

EXERCISE TO BE CONCURRENT WITH 'AIR ASSAULT II'

'Cherokee Trail' Maneuver Slated

North Carolina's Uwharrie National Forest and its environs will again be the scene of the U. S. Army Special Warfare School's October 4 through 15, it has been announced at Fort Bragg. The training exercise, dubbed Cherokee Trail IV, will be the ninth in the school's series of guerrilla-counterinsurgency maneuvers and the fourth to be held in the Uwharrie area.

The maneuver area, as in former exercises, includes the northwestern corner and the western third of Moore County. Heretofore maneuver activity has been confined, in Moore County, to near the north and west boundaries, in the Eagle Springs and other nearby areas. The bulk of the area is in Montgomery, Randolph and Richmond Counties.

The October maneuver will essentially be unchanged from its predecessors. The Cherokee Trail exercises are "controlled maneuvers" with neither side winning or losing. They are designed specifically to test proficiency of Special Warfare School students and culminate their 12-week course of instruction in one of the three phases of special warfare-counterinsurgency, psychological operations and unconventional (guerrilla) warfare. As a by-product, valuable training in special warfare is afforded conventional Army units which take part.

Mythical Republic

The scenario of Cherokee Trail places the action in the mythical republic of Pineland, where a political malcontent, David Paton, is attempting to overthrow the nation's legitimate government with the assistance of the neighboring country of Satilla. When Paton's guerrillas, advised by Satillan Special Forces troops, step up insurgent activities in Pineland, that nation asks for and receives the military assistance of the United States.

Against this background, the Cherokee Trail IV war will be

waged. A chief difference from previous maneuvers will be the participation of troops from installations other than Fort Bragg. In the past, non-student participants have been from the 82nd Airborne Division, the 5th Logistical Command, XVIII Airborne Corps Artillery and Special Forces groups at the U. S. Army John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare.

Playing the part of the loyalist Pineland Army in the coming exercise, however, will be elements of the 2nd Infantry Division from Ft. Benning, Ga. Guerrilla forces will be supplied by the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky.

Once more, air support will be provided by the Special Air Warfare Center, Elgin AFB, Fla., and aviation elements of the Kennedy Center. Acting as advisors to both sides in the maneuvers will be members of the 6th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Bragg. Some 2,800 troops will be involved.

The men of the 2nd Division will be no strangers to the maneuver area since they recently completed a preparatory exercise, Highland Fox, there.

'Air Assault II', Also

Cherokee Trail IV will be conducted concurrently with, but independently from, Exercise Air Assault II, a test of the Army's air mobility concept being held in the same area from September 20 to November 15. The more extensive Air Assault II will take place in North and South Carolina and Georgia and includes the Cherokee Trail area. Activity in the Uwharries will be scheduled however, so that the two elements will not interfere with each other.

As in past school exercises, civilian residents will play an important part in lending to realism. Citizens will be called on to choose sides and support one of the opposing forces. Again, civic action will be practiced to a great extent by Pineland forces, who have assisted maneuver area communities in the past by building and renovating playgrounds and parks and giving military demonstrations.

Special Warfare School students will perform the actual jobs

they are being trained for here. Those in counterinsurgency will act as advisors to the Pineland forces, while their guerrilla counterparts will be students of the Special Forces Officers Course of the school's Unconventional Warfare Department. Psychological operations students will perform propaganda functions on both sides. Some 235 US officer students and 47 allied foreign officers will take part.

Heavier Traffic

Roads and highways in the military maneuver areas of North and South Carolina can be expected to have heavier than normal traffic from now until the middle of November during exercise Air Assault II, according to Army spokesman at Exercise Director Headquarters now at Fort Jackson, S. C.

Most of the increase in military traffic in this area will be caused by the vehicles of the 82nd Airborne Division under Maj. Gen. Robert H. York operating out of North Carolina as "aggressors" for the exercise.

Caution should be exercised while driving on all roads north from Columbia to Monroe and Albemarle, N. C. Motorists will meet military vehicles on US Routes 1, 21, and 321; South Carolina highways 12 and 262; and North Carolina highways 24, 27, and 200.

All roads heading southwest from the vicinity of Fort Bragg, the support base for the 82nd Airborne Division, also will have more military traffic than usual. Particular care should be exercised while driving US Routes 1, 15, 401, and 501; North Carolina highways 38, 79, and 211; and State highway 177 in South Carolina.

The Pee Dee River will be a focal area for the operations which will cover some 4.5 million acres of privately-owned land. Army vehicles will be moving on all roads inside the area bounded by Albemarle, Fort Bragg, Darlington, S. C. and Columbia, S. C.

Traffic control points have been set up by the Army in Cheraw, S. C. and Wadesboro, to handle any problems that may arise. Civilian motorists are asked to be especially watchful in the vicinity of Wadesboro, where support and administrative elements of the exercise are stationed.



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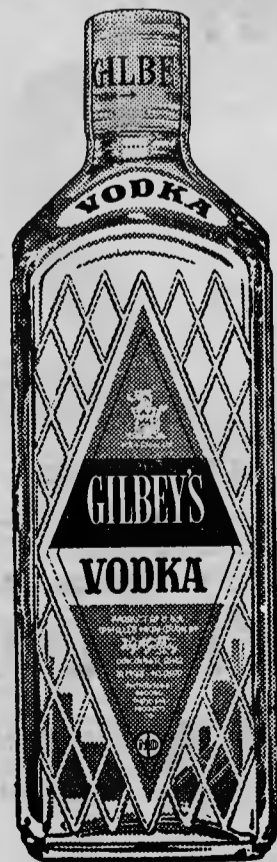
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