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TITLE

TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE FORWARD RIFLE COMPANY COMMANDER
DETERMINE WHEN THE ENEMY IS PLANNING THE USE OF AN ATOMIC
WEAPON IN THE VICINITY OF HIS POSITION?

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PREFACE

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The point of view expressed in this paper is that of the author - not necessarily that of the United States Army Infantry School or the United States Army.

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INTRODUCTION

The advent of atomic warfare is upon us. To us, as rifle company commanders, this means that in a fleeting instant, we could possibly lose all or a major part of our command. The determining factors are; the size of the enemy's atomic explosion and the extent to which the command has been prepared for an atomic explosion.

The first factor assumes the enemy currently has atomic weapons and also that his technological progress will continue, at least on an equal plane with ours.

The second factor, the one over which we can exercise control, will depend directly on the amount of intelligence that the company commander has at his disposal and the subsequent actions of the company commander based on this intelligence. Therefore, I am limiting the scope of this monograph to the intelligence aspect of the problem. This analysis will discuss the facilities that a company commander currently has and I will recommend an addition that could greatly expand his capabilities.

Annex A will be the current TO&E of a rifle company. This will assist in the discussion of what the company commander has available now.

Annex B will be the recommended TO&E of a small reconnaissance unit.

We will be discussing a condition that has never actually existed on a battlefield. My references are limited. There will be no historical examples.

DISCUSSION

The Company Commander does not have at his disposal any section or subordinate unit that has the specific purpose of producing intelligence. Annex A. (Current TO&E of a Rifle Company). However, the crux of his problems lies with his ability to gather information and process that information into useful intelligence. Speed is of primary importance if this information and intelligence can be disseminated and appropriate action taken to insure survival of the command.

The basic differences between atomic and conventional warfare which will complicate the collection procedure are the increased distances between units and the rapidity with which units can be expected to move. This applies equally as well to aggressor units as it does to our own.

One of the best protective measures against an atomic attack is dispersion. We can habitually expect distances between units far beyond what were considered normal. While this is an excellent passive defensive measure it multiplies the problems involved in collecting information. Likewise, rapid movement by our forces will materially reduce the enemy's ability to locate lucrative targets for his atomic potential, but this same movement will increase the difficulty we will have with our own collection effort.

To survive on the atomic battlefield the company commander will have to have at his disposal certain information. The following are not all inclusive, but represent some of the most vital requirements:

- (1) Fast, accurate information on enemy locations!
- (2) precise information on enemy disposition
- (3) information of any special equipment the enemy may possess!
- (4) information on any special training the enemy may have received!
- (5) information on any enemy atomic delivery means that may be located well forward!

The above requirements, if analyzed, will also provide us with a majority of the indication that a rifle company commander will be able to develop at his level. These indications if properly analyzed and evaluated will materially supplement the intelligence that will come down from higher headquarters!

The first, fast accurate information on enemy disposition, should serve as indication for two possible courses of action! If the enemy consistently employs "hugging" tactics, that is, attempts to keep his front line units so close to ours that we could not use an atomic weapon without endangering our own troops; this would indicate that at that particular time he does not intend to use an atomic weapon against us! This however, is based on an assumption that the enemy would not indiscriminately expose his own troops to the effects of his own atomic weapon! Time and combat experience alone will prove whether or not this assumption is valid!

Secondly, if the enemy should suddenly break contact after a period of sustained contact it might indicate that we have been selected as a target! This by itself may not be conclusive and should be evaluated in light of the overall intelligence picture!

Precise information on enemy dispositions will also provide several indications! Extensive digging by the enemy, with

particular effort toward providing overhead cover for troops; vehicles and ammunition supplies all or partly dug under surface level would possibly indicate the use of an atomic weapon. Skeleton forces, motorized for quick withdrawal is another indication.

Information of any special equipment can also provide us with indications. Our patrols suddenly report that the enemy troops have received issues of ion chambers. The patrols also report that the enemy is using more clothing than weather conditions make necessary. Additional reports state that he appears to have issued opaque glasses to units in contact. The enemy may also increase the issue of medical supplies. This type of information will provide front line commanders with valuable time for defensive preparations.

Of particular interest to us would be information on special training being conducted. This training may take the form of proper use of the equipment discussed in the above paragraphs or training in battlefield survival. Special emphasis would probably be placed on self aid for burns and first aid in general.

The rifle company would also need prompt information on any atomic delivery means that had been located in the forward portion of the enemy battle area. Specifically we would need information of heavy caliber artillery. In addition any ground or vehicular mounted launchers capable of firing large or guided missiles. Included with delivery means I would add atomic demolitions. If the enemy were excavating to unusual depths by using heavy equipment in the vicinity of key terrain that we might be expected to try to seize and occupy, it would certainly warrant further reconnaissance.

The above discussion serves to point up some, and it is not by any means all, of the indications of enemy atomic

effort. These are the indications that a rifle company commander must be cognizant of and expend his intelligence effort to procure. The extent to which a commander can produce these indication will prove to be the extent to which he can determine when and where the enemy will employ atomic weapon or weapons in his area.

With these requirements in mind, let us visualize a company in the attack. The company will probably be one of two or more making the attack. It will be dispersed from the other units both laterally and in depth. The units will not be concentrated until the last possible moment. The company will probably be operating over extended distances. Reconnaissance forces must be used to gain and maintain contact with the enemy to provide the commander with information that is vital to accomplish his mission. We also still have the inherent responsibility for the protection of our flanks and rear to prevent the enemy from surprising us. Each of these tasks bites into the available manpower and reduces our overall ability to accomplish the mission.

Defensively our problems have also increased. As I discussed in the attack, dispersion will be one of the major techniques used to provide protection against an atomic attack.

The company as part of a battle group conducting either a mobile type defense or a strong point defense will require a large amount of patrolling to satisfy surveillance within the battle position. This surveillance does not materially reduce the amount of effort that will be necessary to produce the requirements as outlined above. Actually this surveillance will reduce the amount of men and equipment that the commander has available for the collection of information that he needs for survival on the atomic battlefield.

If the company is ordered to adopt some form of linear

defense, the company will still be expected to occupy and defend much greater yardages than previously. Again, patrolling within the positions will be necessary to detect and eliminate enemy units that may infiltrate due to the increased front-ages.

The very nature of atomic warfare has forced the company commander to increase his production of intelligence. He must be able to accurately fix the enemy both during the day and during the hours of darkness. The effectiveness of his collection effort will be determined by the speed and accuracy by which it operates. To accomplish their collection effort, mobile patrols with long range communications and well trained observers will be necessary.

I believe that it is apparent that the rifle company commander should have a small, highly mobile unit organic to the company to fight an atomic type war successfully.

The unit that is sent to get the required information should have certain other additional characteristics. To break the enemy reconnaissance screen, or fight to defend itself, or to delay the enemy, this unit should be fairly well armed. Also this unit should contain especially trained personnel. These personnel should be carefully trained in route and bridge analysis, terrain evaluation and be well versed in indications of atomic activity by the enemy.

Now that I have outlined the characteristics and equipment of the unit that could successfully do the job for the company commander, let us examine the current TO&E of a rifle company for possible sources of such a unit. We must keep in mind also that a large amount of patrolling will be done, the results of which will add little or nothing to the collection effort.

The commander could utilize all or part of a rifle

platoon. This unit can and has done a fine job in the past. But can it accomplish the required job for us under the criteria as set down above? Frankly I doubt it. The platoon does not have the required transportation and this transportation is not available anywhere in the company. The AN/PRC-6 radio is inadequate to cope with the extended range over which we could be expected to operate. The major deficiency that a rifle platoon would have is the lack of troops with the necessary specialized skills. Then to, the rifle platoon does not have anything heavier than a 30 cal. MG and I feel that at least a 106 RR should be provided.

This unit could be formed from the weapons platoon. However, to take the necessary vehicles, men and communication would render this platoon completely ineffective. Nothing would be gained by destroying one unit to create another. Also, the men of the weapons platoon do not have the necessary specialized training.

A quick glance at company headquarters reveals that it is already so lean on equipment and personnel that to reduce it further would render it ineffective.

The rifle company is equipped to handle normal patrolling. It is not organized or equipped to accomplish the additional patrolling responsibilities of the atomic battlefield. When the situation demands speed, long range, mobility and superior communication, the rifle company commander cannot furnish the necessary unit from the current rifle company. The force at best would not be mobile, would be poorly trained for the job and would lack fire power and communications.

Another major factor to be considered deals with the impact on the fighting strength of a unit by taking additional patrolling forces from it. Brig. Gen. L. C. Hudson, USMC and formerly a member of the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth had this to say on the subject, "Clearly,

additional far ranging security forces will be needed to cover the greater area required. But if we attempt to provide such forces in the conventional manner, these patrols and scouts eat deeply into the manpower of tactical units of a company or companies providing them; perhaps in some circumstances to such an extent that the tactical integrity or structure for fighting is seriously impaired. Thus our solution must take into account the serious problem which presents itself-- of getting personnel to do the needed job and yet avoiding the harmful effects caused by disruption of our tactical units". (4:29)

So far, we have been discussing what the commander had immediately available to him to provide ways and means for increased patrolling. Let us now look at other sources of intelligence.

I can state without reservation that much vital intelligence will come down through normal intelligence channels. Battle Group has an organic reconnaissance platoon. It is admirably suited to perform reconnaissance type missions. It is completely mobile, well armored, has adequate fire power and communications. In addition to its primary mission of securing information on the enemy and terrain, the platoon has several missions that do not contribute directly to our primary needs. These are the secondary missions of screening maintaining contact between friendly forces and security patrolling to the flank and rear. This platoon, just as the entire battle group, will now be forced to operate at much longer distances, both laterally and in depth. This alone, imposes serious restrictions. However, from the point of view of the rifle company commander, the primary disadvantage is that this unit provides information for the battle group, not the rifle company. How often have you heard the expression, "Too little, too late?" This can be applied to intelligence

as well as logistics.

At Division level, we have units that secure information for the Division. One is the Armored Cavalry Battalion. Here again, to accomplish the variety of missions that this unit may be assigned, its overall effort is fairly well disipated. It has huge areas of responsibility and corresponding problems. The most significant point, however, is that this is the Division Commanders unit. The missions assigned to this battalion do not necessarily correspond to the needs of the rifle company commander as we have discussed previously.

The organic aviation company has greatly increased the Division Commander's intelligence capability. He now has the capability of organic photography. He can employ airborne infared dector and airborne radar devices previously unknown at Division level.

I don't believe it is necessary to discuss a unit higher than Division to make my point clear. While the Division's overall intelligence capabilities have increased, so have the distances over which these units must operate and corresponding problems have also increased.

The rifle company commander has no organic reconnaissance unit, just as he had none prior to the reorganization. The current concept of employment envisions mobility and dispersion as bywords. The rifle company commander can expect to receive attachments of various kinds, but currently none of these attachments are from intelligence or reconnaissance type units. Only employment in combat will prove if these units from Battle Group and Division can adquately preform their normal missions. I don't believe any elements of these units will ever be made available for attachment to a rifle company for extended periods of time.

The previous discussion has attempted to show some of the indications that a rifle company will have to produce to adequately get the answer to the question contained in the monograph title. I then attempted to analyze the means available to a company commander to get this information. Organically he is limited. Intelligence will be decimated through intelligence channels and will be invaluable. There is a possibility however, that it will be "too little too late". I personally feel that the rifle company commander should have an organic unit that will materially increase his ability to produce the indications that are necessary to insure survival.

A proposed TO&E for a small, (total, 11 EM) reconnaissance unit contained in Annex B. I do not mean to imply that this unit, if added, to a rifle company would solve all of the commanders problems. It would not prove to be an all inclusive panacea, rather, it would give the commander a reasonable chance to gather necessary indications of enemy atomic ability. The current rifle company can best be described as a well trained boxer about to fight an opponent blindfolded, dependent on his seconds, the Battle Group and Division in this illustration, for his eyes. The point, of course, has been stretched, but the similarity does exist.

My reconnaissance section would contain a total of eleven men, organized into a section headquarters of three men and two four man reconnaissance squads.

The section headquarters would perform the normal function of command and control and itself be capable of handling reconnaissance missions. The section headquarters would be mobile, riding in a $\frac{1}{2}$ ton truck mounting a 30 caliber machine gun. For communication to company and to the squads, the headquarters would have an AN/PRC-10 radio.

Each of the two reconnaissance squads are also mobile, riding on a $\frac{1}{2}$ ton truck with a 106 RR rifle mounted on the vehicle. Each squad has an AN/PRC-10 radio.

This section would have the primary mission of reconnaissance. It is felt that it would be extremely unwise to divert the unit from this mission in all but extreme emergencies. The mission would be pointed toward producing indications of enemy atomic activity.

The section would be especially trained. I feel this is one of the major reasons that will justify its existence. The current ATP's do not provide adequate training time for a commander to bring his entire unit up to a sufficiently high level of training in the intelligence and reconnaissance fields. Actually, a large portion of this training is supposed to be acquired through intergrated training. This small section could be trained in the varied and specialized skills needed.

This unit would provide the commander with an element that is especially trained to accomplish his specialized reconnaissance needs. It has the necessary mobility and communication. It has sufficient fire power to handle small road blocks on lightly held positions and still continue to fulfill its mission.

I feel that this unit should come under the supervision of the executive officer as this officer will normally spend a majority of his time with the company. The commander will frequently be at Battle Group or on reconnaissance. The executive officer could be assigned an additional duty as intelligence officer for the company. This would provide centralized control and direction to the effort of this section.

We can, in the near future, expect that new items under

development will become organic to the rifle company. I will mention several developments that would fit in extremely well with the mission of this reconnaissance section. There is under development, electronic "listening posts". These devices planted near known enemy location would tell us much about his activity.

Man transportable radar may soon be seen at company level. Also, passive infrared equipment that will permit detection of the enemy vehicles under condition of total darkness.

I believe that the new development that would accomplish the most for a commander from the reconnaissance and intelligence standpoint is the one man flying platform. Any or all of the above mentioned developments could readily be integrated into a company intelligence section under the supervision of the executive officer.

CONCLUSION

The extent to which a rifle company commander can determine when the enemy is going to explode an atomic weapon in his area will be in direct proportion to the amount of intelligence that that commander has available to him.

At present the rifle company has no organic element that has the capability and the mission of producing the specialized intelligence requirements. If the commander uses part of all of a rifle platoon or part of the weapons platoon, he runs the risk of weakening the basic fighting structure of his command.

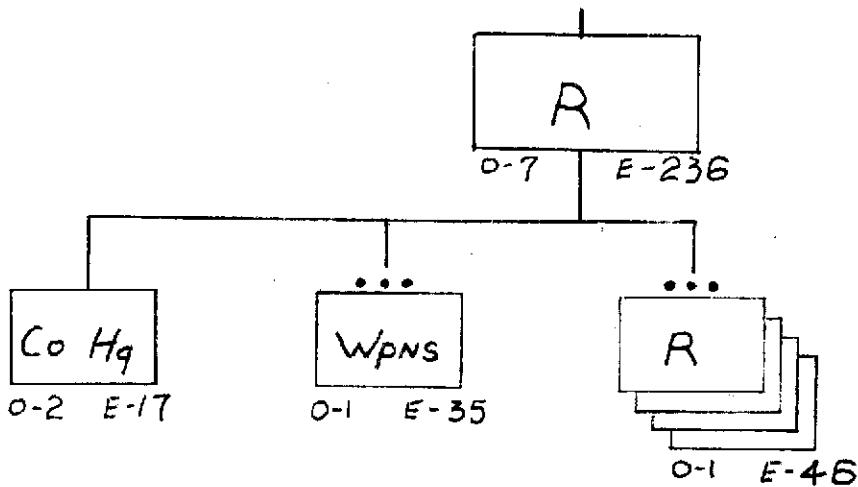
Granted, that some intelligence will come down from Battle Group and Division, it may well be, "too little, too late".

The amount of intelligence will depend on how fast and accurately the commander can develop indications of enemy atomic activity. Speed and accuracy cannot be overemphasized.

Current doctrine does not consider as normal, the attachment of element of reconnaissance type units from higher echelons for extended periods of time.

The solution lies in adding a reconnaissance type unit to the TO&E of a rifle company. We have spent thousands and thousands of dollars on personnel and equipment for a rifle company. The expenditure of just a few more dollars will give us an element that can provide the "eyes" that are needed on an atomic battlefield. The commander must produce the indications I have discussed; give him the means to accomplish the job. Survival is at stake.

ANNEX A: Current TO&E of a rifle company (6:3)



RECAPITULATION (Partial)

Armament

Gun Machine Cal. 30	8
Mortar 81 mm on Mount	3
Rifle Auto Cal. 30	24
Rifle 106 mm on Mount	2

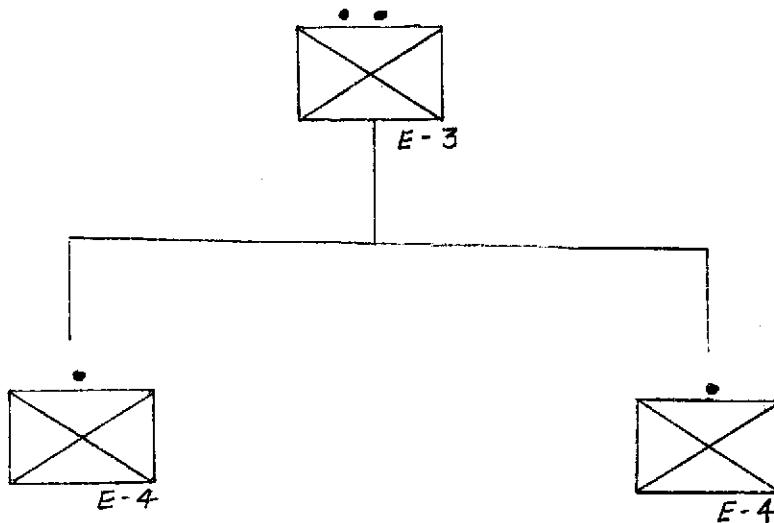
Transport

Trailer Cargo $\frac{1}{4}$ -T 2W	2
Trailer Cargo $\frac{3}{4}$ -T 2W	4
Truck Cargo $\frac{3}{4}$ -T 4 x 4	4
Truck Utility $\frac{1}{4}$ -T 4 x 4	4

Communication

Radio Set AN/PRC-6	9
Radio Set AN/PRC-10	7
Radio Set AN/VRC-18	1

ANNEX B: Recommended organization and equipment of a rifle company reconnaissance section.



SECTION HEADQUARTERS

PERSONNEL

- 1 - SFC Section Leader (R)
- 1 - SP3 Scout Driver (R)
- 1 - SP3 Radio Operator (C)

MAJOR ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT

- 1 - truck $\frac{1}{2}$ ton
- 1 - MG - 30 Caliber
- 1 - radio AN/PRC-10

SQUAD

PERSONNEL

- 1 - SGT Squad Leader (R)
- 1 - SP3 Scout Driver (R)
- 1 - SP3 Radio Operator (C)
- 1 - PFC Scout Observer (R)

MAJOR ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT

- 1 - truck $\frac{1}{2}$ ton/106 RR mounted
- 1 - radio AN/PRC-10

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