

# TDGs

## Solutions to TDG #04-5

Tactical Decision Game #04-5, "No Bugles, No Drums," was presented in *MCG*, May 04 and is reprinted here.

For the past 7 weeks the 2d Marine Division has been conducting conventional operations against an invading enemy force in the country of Hartland. The enemy has been fighting a delaying action as 6th Marines has pressed its attack across the open countryside; however, they are beginning to consolidate in more urban areas as they approach their own borders. Intelligence believes they will continue to consolidate forces and attempt to reinforce while they prepare to defend more earnestly.

Brownsville is a small town that sits along the White River, 15 miles south of Orange City, the metropolis in a string of urban communities along the White River known as the "Upper Valley." The Upper Valley and Highway 5 have been serving as important transportation and supply routes for enemy forces operating within this area of Hartland.

You are the company commander of Company G, 2d Battalion, 6th Marines (2/6). 6th Marines is conducting an attack on the southern sector of Orange City, and 2/6 is supporting that attack by seizing Brownsville and isolating enemy units in their area of responsibility in order to prevent enemy interference with the main effort to the north. Your battalion scheme of maneuver is sending Companies E and F into Brownsville from the northeast via assault amphibious vehicles, while a combined antiarmor team screens to the northeast. You have been tasked with conducting a heliborne insertion south of Brownsville and isolating the town south of Phase Line Blue (PL Blue) along route Baltimore. 3/10 is in general support of the regiment, and two sections of rotary-wing aircraft are in general support of 2/6. Company E

has priorities of fire from the 81mm mortars platoon. PLs Red and Blue are serving as company boundaries for this operation.

The S-2 (intelligence) reports that the majority of the indigenous population has fled the town. Those who remain are sympathetic to the enemy invasion and should be considered dangerous to U.S. forces. Expect at least a company-sized enemy force within the town itself. They have been using BMPs/BTRs (Soviet mechanized infantry vehicles/Soviet armored vehicles) and 82/120mm mortars but have been operating without adequate resupply for some time. Their morale is waning due to the lack of support and bad weather, but their increased defensive posture indicates they expect an imminent U.S. attack. There have not been any reports of reinforcement or resupply within the past 72 hours.

You inserted into Landing Zone Eagle, 7 kilometers (km) to the south of Brownsville and have proceeded north in a movement to contact formation for 5km. The terrain on the western side of the White River consists mostly of rolling hills that gradually rise into a low intermittent mountain range off to the west. The local country alternates at varying intervals between cleared farm communities and wooded areas. The forests contain moderate undergrowth that thankfully does not limit foot trafficability. Heavy rainfall in recent weeks has swollen the river and streambeds while hampering vehicle mobility on all unimproved surfaces.

Along your route toward Brownsville your company has been involved with two brief engagements with the enemy. 1st Platoon, at the lead of the company formation, came into contact, and both times you directed 3d Platoon to maneuver to the west with one assault squad and one machinegun team in accor-

dance with your unit standing operating procedure. In both instances the enemy disengaged and withdrew ahead of the company as 1st and 3d Platoons pressed forward and pursued by fire. As you approach PL Blue, 3d Platoon is still out forward to the west and you have been unable to communicate with anyone over battalion Tactical Net 1 (Tac 1).

3d Platoon now calls you over the company Tac and tells you he has spotted what looks to be a platoon (minus) dismounted from three BTRs attempting to drive northeast toward PL Red. They are traveling along an unimproved road not recorded on the map. At that moment you hear single shots and automatic weapons fire erupt from 1st Platoon's direction, and the battalion operations officer suddenly comes through over battalion Tac 1 asking for an update. What do you do?

### Solution A

by 1stLt Quinn P. Colgan

(Author)

*Company Commander's Frag Order*

To 3d Platoon: "Conduct a hasty attack on the enemy platoon (minus) while you have the element of surprise. You are the main effort and have priority of 60mm mortar fires unless we get artillery fire support."

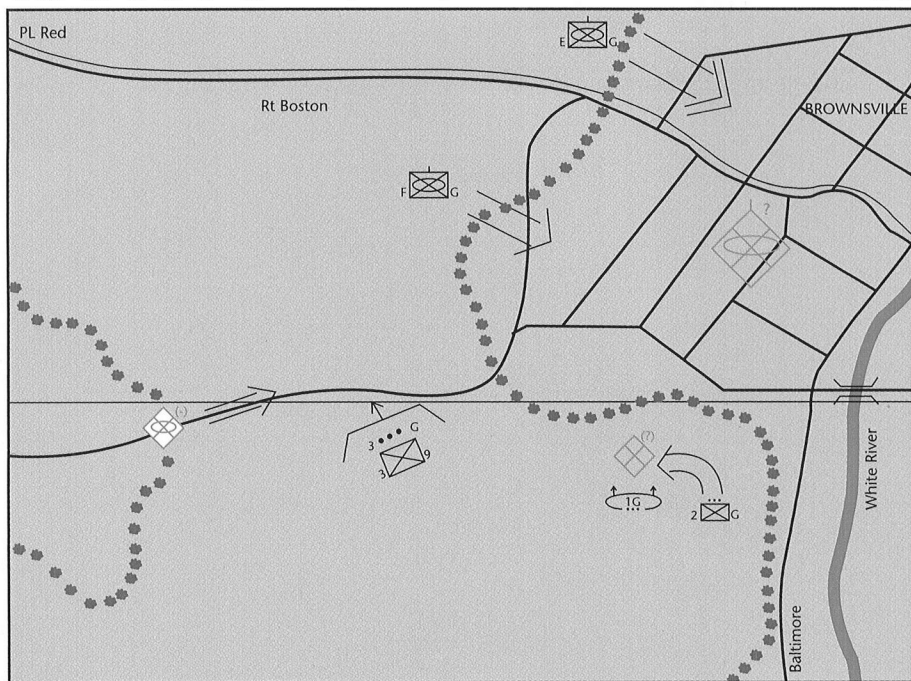
To 1st Platoon: "Set up a base of fire and take enemy under fire in accordance with company standing operating procedures. Establish a linkup point for yourself and 3d Platoon."

To 2d Platoon: "Maneuver and assault the enemy position from the east to the west. Provide security to the east in order to prevent an enemy counterattack on the rear of your assault."

To all: "If the enemy breaks contact to the north, 1st and 2d Platoons will set up security at the company position. 1st Platoon, with one machinegun squad and one assault squad, will be prepared to reinforce

# TDG #04-5

**A**



3d Platoon. Mortars will set up on the nearest available fire position with a principal direction of fire in the direction of 3d Platoon. They will be prepared to fire in support of the company as the supporting element.

“The primary signal plan will be sent via PRC-119F. Secondary signal plan will be developed for the company when I decide to attack.”

**Rationale**

As the attack on Brownsville progresses from the northwest, it is clear that the presence of the enemy platoon (minus) is unknown to your battalion commander (CO). You presume they are one of numerous enemy units still attempting to consolidate in the area and that they could easily become a significant reinforcement and counterattack force. Company G’s mission is to isolate Brownsville from the south and that is precisely what you must do, before the enemy unit can come in contact with or observe Company F’s right flank.

The fire coming from 1st Platoon’s position must be another engagement with the enemy just as you have been having throughout your movement, but your conclusions about the enemy thus far give you reason for concern. Their purpose south of Brownsville has not been as a delaying force at all. They have been probing you as you move to

gain intelligence of your size, dispositions, and immediate actions. You have been preparing for further resistance and there is a good chance this is it.

Your intent is to prevent the enemy platoon (minus) from reinforcing or counterattacking from Brownsville trail while simultaneously defeating the enemy threat to the north. In order to accomplish this, the first thing you must do is communicate with the battalion CO. “Feed the elephant a

peanut,” with a hasty position report, spot report, and situation report, then request permission to coordinate for an attack across PL Blue. Don’t forget to request indirect and air support through your fire support team. Just because you do not have priority doesn’t mean you cannot get it.

**Solution B**

by Sgt Thomas R. Brown

Company Commander’s Frag Order

To 1st Platoon: “Set up a blocking position to the west of the withdrawn enemy’s position.”

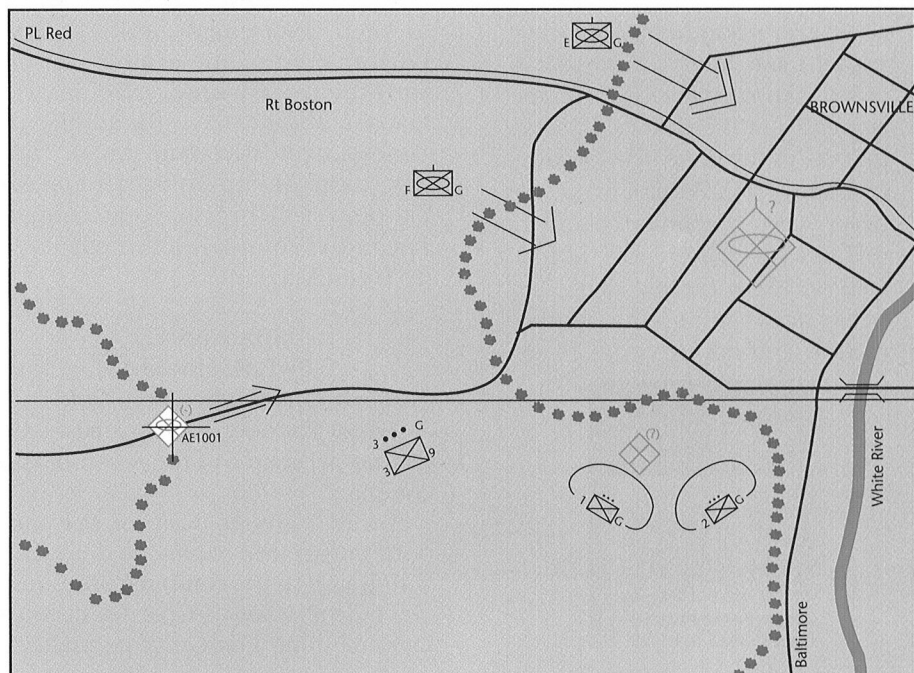
To 2d Platoon: “You will set up to the south. We will stay here until we receive word from 3d Platoon that their targets are neutralized and ineffective. We will prevent any envelopment of the enemy to gain position on us, and we will prevent any hostile forces from cutting us off from 3d Platoon.”

To 3d Platoon: “Engage hostile targets as they appear. I want total destruction of the enemy. I have called in a rotary-wing mission to your location. On my order break contact to the designated linkup point.”

To higher headquarters: “3d Platoon has contact half a click north-northwest of my position. Dismounted infantry at platoon strength and three BTR vehicles are engaging them right now. I request rotary-wing support to their location. I am currently 5

# TDG #04-5

**B**



*Just received orders reporting to or leaving the West Coast?*



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Phone: (949) 212-4891

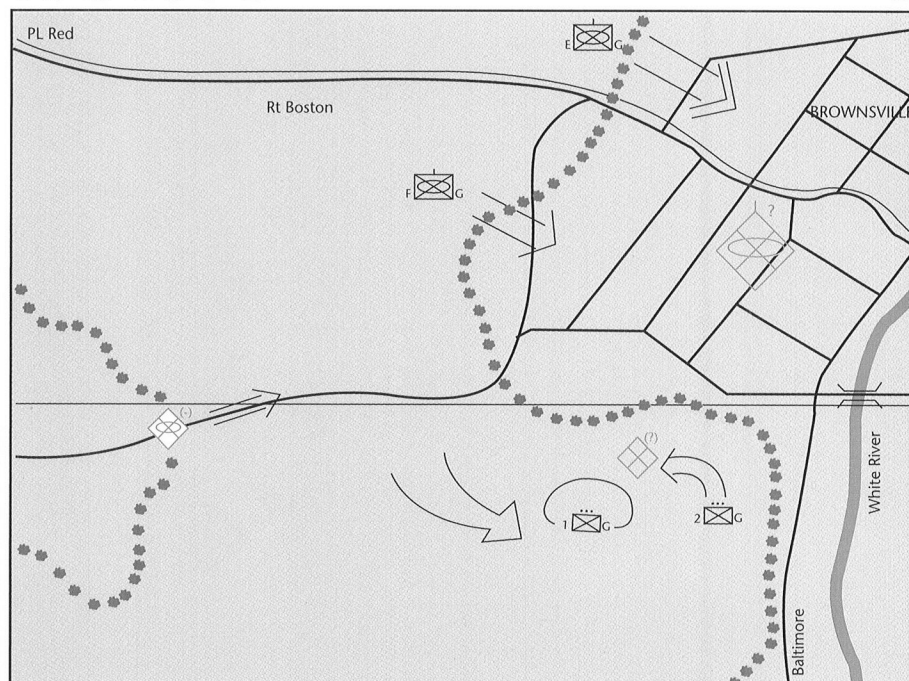
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## TDG #04-5

C



clicks north of Landing Zone Eagle and have been engaged in two minor firefights. I am setting up blocking positions to prevent 3d Platoon from getting cut off from the company in the event the enemy will attempt an envelopment to our right."

### Rationale

I cannot reinforce 3d Platoon because of the possibility that the enemy forces 1st and 2d Platoons encountered may be attempting to gain positional advantage on the company. I decided that setting up blocking positions would allow us to keep both enemy units at bay. With the aid of the assault section and the rotary-wing mission, 3d Platoon should have the ability to knock out hostiles and break contact to the linkup point. 1st and 2d Platoons will prevent any maneuver on the company although activity is unlikely.

### Solution C

by L.R. Howard

#### Company Commander's Frag Order

To 1st Platoon: "Set up a hasty defensive perimeter to the north of the company."

To 2d Platoon: "Call for fire support, engage the enemy, and begin a withdrawal to the company position."

To 3d Platoon: "Assist 1st Platoon in establishing a defensive perimeter."

To weapons platoon: "2d Platoon has priority of fires."

To higher headquarters: "1st Platoon under attack. Request for artillery fires coming. Also, request rotary-wing close air support (CAS)."

### Rationale

Using either air or artillery will greatly aid the company in accomplishing the mission. Rotary-wing CAS will assist them in getting back to the company safely by screening their movement."



**9th Annual  
TDG  
Contest  
See August  
MCG for rules.**