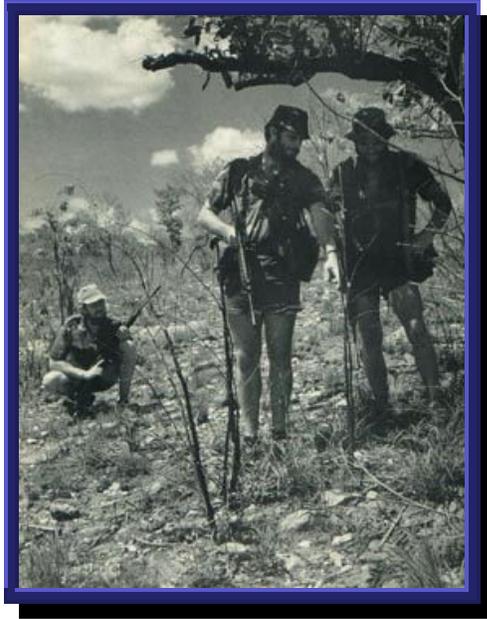


# TRACKING AND COUNTERTRACKING



## USE OF LOCALS FOR GUIDES AND COMMANDO/SCOUT TRACKERS

With common sense and a degree of experience, you can track terrorists. You must develop the following traits and qualities to be successful and to lead your stick to contact.

- Be patient and steady.
- Be able to move slowly and quietly, yet steadily, while detecting and interpreting signs.
- Avoid fast movement that may cause you to overlook signs, lose the spoor, or blunder into a terrorist unit that is counter tracking.
- Be persistent and have the skill and desire to continue the mission even though signs are scarce or bad weather or terrain is destroying the spoor.
- Be determined and persistent when trying to find a spoor you have lost.
- Be observant and try to see things that are not obvious at first glance.
- Use your sense of smell and hearing to supplement your sight and intuition.
- Develop a feel for things that do not look right. It may help you regain a lost trail or discover additional spoor.
- Know the terrorist, his habits, equipment, and capability.

- Trust your stick to back you up and your other troops to protect you.

## TECHNIQUES

The ability to track a terrorist after he has broken contact also helps you regain contact with him, which is more important in the African bush than in any other theater of war.

Visual tracking is following the paths of men or animals by the signs they leave, primarily on the ground or vegetation. Scent tracking is following men or animals by their smell.

Tracking is a precise art. You need a lot of practice to achieve and maintain a high level of tracking skill. You should be familiar with the general techniques of tracking to enable you to detect the presence of a hidden enemy and to follow him, to find and avoid mines or booby traps, and to give early warning of ambush.

Perhaps you should think back to when you first began this operation. Let's assume you are operating on a fairly long-term contract.

Your first concern is the terrain. You can't track in it if you don't have a rudimentary knowledge of the lay of the land. Prior to operating in the area, you should ideally have spent a few days acclimating your troops, if they are not local civilians. During this period, thorough study of available maps, air photos, and even tour guides can be helpful. Extract detailed briefings from the local police, military officials, and population. Talk to local farmers, natives, police units, anyone who has been in the area in which you will be operating.

Your equipment should be organized during this period as well, and any remedial training conducted. Pay special attention to camouflage. Secure all your gear, discard inessentials, and inspect the troops for the same. Carry food, water, and ammunition and go as light as possible. Some trackers dress like the terrorists and use captured weapons. This is helpful if you are tracking outside your own country into enemy-dominated countries.

Exercise caution. A large number of people, dressed in the correct uniform, have been shot in error by their own troops. Weigh the pros and cons carefully. Also try to learn as much about native fieldcraft as possible. How do they use the terrain to survive? Where do they get food and water, and what do they use for expedient tools and weapons?

Study all information on local weather. It will have a definite effect on your operations and hence your tracking. By enlisting the natives, if possible, to teach you about local vegetation, you will gain excellent survival information which may help you make decisions about terrorist movements. If he is far from his supply bases, he will attempt to live off the land to sustain or even expand his operations, especially if native assistance is denied him.

However, do not assume that the enemy is an excellent bushman just because he is indigenous to that continent. In Rhodesia, Angola, and Mozambique, terrorists have been found wandering, lost and starving, because they were also strangers. If you know the ground and are comfortable in it, you already have a 30-percent edge on the enemy.

Also, during your terrain study, note native customs and attempt to learn some of the language and folklore. This takes time and effort and on short-term jobs will be nearly impossible, but if you have the time, it will pay big dividends. It may give you the necessary edge to come out of the next contact standing up instead of lying down.

Learn as much information as possible about wildlife in the area. It will be invaluable in tracking.

When tracking a terrorist, you should build a picture of him in your mind. Ask yourself, "How many persons am I following? How well are they trained? How are they equipped? Are they healthy? How is their morale? Do they know they are being followed?" You should ask questions of the survivors of a terrorist attack and find out as much about the leader as possible and how he thinks.

Know the terrorist. The better you understand him, his motives, aspirations, traits, habits, tactics, and attitudes, the greater your tactical edge. As a result, you will be able to run him to ground sooner. Once you understand the terrorist, your task will become much easier.

If possible, keep notes on tactics employed against your stick and other police and paramilitary groups. Look for patterns of the terrorist group in general and of specific commanders in particular. Watch his standard operating procedures and record his responses to your tactics. Intelligence is usually extremely limited to a mercenary, so be your own second in charge (2 IC). Absorb every piece of information available to you.

Now that you have some idea as to the terrorist group and the situation, you may investigate the feasibility of using native trackers. Ask local authorities who the headman, local chief, or kraal head is and his location. Then with one of the officials, who is known to the chief, approach him for the assistance of the most reliable, efficient trackers in the area. You may have difficulty since he may be in sympathy with the terrorist group or just plain scared. Allay his fears if possible, and be prepared to offer top wages and protection for the trackers and their families. This is the only way to ensure some semblance of loyalty. Investigate any native male of military age who might be seeking revenge against the terrorists. Use this to your advantage.

When dealing with native troops, be firm, fair, and honest. Be friendly but not familiar; treat them with respect and accord them the dignity due their station in the tribe. Treat them well but not lavishly. Make sure they understand exactly what is expected of them and guide them adequately in the field. Never assume anything unless you can deliver, and never lie to them. In many situations only mutual trust and respect will keep them loyal to you.

Once you have employed your trackers, you may wonder how to gauge their effectiveness. Probably the most positive way is to see how often they track into contact. If they are constantly being fired on first, then your trackers are of only marginal ability. Good trackers will be able to tell how far ahead the enemy is and alert you to this so you can request air cover or more follow-up troops to reinforce your patrol.

This chapter has been written to help you if you wish to become a better tracker or to know enough to properly employ and command tracking teams. This knowledge will not make you a tracker. Only practice, practice, and more practice, under expert supervision, will do that.

## **How to Track**

Now for the most important aspect: How to track. First, psychologically and physically prepare for the hunt. You should be in good physical condition with excellent reserves of stamina, alert, reasonably well-fed, and above all confident in yourself and your men. You may be forced to travel for days under adverse conditions, without food and with little water, at a fast pace, and under tremendous mental stress. Tracking requires intense concentration, stamina, and an eye for detail.

Secondly, you must know what to look for when reading spoor (tracks). When you begin tracking, try spooring large groups in easy terrain for short distances. Usually soft ground with knee-high grass is best. Send out three or four people with instructions to walk for about five to ten minutes, depending on the bush growth, and then track until you find them. Your attention span at first will be short and you will tend to become discouraged quickly. You will lose the spoor often, but don't worry. No one is a born bushman. Be patient and concentrate on the spoor. As you become more aware of what to look for, the legs of spoor can be lengthened until spoor layers are given a thirty-minute head start. This can be extended to hours, until they are laying spoor in the morning and you are tracking later in the day.

As you are tracking, look for evidence of disturbed grass; bent blades will reveal the direction of travel. The top of the grass will point in the direction the person is walking. If the enemy has passed through after sunrise, the dew will be disturbed and a faint darkened area will reveal his trail. Watch for broken spider webs or cobwebs. When examining spoor always keep your head slightly up and look fifteen to twenty yards ahead of you. It will enable you to see the spoor better, determine the direction of movement, and keep alert for likely ambush areas. If the terrorist knows or suspects he is being followed, he will try to set you up.

Be alert, patient, and careful. Watch for rocks that have been overturned. The dark side will be up or you will see the impression on the ground where it once rested. Although midday heat will dry the rock quickly, it tells you the terrorist is only hours ahead of you. If you find it in the morning, then he has been moving prior to sunrise. The darker and wetter the rock, the closer your quarry.

Much of tracking means noting what is out of context in nature and realizing the cause. Move from sign to sign and always be sure of your last confirmed sign before you move on to the next. There are, of course, the obvious: footprints in the mud near streams and water holes and along sandy rivers; leaves on plants that have been broken, knocked off, or turned so that the light underside contrasts with the surroundings; scuffed tree bark or mud scraped from passing boots and the impression of rifle butts being used as crutches or canes up steep slopes. Of course, there is the old favorite, blood on the trail.

Watch for discarded ration packages, food tins, and even dropped or discarded documents. U.S. troops in Vietnam were easily tracked, not by recently cut jungle foliage but by their inevitable trail of Kool-Aid packages and junk. Once you have identified the spoor, try to identify the type of footgear. Often different guerrilla groups wear different types of boots. Terrorists in Africa have been killed and captured carrying two or three types of shoes and wearing two or three shirts and pants at the same time! Make sure the print is not one of your own people or a regular army unit, and keep a record of the different types of prints you encounter. Plaster impressions, drawings, photos or even a copy of the soles themselves should be on record with local intelligence people. The military intelligence unit makes copies of all terrorist footwear and distributes these drawings to local population. Village police, hunters, and farmers walking in the bush have often discovered the trails of terrorist gangs who have crossed from one border to another and have alerted the security forces.

The depth and space of the tracks will also tell you something about your foe. Women take smaller steps, as do heavily laden men. People running will leave more space between tracks, and men walking in each other's tracks will make deeper impressions. Also, they will cause the edges of the tracks to be less distinct. Drag marks could indicate wounded. Once you have identified your particular track, follow it even if the group splits. Sometimes guerrillas will split up or bombshell until you are left following one set of tracks.

### **Tracking Teams**

If you have the personnel, you can assign tracking teams to each terrorist's tracks. If not, pick one and run him to ground, then pick another. Try to stay with the main body, if possible. You may get lucky and nail the commander or political officer or you may end up following the spoor to the RV point where you can ambush the entire gang.

Sunlight will also have some effect on reading spoor. If you are tracking into the sun and are experiencing difficulty in seeing the sign, look back over your shoulder every few yards to confirm your spoor. Never walk on the spoor and caution the follow-up troops behind you to also walk to one side of the tracks.

If you lose the spoor, it is imperative that you go back to the last positive sign, confirm it, and then begin a search pattern to relocate the tracks. Watch for the absence of insects or wildlife. Most wild creatures are shy of man and will seek shelter if he has been in the area. Birds are great indicators of men, as are baboon, impala, and many types of gazelle. Listen for animals snorting or running and note the direction. Something is there.

If you lose the trail, there are a number of search patterns used to relocate spoor. The most common are the cross-grain, the box search, and the 360-degree sweep. Go back to the last positive spoor and mark it. Then look up to about twenty-five to thirty meters in front of you and sweep from the center to the left out about to 45 degrees and then sweep back to center. Repeat the process to the right, each time coming back to your feet and the last confirmed spoor. Look carefully and slowly and most times you will pick up the spoor again. If not, brief the troop commander to alert his men that your trackers will be circling to the front and flanks and possibly to the rear.

## **Team Duties**

Next, let's discuss tracking team assignments and duties. First, the stick leader. He is responsible for the control of the team and all follow-up troops until the time of contact, when control of the follow-up units reverts to the ground commander. Once the trackers have found the terrorist group, conventional tactics can be used to close with and kill them. The stick leader relays information to the commando unit follow-up troops and the next higher headquarters. He is responsible for briefing the troops in the team operation and what duties he will expect of the ground follow-up unit. On contact, he extracts the tracking team, if possible, and allows the infantry to engage the terrorist group. Trackers are too valuable to risk in a firefight and should not engage unless there is a serious manpower shortage. He is also the tail trooper, if the team is working alone.

The tracker. He is responsible for reading the spoor and interpreting it to the stick leader.

The flankers. These two troopers, who are also trained trackers, are responsible for the forward and flank security of the tracker. As the tracker becomes fatigued, they rotate duties with him so that all the trackers remain fresh and alert. The stick leader does not pull tracker or flanker duty. The flanker's function is most important; he will probably see and engage the enemy first. He must be alert and ready for instant action.

Follow-up troops. These troopers are under the control of the stick leader until contact is made or the terrorists pointed out to the commander of the follow-up unit. Follow-up troops should be in close proximity to the trackers, although reinforcements can be vehicles or airborne and on call.

Generally just about all standard infantry tactics apply to tracking sticks with the exception of crossing obstacles such as rivers, streams, roads, trails, or rail lines. Instead of the flankers crossing to recon the other side and then calling the rest of the unit over, the stick, after carefully observing the far side, crosses together under the cover of the follow-up troops. This is done to keep any spoor on the other side intact and undisturbed. The risk imposed upon the stick by use of this tactic is less important than staying on the tracks of what could prove to be an important terrorist leader.

## **Formations**

The standard tracking formation is V-shaped, with the flankers forming the open legs of the V and the tracker at the junction, with the stick leader directly behind him. The stick leader remains about five meters behind the tracker, and the flankers remain forward of the tracker and to the side as much as terrain and vegetation will allow.

## **Spoor Age**

Another important point is to determine the age of the spoor and the number of personnel involved. To determine age, note the way in which vegetation is disturbed. Grass blades will remain green for about a day after being broken. Prints in mud will usually take about an hour to fill with water, depending on the amount of moisture in the earth. Disturbed dew drops on grass

and plants will indicate passage of something within the last few hours. Dew usually stays on for about four hours after sunrise. Overturned rocks take a couple of hours to dry in direct sun. Cobwebs and spider webs usually take about an hour to be replaced by the insects.

Rain can also be used to your advantage to indicate age of spoor. If you know the last time it rained in the area, you can tell how old the tracks are. Animal prints superimposed on the spoor will tell you that the spoor was made prior to nightfall, since most animals move at night. The reverse is also applicable; if you see the spoor on the animal prints, the spoor was made sometime after sunrise.

Broken twigs and vines are also good gauges of time since it requires about ten hours for the pulp inside to begin to turn brown. If you discover a resting area, check the campfire's heat. Look for cigarette butts, ration tins, documents, letters, or diaries. If your terrorist is communist—oriented, he will usually be carrying a diary. Look for human feces near the camp. Interrogate all the locals you meet. They may be hiding the terrorists, feeding them, or know where they are camped. The trail itself can be used to tell age. If it is erratic or circuitous, your terrorist may be walking in the dark.

## **Displacement**

Displacement takes place when something is moved from its original position. An example is a footprint in soft, moist ground. The foot of the person that left the print displaced the soil, leaving an indentation in the ground. By studying the print, you can determine many facts. For example, a print that was left by a barefooted person or one with worn or frayed footwear indicates that he may have poor equipment.

Footprints show the following:

1. The direction and rate of movement of the terrorist group.
2. The number of terrorists in the group.
3. Whether or not heavy loads are carried.
4. The sex of the terrorist group.
5. Whether the terrorists know they are being tracked.

If the footprints are deep and the pace is long, the group is moving rapidly. Very long strides and deep prints indicate that the group is running. If the prints are deep, short, and widely spaced, with signs of scuffing or shuffling, a heavy load is probably being carried by the group who left the prints.

You can also determine a terrorist's sex by studying the size and position of the footprints. Women generally tend to be pigeon-toed, while men usually walk with their feet pointed straight

ahead or slightly to the outside. Women's prints are usually smaller than men's and their strides are usually shorter.

If the terrorist group knows that it is being followed, it may attempt to hide its tracks. Men walking backward have a short, irregular stride. The prints have an unusually deep toe. The soil will be kicked in the direction of movement.

The last terrorist walking in a group usually leaves the clearest footprints. Therefore, use his prints as the key set. Cut a stick the length of each key print and notch the stick to show the print width at the widest part of the sole. Study the angle of the key prints to determine the direction of march. Look for an identifying mark or feature on the prints, such as a worn or frayed part of the footwear. (Refer to the paragraph about different types of footwear.) If the spoor becomes vague or obliterated, or if the trail being followed merges with another, use the stick to help identify the key prints. That will help you stay on the trail of the group being followed.

Use the box method to count the number of terrorists in the group. There are two ways to use the box method- the stride as a unit of measure method and the 36-inch box method.

The stride as a unit of measure method is the most accurate of the two. Twenty to twenty-five persons can be counted using this method. Use it when the key prints can be determined. To use this method, identify a key print on a trail and draw a line from its heel across the trail. Then move forward to the key print of the opposite foot and draw a line through its instep. This should form a box with the edges of the trail forming two sides, and the drawn lines forming the other two sides. Next, count every print or partial print inside the box to determine the number of persons. Any person walking normally would have stepped in the box at least one time. Count the key prints as one.

To use the 36-inch box method, mark off a 30- to 36-inch cross-section of a trail, count the prints in the box, then divide by two to determine the number of persons that used the trail. (Your R-4 rifle is 39 inches long and may be used as a measuring device.)

Should you discover a resting place, count the places on the ground and no matter what the number, add two and report that number. Should you be operating more conventionally, call in periodic tracking reports to your commando. These can be plotted on a map and a general pattern determined. It will also allow different terrorist groups to be plotted together to determine if this is some sort of coordinated action. It will also establish what routes are being used to funnel terrorist groups into and out of the country.

A sample of a tracking report might follow the following format. First give your location using the standard military grid system. The "N" is the number you believe to be in the enemy unit as determined by your print count. "D" is the general direction of spoor expressed by magnetic bearing. "A" is age of spoor, if possible, and "T" equals the type of spoor followed, boots, shoes, bare feet, etc.

Footprints are only one example of displacement. Displacement occurs when anything is moved from its original position. Other examples are foliage, moss, vines, sticks, or rocks that are

moved from their original places; dew droplets brushed from leaves; stones and sticks that are turned over and show a different color underneath; and grass or other vegetation that is bent or broken in the direction of movement.

Bits of cloth may be torn from a uniform and left on thorns, snags, or the ground, and dirt from boots may make marks on the ground.

Another example of displacement is the movement of wild animals and birds that are flushed from their habitats. You may hear the cries of birds that are excited by strange movements. The movement of tall grass or brush on a windless day indicates that something is moving the vegetation from its original position.

When you clear a trail by either breaking or cutting your way through heavy vegetation, you displace the vegetation. Displacement signs can be made while you stop to rest with heavy loads. The prints made by the equipment you carry can help to identify its type. When loads are set down at a rest halt or campsite, grass and twigs may be crushed. A sleeping man may also flatten the vegetation.

In most areas, there will be insects. Any changes in the normal life of these insects may be a sign that someone has recently passed through the area. Bees that are stirred up, holes that are covered by someone moving over them, or spider webs that are torn down are good clues.

If a person uses a stream to cover his trail, algae and water plants may be displaced in slippery footing or in places where he walks carelessly. Rocks may be displaced from their original position, or turned over to show a lighter or darker color on their opposite side. A person entering or leaving a stream may create slide marks, wet banks, or footprints, or he may scuff bark off roots or sticks. Normally, a person or animal will seek the path of least resistance. Therefore, when you search a stream for exit signs, look for open places on the banks or other places where it would be easy to leave the stream.

### **Spoor**

A good example of spoor is the mark left by blood from a wound. Bloodstains often will be in the form of drops left by a wounded terrorist. Blood signs are found on the ground and smeared on leaves or twigs.

You can determine the location of a wound on the terrorist being followed by studying the bloodstains. If the blood seems to be dripping steadily, it probably came from a wound on his trunk. A wound in the lungs will deposit bloodstains that are pink, bubbly, and frothy. A bloodstain deposited from a head wound will appear heavy, wet, and slimy, like gelatin. Abdominal wounds often mix blood with digestive juices so that the deposit will have an odor. The spoor will be light in color.

Spoor can also occur when a person walks over grass, stones, and shrubs with muddy boots. Thus, spoor and displacement together may give evidence of movement and indicate the direction taken. Crushed leaves may stain rocky ground that is too hard for footprints.

Roots, stones, and vines may be stained by crushed leaves or berries when walked on. Yellow stains in snow may be urine marks left by personnel in the area.

In some cases, it may be hard to determine the difference between spoor and displacement. Both terms can be applied to some signs. For example, water that has been muddied may indicate recent movement. The mud has been displaced and is staining the water. Stones in streams may be stained by mud from boots. Algae can be displaced from stones in streams and can stain other stones or bark.

Water in footprints in swampy ground may be muddy if the tracks are recent. In time, however, the mud will settle and the water will clear. The clarity of the water can be used to estimate the age of the prints. Normally, the mud will clear in one hour. This will vary with terrain.

### **Weathering**

Weather may either aid or hinder tracking. It affects signs in ways that help determine how old they are, but wind, snow, rain, and sunlight can also obliterate signs completely.

By studying the effects of weather on signs, you can determine the age of the sign. For example, when bloodstains are fresh, they may be bright red. Air and sunlight will change the appearance of blood first to a deep ruby-red color, and then to a dark brown crust when the moisture evaporates. Scuff marks on trees or bushes darken with time. Sap oozes from fresh cuts on trees but hardens when exposed to the air.

### **Footprints**

Footprints are greatly affected by weather. When a foot displaces soft, moist soil to form a print, the moisture holds the edges of the print intact and sharp. As sunlight and air dry the edges of the print, small particles that were held in place by the moisture fall into the print. If particles are just beginning to fall into a print, it is probably fresh. If the edges of the print are dried and crusty, the prints are probably at least an hour old. The effects of weather will vary with the terrain, so this information is furnished as a guide only.

A light rain may round out the edges of a print. Try to remember when the last rain occurred in order to put prints into the proper time frame. A heavy rain may erase all signs.

Wind also affects prints. Besides drying out a print the wind may blow litter, sticks, or leaves into it. Try to remember the wind activity in order to help determine the age of a print. For example, you may think, "It is calm now, but the wind blew hard an hour ago. These prints have litter blown into them, so they must be over an hour old." You must be sure, however, that the litter was blown into the prints, and was not crushed into them when the prints were made.

Trails leaving streams may appear to be weathered by rain because of water running into the footprints from wet clothing or equipment. This is particularly true if a group leaves a stream in a file. From this formation, each person drips water into the prints. A wet trail slowly fading into a dry trail indicates that the trail is fresh.

## **Wind, Sound, and Odors**

Wind affects sounds and odors. If the wind is blowing from the direction of a trail you are following, sounds and odors are carried to you. If the wind is blowing in the same direction as the trail you are following, you must be cautious as the wind will carry your sounds toward the terrorist group. To find the wind direction, drop a handful of dry dirt or grass from shoulder height.

To help you decide where a sound is coming from, cup your hands behind your ears and slowly turn. When the sound is loudest, you are probably facing its origin. When moving, try to keep the wind in your face.

## **Sun**

You must also consider the effects of the sun. It is hard to look or aim directly into the sun. If possible, keep the sun at your back.

## **Littering**

Poorly trained terrorist groups may leave trails of litter as they move. Gum or candy wrappers, ration cans, cigarette butts, remains of fires, or human feces are unmistakable signs of recent movement.

Weather affects litter. Rain may flatten or wash litter away, or turn paper into pulp. Winds may blow litter away from its original location. Ration cans exposed to weather will rust. Rust begins at the exposed edge where the cans were opened, then moves in toward the center. Use your memory to determine the age of litter. The last rain or strong wind can be the basis of a time frame.

## **Camouflage**

If a terrorist group knows that you are tracking them, they will probably use camouflage to conceal their movement and to slow and confuse you. Doing so, however, will slow them down. Walking backward, brushing out trails, and moving over rocky ground or through streams are examples of camouflage that can be used to confuse you.

The terrorist may move on hard surfaced, frequently traveled roads or try to merge with traveling civilians. Examine such routes with extreme care, because a well defined approach that leads to the enemy will probably be mined, ambushed, or covered by snipers.

The terrorist group may try to avoid leaving a trail. Its terrorists may wrap rags around their boots, or wear soft soled shoes to make the edges of their footprints rounder and less distinct. The party may exit a stream in a column or line to reduce the chance of leaving a well defined exit.

If the terrorist group walks backward to leave a confusing trail, the footprints will be deepened at the toe, and the soil will be scuffed or dragged in the direction of movement.

If a trail leads across rocky or hard ground, try to work around that ground to pick up the exit trail. This process works in streams as well. On rocky ground, moss or lichens growing on the stones could be displaced by even the most careful evader. If you lose the trail, return to the last visible sign. From there, head in the direction of the terrorists' movement. Move in ever widening circles until you find some signs to follow.

## **USE OF INTELLIGENCE**

When reporting, do not report your interpretations as facts. Report that you have seen signs of certain things, not that those things actually exist.

Report all information quickly. The term "immediate use intelligence" includes information of the terrorist that can be put to use at once to gain surprise, to keep the terrorist off balance, or to keep him from escaping an area. A commander has many sources of intelligence. He puts the information from those sources together to help determine where a terrorist is, what he may be planning, and where he may be going. Do what you are there to do- track.

Information you report gives your stick leader definite information on which he can act at once. For example, you may report that your stick leader is thirty minutes behind a terrorist group, that the group is moving north, and that it is now at a certain place. That gives your stick leader information on which he can act at once. He could then have you keep on tracking and move another stick to attack the terrorist group. If a spoor is found that has signs of recent terrorist activity, your stick leader can set up an ambush or have a regular army or police unit follow up.

## **TRACKER DOGS**

Tracker dogs may be used to help track a terrorist group. Tracker dogs are trained and used by their handlers. A dog tracks human scent and the scent of disturbed vegetation caused by man's passing.

Tracker dogs should be used with tracker sticks. The stick can track visually, and the dog and handler can follow. If the stick loses the signs, then the dog can take over. A dog can track faster than a man, and it can track at night.

A tracker dog is trained not to bark and give away the stick. It is also trained to avoid baits, cover odors, and deodorants used to throw it off the 'track. The tracker dog stick leader should let each trooper of the stick touch the dog to eliminate fears the trooper might have.

Scout dogs have limitations which should be borne in mind. Dogs have acute senses of smell, good hearing, and are attracted quickly to movement. Dogs are subject to periodic retraining and are as sensitive to the elements as humans.

The best position for the dog stick is directly in front of the patrol. Wind conditions may require that the stick move to windward to take advantage of the dog's sense of smell. Some dogs can, depending on weather and wind, sense the terrorist two hundred meters away.

The dog can be used to locate sentries and determine the extent of positions and emplacements, and may assist the stick leader in setting up his troopers without being detected by the terrorist group.

The following are some general rules for dog sticks:

1. If the handler is killed, leave the dog with him and report it to your HQ.
2. If the handler is a casualty, try to lure the dog away so you can treat him. If you must evacuate one, send the other as well.
3. Treat the stick as one of the unit. Support it and keep the handler informed of all tactical moves.
4. Let the handler select the dog's position in the line of march.
5. Seek the handler's advice in employing the stick.
6. Do not expect the tracker dog stick to perform miracles and do not relax your alertness because they are with you.
7. Do not feed or play with the dog.

### **Use of Tracker Dogs In Ambush Contacts**

A great many insurgents wounded in ambush get away. In many cases they escape by running into the undergrowth and lying low until the hue and cry has died down and they can crawl away. The employment of tracker groups will quite often lead to their capture or elimination.

Experience has shown that the blood trail left by wounded insurgents is not always an aid to a tracker dog and is sometimes more useful as a visual aid to the human tracker.

The tracker group should not form part of the ambush party, but should stand by at some convenient RV ready to move when shooting indicates that the ambush has been sprung.

Under certain circumstances, patrol dogs may form part of the ambush group. They may be most profitably employed where several alternative routes lead into the ambush position and it is not known which route the insurgents will take. It must be borne in mind, however, that their presence may give the ambush position away to the insurgents as they pant, make other noises, and are smelly. However, when used they will invariably be alert before any human being.

### **TRACKING**

Although the information in this chapter will not make you an ace tracker, it will give you a better awareness of tracking and the tactics employed by sticks.

The only way to become a competent, reliable tracker is to use the method of the natives: practice, practice, practice. It is a skill that can stand you in good stead on your next operation, enhance your combat effectiveness, and perhaps save your life.

Since terrorists in Africa operate in the same areas as the local population such as bush veldt areas in tribal trust lands, national parks, and game reserves, their pursuit requires abundant use of man's oldest skill: tracking. Man was first a hunter, gatherer, and tracker, having to approach game closely enough to kill it or to follow it when wounded, despite its superior speed and senses of sight, smell, and hearing.

### **Native Trackers**

Fortunately, Africa has an abundant supply of superb trackers among the African population, to whom game hunting is still important as a means of sustenance, though illegal. African whites include some of the finest hunters and trackers in the world, but their numbers are small, so the skills of native poachers have now become a national resource employed to combat terrorism.

It is soon realized that the number of trackers available to units of the army is usually inadequate as soon as commando sticks come on the scene, because of the greater demand for manpower. This manpower shortage causes many operations to fail due simply to insufficient or poor tracking. Most trackers come from the most primitive tribes, and their skill is often proportionate to their lack of education and dependence on subsistence agriculture.

Throughout Africa, in the areas still hunted, trackers and hunters are in great demand by professional hunters. They are often employed as farm labor solely to have their skills available when hunting season rolls around. Native trackers are also popular in the military and the police because of their stalwart martial tradition and almost arrogant martial spirit.

However, the supply of tribal trackers available to the army and police rarely equals the demand, because most of those possessing such skills are illiterate, and therefore unqualified for recruitment into the regular army or police units. Some were "too old" at fifty although lean as panthers and in the prime of their physical and mental faculties. Sooner or later, such a valuable, if primitive, resource has to be tapped and your commando unit should not pass up such an untapped reserve.

Although tracking is not taught to African recruits, if the candidate is a natural tracker, his tracking skills are joined to military tactics, and basic military training is given to assist his service when attached to regular units of the army or to commando units. Each qualified tracker is selected from applicants by putting him through various tests by master trackers, who use every subterfuge to foil his best efforts. First he tracks game and then humans, first with, and then without, boots on his "prey." The pseudo-terrorist employs such anti-tracking devices as walking backwards or on stones, both on land and across streams. Walking on stones in a riverbed and crossing some distance from one's original arrival point foils all but the top

trackers- but not the African unit tracker. Although top trackers may be temporarily slowed by such methods, they will eventually pick up the spoor.

### **Tracker Unit Précis**

The preamble to the tracker unit précis is worth repeating:

Civilian African Tracker Unit is a unit which has been formed primarily to promote and utilize more of the inherent tracking potential so abundant in our many African Lands. These men are unsophisticated and would normally not avail themselves for army conscription, but they are quite prepared to offer their services on a professional basis if along uncomplicated lines.

Generally speaking, the primitive African has a natural instinct for tracking and is either a born hunter or has spent most of his life herding and tracking down livestock. This instinct has, however, got to be motivated and then married to common military tactics, and it is with this aim in mind that this unit has carefully formulated ways and means of promoting this important auxiliary (commando unit) of the regular army forces. Having said this, it cannot be emphasized enough that you as the commando should both understand and appreciate the primitive, voluntary nature of his service when dealing with him, and it is essential that you do not overwhelm him with sophisticated military regimentation. Allow him to do his job. Don't bind in unless discipline is necessary. Be precise in where he stands. Let him "do the job" or you will find someone else.

The tracker retains civilian status during service but is required to complete terms of service unless found unsuitable when he is returned to base. Trackers are under full army regulations while on duty and carry an identity card. Trackers do not expect special food on service but if available his traditional diet is utilized. The men are drawn from various tribes, and full sticks (four men) are made up of one tribal stock to avoid friction. Such sticks are employed only in areas of different tribal stock than their own to insure their affiliation doesn't dampen their zeal. Such trackers work harder to insure defeat of terrorists of other tribal affiliation and will be more difficult to compromise by identification. At any stage extreme care must be maintained to avoid compromising identity since this would cause removal from duty and risk that the supreme price of being termed a "sellout" would be a fatal consequence.

### **Other Considerations**

Incentive bonuses are offered in addition to their normal high pay which must remain confidential. Bonuses are paid for confirmed terrorist (Charley Tango) kills as a direct result of tracker's follow-up and for outstanding performance, e.g., exceptional follow-up, in which, despite the tracker's skill, the exercise resulted in no CT kills, contact, or discovery of arms caches. Reports are filled out by the stick leader who assesses the tracker's performance at end of camp. These are analyzed by the unit commander and a payout is made on this basis according to government scale if a reward is officially offered.

Tracker sticks number from four at full strength, to four with a stick leader, and under him a second in command. No rank structure exists in the unit but the stick leader and his number two

are given corporal stripes. Trackers are normally used on three-day patrols to ensure that one stick of the team is at base at all times, rested, ready, and alert, so as to react instantly in emergencies. Since their main function is to follow and locate spoor, these men are not strongly trained or depended upon for combat or general soldiering, and once their efforts result in a contact they normally fade into the background. However, these men, during their service, have become outstanding fighting men in many cases, with outstanding successes during contacts with terrorist groups.

Two sticks of three trackers each can be used with one commando stick leader as controller attached to each section. In this case, one tracker follows spoor and the others flank him for his protection and to cut for lost spoor. Three groups of two trackers each can be used with two commando troopers attached to each section. One trooper is controller and the other assists in a flanking role.

These commando troops should be experienced, and so time in country with close knowledge of both the bush and the African, his language, and customs are important. This vitally necessary close communication keeps efficiency from being lost. In addition, the stick leader must stay with his sticks so the trackers get to know, respect, and understand him. Trackers are also not employed for guard duty or “shotgun riding” except in extreme emergencies. Trackers are sometimes used in the role of interrogator after capture of suspected mujibas or terrorists, but controllers must keep a good grip on them to prevent cruelty or heavy-handedness caused by tribal instincts. Keep the objective in the minds of all at all times. Do not digress into any cruelty at all or allow it. Trackers can also be used for clandestine purposes in tribal lands other than their own, if they volunteer and are given adequate protection from compromise and retribution.

Stick leaders must have the trackers’ full confidence and feel free to discuss problems with them, whether personal or military in nature, to preclude an information gap. Likewise, the stick leader should be aware of the primitive nature of his pseudo-terrorists or trackers and have their security and welfare first in his mind. He must ensure that backup is available when contact is made and that trackers must not be used as “feelers” or be allowed to wander off alone without support when a large 360-degree search is called for. Trackers quickly detect any falling back of protection units and this causes them to lose momentum on follow-ups. After a patrol, contact, or stand down, the stick leader checks all weapons for safety to avoid accidents or compromises.

During a contact, the stick leader keeps a close check on his troops so as to fade them out of the scene quickly. He ensures that trackers are not used as general fire and movement forces since their training is not intense in this area and it subjects them to more risks than necessary, both of which could cost valuable trackers or lost Charley Tangos.

Endurance tracking, consisting of as much as 50 clicks in two days, brings bonuses, as does ‘a foray into enemy territory or base camps. The tracker has an eye for camouflaged base camps, arms caches, etc., plus an ability to detect abnormal demeanor in locals which may indicate tension due to terrorist presence.

All of these are important, and when you find a tracker such as this, you and your stick must continually keep the trackers in good shape. Let the tracker know that your troops are behind him

and will not let any harm come to him. In turn, the tighter the bonds get, the better your own security will become in the African bush.

## **COUNTERTRACKING**

In addition to knowing how to track, you must know how to counter a terrorist tracker's efforts to track you.

1. While moving from close terrain to open terrain, walk past a big tree (30 cm in diameter or larger) toward the open area for three to five paces. Then walk backward to the forward side of the tree and make a 90-degree change of direction, passing the tree on its forward side. Step carefully and leave as little sign as possible. If this is not the direction that you want to go, change direction again about fifty meters away using the same technique. The purpose of this is to draw the terrorist tracker into the open area where it is harder for him to track. That also exposes him and causes him to search the wrong area.

2. When approaching a trail (about one hundred meters from it), change your direction of movement and approach it at a 45-degree angle. When arriving at the trail, move along it for about twenty to thirty meters. Leave several signs of your presence. Then walk backward along the trail to the point where you joined it. At that point, cross the trail and leave no sign of your leaving it. Then move about one hundred meters at an angle of 45 degrees, but this time on the other side of the trail and in the reverse of your approach. When changing direction back to your original line of march, the big tree technique is used to draw the enemy tracker along the easier trail. You have, by changing direction before reaching the trail, indicated that the trail is your new line of march.

3. To leave a false trail and to get an enemy tracker to look in the wrong direction, walk backward over soft ground. Continue this deception for about twenty to thirty meters or until you are on hard ground. Use this technique when leaving a stream. To further confuse the terrorist tracker, use this technique several times before actually leaving the stream.

4. When moving toward a stream, change direction about one hundred meters before reaching the stream and approach it at a 45-degree angle. Enter the stream and proceed down it for at least twenty to thirty meters. Then move back upstream and leave the stream in your initial direction. Changing direction before entering the stream may confuse the terrorist tracker. When he enters the stream, he should follow the false trail until the trail is lost. That will put him well away from you.

5. When your direction of movement parallels a stream, use the stream to deceive a terrorist tracker. Some tactics that will help elude a tracker are as follows:

- Stay in the stream for one hundred to two hundred meters.
- Stay in the center of the stream and in deep water.

- Watch for rocks or roots near the banks that are not covered with moss or vegetation and leave the stream at that point.

- Walk out backward on soft ground.

- Walk up a small, vegetation covered tributary and exit from it.

6. When being tracked by a terrorist group, the best bet is to either try to outdistance it or to double back and ambush the group.

*(END)*