

action is taken to return fire and move against the ambush party. See chapter 9 of this manual and also FM 7-8 and FM 21-75.

## ENCIRCLEMENT

Encirclement offers the best chance to fix guerrilla forces in position and achieve decisive results. The brigade, battalion, and, to a limited degree, the company may conduct encirclements. The company and smaller units normally do not have the personnel strength and command and control capability to execute encirclements except as part of a larger force.

Planning, preparation, and execution are aimed at encircling the guerrilla force rapidly. Maximum security and surprise can be gained by occupying the initial encirclement positions during the hours of darkness.

Encircling movements are executed rapidly. In large operations, use of airmobile and airborne troops contributes speed and surprise to the operation. Positions are occupied simultaneously in order to block escape. If simultaneous occupation is not possible, probable escape routes are covered first. Initial occupation is the most critical period of the operation. When the guerrillas become aware that they are being encircled, they will probably probe for gaps or attack weak points and attempt to break out.

Encircling units must provide strong combat patrols well to their front to give early warning of attempted breakouts. Mobile reserves are positioned to counter a breakout and to reinforce difficult areas such as broken terrain or areas with caves, tunnels, or fortification complexes.

Indirect fire support can serve to cloak an encirclement by gaining and holding the guerrillas' attention. Fires should be planned in detail to support the encirclement.

Following completion of the encirclement, the circle is contracted to capture or destroy the guerrilla force. As the circle is progressively contracted, units may be removed from the line and added to the reserve. Against small guerrilla forces, the encircled area may be cleared by progressive contraction and a final sweep. Against larger guerrilla forces, however, at some point, some action other than further contraction will be required.

- One technique consists of driving a wedge through the guerrilla force to divide it and then destroying the guerrillas in each subarea.
- Another technique, employed after some degree of contraction, is to employ a blocking force on one or more sides of the perimeter while the remainder of the encirclement forces drive the guerrillas against the blocking force. Either element may accomplish the actual destruction. This technique is most effective when the blocking force can be located on, or immediately in the rear of, a natural terrain obstacle.

## OPERATIONS IN BUILT-UP AREAS

Built-up areas usually are unfavorable for guerrilla operations. Guerrillas normally will not choose to fight in these areas; however, insurgent elements in urban areas