

present scale allotted to the battalion should suffice. It would also avoid the need of the Reserve Motor Transport Companies R.A.S.C. for troop-carrying purposes. These can move only a third of the divisional infantry at a time, and their lorries may have to be diverted to carrying supplies. Trucks are much handier than lorries, less likely to attract the attention of enemy aircraft, and less of a target from the ground. Using trucks it is practicable to bring troops closer to the fighting line than in lorries or motor-coaches, and to move them about close behind it, so long as they are distributed in small packets. "Bus columns" are only suitable for long-distance moves ending well behind the front; they are best reserved for strategic troop-carrying.

But all troop-moves, in unarmoured vehicles, need to be better protected against ambush or mobile attack than they have often been in exercises this year. Light tanks fulfil the purpose, but to provide them for it in large numbers is expensive, while in small numbers they may not be able to cover sufficient width of front, besides being more easily put out of action by anti-tank guns that may be lying in wait. As a substitute, or supplement, the introduction of motor-cyclist troops might well be considered. A screen so composed, advancing by as many roads as possible, would form a modern application to the approach march of the swarm of skirmishers which preceded the Napoleonic columns in the attack. And by its capacity, through wide distribution, of exploring the largest number of lines of advance simultaneously, it would also be of promise towards solving the problem of gaining ground quickly, and avoiding delays in the general advance, in face of the enemy's covering forces.

OPPORTUNISM

In a previous article, in *The Times* of September 10, I suggested that, dim as were the prospects of the tactical offensive, there were still possibilities for the strategic offensive so long as the enemy was not met in a prepared and continuous position. But these possibilities appear to depend on the simultaneous probing of any resistance at as many points as possible, and on the rapidity with which flank leverage, external and internal, is exerted. Preconceived manoeuvres and concentrations of force are out of date. Opportunism offers the only chance, and is the only realistic basis of plans. The need to-day is to turn opportunism into a system. By applying to the strategic advance the "expanding torrent" method developed for infantry tactics just after the War, the use of reserves becomes semi-automatic, each grade of commander moving his reserves in the wake of which of his forward sub-units is making the best progress. The normal practice of holding one's reserves back until a weak spot is found and reported may well mean that it has become a strong spot by reinforcement during the interval before the reserves can arrive. For mobile operations the risks of pushing too far and of committing reserves prematurely are minor compared with the cumulative risks of delay.

"Opportunism as a system" requires that every force should move in a semi-deployed formation on the widest possible front. The objection is commonly made that to move in such a way is slower and more tiring than in big columns along main roads. This is highly questionable nowadays, since the development of air attack brings a constant danger of delay, at the least, to columns which form a large target. The bigger the column, the bigger the jam. For security of advance under the threat of air interference, as well as for the chance of surprise, it is advantageous to move in a state of dispersion from the moment the force comes within range of air attack; and this now extends far beyond the fighting lines.

The development of motorized movement also provides new tactical grounds for a "permanent" state of semi-deployment, to be adopted from the outset in any advance. Last century it was not safe to reckon on an isolated detachment being