

TACTICAL VIGNETTE 98-4

Stability and Support Operations in Athia

“Showdown at Bruechville”

Scenario:

You are deployed in theater as part of a United Nations force where you have been assigned stability and support type operations (SASO), primarily peace enforcement and support of the humanitarian assistance efforts of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The threat in the area is from the Athian faction, which is not satisfied with the United Nations' resolution of border disputes or redistribution of international aid. Athian equipment includes BRDM-1s and OT-64s, which they have been flaunting in violation of the U.N. accord by using their armored vehicles to escort other vehicles and equipment around in your area of operations. Additionally, Athian activity has thus far been limited to mild anti-United Nations demonstrations and graffiti. Recent intelligence indicates insurgent forces are suffering food shortages brought on by harsh winter months. Current rules of engagement now allow the use of deadly force when necessary to protect lives, critical equipment, and all U.N./host nation facilities.

General Situation:

You are the commander for Blackhorse Troop 1-23 Cavalry, an armored division cavalry squadron. Your assets include two scout platoons (1st and 3rd Plt) of M3 Cavalry Fighting Vehicles, two tank

platoons (2nd and 4th Plt) of M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tanks, a mortar section, one up-armored fire truck and one tank and pump unit, carrying high-pressure water cannons. Additionally, there is a team of OH-58D(I) Kiowa Warriors (KWs) on station from Delta Troop that are under squadron control. The KWs are each carrying 300 rounds of .50 caliber and two Hellfire missiles.

Mission:

B/1-23rd Cavalry conducts area security operations centered on the village of Bruechville to protect food distribution points and other critical facilities against Athian insurgent threats.

You have been issued non-lethal weapons for crowd control, to include water cannons, pepper spray, and CS grenades. You are conducting an area security mission to protect and control the distribution of food and medical supplies at a recently resupplied food distribution center. Your 1st platoon is assigned Check Points 7 and 9, the terrain west of the river, with its sister platoon (2nd) established in Hide Position Horse. Your 3rd Platoon is responsible for the river and the terrain east of the river, with its sister platoon in Hide Position Saddle. Your mortars are in Mortar Firing Position Rope.

WHAT'S
YOUR
NEXT
MOVE??



The Action Begins:

Ten minutes ago, the squadron S2 informed you that JSTARS reports two convoys approaching your position from the west on each of the major roads. Both convoys have approximately 20 vehicles, of which about half appear to be armored. The **squadron commander FRAGOed** the KWs to reconnoiter the convoys to determine their exact location and disposition. You plot their location to be approximately twelve kilometers west of CPs 7 and 9.

You receive the following **SPOTREP** from your 3rd platoon: “*Black 6, this is Blue 1. We have a crowd of approximately 200 pro-Athian sympathizers on foot, moving on the road toward the resupply area, current location is two kilometers west of CP 11. We have identified known Athian black list personnel among the demonstrators. Also, a roving patrol has found five empty dump trucks hidden in the wooded area north of HP Saddle. The truck drivers state they are taking a lunch break from their road construction project.*” Although you have been briefed on all construction projects in your area, you are unaware of any projects in your immediate AO.

The **KWs report** that both convoys are approximately ten kilometers west of CPs 7 and 9 respectively. The northern convoy consists of 3 BRDMs, 5 OT-64s, and 12 GAZ cargo trucks. The southern convoy consists of 5 BRDMs, 6 OT-64s, and 9 GAZ cargo trucks. Every armored vehicle has women and children riding on top. The OT-64s are equipped with 14.5mm heavy MGs, and BRDMs equipped with 12.7mm heavy MGs. The paramilitary soldiers have RPGs and SA-7s. They further report that the road is bordered on both sides by restricted and severely restricted terrain.

Requirement:

Take five minutes to assess the situation and formulate a FRAGO. Issue your FRAGO as if talking on the radio. Submit your solution to the Cavalry Branch by e-mail at: HoskinsonT@ftknox-dtdd-emh5.army.mil, or mail your solution to ARMOR, ATTN: ATZK-TDM, Fort Knox, KY 40121-5210.

