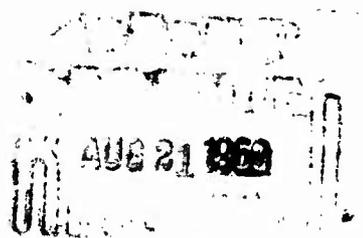


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NIGHT PACIFICATION PATROLLING

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NIGHT PACIFICATION PATROLLING

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Patrol Objectives

In the current stage of the war (late 1969), with the ARVN forces assuming more and more of the responsibility of the large unit war and border security, and with American units preparing to leave, many U.S. forces are finding themselves temporarily assigned to patrolling in the populated areas in order to keep out large NVA units and to assist the Popular Forces (PFs) and Regional Forces (RFs) in their area security tasks. This sort of area security (or pacification) patrolling is different from the offensive counterforce patrolling conducted on sweeps of places such as the Ashau Valley or War Zone C. This document will discuss some of the objectives and techniques characteristic of pacification patrolling.

Within the context of the current Vietnam war, pacification patrolling is one of five component factors which must be meshed together and assessed that way for optimal resource allocation to the task of population control, or area security. The components are: surveillance (or intelligence concerning the enemy); patrolling; defensive positions; reaction; and pursuit. Within a military strategy for Vietnam as a whole, area security would be considered a defensive program of which patrolling was an offensive tactic.

There are two theoretical strategic alternatives to pacification patrolling, although neither proved feasible in Vietnam. First, counterforce operations could become total, using all available manpower all of the time against enemy units. The operational concept would rest upon the tautological argument that security for the people could come

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only when the enemy forces were completely destroyed. This concept may be faulted technically for its inconclusive time frame to accomplishment and politically for its insensitivity to friendly casualties and to the nature of the war.

Second, barriers might be erected between the people and the enemy. The walled towns of medieval Europe are cited by way of analogy. This approach may be faulted because intramural guerrilla terrorism exists even in Saigon, necessitating constant patrolling and identification checks by police. Moreover, there is the example of the historical defeat by detail of the strategic hamlet program. The amount of space in rural regions which would have to be enclosed and constantly guarded would exceed 8000 square kilometers, the defense resources for which would have to be allocated incrementally, at least at first.

Since neither of these alternatives has proven realistic, patrolling has been, and will continue to be, the major tactic used to attempt the separation of the villagers from the enemy, a feat upon which the reestablishment of government control over the rural population depends. Therefore one definition of pacification patrolling is the conduct of frequent pedestrian tours within specified geographical boundaries in order to keep free from the enemy the people therein. This definition refers to a long-term result of the tactic of patrolling in general, and should not be confused (although it often is) with the objectives of any particular patrol.

Within U.S. and GVN military headquarters, there are no clearly written rationales which link strategic purposes with tactical means, setting forth the chain of causality between an action, a result and the fulfillment of an objective. This responsibility devolves upon the scattered lower units to translate broad and perhaps erroneous directives into specific actions, with the decentralization resulting in scores of suboptimizations, in pursuit of which units may invoke contradictory criteria and opposing objectives.

Many PFs, for example, are bewildered by the attitude of Americans toward patrolling. They believe the Americans are myopic to equate attrition with accomplishment. During the dry harvest season at a village in Quang Ngai province, for instance, rumor had it that a VC company

was nightly entering the most outlying hamlet to collect taxes. The village chief responded by requesting the hamlet family group leaders to come with their money each night to the central hamlet. Around the edges of that hamlet he disposed his PF force each night. The outlying hamlet went unprotected, the GVN officials relying on the hostage system of unprotected VC families to deter VC retributions against all those families without monies to pay the taxes.

Hearing that there was a VC company in the vicinity, an American squad wished to patrol aggressively until they found and engaged them, and wanted the PFs to go along. The village chief was appalled, arguing that he must keep his forces close in during the dry season because the VC could penetrate his central hamlet from a dozen directions. When the rains channeled the VC movement, then long night patrols made sense to him, but not now. His current actions, he claimed, had countered the VC intentions successfully.

Seeing things from a different perspective, the Americans sent out a long night patrol to the threatened hamlet, were ambushed by 60 VC, and lost one man. The villagers, who liked the man and had admired his bravery, were genuinely sorry, especially because they believed his death was for no good purpose. It is not my intent to pass judgment concerning this incident; it is to point out that the missions men currently include under the tactic called patrolling are complex and sometimes contradictory.

Night patrolling should not be conducted just to contact the enemy. In fact, the final objective of patrolling is no contact at all, provided that state of peace is reached by deterrence of the enemy. Deterrence occurs when an enemy calculates that the gains from an incursion into a particular GVN area are not worth the cost, thereby tacitly admitting at least temporarily the physical (and perhaps non-physical) superiority not only of the patrollers but also of the military and civilian system which supports and backs up the patrollers. Deterrence thus is obviously a long-term goal which will still be pursued after U.S. units have left the country. The objective for Americans in night patrolling, then, is not just one of contacting the enemy,

but of conducting themselves so as to influence the future actions and beliefs of three separate categories of people: I) the villagers; II) the GVN patrollers; and III) the enemy.

Most of the villagers are not committed to the war; that is, category I includes all those who would not of their own free will run a risk of death to perform an act of benefit either to the GVN or to the VC. They are affected by patrolling in three ways. First, constant GVN patrolling raises the confidence of the villagers because they feel more secure at the moment and transfer that feeling into a trend for the future. Second, increased security means less risk of death, and with less risk of death relatively more information is forthcoming. Third, popular confidence begotten by dominant GVN patrolling lowers respect and fear for the enemy, an attitude which is of course communicated to the local VC political cadres and guerrillas, with adverse affects upon their morale and their efforts to control the population.

The friendly armed forces, especially the GVN local forces, comprise category II. They are affected by their own patrolling. Small unit night patrolling is an excellent gauge regarding the spirit and situation of those involved; men who are patrolling well and consistently have the offensive and believe themselves more capable than the enemy. Considering self-delusion is scarcely a problem on the squad level during wartime, patrolling is a solid indication of tactical efficiency, (or of belief that the enemy threat is either very improbable or very impotent.)

In category III, patrolling, as a tactical activity within a specified geographic area, confronts the spectrum of enemy intentions and capabilities, from two hamlet guerrillas sneaking home to visit their families to the local force battalion moving in to assault the GVN fort to an NVA regiment with VC guides passing through on the way to attack an urban center. In the face of such diverse threats, it does little good to say that patrollers are to engage and destroy the enemy and let it go at that. The fact of the matter is that random night patrolling has not dissuaded the determined enemy, any more than police patrols have forced criminals to desist. There is a general misconception about patrolling, especially at night. (Since the hours of darkness are when the enemy is more likely to be moving in GVN areas, this document refers

only to night patrols and ambushes.) Some people believe that small unit night patrols can "take the darkness away from the enemy." If patrols are sent out, the enemy will be unable to accomplish his mission. Such a belief seems falsely held. Time, space, and visibility rule most night contacts a matter of luck, or, more precisely, a matter of odds--long odds. In 1967, for instance, there were almost two million small unit patrols run in Vietnam, of which about 4000 made contact at night, for a contact rate of about .2 percent. Patrolling is not proof against penetration; it is a necessary but not sufficient deterrent technique only in the long run.

It is not sufficient of itself because to patrol is to gamble. It is to risk one's life in an offensive maneuver against an enemy force of unknown size. The higher a set number of men perceive the risk of being, the fewer will be willing to patrol. Risk perceptions and reasons therefore are discussed in the next section. It is imperative to remember that, while quantitative assessment of patrollers uses numbers, graphs, and probabilities, the individual patroller judges the return of his output not in terms of the maximum expected number of enemy killed, but in terms of the maximum expected utility. What the destruction of the enemy means to him, not the number destroyed, is what determines those actions he will want to take.

Population control by patrolling is a campaign objective related to winning a war over a five or ten year period. To translate that objective into concrete tactical instructions for any given patrol on any given night is another matter altogether. The rough rule of thumb for patrollers is the same as it is for guerrillas: if the enemy is small, take him; if he is large, let him go. The tactical missions for any single patrol, listed in the chronological order in which they would probably occur if the patrol saw some enemy, are:

- (1) to discover enemy movement or activity
- (2) to assess the enemy's intentions
- (3) to engage and annihilate the enemy if the situation is favorable to the patrollers
- (4) otherwise to attrit the enemy

- (5) to disrupt him so that he does not fully attain his objective
- (6) to warn others (forts, etc.)
- (7) to delay him
- (8) to change his route
- (9) lacking that, to harass and upset him.

To put it quite simply, I believe the object of pacification patrolling should be to deter enemy entrance and activity. To inflict physical casualties on an encroaching enemy unit is only one means to this objective. Games of blind man's bluff in which neither side lays a glove on the other are another means, because it unsettles the enemy. The GVN reputation among the villagers is a third means. Of course, there is among these means a considerable overlap. But looking at the task this way should rule out the equating of destruction with deterrence. It is not necessary for a GVN patrol in every engagement to cling grimly to the enemy until he is destroyed. And, in fact, few patrols will do it. It would be of help, however, to make it very explicit to the troops charged with patrol responsibilities that as a general rule they should attempt to inflict as many casualties as possible on the enemy at no cost to themselves. And when they have an inkling that such may not be the situation, there is wisdom in withdrawal.

Patrol Psychology

Patrolling cannot be explained in terms of these objectives without considering four interrelated calculations any patroller intuitively makes. He will patrol in a GVN area if:

- (1) He is a high risk-taker; he enjoys action and he thinks he is better than the VC (this attitude is a function of his personality, his training, his group spirit and ethos); alternatively he will patrol if he is well supervised (i.e., a good sergeant); but good sergeants usually belong to the unit characterized by risk-takers to begin with.

- (2) He has faith in the ability of the others in the patrol to handle the enemy and help him; this is a function of numbers or spirit or both or one substituting for the other.
- (3) He has faith in the quickness and determination of reaction forces to help him and his patrol; this is a function of weather, distance, geography, reaction force spirit, preplanning and enemy reputation.
- (4) He has faith in his knowledge of the enemy threat in his area and is so familiar with the terrain and the people that he considers himself master of the situation as he sees it to be.

The members of a patrol must believe in the abilities and loyalties of each toward the others. Few men will run a high risk if they feel they may be abandoned or let down, either by those immediately close to them or by those responsible for insuring reaction forces. Thus a low level of faith in reaction forces cannot be expected to correlate with a high willingness to patrol in units of small enough numbers to control a large segment of the rural population. When units refuse to patrol farther than 400 meters from their wire and to go out with less than 20 men, the patrollers have made calculations which cannot jibe with productive pacification patrolling over the long run. It is not sufficient merely to order these men to go farther or smaller.

Neither can the desire for numerical strength be dispelled by quoting statistical probabilities to the troops. There is comfort in the closeness and in the numbers of others even when the individual risk is thereby increased. This is a psychological trait observed not just on the battlefield. The firemen in New York City, for instance, have been briefed on statistical findings which show responses to fires in riot-torn areas are most safely undertaken if each truck proceeds alone and without sirens. Nevertheless, the firemen want no part of such an approach and insist in traveling by five (or more) truck convoys with sirens screaming. Although they know this procedure attracts attention, debris and missiles, this higher risk course is run anyway.

From this it should be obvious that there is little about patrolling which is simple or easy to express, although a good commander intuitively grasps many of these relationships between external factors and patrolling performance. The size, extent, and aggressiveness of a patrol depend upon the quality of the patrollers, the weather, the terrain, the time of day, the perceived enemy size and quality, proximity of other friendly units, perceived time till reaction and confidence in reaction.

There is something seductive about the statement that "patrolling is necessary to bring security to the countryside," for, in a sense, patrolling will occur only when there is security. I define security as a belief on the part of a soldier that his organization will take care of him and will triumph eventually. This does not mean that the soldier does not know he may be killed; it means he does not expect this to happen even when he is undertaking offensive action such as patrolling.

This means that steady, aggressive patrolling cannot be expected of troops such as PFs until and unless they believe they belong to a responsive and responsible organization with a theory of victory. Given this psychological security, the PFs would then be willing to patrol. This is why I think it is exactly wrong to say patrolling brings physical security; rather, psychological security brings patrolling.

To put it another way, when the day comes that the GVN is routinely patrolling in small units throughout most of the populated areas, the GVN has in effect won the war, although the fighting may continue for several more years. For before the sort of patrolling I explain herein is undertaken by a unit, the patroller must calculate to himself in a way similar to (1) through (4) above. Patrolling then becomes part of a competent military system, within which organizational orphans such as the Popular and Regional Forces believe they are supported by regular ARVN troops capable of defeating enemy sallies in strengths beyond that of the patrollers. To help establish such a system is the main reason

American troops should patrol with the GVN local forces before leaving the country.

Tactics

Night encounters are hard to control. The random nature of patrolling leads to chance head-on-head meetings, where both sides are initially able to bring only a few rifles to bear. Since the VC loath unplanned engagements, their response in most cases will be to break contact. If they do not, the friendly side still has that same option, if the gauge of rifle flashes, grenades and yells indicates the opposition is too strong. The blackness of night is the protector of the discreet.

Trying to set rules or norms for patrolling is rather like setting rules for playing good chess (or, more closely, for playing good football, since patrolling requires close teamwork). Better than rules are the reasons for the rules, since this should partially offset the possibility of an anomaly posing as the norm. An example of an anomaly would be to have Bubba Smith saying he red-dogged faster swinging in with his arms than following the rule which says go in shoulder first. What is even better yet, of course, is to have a valid statistical sample to show that the norm was derived from an analysis based on the experience of X number of defensive ends.

Having suitably qualified my belief in rules, let me set down some of my own. The basic tactical rules of patrolling are simple and rarely observed: move slow, then move slower; stay small (under ten men); do not split; crawl, do not stand up in a fire fight; use claymores first in ambush; use grenades before rifles, all things being equal; remember you might not want illumination; after the first burst, consider slipping away; few enemy are worth getting one of your own killed; there is always another night.

Blackening the faces before night patrol is seldom done in GVN areas and it is urged for the same reason it is avoided: it dirties

the patroller. Once sullied, he is more willing to play correctly the miserable crawling and mud game of patrolling even though he knows the chances of contact are very slight. Let a patroller start clean, however, and he will try to stay that way. In addition, painting a face psychologically prepares a man for combat and frightens his enemies. The Indians knew this, and it is not so different a century later.

The villagers are impressed also, and this should be done purposely. Since many enemy activities concern the villagers and not GVN officials, they should be as much a psychological target for patrol activities as is the enemy. After a night ambush, a patrol should insure that it returns to base by a route designed to let the villagers see the patrol members: invisibility when searching for the enemy; visibility when dealing with the people.

Regardless of the patrol's intent, during its course one or more villagers will know of its passing. Terrain almost guarantees that. The villagers, not just of Vietnam but throughout South Asia, are constructed by people seeking comfort and security. That means shade trees and rickety fences, interspersed with thickets and brambles. At night a patroller does not go regularly clambering over fences and beating through bushes; he will use the soft, smooth trails which run right by the thatch houses and he will slip around corners and through backyards, seeking the path of darkness and least resistance. This movement pattern will often bring him along the sides of the houses, and people sometimes hear his passage. This element of movement is inherent in all types of patrols and ambushes in GVN areas.

Patrol Size

In essence, patrolling in a GVN area is a defensive function. The rate of night contact being very low, maintaining high tactical proficiency is difficult if not impossible. Men tend to slack off when they do not think there is danger. This sets a poor example for the GVN local forces who must carry on after the Americans leave, and also renders the U.S. troops more vulnerable to the quick raid (after extensive reconnaissance) in which VC local forces excel. The number of men to be

sent out on patrol depends in large measure on the number of men available at the base camp, the acceptable level of activity which must be daily reported to higher headquarters, and habit. Coming from a heavy war zone to an area security task, many units simply carry over the habit of large patrols which, not making contact, tend to become careless. There is such a thing as having too many men, or that the marginal protective productivity becomes less than the average.

When contact is made by an enemy ambush, having many men probably will just assure having many sudden casualties. Problems of extrication are more often compounded than helped by mass. For extrication friendly rifles on the outside diverting or disrupting the enemy are preferable to a large group of friendly rifles caught within a trap. In any event, the VC have demonstrated that closing for the coup de grace at night is for them a rare and slow process, with the accent more on explosives than individual small-arms fire. This allows those pinned either to slip away or to keep up a counterfire to hold off the attackers until outside help can arrive.

When contact is made by a friendly ambush, massed rifle fire is unusual, since to coordinate sleepy ambushers for a first volley without being heard by the enemy requires an MGM rehearsal. Instead, the proper use of claymore mines has demonstrated that technology can give a few men the destructive power of a dozen automatic weapons.

The patrols going out every night are generally relaxed because the search becomes routine and the chances of a brush with the enemy are so very low. Consider the extremely active unit, where the same troop may go out on patrol every other night; still for him that means on an average of once every four months he personally may have a brush with the enemy. His alertness on any given night is not going to be sky-high. Moreover, his close contact with the people and intimate knowledge of the area add to his acceptance of patrolling as a routine assignment.

One operational counter to this tendency is to reduce the size of the patrols. This raises the insecurity of each patroller, thereby insuring his higher devotion to proficient tactics, and thereby lowering his probability of being hit. In Quang Nam Province, for instance, where

enemy activity is high, patrols average six to eight men, and many of these are combined Vietnamese/Americans.

The patrols will bulk up, so to speak, to squad size when alerted to strong enemy activity. Assuming that the patrollers have contact with the villagers, this alert is rather common and vaguely accurate; that is to say, more often times than not the rumor includes a reason for the enemy presence and upon reception of the rumor it is worth adding a few more men to the usual patrols. But most Quang Nam patrols are small.

Patrol Movement

Basically, night patrols run to one of three types. In the same areas, a random mix of the three should be employed. First and most common, there is the patrol-ambush-patrol technique. A group of men will leave base after dark, move slowly to a seemingly ambush site, set in and wait for several hours, then move back to base (or on to another ambush site). There are two strong deficiencies in this old standard. The movement to the ambush site and the settling in period are hardly silent. The inevitable noise will tip off any lurking enemy or agents and render fruitless the subsequent wait, no matter how silent. Or, if the movement into position has preceded enemy incursions, the degree of group alertness as the hours creep by will fall off drastically. Thus the use of claymores and watch-standing is recommended. Alternatively, stop-and-go ambushing may be tried, where a patrol lies down for an hour or two, then moves to a different spot. The trouble with stop-and-go is that most troops will want to go back to base after one fruitless stop.

Second, a patrol may leave base and just roam. Rover patrols are a good change of pace provided they do not become too repetitious. They are vulnerable to VC ambush--if the enemy can discern a pattern of movement. Rovers cover a good deal of terrain; three to four map kilometers may be criss-crossed in eight hours. Brushes with the enemy generally are of a head-to-head sort which go well for the GVN patrollers, mainly because the VC do not patrol just looking for a chance fire fight and will therefore back off the unexpected challenge almost regardless of

numbers. (The exception is when the brush is with a large enemy force moving in accordance with a fixed attack plan. Even this need not be dangerous, since the enemy may not take the time to search in the dark for the patrol.)

Third, a patrol may leave base and move into a house to watch for passersby. This variation on the usual ambush has the added advantage of being a spot check on the villagers. This patrol is sometimes lengthened into a stakeout of several days duration. It is rare that this technique actually snares some unsuspecting enemy. The general case is that the word gets out, the guerrillas hear it, and the entire hamlet goes off limits to the VC until the village gossip system gives an all-clear again. This is not, however, a trivial benefit. It shows the villagers who are the hunters and who are the hunted; and it disrupts the enemy's plans.

Contact and Casualties

The current rate of contact for area security is low. Were more patrols to be generated this rate would most likely drop even lower in those areas already under patrol. In those other areas not so presently favored, there is a strong likelihood that the contact rate would increase for some rather short (less than five months) period, then decrease. So generally speaking, the probability of contact should decrease even more as the number of patrols is increased.

Further differentiation is in order: basically, the larger the enemy force, the greater the likelihood of detection and contact. The reason is simple: more troops make more noise and take longer to pass any given point. The idea of safety in numbers works as strongly for the enemy as for us, and is reinforced by the belief of enemy commanders in a strong payoff for large attacks. Thus the situation can occur over time where area security patrolling can drastically reduce the daily operating procedures of the enemy but conversely cause unprecedented large-scale attacks, which in turn may result in more friendly casualties than had been sustained in the pre-patrolling situation (although the fatality ratio may be much improved).

Vectoring

There are four echelons of patrol vectoring: random, general knowledge, specific warning, and exact intelligence. Random vectoring characterizes much of the American effort in the populated areas. It is patrolling decided by map inspection and carried out by troops who believe the chances are even of seeing the enemy any place at anytime. Vectoring patrols in keeping with a knowledge of the general situation, on the other hand, is the method undertaken by most PF platoons, as much to avoid as to make contact. With a knowledge of the terrain and the enemy's habits, patrols can be dispatched with a density in keeping with the relative probabilities of encountering the enemy. A definite warning can add specificity to this general knowledge, as when the village gossip system feeds back to a PF family the news that the VC are coming into a certain hamlet that night. And finally, very rarely, comes the piece of exact intelligence, as when a PF leader is whispered the news that a VC district executive committee member has arranged to meet his wife at home that evening.

Patrol Schedules

The number of men it takes to frequently patrol populated areas depends on the endurance, rate and distance covered by the patrols, plus the reaction plan. There are limits on human endurance, alertness and aggressiveness. The optimum might be a schedule for patrollers like that in the Hue area, where eleven hours are spent on night patrol/ambush, corresponding to the hours when the VC are most active. Another three hours during daylight are spent in contact with the villagers. So 14 out of 24 hours are patrol productive. The patrollers have no fixed base to guard or maintain; they wander constantly.

That is the optimum. I have rarely seen it approached, and never for an extended period of time. Closer to reality, yet still maintaining many patrol hours, is the example of the Combined Action Platoon of Americans and PFs whose productivity averages about eight to ten hours of night patrolling every 48 hours, with about the same amount of daytime spent chatting in the hamlets. To put it another way, a 35-man

platoon of Americans and PFs will conduct 100 night patrols in a month, with an average of eight men per patrol.

Rate and Distance

One must also consider the rate at which a patrol, especially at night, can move and still be considered tactically alert. One map kilometer an hour is good speed in the rice paddy and scrub growth populated lowlands which extend from I Corps through IV Corps. A night patrol which advances more than three map kilometers from its base is rare (unless the patrol is planning to stay out during the next day, which is not a common occurrence). This means that in judging the effect of patrols the quantity generated is an insufficient gauge. A battalion operating from one or two fire bases, for instance, may put out 1000 small unit patrols in a month, half of them at night, yet for all practical purposes just be tracing and retracing the same few square kilometers.

The distance which can be covered tactically from one fixed base during the hours of darkness makes doubtful the belief that a centralized battalion provides a shield force for the people of a district because of its patrol activities. If it is a shield, it is because of its reaction threat acting as a deterrent. This potential for large action, however, should not be confused by the assertion that it is the patrol activities of the battalion which are primary.

This does not mean the number of patrols should be cut down or shifted to another area as contacts decrease. Area security patrolling has two stages. In the first stage the main mission of the patrollers is to disrupt the enemy. In the second stage, the main mission of the patrollers is to continue to deter the enemy from normal activities and to detect and thwart, probably with external aid, his occasional sorties. Area security thus requires of competent patrols through any given hamlet a frequency sufficient to accomplish this task. In my judgment this requires patrol presence in a hamlet at least every 36 hours, and in hard areas, perhaps every night. Regardless of whether my judgment of the time lapse is correct, the concept of patrol presence within certain time frames must be observed. One could not, for instance,

mark a hamlet out of bounds to friendly forces for a year and not expect enemy encroachment.

Knowledge that there exists a reaction capability becomes especially critical for patrollers when they receive warnings of large enemy units moving toward their area. These warnings should not mean that the size of the patrols automatically expand (although they often do), thereby cutting back the number of patrols sent out. What it does mean is that the distance a patrol is willing to travel from base or from the nearest friendly unit will decrease as the perceived threat increases. In the infamous district of Dien Ban in Quang Nam province, for instance, the known proximity of VC battalions and the nightly drumming on bamboo to signal the friendly units' positions has not prevented night ambushes. Nor have they been enlarged beyond eight men. What ordinarily occurred, however, was that the ambushers would advance less than 600 meters from the nearest friendly unit. They would push forward only to the point where they still felt help could reach them in time. This was not very far and it would have done little to order them farther. They would have lied about their movement.

There is only one way to assess the adequacy of a reaction plan, and that is to ask those dependent upon it for their opinions. The best reaction plan in the world will have no salutary effect on the patrol activities of a dependent unit if that unit has no faith in the plan. It is the perception of those on patrol which should be determined, not of those in the reaction force.

Timing

To deny the enemy freedom of movement, patrols should be scheduled so as to maximize the probability of interacting with the enemy's moves. That this principle is by no means self-evident is shown by the MACV data-collecting system which reports that the majority of patrols are carried out during daylight. Yet 70 percent of all enemy attacks occur at night. A less formal but perhaps more relevant test is to ask local officials which are the hours during which they believe their enemies are most likely to be prowling close. The usual answer, of course, is between dusk and dawn.

It should be relatively easy (though crude) to draw graphs for various districts which show the times of friendly patrols. It may be that the PFs, if left alone and unaided, do not move at the same time as the enemy is moving precisely because they have that knowledge and have reached a rational conclusion: avoid contact.

It may be that the American troops are not moving at the same time as the enemy for any one or any combination of the following reasons:

- (a) The Americans do not have the knowledge;
- (b) They do not have the training;
- (c) Their habits of eating, sleeping, etc., are too ingrained;
- (d) They are afraid of the uncertainty of the dark;
- (e) Their commander fears higher casualties because night fire fights limit fire support.

If these reasons be true, orders alone to either the PFs or the Americans are not going to beget radical changes except, perhaps, in the reporting systems. Remedy should follow after symptoms and diagnosis.