

Zone Recon

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Situation

You are the company commander, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marines.

For the last 3 months the Marine expeditionary brigade, as part of a joint task force, has been operating in support of an international coalition of forces deployed into Karabrun in order to restore this beleaguered nation's borders.

The terrain in your current area of operations (AOR) is primarily volcanic with dense tropical forests. Scattered, cleared areas are utilized by the inhabitants for existence farming. During your movement north you have conducted very deliberate searches for enemy forces, supplies, and weapon caches. For the most part your battalion's contact with the enemy has been sporadic, although, in the zone of ac-

tion adjoining your present AOR, they have demonstrated an ability to mass forces—normally company reinforced elements conducting well-executed night attacks supported with medium and heavy mortar fire, then fading quickly into the surrounding area.

Your battalion commander has been directed to conduct a zone reconnaissance from your present location (line of departure) to the vicinity of Hill 261, approximately 7 miles north. Your company has been assigned as lead element for this mission. To your northeast you can see the Mirana River. There are no bridges across the river, but you know from practical experience that it has been fordable in most areas.

Recent intelligence reports that the enemy may be consolidating his

forces north of Hill 261 in preparation for a final effort to push U.S. forces from this area.

Hill 261 will be in your zone of action, the Mirana River is your right boundary. 2d Battalion, 6th Marines is on the other side of the Mirana. You will have priority of fires from the 81mm mortar platoon and have been directed to submit a request for artillery fires to the battalion fire support coordinator within the next 2 hours.

Requirement

Within 30 minutes develop the following: (1) List of questions you may have for the S-2; (2) your scheme of maneuver, with overlay and fire plan sketch; and (3) what you believe the most likely enemy course of action will be. Submit your solution to *Marine Corps Gazette*, TDG #01-1, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134 or fax 703-630-9147.

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