

two-and-one-half foot hole, chest deep, will suffice; a poncho can be stretched tight over the top to allow for the use of a filtered flashlight for map study and message copying. The command post must be a defensive entity. This means that if a portion of your perimeter is overrun, the CP will remain a fortified island that can care for itself. Your CP group must be able to fight in any direction. Radios are operated from the bottom of the hole for maximum protection. The radio is your lifeline. Take care of it.

The perimeter must be checked to insure that a minimum of one man per fighting position is awake and alert. In the jungle, I recommend *against* a leader physically walking the line during darkness. This procedure is too noisy, and jumpy soldiers have killed their fair share of squad and platoon leaders. A system I suggest is that each fighting position be connected with a piece of communication wire. The trooper who is on guard holds the wire in one hand. The wire is tugged every 20 minutes. If a fighting position does not respond to a tug, a leader is notified and he pays the position a visit. Soldiers who sleep on guard must be treated harshly.

The best defense against attack is alert soldiers, trip grenades, trip flares, anti-intrusion devices, and sharp OPs. If your OPs are on the ball and have a starlight scope, they will see and smell the enemy. Instruct your OPs when they see enemy soldiers to spray a few magazines, toss a couple of grenades, and make it back to the line yelling as loud as they can that the platoon's got visitors.

The platoon immediately should go to 100 percent alert and simultaneously hose down all sectors of fire. The artillery defensive fires should immediately be brought in, and a flare ship should turn night into day.

The enemy prefers to attack when there is no moon or during heavy rain. Increase your number of OPs and percentage of people who are on guard during these periods.

So far, we have just discussed the hasty overnight defen-

sive position. On occasion, you will be assigned a security mission, such as for an artillery battery or the attached helicopter company of a higher headquarters.

When you get this kind of mission, you must harden your position, set out wire barriers, mines, booby traps, claymore mines, and improvised flame devices (such as electrically detonated *fougasse*). An open fighting position is not sufficient if you are going to stay in one spot more than a day. You must build bunkers that are designed to last. All positions should have reinforced overhead cover capable of withstanding the effects of mortar fire. Positions must be well camouflaged and have small firing apertures. The outline of the bunker must be broken up by the skillful use of camouflage to prevent silhouetting at night. The bunkers should be at least 50 meters behind the inner barrier wire to be out of hand grenade range and to reduce the damage from enemy employed claymore mines. Place chicken wire over the aperture of each bunker to deflect grenades. Connect each bunker with a deep zigzag pattern trench network. Cut grenade sumps throughout the trenches.

Establish dummy positions to confuse an enemy intelligence team who may be sketching the perimeter. Leave your machineguns in alternate firing positions during daylight. After dark, move them to their primary sites. Do everything possible to break the routine. Do not get into a rut and follow a schedule. The enemy will be watching and studying.

Get out to your front and try to outthink your opponent. Don't just sit and wait to get hit. The best defense is a vigorous offense. Get out and patrol around the hardened base. Set up ambushes and OPs during day and night. Place VT H & I fire on possible enemy mortar positions at night; also stake out ambushes in these positions.

If you do your job right, you can kill a lot of the enemy in a defensive perimeter, whether it's an overnight or hardened position. And that's the *name of the game*.

# SWAP SHOP



## FIELD EXPEDIENT ACETATE

During field exercises, our unit tries to keep leaders down to squad level better informed by distributing overlays showing the company's mission and the various control measures. These overlays are usually made of a thick film acetate. Because this material is very stiff, though, the overlays are difficult to carry and easily damaged.

During a deployment to Korea, we discovered another problem. Because of the extended time in the field, we ran out of the acetate. Being excellent infantry soldiers, we scrounged around for a similar material that we could use as a substitute.

The answer was the clear plastic trash bags the Army supplies us for handling garbage. We chopped one up into pieces of the right size, drew on them the information the leaders needed, and distributed them.

A side benefit we discovered was that this plastic is tough and flexible. The leaders can now wad the overlays up and stuff them into their pockets without damaging them. The only things to worry about when using this material are to avoid stretching it out of shape by pulling too hard on it and to keep it away from hot items that could melt it.

(Submitted by Lieutenant Craig D. McKibbin, California Army National Guard, Westminster, California.)