

economy-of-force unit, thereby releasing other units for operations against the guerrilla force in less accessible areas. With their organic mobility, reconnaissance platoons or cavalry troops can disperse over relatively large areas, periodically visiting the civilian communities in the area and patrolling lines of communication, and still can assemble rapidly to counter a guerrilla threat in the area. They may be supported by host country elements. For further discussion on the organization and employment of the armored cavalry troop, see FM 17-95.

ANTITANK PLATOONS

If the situation requires conducting operations where the armor threat is minimal or nonexistent, this element can be organized to accomplish other missions or to reinforce reconnaissance or scout platoons. Consideration should be given to employing the platoon in an antipersonnel role, to destroy enemy strongpoints, or in the defense of the combat base. NOTE: This may require substitution of other weapons for the antitank guided missiles.

HEAVY MORTAR PLATOONS

The firing elements of the heavy mortar platoon normally will occupy positions within a combat base (also known as "fire bases"). If sections are required to move to firing positions outside combat bases, rifle elements must be assigned to aid in the security of the firing positions.

COMMUNICATIONS

Radio is the primary means of communication in counter guerrilla operations. Planning and implementing radio communications nets for the brigade and its maneuver battalions may become highly complex. The brigade signal officer must be prepared to advise on the capability of available communications means to support each course of action being considered. Platoon and company-level communications become more significant in counter guerrilla operations, since employment of such units on small patrols and in assigned area missions may overtax their organic communication capability.

Manpack-type radios to replace vehicle-mounted radio sets will be the principal requirement of maneuver battalions. Aerial and ground relay stations may be required to extend the ranges of FM radio equipment. Since the brigade communication platoon has no reserve from which to provide augmentation, special communications needs of brigade elements must be provided either by redistributing equipment or by augmenting the TOE. For long-range radio communications between battalion combat bases and patrol bases, communications support teams may be required.

Extensive use of radio for communications expands the communications security problem. Any tendency to consider the guerrilla force too unsophisticated to acquire communications intelligence must be avoided. Conventional communications security measures must be employed with emphasis on changing operational codes frequently at the lower tactical echelons. Secure voice nets should be provided from company level upward.