman Digna, the Mahdi's commander of the eastern tribes. The fighting that followed was little more than a skirmish, three members of the Australian contingent being slightly wounded. The village was destroyed and the force returned to Suakin.

Following this affair many eulogistic and courteous messages were exchanged between the commanders, the War Office and the NSW Government. The British Press paid particular tribute to the Australians' physique and endurance. The spectre at the feast was the Sydney *Bulletin.*

The Australians were next given the role of protecting workmen building a military railway near Handoub, 14 miles north-west of Suakin. Occasionally small groups of Arabs would fire into the zarebas, or fieldworks, the Australians constructed for protection but these would do little more than awaken the men from a comfortable sleep.

The ever-increasing heat with much idle time began to cause sickness.

News came of trouble gathering in other quarters, compared with which any possible outcome of the Sudan difficulty was of no importance. Cablegrams between Her Majesty's Government and the NSW Government concerning the fate of the Australian contingent were exchanged

and, although Mr Dalley offered the force for service in India, subject to the men volunteering, the British ended the discussion by offering to send the contingent back to Sydney at the entire cost of the Imperial Government.

A reply sent immediately accepted the offer with gratitude and on 17 May 1855, the whole contingent, less the horses, embarked on the troopship *Arab*.

The departure from Suakin was a hurried affair but the authorities in Sydney were in no hurry when the *Arab* arrived on 12 June. Eleven cases of fever were left in hospital at Suakin and Suez and 12 at Colombo (there were six deaths) and because of this the ship was placed in quarantine.

The late Mr Tom Gunning, a member of the contingent, has related that the one bright spot during the difficult days of quarantine was the gift of 40 baskets of fish from some local fishermen. The gift is commemorated today in maps of Sydney Harbour by the name Forty Baskets Beach.

It was planned to welcome the return of the contingent in much the same manner as it was sent on its way. On Tuesday, 23 June the *Arab* left the quarantine station but the weather, which had been dry for many months, broke and the ship came up the harbour through piercing wind and driving rain.

When the *Arab* moored at the quay, the welcoming troops were drawn up ankle-deep in mud and the public saturated. None of this appeared to affect the warmth of the welcome—the speeches were long, and the route taken through the streets the same as that when they departed.

Next day the contingent was broken up and scattered throughout the colony, each man receiving two months' pay in addition to his full account since the day of enrolment. The men returned to their ordinary occupations but the memory of their service remained.

The Big Adventure was brief and in some quarters ridiculed, but it was not a failure. For the first time it brought home to the British and Continental Governments the realization that the colonies would stand by Britain in trouble.

Perhaps for the first time, although briefly, Australia became the focus of the newspapers of the world and the significance of her contribution was not allowed to be lost on restless countries, such as Germany. □

—C.F.C.

Some More Thoughts on Adventure Training

Major M. R. N. Bray
The Duke of Wellington's Regiment

HAVING read with interest Major White's article on Adventure Training in the April 1970 issue of the *Army Journal*, pondered whether he had acquired this enthusiasm in the classrooms of Camberley, and suspected the sources of some of his 'should not be' aspects, I have decided to write a sequel to his article. Being a keen supporter of Adventure Training activities in my own Army I applaud Major White's suggestion that the Australian Army should sponsor this type of training. This article's aim is to throw a few more ideas into the ring in the hope that someone might find them useful. In only one major aspect do I disagree with Major White, and that is on whether Adventure Training

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Major Bray graduated from RMA Sandhurst in 1957 and service since then includes a period in 1960-61 as ADC to GOC HQ, Middle East; Regt Sig Offr 1 DWR Kenya in 1961-63; Adjt 10WR, Germany (RAOR) 1964-66 and Tactics Instructor at the School of Infantry, UK in 1966-68; from where he attended RMCS, Shrivenham. Other courses attended by Major Bray were at Fort Churchill, Canada in 1964 and at the School of Infantry, Norway in the same year. In 1970 he attended the Australian Staff College, Queenscliff where this essay was written.

should be 'considered a normal part of military training', of which more later. I also think that he has omitted to mention the best form of Adventure Training.

Outward Bound

During World War II the British Merchant Navy discovered that the ability of their crews to survive after their ships had been sunk varied greatly from crew to crew — for no special reason other than that some were better at looking after themselves than others. As a result, a training scheme was started to teach men who were 'outward bound' how to survive at sea. At the end of the war this scheme developed into a youth training scheme, now known as the Outward Bound Trust. Its aim is to develop the character of boys aged about 17 and to show them the value of self-discipline and service to others. There are now several Outward Bound Schools in the British Isles, each of which uses either the mountains or the sea as a medium for presenting a challenge to their students. I believe that there is also a School in New South Wales.

The British Army has for many years had its own Outward Bound School at Towyn in Wales, to which it sends most of the boys who are being trained as junior leaders and apprentices. 1(BR) Corps in Germany also runs an Outward Bound School at Kristiansand in Norway for its young officers and soldiers.

Strictly speaking, Outward Bound Training and Adventure Training are perhaps two quite separate things, but in this field there is a lot of loose terminology. Major H. L. Stewart, writing in the July 1968 *Army Journal*, even includes battlefield historical tours as Adventure Training. However, despite being currently at Staff College, I have no intention of indulging in semantics. Suffice it to say that courses run at a school with the specific aim of character training are normally called Outward Bound Training, and everything else is Adventure Training.

Adventure Training

The scope is very wide: from the London-New York Air Race to collecting bats in Brazil for the British Museum; from crossing the Drakensberg mountains in Basutoland to sailing in the Baltic; all manner of activities get classed as Adventure Training, largely in an

attempt to obtain official sponsorship and funds. However, Adventure Training can be broadly classified as either expeditions or training schemes.

Expeditions, as Major White suggests, are primarily private concerns but the Army should have funds, facilities and equipment to help support them. In assessing how much support an expedition merits the following criteria are suggested:

- How many people are benefiting? — the more, the better.
- How much originality and kudos is involved?
- Is any useful end achieved or service performed?
- What are the prospects of success?
- Will the reputation of the Army be enhanced?
- Cost in relation to achievements?

Expeditions generally tend to be expensive and often benefit only a few people. On the other hand, training schemes, which are not mentioned in Major White's article, usually cost very little actual money and benefit a much larger number of people. Two examples, of which I have personal experience, will illustrate the type of scheme to which I refer.

In more peaceful times in Northern Ireland my battalion ran an Adventure Training Camp for six months each year. We set up a tented camp on the edge of a lough and ran three-week courses for soldiers, mostly young potential NCOs. The percentage of time spent on each subject was roughly as follows:

Subject	%
• Canoeing	25%
• Rock climbing	20%
• Mountain walking	20%
• Swimming, first aid, map reading PT • Confidence area, night patrols, initiative tests	35%

It was a tough course with early morning swims and PT, late nights, no beds and plenty of blisters. There was no technical military training. There were night patrols, and missions like canoeing into the nearest commercial harbour to 'blow up' ships — with the police acting as opposition. Overheads were small, there being one officer, three corporals, four privates and two vehicles to cope with 24 students. Students were graded and had comprehensive reports written on them.

Once they returned to the battalion they were given the opportunity to continue the activities they had learnt, but in a much more leisurely manner, during their spare time.

Some years later 12 Brigade in Germany had an ambitious and successful Adventure Training scheme which ran throughout the summer. Each of the four regiments in the brigade ran a camp; sailing in the Baltic, canoeing in Holland, mountaineering in Bavaria and under water swimming in Italy. Each camp had a capacity of 40 students and ran courses which lasted two weeks. These courses, unlike the battalion ones described earlier, were purely recreational and gradings awarded were only an indication of technical ability in the sport concerned. This guided units in the selection of men to train as future instructors. In the winter, this same brigade ran a ski-ing course in Bavaria, which gave about 80 men each fortnight an all-in ski-ing holiday for the equivalent of $A5.

I believe that schemes of the type I have just mentioned are better value than expeditions which involve one group of men on a unique mission. They cater for much larger numbers and, apart from the widely recognized value of Adventure Training as a character builder, they also introduce men to pursuits which may become life-long interests. Such pursuits are often beyond the reach of most men, particularly town dwellers, before they join the Army.

Now, should all this be considered 'a normal part of military training?' First, one must be sure what is meant by the statement. No one would suggest that the training is normal in a military sense but I believe that the organization of Adventure Training schemes should be handled by the normal military system using its normal military methods. This has the following advantages:

- Commanders at every level approve or reject each scheme bearing in mind their other commitments. Approved schemes then get the appropriate priority and assistance.
- Schemes are properly organized and administered. This gives a much better chance of avoiding the pitfalls of Adventure Training — financial, medical and diplomatic.
- Military assistance in cash or kind can more easily be provided for 'a normal part of military training'. There should be no problem over pay and allowances for those on 'military training'.

- There is a better chance of employing the experts to teach the masses rather than encouraging the experts to go it alone.

In short, I suggest that Adventure Training schemes are best handled like any other training scheme, and that if expeditions are recognized as useful military training the organizer will find it much easier to get support. In no way do I wish to inhibit the initiative of an individual who has a good idea. But if the individual's enthusiasm is harnessed to the military machine the benefit is mutual, provided that the military machine is correctly geared.

Finance

The British Services derive enormous benefit from the Nuffield Trust which generously present boats, canoes, climbing equipment, club houses and a host of other things which play an important part in our lives. Perhaps if the Australian Services cannot find a Lord Nuffield they should start a fund to which many mini-Nuffields might be persuaded to contribute. What could be more appropriate than a sail training ship called Poseidon!

Once Adventure Training is firmly established it will probably be possible to tap various sources for money. Usually there are a number of command funds or training grants which may be able to assist.

Expeditions are often financed in part, if not entirely, by the individuals who take part. There is no reason why individuals should not also contribute to training schemes, provided that they have a high recreational content and are good value for money.

The Army in Society

In the task of maintaining good relations with the society in which it lives the Army may well find Adventure Training an asset. The British Army created, some years ago, a large number of Youth Teams. The charter of these teams was to make a contribution to the development of the youth of the country by running such things as Adventure Training for youth clubs and similar organizations. These teams are not established to recruit and from some points of view they are a mixed blessing to the Army. However, they must be a useful bond between the Army and society and they are one illustration of the way the Army's particular talent for training young men can enhance its usefulness and

reputation in the society in which it lives. In Britain, Army officers also play a big part in the Sail Training Association's sailing courses for boys.

If the Australian Army sponsors Adventure Training it can do two things which will be popular with, and valuable to, society. First, it will return to civilian life, from the Army, men who are more likely to be healthy and active sportsmen, rather than articulate but inactive spectators. Secondly, the Army may be able to provide qualified instructors, when their military duties permit, to assist civilian projects; or it may sponsor such projects itself as part of the Army's contribution to society.

The Future

At present, with Vietnam in full swing, the Australian Army probably feels unable to stretch its resources still further by taking on additional commitments. But if the subject of Adventure Training is discussed now and the seeds sown in high places, a good start can be made after the war. The best start would be to set up an Adventure Training School which would teach the basic skills to beginners and also train instructors. The school should also set the safety standards for the Army. The grading system should be based on current civilian standards for such things as climbing, canoeing and sailing so that men might find their qualifications useful outside the Army. Dare I suggest that the school should also be tri-service? Meanwhile, progress could be made on those aspects which do not require manpower (other than staff work), namely, recognition of Adventure Training, establishing procedures and looking for money.

Conclusion

Major White made a good case for introducing Adventure Training activities into the Australian Army. This article supports his cause but suggests that training courses in adventurous activities are a more worthwhile enterprise from the Army's point of view than individual expeditions.

The article also makes the case for treating Adventure Training as a normal military activity, and suggests some ways in which Adventure Training enhances the Army's reputation in society. □

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL PAINTINGS. Produced for the Trustees of the Australian War Memorial by John Brackenreg, Australian Artists Editions, Sydney. (1970, $1).

Reviewed by Brigadier G. D. Solomon

THE assiduous reader of this Journal will remember that in August 1968 it appeared with a new title and, though not for the first time, a new cover design. Featured on it was a reproduction of the painting 'Tanks and Infantry, Aitape' by G. R. Mainwaring, from the collection belonging to the Australian War Memorial. It was hoped that this innovation, made possible by the co-operation of the Director of the Memorial, would enhance the appearance of the Journal and at the same time give a modest form of publicity to a remarkable collection of works of art, the quality and size of which is generally unknown to the public, for even those who visit the Memorial in such numbers probably do not realize that what is on display at any time is about one eighth of the total collection. With this in mind it is gratifying to note that the Trustees have now produced a booklet containing a selection of plates in colour and black and white, together with a monograph, 'Australian Artists at War', by Ronald Monson, the Publications Officer of the War Memorial and formerly war correspondent of the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*. The monograph is brief but comprehensive and should lighten the darkness of many readers provided they are not deterred by the rather forbidding type. For the officer preparing for examination it could serve as a model of lucid writing.

The illustrations generally are of high quality but one or two, for example the reproduction of Dennis Adams' 'The Australian Cruiser H.M.A.S. *Perth*', seem to lack something of the colour of the original. Their selection must have posed a difficult problem. We all know that 8,000 into 25 'won't go', yet this was precisely the problem

which confronted those who were responsible for making the choice. They did not make their task any easier by including two works by each of Dargie, Hele, Lambert and Mainwaring. Their unfortunate succumbing to this very understandable temptation meant the exclusion of four other artists who could have given their own individual distinction to the booklet. Although one cannot quarrel with the selection there must remain room for personal disagreement. For instance, while one welcomes the inclusion of Colin Colahan's 'Ballet of Wind and Rain', which conveys the quality of an artist perhaps not widely known (in this country), one must regret that room has not been found for one of Charles Bush's paintings. The omission of Louis McCubbin seems particularly unfortunate if only because of his close association with the Memorial. As Mr Monson makes clear, McCubbin, with Sir Harry Chauvel and Dr C. E. W. Bean, was a member of the Art Committee of the Board of Management of the Memorial when it was set up in 1941. He had been one of the most prolific contributors of the 1914-18 War and was responsible for the background painting for most of the dioramas of that period which are so much a feature of the War Memorial. The inclusion of his 'RAN Tribute to Anzac Dead' with its peculiar and altogether appropriate serenity would have been very fitting and Charles Bryant's 'AE2 in the Sea of Marmora' with its different sort of serenity would have been an admirable complement to it. However, the list of candidates is so long and the choice so personal that perhaps one should simply be grateful that someone else has had the task of making it and has succeeded in presenting such an agreeable and representative selection. One hopes that if the venture has the success it deserves the Trustees may be encouraged to produce a larger book with more plates (not that this will make the selection any easier) and some brief biographical details of all the artists in the collection. More plates, more text, more money — but it could well be that many people would welcome the chance to pay it.

Both for the visitor to the Memorial and the person who comes upon this booklet by chance, it is an excellent souvenir of one of the great institutions of its kind anywhere and judged by any standard. The plates will provide a spur to memory for many who look at them — a reminder of the visit to the Memorial, of wartime experiences and associations, and sometimes even quite inconsequential recollection of things long forgotten and suddenly remembered. Forty years or so ago a reproduction in colour of Will Longstaff's 'The Menin Gate at Midnight' was a feature on many a school wall. Certainly there was one

at our school and the thought of that brings back memories of school Assemblies and in particular Speech Nights, with Mrs Sadleir singing 'Lo, Hear the Gentle Lark' — in recollection it seems every year but surely this could not have been so? — and, we liked this rather better, 'Land of Hope and Glory'. Later Mr Atherton would sing with great spirit 'The Company Sergeant Major' and to us, squirming on our chairs on a warm December evening, that seemed better still.

O tempora, O mores! — but how pleasant to be reminded of them by such a decorative and informative souvenir designed to achieve an altogether different purpose. □

NO MEMORY FOR PAIN, by F. Kingsley Norris. Heinemann, Melbourne, 1970. 388 pp. $7.50.

Reviewed by A. J. Sweeting *

'IT was gross libel to hear A.H.Q. described as "the only asylum in Australia run by its inmates",' writes Major-General Sir Kingsley Norris in his recently published autobiography. This was of the period not long after he had been appointed D.G.M.S. in 1948 in succession to 'Ginger' Burston. The war had ended three years before, but there is no doubt that there was still skirmishing going on in the old grey-stone building on St Kilda Road. Norris provides some evidence of this in his disagreement with the A.G. of the day on the need for a Deputy, a point that he seems to have had to hammer home by spending a good deal of his subsequent term in office outside Australia.

'Dum' Norris, as he is universally known, got his name from Ally Wilson, a Latin master at the Melbourne Church of England Grammar School at a stage when the class was studying the Gallic wars and Caesar had come into conflict with Dumnorix, the Aeduan, a rugged and individualistic chieftain. Norris had come into conflict with Ally Wilson. 'Come out here, little Dumnorix,' said Wilson, and the nickname 'Dum', has stuck ever since.

'Dum' was one of two sons of the first Federal Director of Quarantine in Australia, who subsequently became medical staff officer

* *A previous editor of the* Army Journal *and formerly Senior Research Officer, Official War History, Mr Sweeting is now the Assistant Director of the Australian War Memorial. He has been acting Editor of the Official History since 1963.*

in the United Kingdom, and in 1915-16 was A.D.M.S., A.I.F., London. The younger Norris was doing a medical course at Trinity College in the University of Melbourne when war broke out in 1914 and he enlisted for the A.I.F. as soon as recruiting opened.

He was posted as a private in the 1st Light Horse Field Ambulance and was with the horse section when that unit embarked in October 1914. In Egypt Norris was transferred as a medical orderly to No. 2 General Hospital at Mena — presumably because he knew more medically of men than of horses. In August 1915 he was promoted corporal, but shortly afterwards was operated on for appendicitis and sent to England. He was destined not to remain there long. Australian medical students serving in the A.I.F. were being returned to Australia to complete their courses, and Norris was one of those marked to go back. He graduated MB and ChB at the end of 1916 and became a resident medical officer at the Melbourne Hospital. He went thence to the Children's Hospital, Melbourne, where he became medical superintendent. In 1920 he took his MD degree and that year started a specialist children's practice in Collins Street.

In January 1925 he joined the militia as a captain and in nine years had reached the rank of half-colonel — fairly rapid promotion for those days.

After the outbreak of the 1939-45 War he was appointed first Chairman of the Central Medical Co-ordination Committee, which directed itself chiefly towards increasing local production and expansion of manufactures of medical instruments and the growing of drug-producing plants such as opium poppy and digitalis. Concurrently he was given command of the 2/1st Casualty Clearing Station of the 6th Division. It was a 'happy' unit as any unit fortunate enough to have been given 'Dum' as C.O. was bound to be. He did not, however, go overseas with his unit, and in April 1940, following the Government's decision to expand the expeditionary force to a Corps, was promoted Colonel and appointed A.D.M.S. of the newly-formed 7th Division, commanded by Major-General J. D. Lavarack.

'J.D.L.', writes Norris, 'was a man of singular charm, of wide reading and knowledge, but with quick flashes of anger at unpredictable times.' He did not 'possess a sparkling sense of humour', and could not at first make out Norris's D.A.D.M.S., Major Stanley Williams, to whose lot fell the task of immunising divisional headquarters against the diseases that sometimes decimated armies in the past. When Lavarack came in for his inoculations he found Williams sharpening a

needle on the sole of his boot. "What on earth are you doing?" growled Lavarack. "Sir," said Williams, "I always like to have a sharp needle for generals; it doesn't hurt so much."

The actual syringe and needle to be used had of course been sterilized and were waiting in a bowl of spirit. With due aseptic care the General was given his stabs. Later that day he sent for Norris. 'Who is this odd fellow Williams you have got?' he asked. 'He was actually sharpening his needle on his dirty boot.' Norris explained that this was only Williams' little joke and that all precautions had been observed. 'If anything happens to me,' said Lavarack sourly, 'you're both finished in my division.'

Nothing happened to J.D.L. and so Norris continued to serve as A.D.M.S. 7 Div with Williams as his staunch and able offsider. He served under J.D.L. in Palestine and Egypt, and was under his command in the first days of the Syrian Campaign until Lavarack got I Corps, and 'Tubby' Allen, the peppery but lovable senior brigade commander in 6 Div, was promoted to command the 7th.

Syria was a costly and painful campaign in which the Australian, British and Indian troops were matched against the Vichy French, the Senegalese, and last but not least, the famed Foreign Legion. The casualties in the six-weeks campaign were heavy, but little was made of the campaign publicity-wise either then or later — a fact which rankled with the 7th Division. After the campaign the casualties could have been heavier in another field — that of venereal disease — except for prompt recognition of the problem, the 'adoption' of controlled brothels — to one of which 'Dum' was offered honorary membership but declined! — and efficient prophylactic methods. 'Dum' writes less tellingly and less amusingly in his autobiography about the V.D. problem than he did in his divisional report, which was circulated widely and read gleefully throughout the A.I.F. in the Middle East. The Staff College might consider including this divisional report in its next 'Recommended Reading' List (a few laughs are frequently more beneficial than half a dozen lessons).

The 7th Division spent the remainder of 1941 garrisoning Syria and in early 1942 was ordered east to take up the fight with the Japanese, who were rapidly advancing southwards. Norris flew by a circuitous route to Batavia with a small advanced party of the 7th Division, including 'Tubby' Allen, and found on arrival that the plan was for two Australian divisions — the 7th and 6th — to supplement the Dutch

troops in the defence of Java. Corps headquarters, under Lavarack, was already established at Bandung, and the first flight of the Australians—including the 2/3rd Machine-Gun Battalion, the 2/2nd Pioneers, the 2/2nd C.C.S. and the 2/6th Field Company — lay in Tanjong Priok. Like the majority of units in this appallingly organized movement, the troops had not been tactically loaded. Nevertheless they were landed as a 'gesture' to the Dutch — a costly one as it proved — and dispositions were made for them ashore. The remaining flights were turned back, eventually to Colombo and Australia, although if Churchill had had his way the 7th Division, still not tactically loaded, would have been landed in Burma in time to take part in the arduous retreat to India. The 7th Division has Sturdee and the Australian Prime Minister, Curtin, to thank for being spared that ordeal. The landing of any part of the Australian force in Java was a blunder which probably would never have occurred had Blamey been present at the time.

In the 7th Division's next campaign in the Owen Stanleys, Norris became probably the best known senior officer on the track. There weren't too many of his rank about. His stumpy figure was up and down it daily and he had a cheery greeting and seemed to be on first-name terms with everyone. In an autobiography — and there are too few of them from our service leaders — one expects to find opinions frankly expressed about controversial events. For example, the Blamey-Rowell clash, which led to Rowell's dismissal, followed by the replacement later of 'Tubby' Allen by George Vasey. On the dismissal of General Rowell Norris remains mute, referring the reader to John Hetherington's *Blamey* and Raymond Paull's *Retreat from Kokoda* which he — accepting the legend now firmly established in the Australian Army — describes as an 'admirable account' of the first phase of the Papuan Campaign. A 'classic', wrote a learned contributor to the *Australian Army Journal* in an article on the study of military history, reprinted in that journal, and now, one understands, required reading at the Australian Staff College.

In fact Paull's account provides a one-eyed view of this episode, and Hetherington's biography, currently being thoroughly revised, was written in haste. There are a number of Australian military 'classics' but Paull's is surely not one of them.

Norris is less restrained about the replacement of 'Tubby' to whom he was 'very close', but offers no medical opinion on the reasons given for his relief. Was 'Tubby' fit to carry on as divisional commander?

Norris's opinion could have been of value. The relief was in fact the outcome of MacArthur's ill-informed signals, which Blamey unwisely passed on, prodding Allen to faster progress. Allen, though with steam mounting, replied to these signals with due propriety.

At last the signal arrived at divisional headquarters announcing Allen's relief:

> Consider you have had sufficiently prolonged tour of duty in forward area. General Vasey will arrive by air morning 28 Oct. On arrival you will hand over command to him and return to Moresby for duty in this area.

Next morning, writes Norris, 'rather like a cortege, a small group of us went across with Tubby to the plane waiting at Myola II. As we walked back the silence was broken after a while. "Poor old Tubby," said Vasey, "he really has done a grand job".' Within 24 hours of his departure, Tubby's planning had broken the Japanese defences and instead of looking up to the ridges ahead the troops gazed down the cleft that led to Kokoda and the Promised Land beyond.

Norris praises the men of the field ambulance units during this period and writes of the 'tireless' work of the surgical teams, who got on with their jobs under a rotting tent fly or a leaking grass roof, probably on a muddy floor, in the pre-antibiotic days of 1942. He tells of the introduction of penicillin in the later stages of the Papuan campaign and of the rapid healing of gross wounds, including the horrible buttock wounds, in a way which was miraculous to behold. At that stage the fighting was in the highly malarious area surrounding Buna, Gona and Sananada. Malaria was decimating both the Allied and enemy forces. Afterwards Norris found no evidence of medical service or supplies among the deserted Japanese areas. 'It would not have mattered,' he writes, 'what food and ammunition the Japanese had, provided we had adequate suppressive drugs and were prepared to wait for the inevitable, as victory was only a matter of time.' More than a few Australians would still be alive had that advice been available and accepted at the time.

In May 1943 Norris was appointed D.D.M.S. of the I Australian Corps. The Corps Commander was Lieut-General Morshead, and most of the Corps staff officers had served either at Tobruk or El Alamein. As Norris writes, unless one had served on 9 Div, one was bound to feel out of it.

After serving in the campaign which led to the expulsion of the Japanese from the Huon Peninsula and Allied control of the Vitiaz Strait, Norris developed severe dermatitis, which resulted in his return to

Australia where he spent a long period in hospital. Towards the end of his convalescence George Vasey, who was going up to take over the 6th Division, asked Norris whether he would like to go up with him to Wewak to let him know what he thought of the medical set-up. 'Dum' would have liked to have gone, but as he told Vasey, he could do so only with the approval of the D.G.M.S. The D.G.M.S. flatly refused. The aircraft taking Vasey to Wewak crashed off Townsville, killing Vasey and all on board. Thus was Norris spared for other important work.

He became Director of Post-Graduate Medical Studies in Victoria after his retirement but soon afterwards resumed private practice for the princely reward of £12 a week. So ends the first half of the Norris autobiography. The second half is devoted to his post-war work, and includes a multitude of impressions and reflections, both of people, places, problems and events. As D.G.M.S. between 1948 and 1955 he made a number of visits overseas — to Japan, to Korea (thrice), to the Arctic Circle (to attend military tests), to New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom. He continued to travel widely after his retirement.

In Japan he met the famed 'Red Robbie', Commander of the B.C.O.F., whom he looked upon as the reincarnation of Napoleon's Marshal Ney, but with whom he found discussion difficult. One evening when he was sipping sherry with him he said by way of conversation: 'This is a surprisingly good show of yours Robbie.' Robbie rose with all his dignity. "Surprising? Surprising? What surprises you? This is my command". ' Dinner *à deux* that night, records Norris, was rather a chilly affair.

During this visit he met General MacArthur ('The Presence') who remembered Norris from the Tableland days. On a second occasion during the Korean War, Norris found the general cheerful and optimistic about the campaign. 'While he was saying how soon the war was to be won, MacArthur rose impressively,' writes Norris. 'So perfect was the alignment of my chair and his figure that as I looked up to him Douglas MacArthur had taken the place of George Washington in the large battle picture behind him.' Although Norris does not say so, there is no question that MacArthur would have considered this appropriate.

It would not be possible or desirable in a review even of this length to set down the mass of rewarding experience which resulted from Norris's overseas tours or to submit them to the scrutiny of a statement of profit and loss in the way of benefits accruing to the Australian Army. One perhaps minor outcome, however, of Norris's visits to the United King-

dom and the B.A.O.R. was the introduction to Australia of more realistic army exercises in the medical sphere. Hitherto casualties had been labelled 'G.S.W. chest', 'compound fractured femur' and so on. After Norris's return to Australia, with the use of greasepaint, putty, fragments of animal bone and glycerine dyed with carmine the Australian Medical Corps was able to simulate wounds, including spurting blood from an artery, so realistic that even the flies were deceived. 'Success,' writes Norris, 'was later demonstrated at our School of Army Health when we staged an exercise on an atomic disaster. As the press photographers approached the casualties, two turned away, were violently sick and gave the afternoon away.'

Norris has reservations about the Psychology Corps, probably fairly widely shared:

> Over the last few years (he writes), psychology has become a blessed word in the community, almost with a halo, and often, shrouded in strange pseudo-scientific jargon, is accepted at its face value. There are psychologists and psychologists, some with academic qualifications and some without, but nearly all rather arrogantly assume the monopoly of common sense — and what isn't common sense is common nonsense. Any person successful in the handling of others is a sound psychologist, even if he has never heard the word or studied the subject. It is difficult to understand how anyone not knowing the basic details, the difficulties and the challenge of military service could, with any accuracy, predict suitability for enlistment. A long list of most personal and intimate questions, most of which are looked on rather as a joke, may reveal something of a personality, but wise people who have had service experience should surely be nearer the mark.
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> Since its inception the Psychology Corps has grown from strength to strength, but I do wish psychologists looked happy and talked about ordinary everyday subjects, and when they looked at me did not make me feel that I was being peered at through a high-powered analytical miscroscope. We are, however, indebted to them for unconsciously providing more jests than the Aberdonians.

This is the work of a man who rose from the rank of private to that of major-general — a feat, in the Australian Army, of which one is entitled to feel especially proud. If Sir Kingsley feels pride in his achievement, he conceals it well in his modestly told story. His is a valuable work, written with an understanding of the foibles and frailties of men — his own as well as of others — and with charm, elegance and humour and in a low-key philosophical vein that are characteristics of the man. The errors in spelling the book contains — largely in proper names, both place and personal — are the author's. As he freely concedes, he was never able to spell. While they may mar they cannot impair the value of the work which deserves to be widely read — and not ony by officers of the Medical and Psychology corps. ☐