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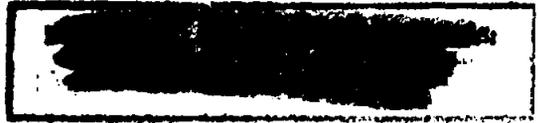
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17 December 1962

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SUBJECT: "Lessons Learned"



TO: See Distribution

1. Attached for your information are the latest "Lessons Learned" from Counter-Insurgency Operations in South Vietnam.

2. The information contained in "Lessons Learned" is primarily intended for use by U.S. Advisors in Vietnam. They may be of value for direct application or simply to reinforce existing tactics, techniques and doctrine based on the combat experience in South Vietnam.

3. Comments, questions and/or requests for changes in distribution of "Lessons Learned" should be addressed to this headquarters, ATTN: O&T Division, USASEC.

FOR THE CHIEF

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BY RAKERS ON 15 Nov 91

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as

s/ David Penson
t/ DAVID PENSON
Lt Col, AGC
Adjutant General

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Special (Lessons Learned)

A TRUE COPY

Joseph Grezaffi
JOSEPH GREZAFFI
LTC, GS
Doctrine Branch, J343

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MILITARY ASSISTANCE ADVISORY GROUP
APO 143, San Francisco, California

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MAGAR-OT (S&A)

11 17 December 1962

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned Number 25 [47] (3)

12 37 p.

TO: See Distribution

1. (K) GENERAL:

a. The importance of methodically searching out insurgents and materiel within villages (or more properly in Vietnam - hamlets), without unwarranted injury to persons or property, and with minimum risk to participating units has been repeatedly emphasized during operations in Vietnam. All too often, Viet Cong successfully avoid destruction by employing escape and evasion tactics and materiel is undetected because it is well hidden. (POW interrogations captured documents and subsequent discoveries of men and materiel following repeated searches by GVN Troops have indicated that VC men and materiel have remained undiscovered in areas presumably "searched".

b. This "lesson" presents in detail the "hiding" aspects of both men and materiel which the VC have employed in villages and presents effective "search techniques" which have been developed by experienced personnel during combat operations in Vietnam. The discussion also treats the problem academically to the degree that some of the techniques described are not as yet "combat tested" but are the result of analyses by qualified U.S. observers.

c. Although all evasion and hiding techniques described have been used by the Viet Cong, they cannot be regarded as the only means which will be encountered in Vietnam or elsewhere. New techniques are detected frequently and as search techniques improve, new and more effective hiding places will be encountered. Therefore, addressees in Vietnam are invited to present other VC evasion and hiding techniques and recommend counter measures to Chief, U.S. Army Section, MAAG, Vietnam, so that they may be

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incorporated into training programs and other appropriate documents.

2. (K) PURPOSE: The purpose of this lesson is four-fold:

- a. Acquaint all personnel with the problem of village search.
- b. Describe VC techniques of hiding which have thus far been recorded in Vietnam.
- c. Suggest a method which can be used to teach search techniques to troops who may conduct counterinsurgency search operations in SVN or similar tropical regions.

3. PROBLEM: Counterinsurgency is a war of many faces. Brief but violent encounters with insurgents punctuate an otherwise tedious and monotonous war. At all times the requirement to ultimately separate the people from the insurgents, and induce them to support the local government must dominate every action. Under this restriction, village searches present one of the most tedious and dangerous "faces" of CI operations. When guerrillas are confronted with a government force which they do not wish to meet, they will evade, hide or attempt to meld with the local population. Experience had indicated that many times hiding or melding takes place within the many villages and hamlets of SVN. A quick but thorough search of villages and hamlets becomes a requirement under these conditions. The problem, then, is how to successfully ferret the guerrilla from his village hiding places while refraining from actions which would alienate the populace and at the same time minimize risk to the unit which must conduct the search.

4. (K) VC HIDING TECHNIQUES:

- a. General: It is not the purpose of this paper to develop in detail all VC evasion techniques, e.g., those techniques employed by the VC to move out of the area of RVNAF operations designed to trap them. Suffice to say that for any one of many reasons, VC may attempt to evade and avoid all contact with government forces. This is the normal reaction for a guerrilla unit when confronted with a superior government force. Frequently however, GVN tactics or time/distance considerations make it necessary for the VC to "evade" by physically hiding in villages, or becoming "one" of the local population. This paper is concerned with this one aspect of VC escape and evasion techniques and is especially oriented to the situation presented when search operations are made more difficult because they are conducted in the presence of a friendly or passive populace.
- b. Equipment: While VC equipment is generally limited in quantity, that which they do have is remarkably effective and highly prized.

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Protection of equipment is equally important, if not more so, than protection of personnel. In some instances elaborate steps are taken to hide equipment of all types; in other instances only the simplest steps are taken on the assumption that the obvious hiding places will be overlooked. Almost any place above or below ground in a village is a potential hiding place in which equipment of all type may be cached. Weapons are buried in gardens, floors of houses, in animal pens (especially if the animals are cantankerous) or any place which can be prepared to hide the weapon. In many instances they are thrown into a rice paddy, stream or canal with or without a water-proof cover (locally produced plastic material, commonly used as a rain cape provides an excellent waterproof cover for weapons which must be stored under water for prolonged periods). Munitions are hidden in hay stacks (more than one hay stack has exploded when it has been burned), buried, or hidden along with weapons. Weapons and equipment are also found concealed in false ceilings in dwellings with thatched roofs. Both mud and thatch false walls provide equally deceptive hiding places. Tree tops also form an effective hiding place for small pieces of equipment. VC equipment to include flags and propaganda signs, etc, which are found in obviously exposed places must be suspect. Experience has indicated that many pieces of equipment have been booby trapped and have resulted in death and injury to careless personnel who attempt to recover those items. Ordinary precautions must be observed in removal of equipment which might be booby trapped.

c. Personnel: Hiding places for personnel are almost as limitless as they are for equipment, however, underground and underwater appear to be the favorite personnel hiding places. Personnel frequently attempt to hide underwater by completely submerging themselves while breathing through a hollow reed or a short piece of bamboo. Any canal, stream or rice paddy in or near the objective village should be regarded as suspect. Mud banks along streams and canals are also used as hiding places but usually no breathing tube is used. The individual simply burrows into the mud, covering himself and any exposed parts with the ooze. Since a standing man will sink to above "knee deep" in the soft mud, a man can easily conceal himself in this manner and not be detected even at short ranges. Individuals also hide underground by being buried alive. Again the reed is used as a breathing device and the man is simply buried in a spot where a new excavation need not be explained, e.g., in a garden. More elaborate means of hiding personnel and equipment underground range from simple "spider trap" holes to elaborate reinforced underground rooms. From the surface, these underground installations are most difficult if not impossible to detect. Critical points are entrances and emergency exits which are usually concealed in gardens, thickets, animal pens, below water surfaces or wells and streams, under piles of refuse, in or under any structure, and other similar locations. Primary entrances can also be found under fireplaces in dwellings, under food storage bins, water containers and

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even in conjunction with real or false latrines where there is an easily explained excavation. Any thicket, refuse pile, hay stack, structure (including Buddhist shrines) or dwelling common to the locale must be suspected of concealing an entrance or exit of an underground installation. While there have been few known instances of VC attempting to evade government forces by hiding in trees, this readily accessible but frequently overlooked hiding place should be examined also. The technique of "playing possum" may be also encountered. Of course, this is effective only after there has been an exchange of fire in the area but VC have been known to attempt to "hide" by "playing dead" while retaining weapons and/or grenades so that if investigated closely, escape may be attempted.

5. (K) SEARCH TECHNIQUES:

a. General: Although the VC is a cunning enemy who knows and uses many unusual devices and techniques to evade and hide from attacking government troops, he can be found and defeated. Trained troops, employing good search techniques and, when available, special equipment and materiel, can quickly, thoroughly and safely search villages without unnecessarily destroying property or jeopardizing the safety of the populace.

b. Planning Village Searches:

(1) A village search mission is a common one in counterinsurgency, usually conducted in conjunction with other combat operations. Each village search mission must be carefully and completely planned and based on current intelligence. Orders should contain considerable detail and should be accompanied by briefings using a sandtable type mock up of the village. If possible, within security restrictions discussed below, rehearsals should be conducted using a similar village.

(2) Security and counter-intelligence take on great importance during all planning and briefing phases preceding the search operation. Since VC intelligence nets always seek information about impending operations, every effort must be made to deny this information to the enemy. By the same token during movement to the objective area, proper physical security to include deceptive measures, must be employed to prevent the VC from learning the true destination and route of march of the search unit. In this regard, the helicopter provides an excellent means of rapid and secure movement to the objective village at a speed which surpasses that of the VC warning net. Proper security will permit surprise. A surprised enemy does not have time to effectively evade or hide thus simplifying search operations.

c. Search Tactics: Since there are no front lines in counter-guerrilla operations, the first step is to isolate the objective village.

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The area of the village must be sealed so that there can be no escape from nor entry to the village during the conduct of the search. The second step is to clear the isolated area up to the village itself. Ideally, guerrillas discovered outside the village should be killed or captured outside the village. This maneuver may be accomplished by tightening the line of encirclement around the village or by holding the line of encirclement and moving a task force through the area clearing as they go. The third step is to search the village. This part of the operation is not unlike conventional "town and village" fighting, except that in the presence of a friendly or passive populace, the application of force must be accomplished with extreme caution. The final steps of the search operation are: first, capitalize on the opportunity to convince the village population of the merits of the GVN through vigorous civic action and psywar, and second to execute a successful withdrawal from the objective village when the mission has been completed. These steps, which are discussed in detail in the following paragraphs, are presented as separate entities in the interest of clarity but it is obvious that they may take place concurrently, e.g., civic action and psywar operations should be conducted while portions of the village are still being searched.

d. Organization of Search Forces:

(1) Blocking Forces: Troops must be positioned to prevent escape from and to deny entry to the village while the search is in progress. Sufficient forces must be available to hold the line of encirclement and provide a reserve capable of dealing with whatever enemy threat intelligence indicates may be present. While it is desirable to use natural obstacles and fires to assist in sealing the objective areas, experience has indicated that VC invariably escape by passing over obstacles or through areas which cannot be effectively covered by fire. It is essential that sufficient troops be allocated to the blocking forces to isolate the objective village. These forces may be brought to positions on the line of encirclement by airlift or airdrop, or they may advance overland to the line from more distant positions. The former method is preferred as it results in greater surprise because of the speed with which it may be executed. The latter method is slower but generally succeeds in destroying guerrillas who may be in outlying fields. As blocking forces assume their final position on the line of encirclement they must remain alert for: possible escape attempts by individuals or small groups who try to exfiltrate from the village; determined breakout attempts in force; determined attack from guerrillas outside the line of encirclement who attempt to relieve the isolated village; and, possible emergency exits from underground installations which are outside the line of encirclement (in Vietnam tunnels over 4 kilometers in length have been found). A portion of the blocking forces should be designated as reserve and ideally should be highly mobile to counter enemy threats which may develop. The use of an air-mobile force (Eagle flights are an example - see

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Lessons Learned 20 and 23) or infantry mounted in M113 Armored Personnel Carriers should be considered. The reserve rather than units from the line of encirclement should also deal with individuals or small groups of evadees who may attempt escape to avoid creating a gap.

(2) Assault Forces: Once the village itself is sealed, the second major operating force, the assault force, must move to the objective village itself. A variety of methods to conduct this movement may be used. An inner line of encirclement may be formed which tightens on the village or the troops may advance from one or more principle directions in small task forces. During this movement, any guerrillas encountered should be killed or captured before they can reach the village. It is during this phase that the advancing units must be especially alert for ambush and booby traps. If the government force is well organized and of sufficient size, it is unlikely that VC will attempt to defend the village but if the village contains a hard core unit or vital supplies, or if the government units give early evidence of poor training or appear to be poorly coordinated, the VC may take overt action against the attacking forces. More than likely, however, the VC will attempt to evade by going into hiding to be ferreted out by the assault forces. The assault forces should be organized into the following teams:

(a) Reconnaissance Team: This team, which leads the way into the objective village from the line of encirclement, generally numbers less than one-third of the total assault force. Its mission is to secure the area from the line of encirclement. Once the search teams enter the objective village, the reconnaissance team performs local security missions and acts as a small local reserve for the assault force commander.

(b) Search Teams: These teams, which make up about one-half of the assault party, are to search out the VC in the village. They move quickly but carefully into previously assigned search areas moving alternately by bounds from house to house under the cover of one another. All areas are carefully and thoroughly checked, literally leaving no stone unturned to dig out the VC and his equipment. Search teams should be armed with automatic weapons, fragmentation and offensive grenades. They may also have special equipment attached for the clearing operation (see paragraph e below). Inclosure 1 details a typical search operation.

(c) Fire Support Team: This team which is a small portion of the assault force, usually less than one-quarter, positions itself where it can give fire support to the search teams should it be needed. The team is equipped with light mortars and if the situation warrants, light recoilless and automatic weapons. It approaches the village but rarely enters it itself, except with its flat trajectory weapons, since its value is in the indirect fire support that it can give the search teams.

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(d) **Civilian Control Team:** This team assumes temporary control of civilians which are uncovered and groups them together out of the way of the search teams. During time available to them, they segregate and interrogate civilians, checking documentation and gaining whatever intelligence is available. They are especially alert to detect VC who may attempt to evade by "melding" with the populace and arrest all persons who cannot establish their identity or account for their presence in the village. These "suspects" are usually evacuated from the village for more detailed interrogation at a later time. The civilian control team should be augmented with PsyWar and Civic Action personnel in order to carry out CA and PsyWar activities. (See paragraph g below).

(e) **POW Team:** A very small portion of the assault force to secure and process all POW's. Normal principles of handling POW's apply: Seize, Search, Segregate, Silence and Speed in evacuation.

e. **Special Equipment and Materiel:** Items of equipment and materiel are presently available which will not only speed up the search but also make it more thorough. They should be used whenever possible. Included in this category are:

(1) **Mine Detectors:** This issue mine detector (AN/PRS-3 or SCR-625) can be used to detect all kinds of VC metallic booby traps. This includes spike traps and grenades and mines which are being used in increasing numbers. The AN/PRS-3 will even detect underground "cavities" which may be underground rooms or foot and mantraps which use bamboo spikes. More importantly, the mine detector will locate buried weapons, ammunition and other metallic objects. Experience in Vietnam indicates a rifle can be discovered under 30cm (about 12 inches) of mud or 50cm (about 20 inches of water). Since in rural Vietnam, the use of metal in construction is uncommon, the mine detector may also be used to search walls and ceilings of buildings for concealed hiding places for metallic objects. Its use by search teams will not only speed up the search and make it more effective, but also will prevent unnecessary destruction of dwellings.

(2) **Dogs:** Military dogs trained as scout dogs have not only located underground installations but have also "told" the handler if they were occupied. In "dry" areas dogs can also effectively locate buried equipment but in inundated areas their effectiveness is reduced. Dogs may also be used to lead the units to the objective village since he will "alert" if the unit approaches enemy ambushes. When used in search operations, dogs will increase the speed of the search, ensure thoroughness, and provide a degree of security to the assault forces.

(3) **HC and WP Smoke Grenades and HC Smoke Pots:** Search teams should be equipped with all types of smoke grenades and pots. The primary

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use of these devices is to dislodge VC from underground installations. HC smoke in heavy concentrations is stifling and will force VC in confined underground installations to seek fresh air. WP grenades not only produce smoke but are also casualty producers and can be used as fire starters to burn buildings if necessary.

(4) Demolitions Equipment: In some instances the only means of destroying underground installations encountered is with high explosives. Demolitions may also be used to dislodge VC from their underwater hiding places. However, in at least one known instance, grenades and two pound blocks of high explosives have not been completely effective in forcing VC from underwater hiding places. Sharp bamboo probes are more effective but armed guards must accompany "probers" for their protection.

f. Actions of Search Teams: It has been stated previously that the actual conduct of the search operation is not unlike conventional town and village fighting. This is true to the degree that the search teams must employ the same techniques of movement from house to house, clearing and thoroughly searching each possible hiding place both inside the dwelling and in the village itself. (Inclosure 3 details typical search operations in a "type" village. Included as appendixes to inclosure are photos of typical hiding places and a narrative describing how search operations are conducted.) It must be remembered, however, that in most instances VC will not fight for the village but will attempt to escape and evade. The search teams must remain alert at all times however, since the threat of VC counter action is always present. There cannot be too much emphasis placed on the requirement for the use of only that force which is required to conduct the search operation in the desired degree of thoroughness. Too little force will result in either an inadequate search or will give the VC the opportunity to react and attack the searching units, while too much force will only result in the alienation of the populace making the ultimate task of establishing government control more difficult.

g. Civic Action: In order that maximum benefit might accrue from the search operations, it is necessary to capitalize on RVNAF presence in the village. The ultimate goal in counterinsurgency is to reestablish government control over the people and no opportunity to prepare the people to accept government control should be overlooked. It will be impossible, in many instances, to leave CA cadre behind in the village but they, or members of the participating military units, should be aware of what they can do while in the village during and after the search. Every detail of PayWar and Civic Action activities must be preplanned to gain the greatest possible effect during these operations. This important subject will be covered in a future "Lessons Learned".

h. Withdrawal of the assault forces from the village must be over a different route than was used during the advance. Withdrawal of the

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assault forces should be to the line of encirclement which remains in position until assault forces join them. All forces withdraw, preferably using multiple routes which are not those used during the approach. Since VC ambush is most common when units are returning from operations, extreme caution during the withdrawal and return to "home station" is an absolute requirement.

i. Speed and thoroughness are the key elements to success in all village search operations. Speed is essential to achieve surprise and to capitalize on its effect. Thoroughness, on the other hand, cannot be sacrificed for the sake of speed. Once an objective village is entered, the search must be completed and thorough. Only by proper training, planning, coordination and execution can it achieve greatest success.

6. SUGGESTED TRAINING METHOD TO TEACH SEARCH TECHNIQUES: Inclosure 2 details a suggested training action to demonstrate proper search techniques and which can also be used as a practical exercise for troops. While this method conforms to localized conditions in South Vietnam, the techniques can easily be modified to conform to other situations. Only the ingenuity of the designer and builder limit the effectiveness of such a training device (In this regard, addressees in Vietnam who have also received US Army Section Memo dated 3 Nov 62, Subject: "Search Techniques Training" should note that this "lesson" is merely an amplification of that memo). Inclosure 4 contains additional information which may be of value in preparing instruction in this important subject.

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s/ H. K. Eggleston
t/ H. K. EGGLESTON
Brigadier General, USA
Chief

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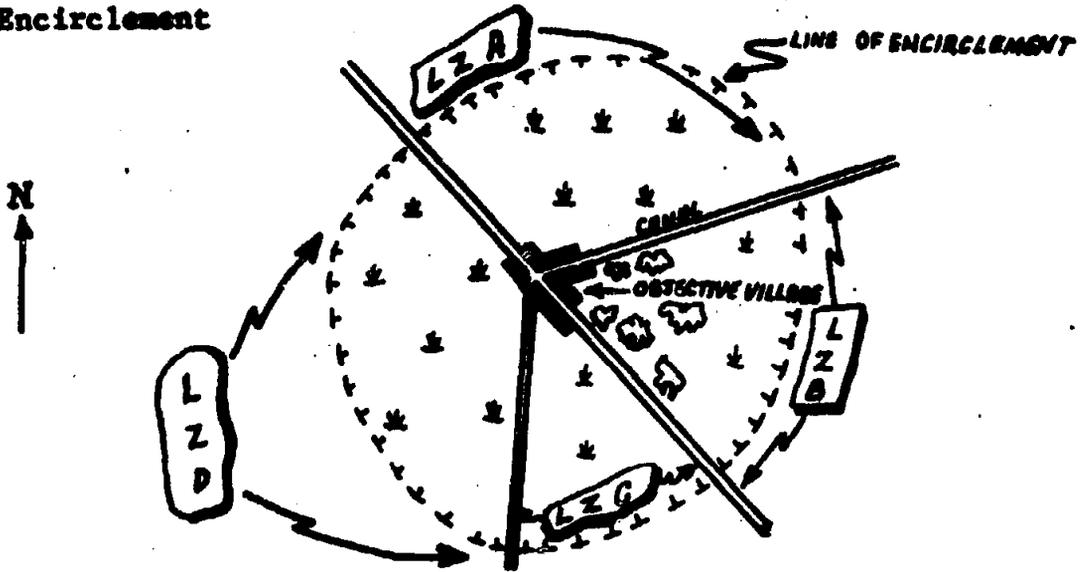
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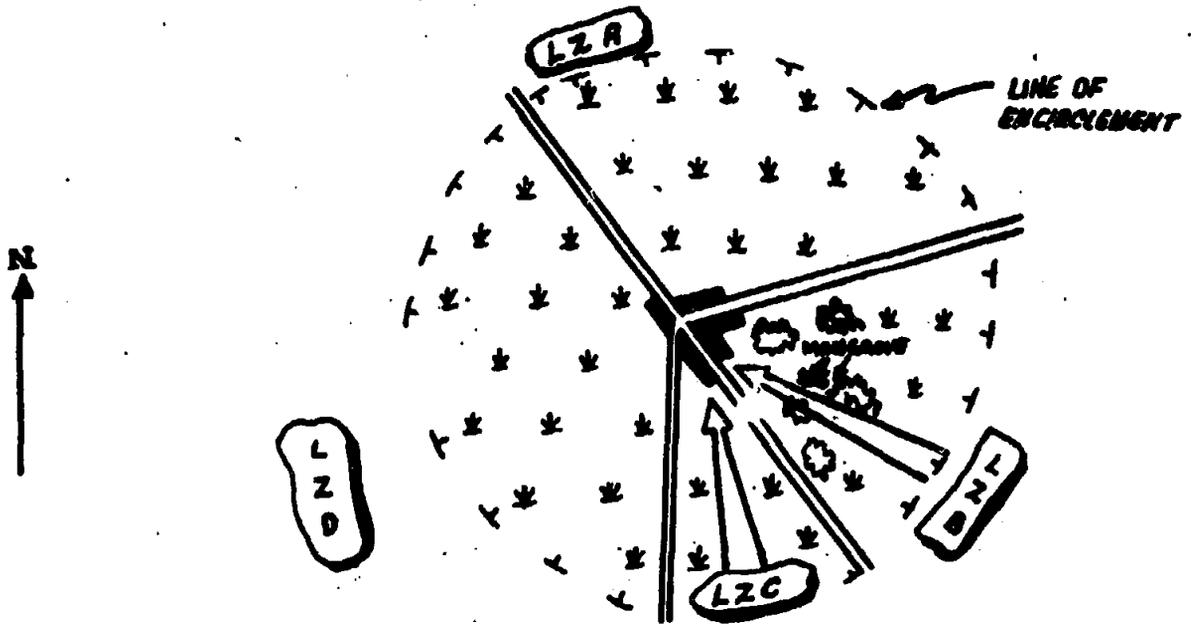
INCLOSURE 1 TO LESSONS LEARNED NUMBER 25

VILLAGE SEARCH OPERATIONS

Phase I - Encirclement



Phase II - Movement to the Objective Village



Incl. 1

(Drawings not to scale)

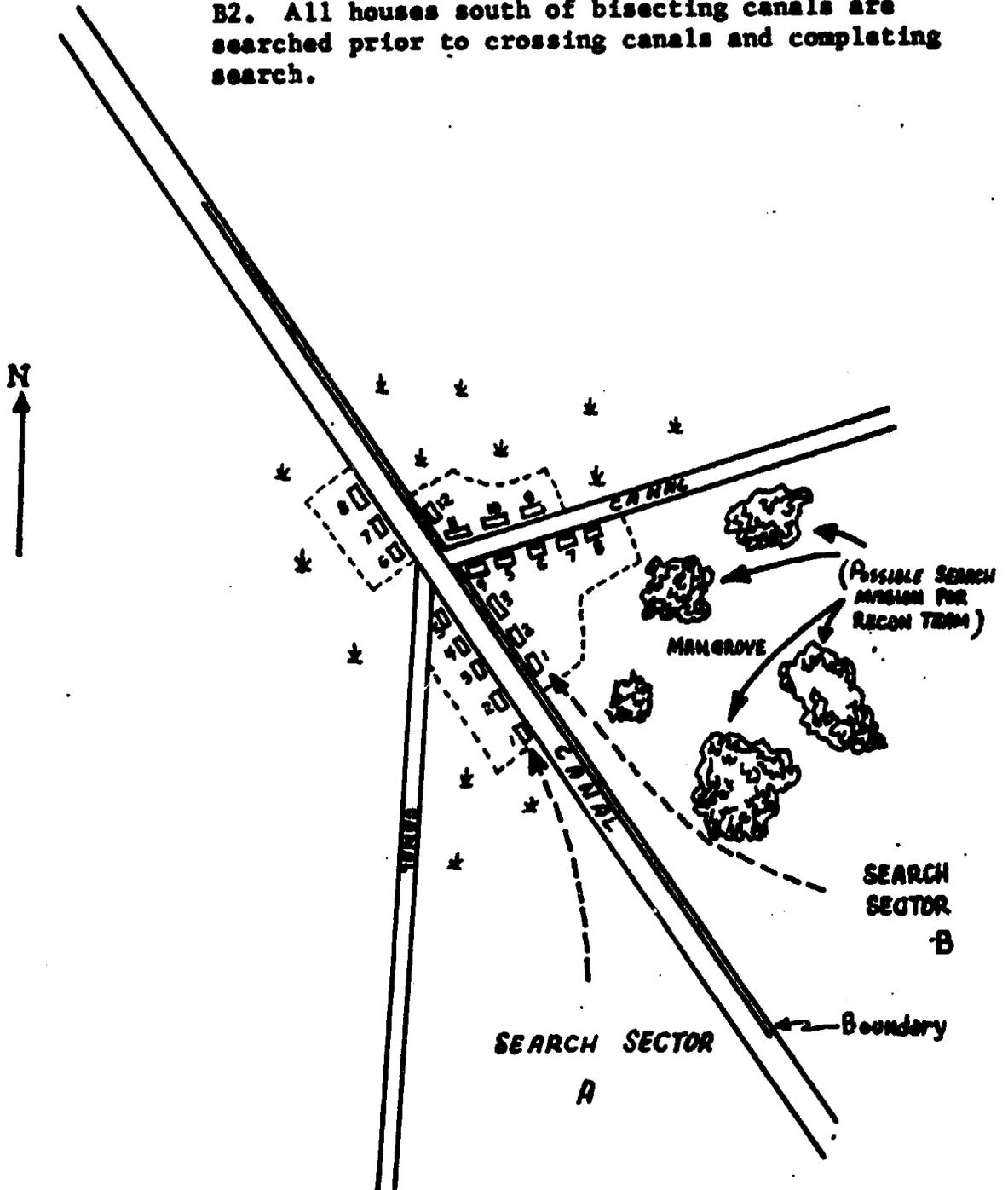
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Inclosure 1 to Lessons Learned Number 25 (Continued)

Phase III - Actions within the village:

Four (4) search teams are used in this search. Village is divided into two search sectors. Search team A will begin search with house #1 as search team A2 covers. Search team B then enters house #1 in B Sector under cover of Team B2. All houses south of bisecting canals are searched prior to crossing canals and completing search.



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INCLOSURE 3 TO LESSONS LEARNED NUMBER 25

CONSTRUCTION OF VC MOCK VILLAGE

The attached sketch (appendix 1) and photographs (appendix 2) illustrate a mock VC village which can be easily built with troop labor using locally available materials. It incorporates many of the VC hiding techniques described in this lesson and requires the use of thorough search techniques.

The village situations should be varied from time to time to prevent "G-2 ing" the problem and to keep student interest alive. A simple scoring system for personnel and equipment not found and booby traps detonated or not discovered may be devised so that comparative unit scores or grades may be awarded. Only the imagination and resourcefulness of the builder and instructor limit the application of the mock village. Logical and feasible extensions of training which can be considered include: Scouting and patrolling to "recon" the village, field sketching and mapping to record village details, demolitions to destroy underground facilities, processing of POW's, CA/PsyWar activities, etc.

Villages should reflect the type of construction found in the anticipated operational area. Also, the search techniques employed should be appropriate to the unique features of the hiding techniques employed by the VC.

A suggested "Instructors Outline" is attached as appendix 3.

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LEGEND TO SKETCH OF VC VILLAGE

A. This explains the appended diagram of a mock Viet Cong Village used for instructional purposes at a Training Center, in Vietnam.

B. The following legend applies, (picture of some of the situations described are illustrated in appendix 2):

1. Home made of straw approximately 4 by 7 meters. There is a double roof allowing small arms and documents to be stored or hidden between the layers. The small rectangular block inside the home represents a hole hidden under a bed, and leading through a short passage to an underground room holding seven or eight persons. The air vent is concealed in a bamboo thicket outside the village perimeter fence. The small rectangular block outside the fence represents a man trap placed at one of the four entrances to the village.

2. Cattle pen complete with water buffalo. Hole hidden in the corner is large enough for one man, small arms, 60mm mortar, or documents. Booby trapped chicken pen is also a part of the cattle pen.

3. Seven by four meter shelter with table in one compartment and fireplace in the other. Rectangle represents oblong hole directly beneath fireplace used to hide weapons. Ammunition cache has recently been placed beneath the table.

4. Seven by four meter mud house with a man trap at the entrance and a false wall in the far end. Tunnel leads from compartment made by false wall to the stream bank fifty meters away. Compartment is entered from room by pushing on movable straw portion of wall near roof.

5. Buddhist Pagoda through which is passed food, documents, or small arms. Also acts as air vent for a concrete block underground room housing communications equipment and serving as a radio room. Underground room also serves as weapons hiding and storage place, and as Viet Cong hiding place. One tunnel is as an escape route and leads to the stream bank. The other tunnel comes from a house and serves as an entrance.

6. Flower and vegetable garden in which one man, weapons or documents can be hidden underground by having a small portion of the flowers or garden growing in a hidden wooden box which covers the entrance to the hiding place.

7. Haystack covering a small underground hiding place.

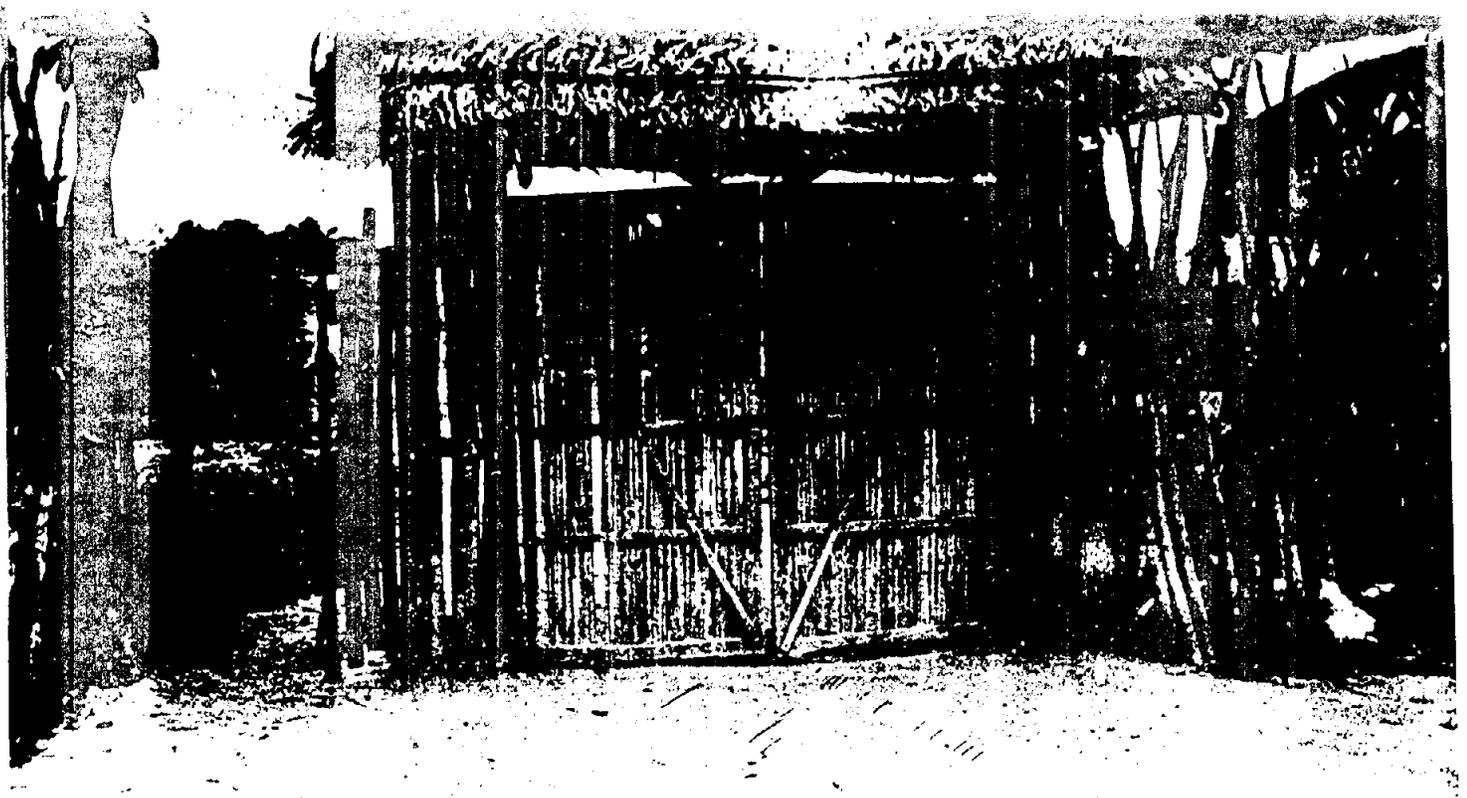
8. Eight by four meter shelter with fireplace, table, bed, and water barrel. Water barrel covers entrance to the underground communication room. A small documents hiding place is concealed underground in the

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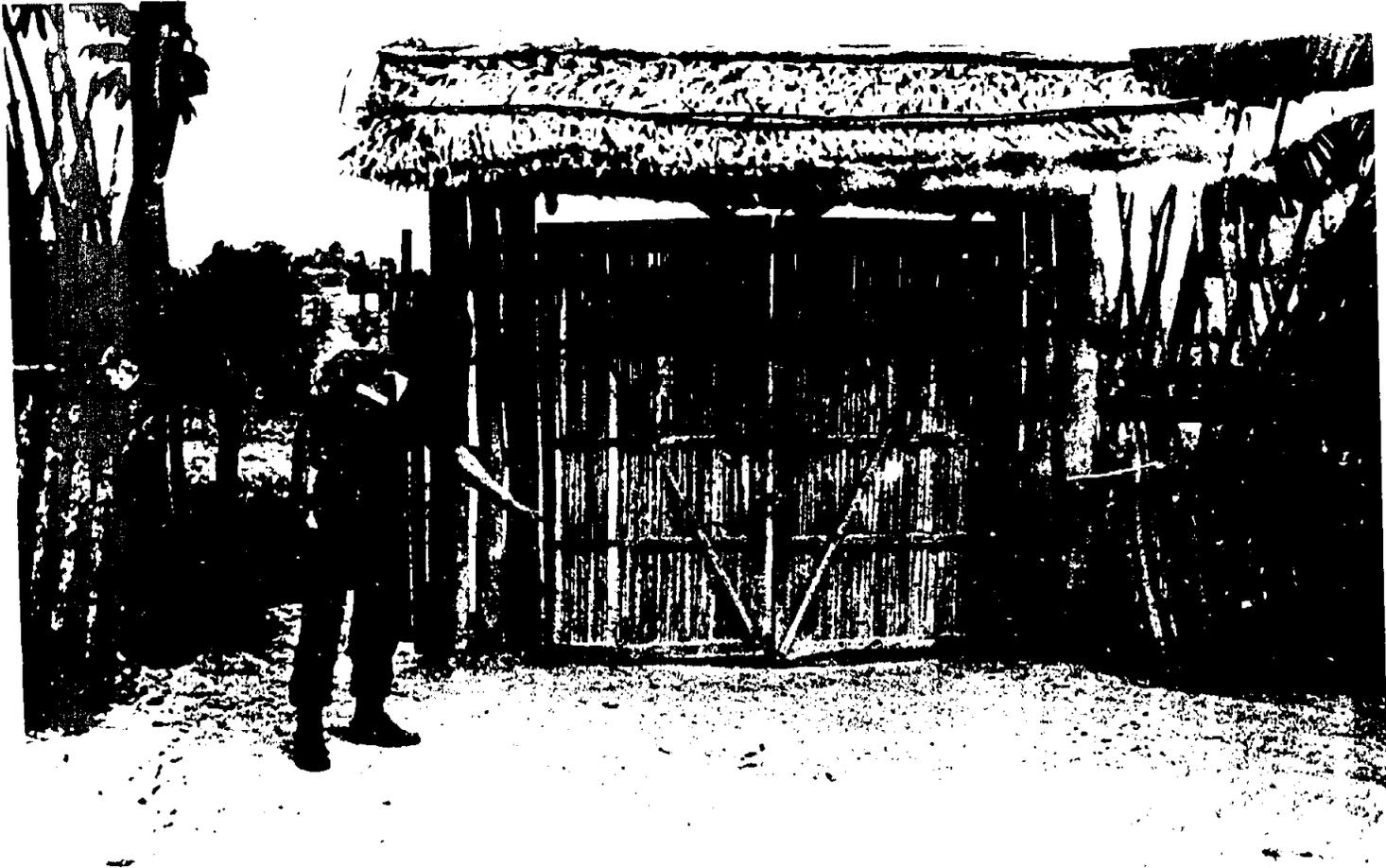
middle of the floor. Nothing but dirt covers it. Entrance to tunnel connecting to station 5 is concealed under rice storage bin.

9. Mantrap just beyond entrance gate to the village.

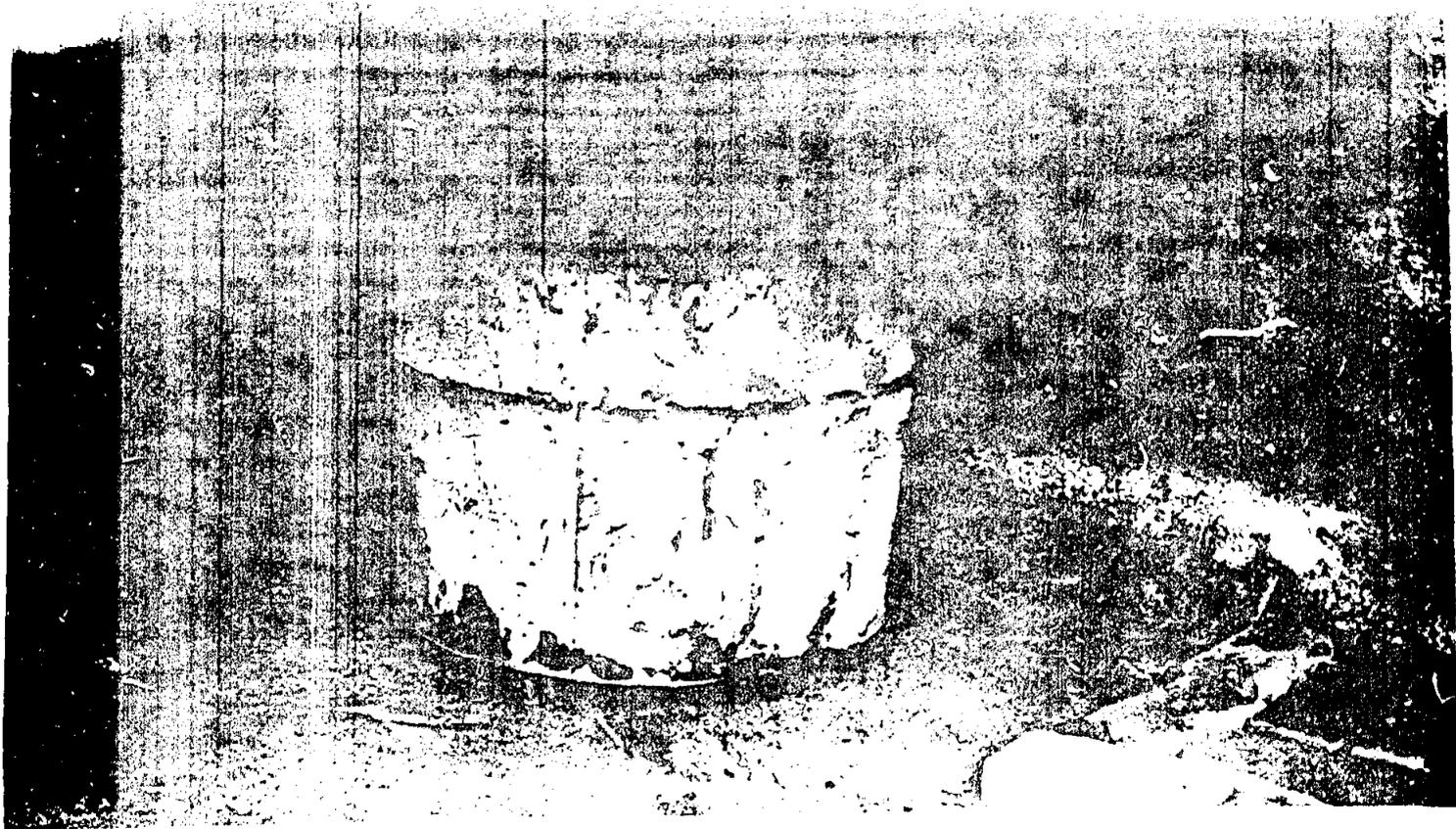
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VC Village Gate Concealed Mantrap



VC Village Gate (NCO Pointing To Trap)



Water Barrel Concealing Tunnel



VC Going Into Tunnel (Usually Covered By Barrel)

Haystack Used To Conceal Weapons



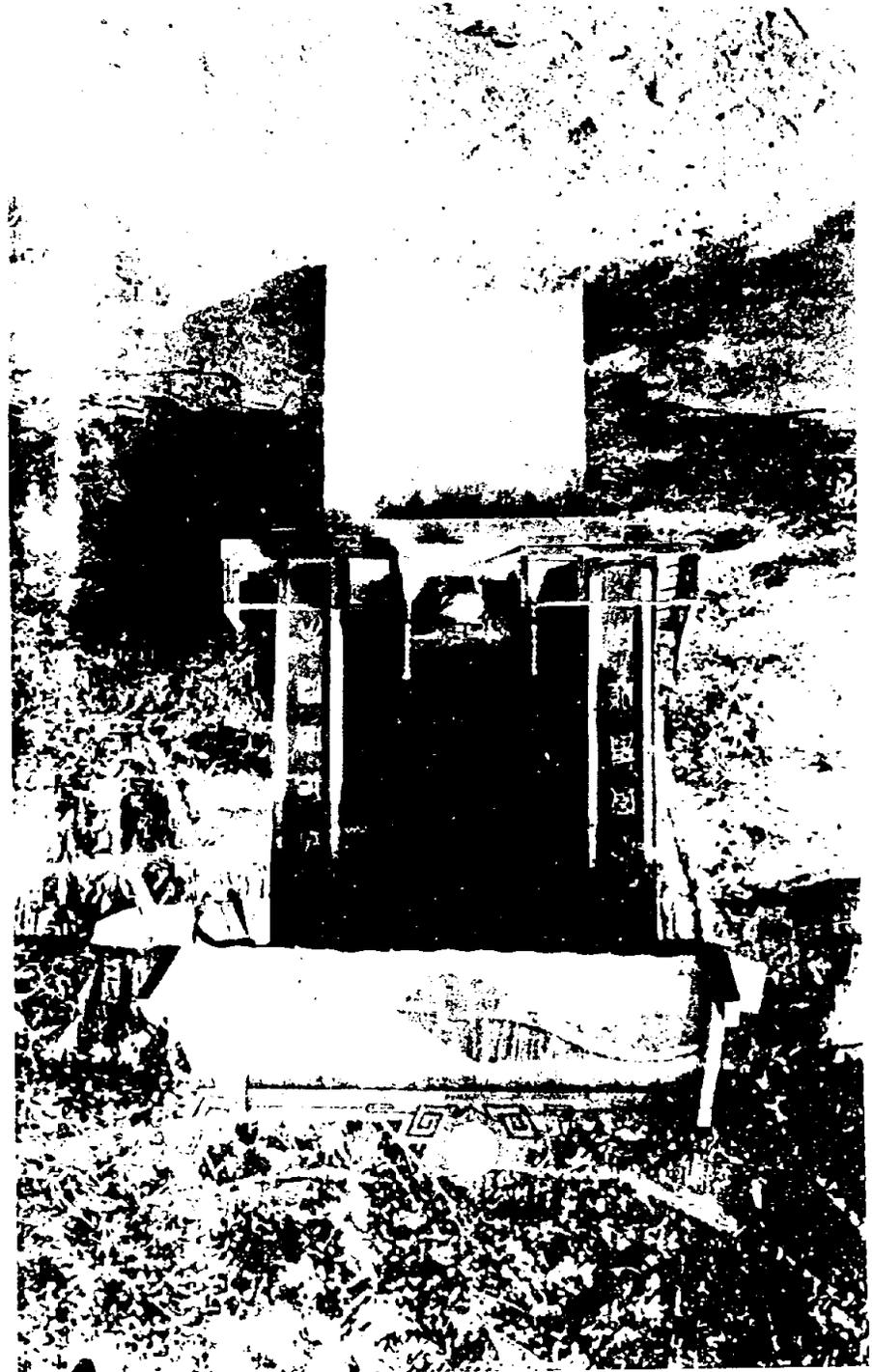
Haystack Used To Conceal Weapons



Troop Pointing Out Air Hole In Temple



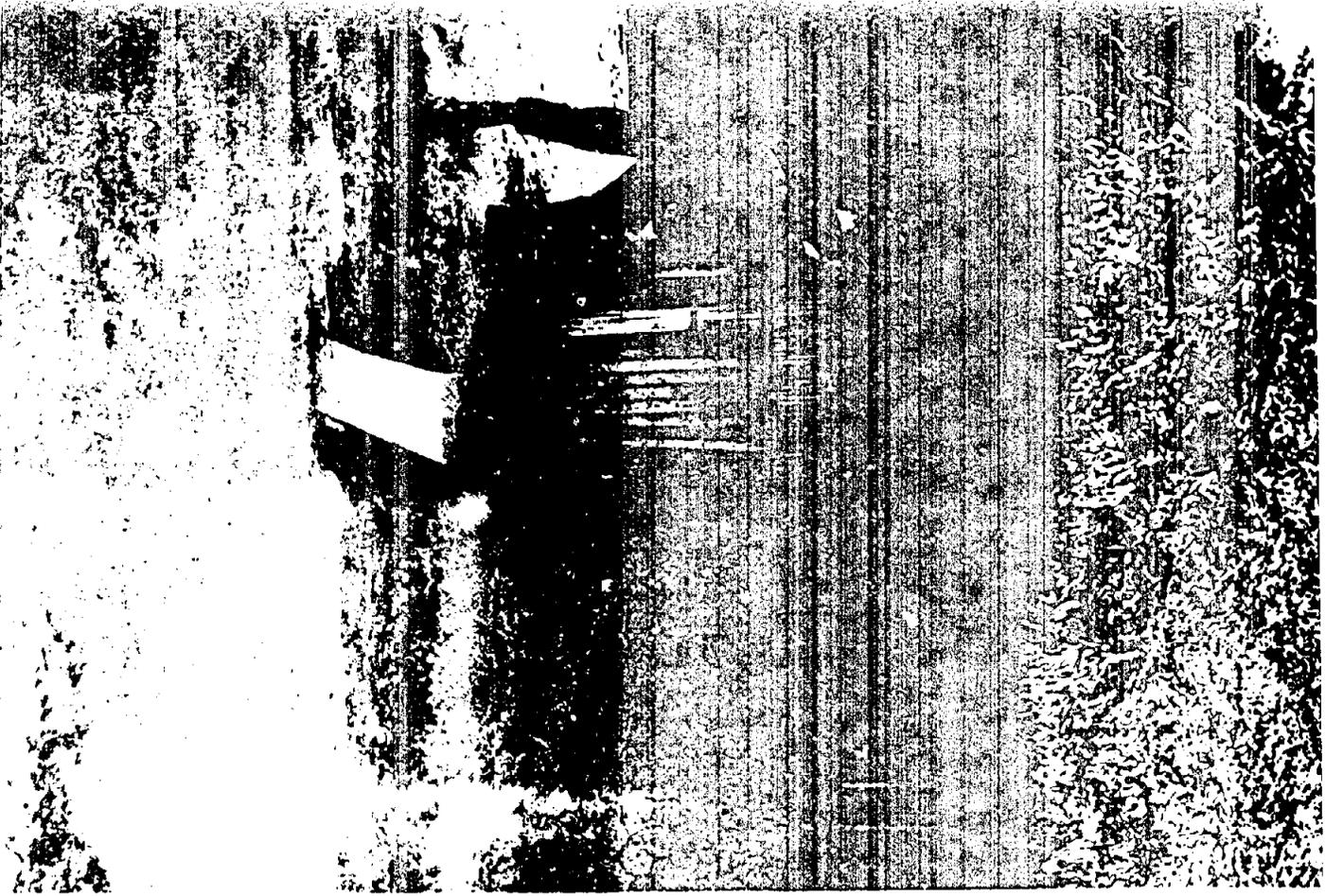
Temple
Concealed Air Hole For Tunnel Complex



Home With False Wall-Foot Trap In Door

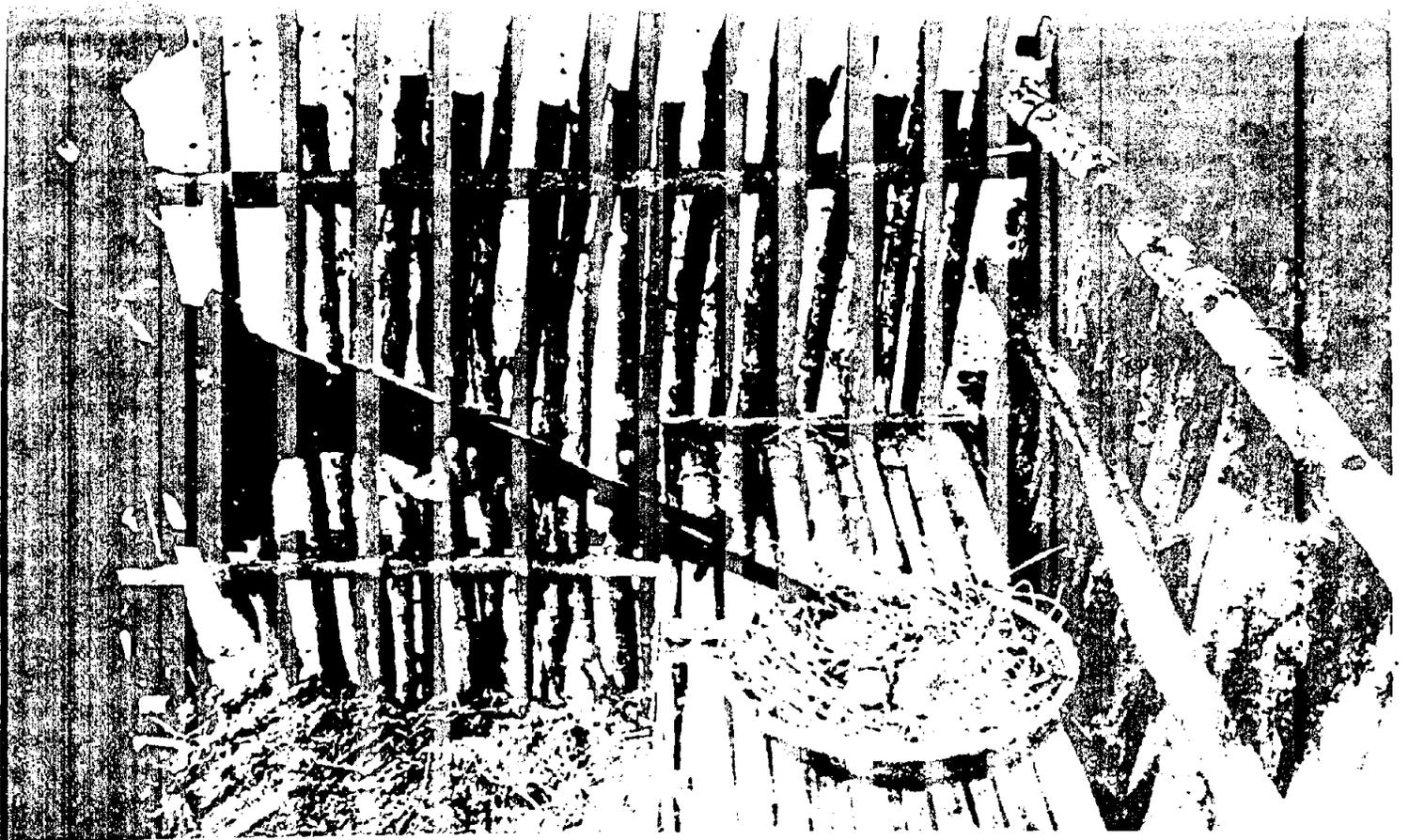


Trooper Checking Foot Trap in Door



Fireplace With Concealed Cache





Chicken Pen With Booby Traps And Grenades



Chicken Pen With Booby Traps And Grenades



Cattle Pen Booby Trapped



Cache Under Cattle Feeder



Cache Under Cattle Feeder



Tunnel Complex And Vines Used As Air Holes
VC Leaving Hatch



VC Tunnel



Hut With Double Roof



Gate With VC Sign "Booby Trapped"



VC Gate Man Trap Sprung



VC Gate Foot Trap Sprung

INSTRUCTOR OUTLINE OF DEMONSTRATION
VILLAGE SEARCH TECHNIQUES

I. Introduction

A. Review of previous instruction (review cogent points covered previously)

B. Purpose of this class

II. Phase I - Preparation of plans for village search

A. Collection of intelligence

B. Reconnaissance to collect required detailed information

C. Planning and troop leading procedures

D. Ground tactical plan of attack is presented and discussed

E. Organization of the blocking and assault forces

III. Phase II - Isolation of the objective village

A. Positioning of the blocking forces

B. Explain that for this exercise, these forces will be simulated.
(NOTE: The location and methods of positioning of the blocking forces should be developed in a map exercise employing the question technique to highlight positioning methods and tactical operations of the blocking forces.)

IV. Phase III - Movement to the objective village (Demonstration begins).

A. Movement from the line of encirclement to village

1. Recon teams leads employing any special equipment available

2. Emphasize necessity to exercise caution to avoid VC ambush

3. Emphasize that this movement must CLEAR the area to the village. Movement of assault forces should be visible to students and should exhibit rapid yet careful movement. A single armed VC should fire several shots at the advancing troops then attempt to flee to the village. He must be shot and his body examined for intelligence items and his weapon and ammunition captured. The advance continues to the objective village.

V. Phase IV - The village search

A. Fire support team takes up positions from which they can support the search.

B. Village is entered by demonstration unit avoiding paths and trails as fire team and recon team "cover the movement", prepared to fire if required. No resistance is encountered as the search teams enter the village. "Natives" watch in apathy.

C. It must be explained that the search will be conducted by the numbers so each situation may be adequately explained. Class may be required to move into the village or to other preselected locations where they can best observe the actions at each of the stations.

1. Station 1 -

With SMG at the shoulder in firing position, No 1 man of the search team covers the inside of the hut from outside the door. No 2 man does the same as No 3 man moves into the hut to conduct the search. No 3 who is armed with an M-1 or carbine probes the ceiling during the conduct of the search and discovers a weapon in a false ceiling. No 1 now joins No 3 in the hut as No 2 continues to cover the outside of the hut not visible by the fire support team. No 1 and 2 attach a long rope or wire to a bed in the hut, retire to a safe distance, and pull the bed from its position. They return, probe, and discover a dirt covered entrance to an underground room. The long rope technique is again applied to the cover and it is removed. After No 1 receives no answer to his challenge, he throws a grenade into the hole as No 2 and 3 cover. Upon detonation, he throws a WP hand grenade into the hole. As the smoke begins to clear, an unharmed VC emerges from the hole forced out by the smoke.

2. POW and Civilian evacuation - As the No 1 station is searched the natives are hurried out of the way of the fight to a secure area. There they are separated, searched and interrogated by the Civilian Control Team. The POW is taken to another area where the POW team begins immediate interrogation to learn of other VC in the village. Proper techniques must be demonstrated in each instance and in the initial search by the capturing search team.

3. Station No 2 -

Covered by No 1 and 2, and 3, mine detector operator, checks the interior of the animal pen. The mine detector operator signals that in the corner of the animal shelter, a suspicious item is located. Examination by No 3 reveals a trap door which is removed using the long rope technique. A weapon cache containing a mortar and ammunition is found.

4. Station No 3 -

Covered by No 1 and 2, No 3 enters the hut and begins the search. He prods at the fireplace and detects an unusual thickness of brick. Alert for booby traps, he removes the bricks revealing a narrow, deep cavity hiding several shoulder weapons. In another portion of the house, a small hiding place for a few rounds of small arms ammunition is found under a table leg. Outside the building, No 2 becomes disinterested in the search and attempts to pick up an egg from a chicken roost and detonates a booby trap.

5. Station No 4 -

Covered by No 2 and 3, No 1 lies on his stomach and pushes the door to the house open. Nothing happens as the door opens and No 3 who is about to enter the hut, is cautioned by No 1. No 1 then carefully examines the doorway and discovers a small foot or man trap in the doorway which he destroys. The normal thorough search produces a false wall behind which are hidden weapons and ammunition. No 1 questions No 3 and 2 who have performed the search and examines the false wall in more detail. The floor of the hidden compartment is examined by the search team leader and the floor of the compartment is discovered to be a trap door. At this point, automatic weapons fires are heard from the support team. The instructor points out that several armed VC have attempted to escape from a tunnel exit near the stream bed about 50 meters away. No 1 throws an HC smoke grenade down the tunnel entrance, replaces the cover and covers the entrance. Smoke is observed at the stream bank, coming from the tunnel from which the VC attempted escape. A demolition party is called forward from Station 1 to destroy the tunnel.

6. Station No 5 -

The search team moves to the small Buddhist temple and recognizes that one of the small urns inside the shrine is in reality a large diameter pipe which extends down into the ground. This could be either a vent tube or a means of providing food and other supplies to personnel below ground. A challenge is shouted down the pipe but no reply is received. Several grenades are dropped down the tube but there is no reaction. The search leader reports this fact to the assault force commander and receives instructions to continue the search. It should be pointed out that the force commander will note this as a possible large underground installation and will not consider the search completed until the entrance and/or exit is located and the installation destroyed. Dogs and mine detectors are seen moving to the area as the search team moves to the next station.

7. Station 6 -

A garden plot is searched by two search team members while

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the remaining member "covers". Probing is by bayonet and is deeper than normal. A bamboo breathing tube alerts the searchers, who then uncover a VC who has been "buried alive". Though he is armed, he quickly surrenders when he sees that he is covered by one member of the team. He is sent to the POW team for processing and interrogation.

8. Station 7 -

Lying beside the haystack is a VC body. He is approached with caution by one member of the search team, while the other members cover him. At this point the VC "body" suddenly rolls over, attempting to bring his carbine to bear on the search team member who is approaching him. He is shot by all three members of the search team who were prepared for this eventuality. It should be pointed out that although the VC have not as yet begun booby trapping their own dead, they do booby trap other bodies and "dead" should be first moved employing the long rope pull method. The dead VC's weapon is recovered and the haystack is searched. A mine detector team comes on the scene and announces that the haystack probably does contain suspicious items. It is searched further until a weapon is found. It should be pointed out to the students that the haystack would be completely torn apart or burned and the area on which it stood would be carefully examined. However, in the interests of time, this will not be done for this demonstration.

9. Station 8 -

As the team commences normal search with two men inside and one covering, one of the men inside reaches for a VC flag which is displayed on the wall. The other man stops him; it has been booby trapped. Both a rice bin and a water barrel are suspicious since both are filled to overflowing in the dry season just prior to harvest. Both are emptied and moved by the normal long rope method. Under the barrel is the entrance to a tunnel and No 2 and 3 throw grenades into the tunnel and on detonation enter the tunnel and find a large underground room which houses radio equipment and other communications gear. Weapons, ammunition and other supplies are found as is an emergency exit tunnel which goes to the stream bed near the previously discovered exit. This fact is reported to the assault force commander and he notes that this is the installation under the Buddhist Shrine in the previous station. The demolitions team moves in to begin the task of destroying the underground facility after the equipment and supplies have been removed.

10. Station 9 -

All buildings having been searched and all civilians are now under control of the civilian control team. POW's are being detained by the POW team. Reorganization of the assault forces takes place and then a check of entrances and exits to the villages are checked. A large man trap is located just inside the main gate to the village and is destroyed.

PsyWar and Civic Action is observed at the civilian collection point. The assault force commander checks off all items on his mission and gives the order to begin the withdrawal. The demonstration unit moves away from the village using a route other than the one by which it moved to the village.

VI. Review of teaching points.

- A. Planning
- B. Isolation of village
- C. Movement to the village
- D. The village search

VII. Closing statement

NOTE: Ideally there should be two mock villages, one for demonstration and one for student exercise. If this is not possible, not all facets of the mock village are demonstrated; the students are left to find cached and underground installations which have not been demonstrated. It should also be emphasized that this is only a suggested village and instructor presentation. There are many other techniques which may be employed. Variations are required to prevent "G-2 ing" the problem and to keep student interest high.

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INCLOSURE 4 TO LESSONS LEARNED NUMBER 25

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VILLAGE SEARCH TECHNIQUES

Included in this inclosure are related and supplemental thoughts concerning village search techniques. They are included here to amplify the main discussion and to provide additional guidance for the preparation of detailed instructional data on this subject.

A village search operation must never be undertaken for its own sake alone. It must have some specific objective. That objective or mission may be PsyWar, Civic Action, one of "showing the flag", or it may be that of apprehending VC which intelligence indicates are in the village. It happens, however, that patrols are sometimes sent into villages with vague, general orders; neither the patrol leader, nor his troops, nor the villagers themselves knowing or understanding the reason of the search and intrusion. This inevitably results in a wide scale of effects, ranging from ineptitude and a laughing VC (with resultant propaganda material for the Communists to employ on that and other villages) to excessive use of force with the result that the villagers are driven to resentment of the government intrusion and hence closer to the "VC camp". Unless the mission of the search operation is clear to all concerned and has been planned, ordered and rehearsed, and actions required are known by all searching units, do not attempt to conduct search operations.

Every enemy develops a behavior pattern of some sort. This pattern varies from district to district and even within districts and from time to time. Perhaps the greatest single determinant of the enemy behavior pattern is past government action in the area. Knowledge of the enemy patterns is basic to the success of not only search operations, but to most any operation conducted in counterinsurgency. Commanders must obtain detailed information of the enemy behavior patterns, study and analyze it, and use it. While the most commonly expected method of gaining this information is from clandestine sources, the technique of conducting search operations to gain information and to learn the VC reaction pattern should not be overlooked.

Though many search operations do not result in fire fights, they are in every sense of the word, combat operations. Like combat operations they require detailed planning and comprehensive training. The final plan is a coordinated series of well known actions designed to complete the mission. While the plan will vary to suit local situations, the individual component actions will not. Failure to plan for eventualities which require on the spot improvisation only invites failure. Units must be trained for search operations no less than for the attack, defense or retrograde actions.

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Interrogation, especially of civilians, requires special consideration. Since VC commonly attempt to evade by "hiding in the open", i.e., melding with the local populace, interrogators must be highly skilled to cull out the VC who attempt to use this hiding techniques. Best results usually come as a result of interrogation of children who, because of their youth, do not understand the devices employed by skillful interrogators. Confirmation or added details usually result from the leads given by the children. Interrogators should specialize to a degree - some who work best with children must develop their techniques in this area. Others exploit natural abilities with youths, old men or with women. It must be emphasized that the interrogators work together as a team even though they may specialize. Interrogation reports are written and crossed checked against other interrogation reports. Since all interrogation should be done in private and individuals may be interrogated several times by more than one interrogator, this activity will require considerable time if it is to be completely effective.

The presence of women in villages undergoing search present special problems to the searchers. If possible, a trained woman should be present to search all females and to help detect men who attempt to evade by disguising themselves as females. In no circumstances should women be exempt from search. Women should always be segregated from men to facilitate searching. If there are no women searchers available, the only alternative is to use a medical officer or aidman to conduct the search of females. This method is undesirable and should be used only as a last resort. There can be no abuse of females during search operations. Nothing will alienate a village more completely than to have searching government troops molest its female members.

A great problem in all search operations is the accusation of theft and looting which is often made against the troops. In small scale search operations it may be possible to obtain a signed certificate from individual on house conditions where there is VC reaction to the search, this will be impossible. In order to answer accusations of theft, it may be necessary and desirable to line up the search team members at the completion of the search operations in the presence of village elders or leaders and have them searched to prove that nothing is being taken away. An alternative is to have a representative of each household present during the time his house is searched. This has obvious disadvantages and should be used only at the insistence of the villagers.

One reaction to search operations which find incriminating documents or equipment in a village will be to deny that they were in the village and to state that they were "planted" by the searching forces. There is little that can be done to overcome this technique except to have a representative of each house present during the search. This course of action has the same obvious disadvantages as discussed in the preceding paragraph. If village officials accompany search parties, the numbers of noncombatants involved in the operation can be reduced. This technique can be employed

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only when the village officials are in fact true representatives, either selected or appointed by the people. Government appointed officials do not always meet these criteria.

Hints to locating VC hiding places follows:

- a. Make a methodical search of all houses - newer better houses are more likely to contain VC hiding places.
- b. Check all bamboo thickets for possible hiding places or entrances to underground installations.
- c. Check banks of all ponds and rice paddies.
- d. Have one or more soldiers wade through all ponds and paddies checking for entrances to underground installations below water level.
- e. Check all bushes, straw stacks and gardens inside and outside the village.
- f. Check all litter piles especially in animal pens.
- g. Check all fertilizer piles and other areas which by their nature are distasteful to the searchers.
- h. Check all food and water storage containers. They may have to be emptied in order to check for concealed entrance/exits.
- i. Check under all fireplaces, latrines, piles of brick or tile.
- j. Be alert for hollow trees.
- k. Check all inside and outside corners of all buildings. This is a favorite location of hiding places and entrances to underground installations.

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