

APPENDIX G

How To Attack And Clear Buildings

This appendix provides "how to" guidance for:

- The conduct of the attack in built-up areas.
- The clearance of defended buildings

HOW TO ATTACK IN BUILT-UP AREAS

This section provides examples of how the battle is conducted in various types of built-up areas. These illustrative actions are based on application of tactical fundamentals.

Because the commander is driven by the requirement to maintain momentum, he must retain the initiative. Upon gaining enemy contact he maintains that contact and provides additional security, if required, while aggressively seeking the enemy's weakness, whatever it may be. He rapidly initiates several actions simultaneously. He directs suppressive fires to neutralize the enemy's ability to react and provide mutual support; he concentrates forces to overwhelm the enemy at a selected spot; and he commits them in fire and maneuver to assault the enemy.

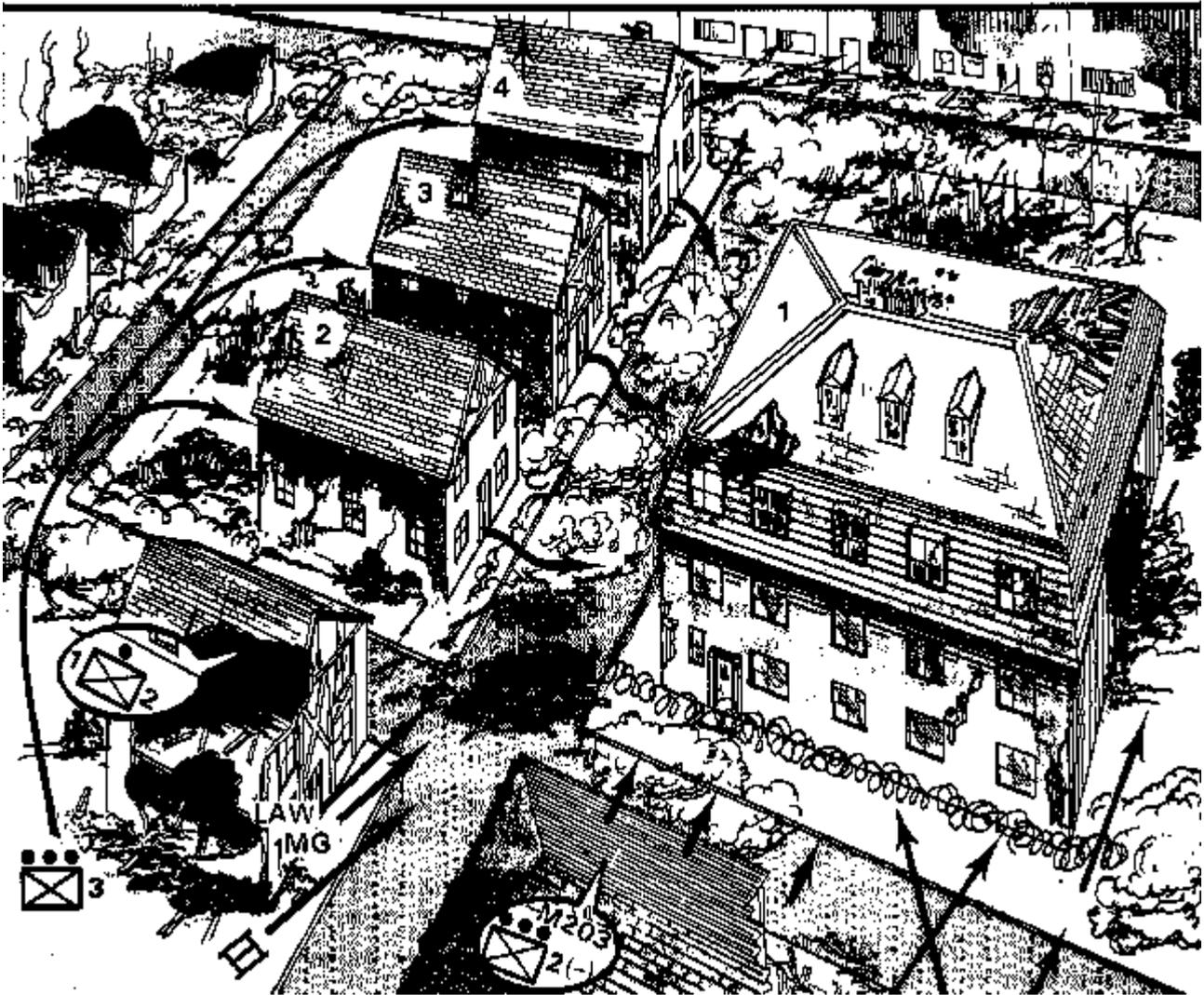
The following combat vignettes are provided:

- Commitment of a company team to seize a strongpoint.
- Reduction of an enemy strongpoint in Type A area.
- Company team attack in Type D area.
- Infantry platoon attack in Type C area.
- Airmobile assault of a tall apartment building in Type D area.

COMMITMENT OF A COMPANY TEAM TO SEIZE A STRONGPOINT

The 1st Platoon leader reported to his team commander that his platoon has been stopped by heavy fires from apartment building 1 (illustration on following page). The platoon leader has requested indirect fires and engaged the enemy position with fires from an attached tank. However, he is unable to bypass. The team commander directed the platoon leader to provide a base of fire for the employment of the 3d Platoon on the flank. The 3d Platoon moved to the vicinity of buildings 2, 3, and 4 and prepared to assault the enemy strongpoint. After achieving fire superiority from supporting weapons, the 3d Platoon attacked and cleared the enemy strongpoint. See the latter part of this appendix for clearance of buildings.

Seizing a Strongpoint



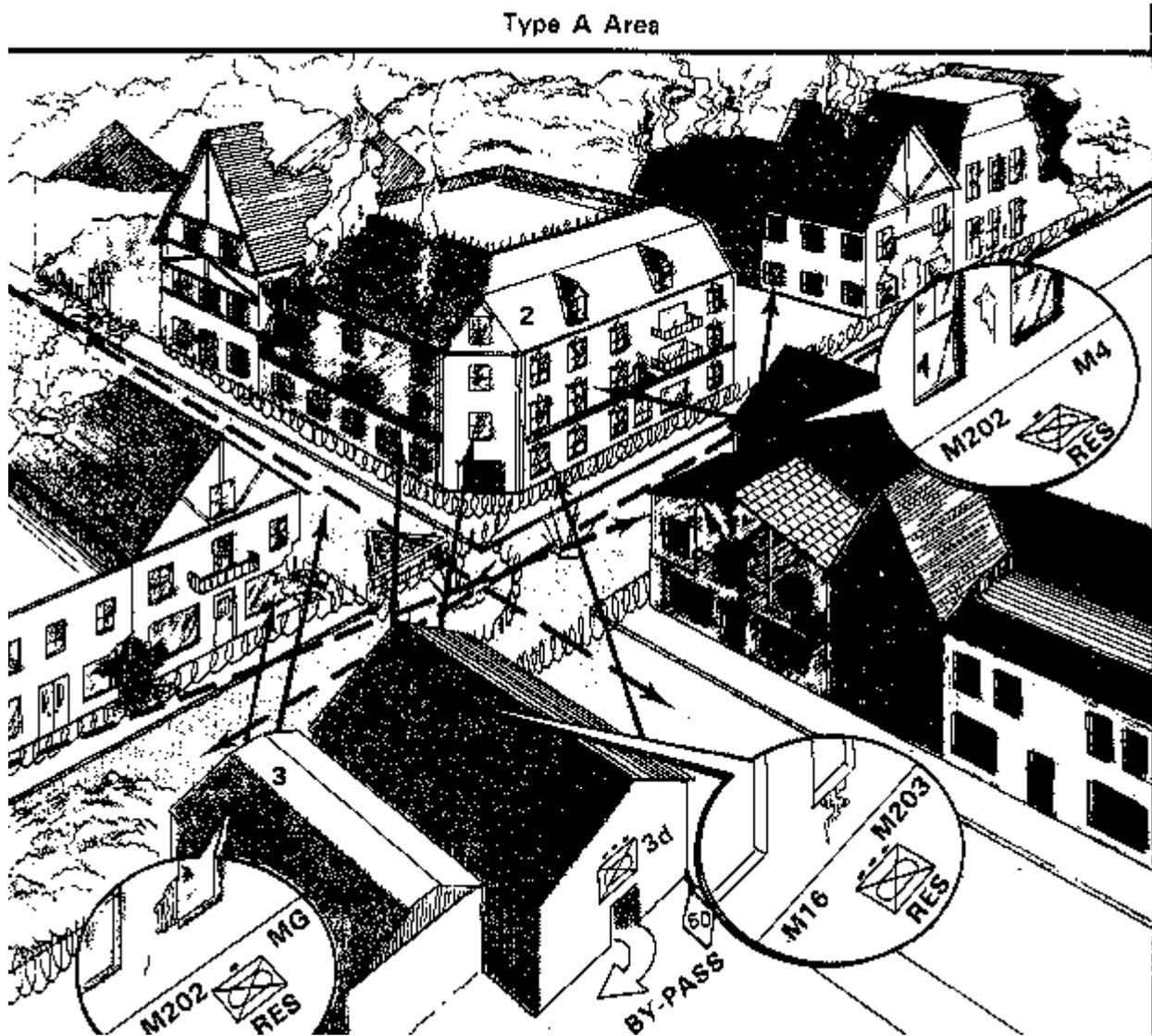
[Figure G-2](#). Seizing a Strongpoint

The following summarizes the actions taken in this situation. Remember, after securing an enemy strongpoint, immediately prepare for a counterattack.

- 1st Platoon provided overwatching fires.
- Strongpoint was isolated by indirect/direct fires.
- All weapons were employed to suppress defensive fires.
- Smoke was used to conceal movement across streets.
- Defeated enemy position was immediately prepared to repel possible counterattack.

REDUCTION OF ENEMY STRONGPOINT IN AREA A

In this situation, the 3d Platoon has been stopped by an enemy-prepared position in building 2 (illustration opposite). It appears that the enemy strongpoint has mutual support from adjacent buildings along the entire block. This area is a high fire hazard area. The company commander employed machinegun tracers and white



[Figure G-3](#). Type A Area

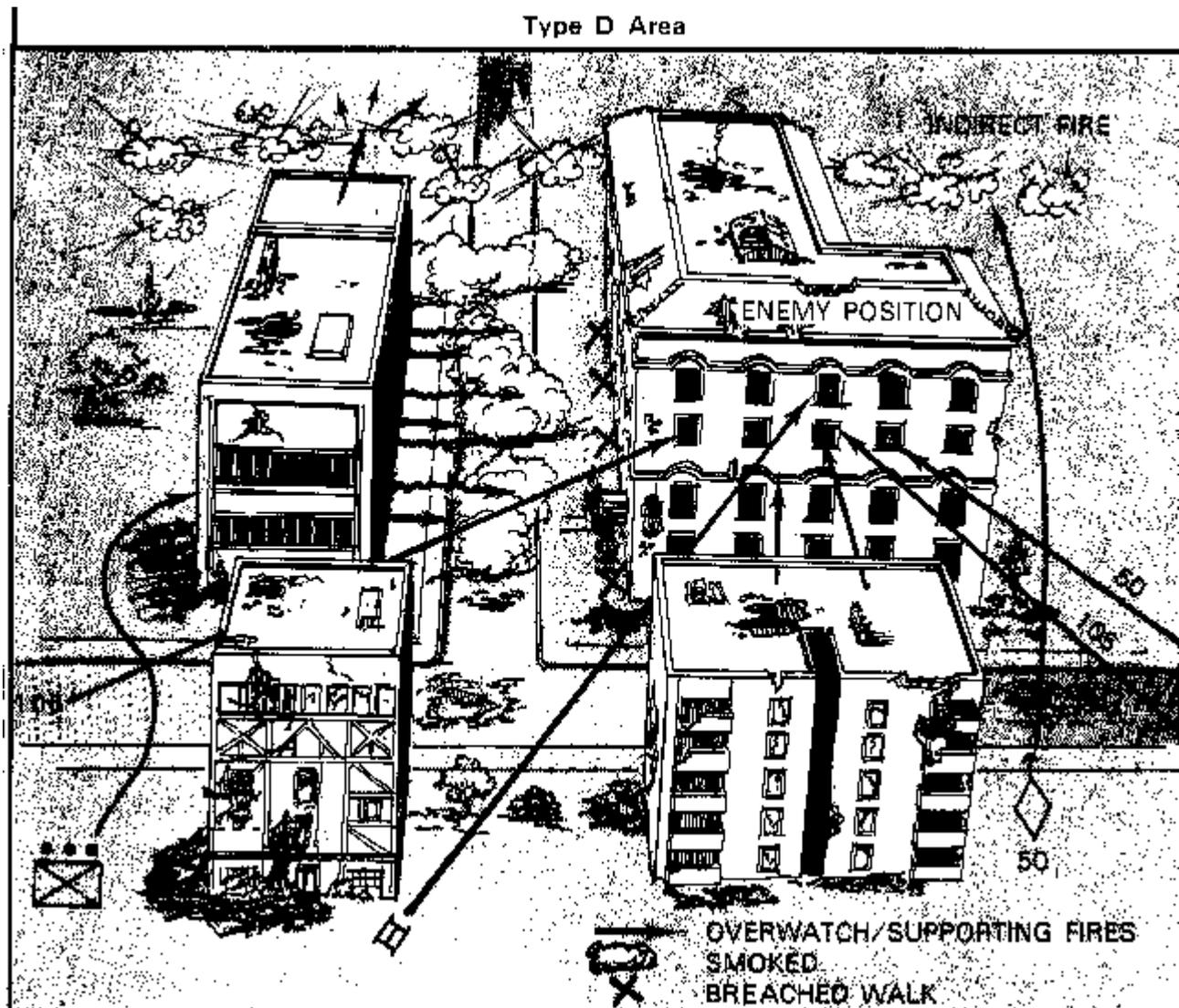
phosphorous mortar fires onto rooftops. Multiple purpose flame weapons (M-202) were employed from buildings 3, 4, and 5. Other indirect fires and automatic weapons continued to suppress the strongpoint. The company commander assigned his reserve the mission of containing the enemy position while the team (-) bypassed and continued the attack.

Combat actions are summarized as follows:

- 3d Platoon maintained pressure until reserve arrived.
- Enemy strongpoint was reduced by fires.
- Tracers, WP, and flame weapons were employed.
- Reserved contained--while 3d Platoon bypassed and continued the attack.
- Excessive casualties were avoided by not assaulting this well-prepared position.

Team A, reinforced with a tank platoon, is attacking an enemy strongpoint organized within the apartment building. The objective has been isolated by indirect fires to the rear and by small arms fire on both flanks. Movement in this area is covered by overwatching fires and/or concealed by smoke. Combat engineers, accompanied by the 3d Platoon, were able to place a breaching explosive as indicated in the figure. After breaching the walls in four places, the 3d Platoon cleared the strongpoint. The actions in this situation are summarized as follows:

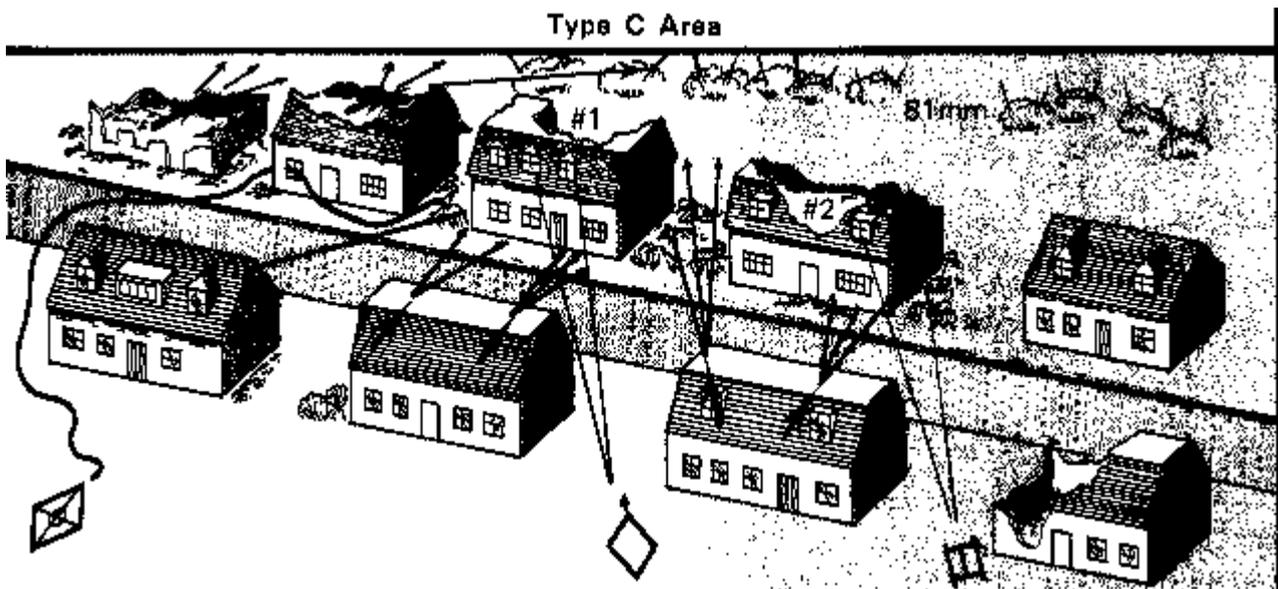
- Strongpoint was isolated by mortar and artillery fires.
- All movement was concealed by smoke.
- Overwatching weapons suppressed enemy gunners.
- Assaulting forces used cover as much as possible while moving.



[Figure G-4](#). Type D Area

INFANTRY PLATOON ATTACK IN TYPE C AREA

The 3d Platoon has encountered two family dwellings lightly defended as indicated below. The platoon leader employed the 1st and 2d squads to support and overwatch the 3d squad's assault on building #1. The platoon leader supported the assault with automatic weapons fire, multiple purpose flame weapons (M-202), and LAWs. Organic team mortars were used to isolate the area from reinforcement or withdrawal, to collapse roofs, start fires, and to provide smoke to conceal fire and maneuver within the platoon.



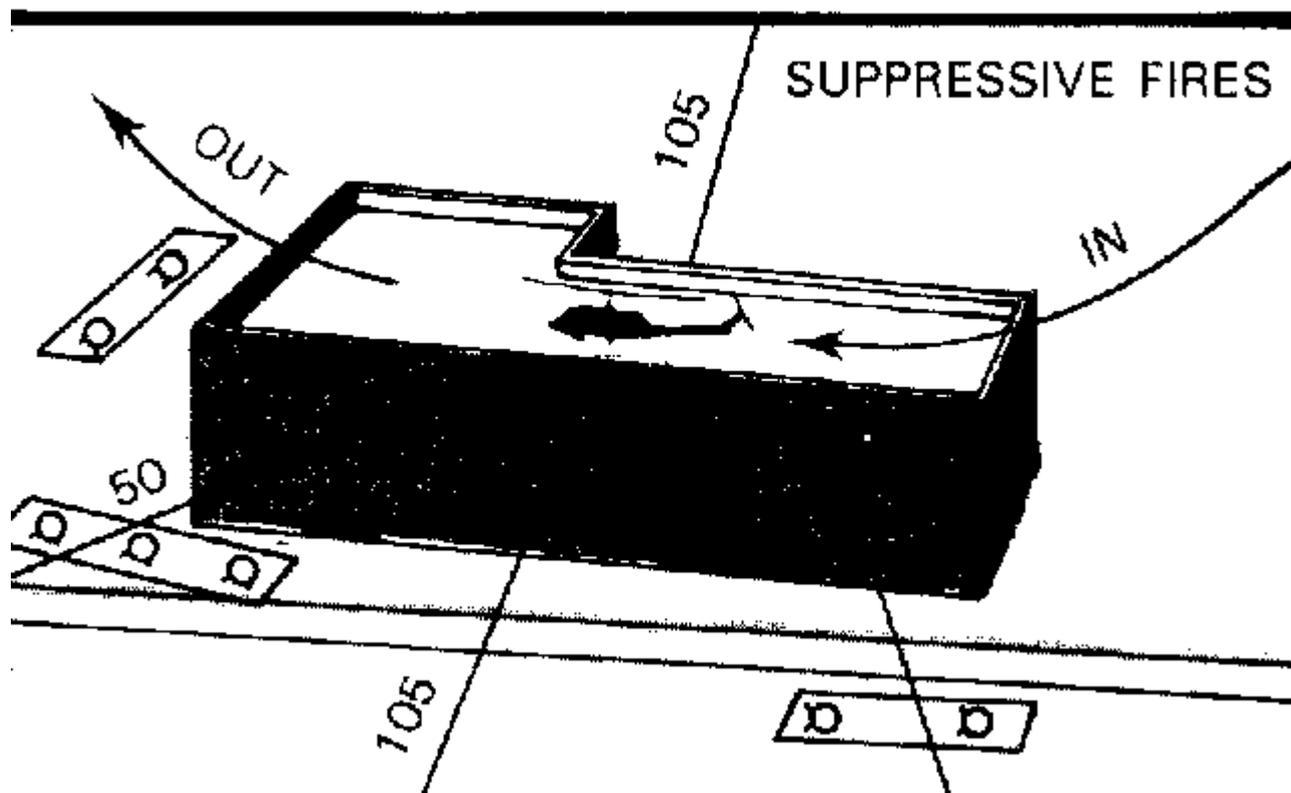
[Figure G-5a](#) Type C Area

AIRMOBILE ASSAULT OF A TALL APARTMENT BUILDING

In this situation, Team A has isolated the objective and was able to suppress anti-aircraft fires within the immediate area. Brigade is coordinating anti-aircraft suppression along corridors leading into this building. Enemy ground fires within the objective are suppressed with all available fires. The open area around the building would make a ground assault too costly. The commander employed the 3d Platoon, by squad, from a secure pickup point to the apartment building rooftop by helicopter. The 3d Platoon cleared the building from the top, down. The helicopter flew in and out of the objective area over known safe corridors. Summary of actions:

- Enemy ADA and small arms fires must be suppressed.
- Never use same air route more than once.
- Pick up in secure area.
- Know strength of roof.

Airmobile Assault



[Figure G-5b](#) Airmobile Assault

HOW TO ATTACK AND CLEAR DEFENDED BUILDINGS

Regardless of a structure's physical characteristics or type urban area, there are four interrelated requirements for attacking and clearing a defended building. They are:

- * Fire support.
- * Assault.
- * Movement.
- * Reorganization.

Proper application and integration of these requirements reduce casualties and hasten accomplishment of the mission. The degree of application of some requirements is determined by the type building to be attacked and by the nature of adjacent urban terrain. For example, numerous open spaces in Type D and E areas require increased fire support to suppress/obscure enemy gunners while infantry units move across open terrain. Conversely, in Type A and B areas numerous covered routes will decrease fire support requirements.

FIRE SUPPORT

Fire support and other assistance to enhance the advance of the assault force are provided by an overwatch force. This assistance includes:

- * Suppressing/obscuring enemy gunners within objective building(s) and adjacent structures.
- * Isolating the objective building(s) with indirect/direct fires to prevent enemy withdrawal, reinforcement, or counterattack.
- * Breaching walls en route to and in the objective structure.
- * Destroying enemy positions with direct-fire weapons.
- * Securing cleared portions of the objective.
- * Providing replacements for the assault force.
- * Providing resupply of ammunition and explosives.
- * Evacuation of casualties and prisoners.

The size of the overwatch force is determined by:

- * Type and size of objective building(s).
- * Adjacent terrain--open or covered approaches.
- * Organization and strength of enemy defenses--what firepower is required to suppress/obscure enemy gunners.

Depending on the situation, the overwatch force may consist of only one infantry fire team, with M-60 machineguns, grenade launchers, and M202 multishot flame weapons, to support another fire team's assault. In situations involving a larger assault force, a platoon or company, reinforced with tanks, engineers, and self-propelled artillery, may be required to support movement and assault by an adjacent platoon or company. Upon seizure of objective buildings, the assault force reorganizes and may be required to provide overwatching fires for the displacement or assault by the overwatching force.

Technique of Fire

Each weapon is assigned a target or area to cover. Individual small arms place fires on likely enemy weapon positions--loopholes, windows, roof areas. Snipers are best employed in placing accurate fire through loopholes or engaging long-range targets. M203s and M202s direct their fires through windows or loopholes.

LAWs are employed to penetrate walls constructed of light material, barricades, and window

barriers on the ground level of structures. Tank main guns engage first-floor targets and breach walls for attacking infantry. Tank machineguns engage suspected positions on upper floors and in adjacent structures. In addition to destroying or weakening structures, tank main gun projectiles create casualties by hurling debris throughout the interior of structures.

Artillery and mortars use delayed action fuzes on rooftops to cause casualties among defenders within the structure by high-explosive, shrapnel, and falling debris effects.

MOVEMENT

The assault force (squad-platoon-company) minimizes enemy defensive fires during movement by:

- Using covered routes:
 - Through underground structures.
 - Through or behind secured buildings.
 - Through streets (rubble, vehicles, etc.).
- Moving only after defensive fires have been suppressed or obscured.
- Moving at night or during other periods of reduced visibility.
- Selecting routes that will not mask friendly suppressive fires.
- Crossing open areas (streets, space between buildings) rapidly under the concealment of smoke and suppressive fires provided by overwatching forces.
- Moving on rooftops that are not covered by enemy direct fires.

In lightly defended areas, the requirement for speed may dictate moving through the streets and alleys without first clearing all buildings. Under these circumstances, the maneuver element should employ tanks, if available, to lead the column, closely followed and supported by infantry. If the infantry is mechanized, it should remain mounted until forced to dismount. It should remount to cross open areas. When dismounted, rifle elements move along each side of the street with leading squads keeping approximately abreast of the lead tanks. When not accompanied by tanks, rifle elements move in single file along one side of the street under cover of fires from supporting weapons. They are well dispersed and move quickly. Each man in the leading element is detailed to observe and cover a certain area, such as second-floor windows on the opposite side of the street.

Individual movement techniques are contained in TC 7-1, Rifle Squads.

ASSAULT

The assault force, regardless of size, attempts to close on the flank(s) or rear of an objective building. If the building is located on a street with numerous adjacent buildings under enemy control and an envelopment is not feasible, a frontal attack is required. Alternatively, the assault force can initially clear nearby buildings and then attack the final objective simultaneously from the front and flanks.

In the following example, the assault force has been organized into two teams; each team is

assigned an entry point on the ground floor. Preferably, entry is gained through walls breached by explosives or gun fire. Assault teams avoid windows and doors as entry points because they are usually covered by fire or boobytrapped.

Immediately prior to the assault, suppressive fires are increased on the objective and continue until masked by advancing forces. Once masked, such fires are shifted to upper windows and continue until assault forces have entered the building. At this time, supporting fires are shifted to adjacent buildings to prevent enemy withdrawal or reinforcement.

Assault teams close on the building rapidly; however, prior to entry through a breached wall, window, or smashed door, a handgrenade is thrown inside. Immediately after the explosion, assault teams enter and spray the interior with automatic fire.

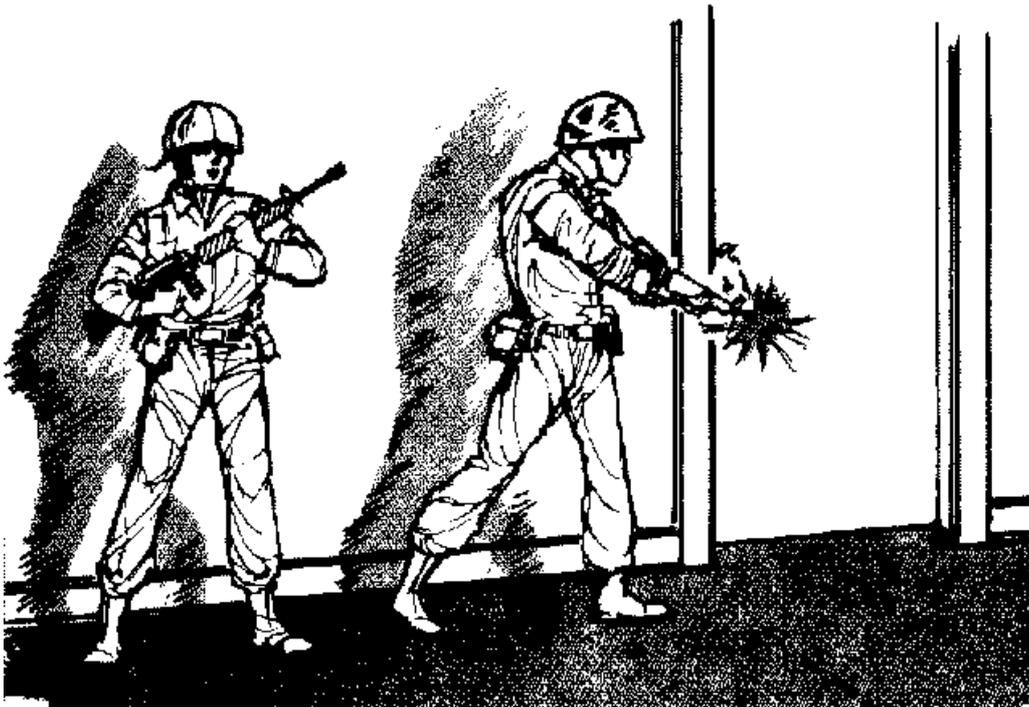
Once inside the building, the first task is to cover with automatic weapons the staircase(s) leading to upper floors and the basement; and, secondly, to seize rooms that overlook approaches to the building. These actions are required to isolate enemy forces within the building and to prevent reinforcement from the outside. Previously designated teams clear each ground floor room and then the basement.

Room Clearance

A searching team (two-man minimum) is assigned to clear one or more rooms. When entering a room avoid using door handles. Knock the door open with automatic-fire and throw a handgrenade into the room. After detonation, one man quickly enters, sprays the room with automatic fire, and takes up a position where he can observe the entire room. At this time, a second man enters and conducts a systematic search.

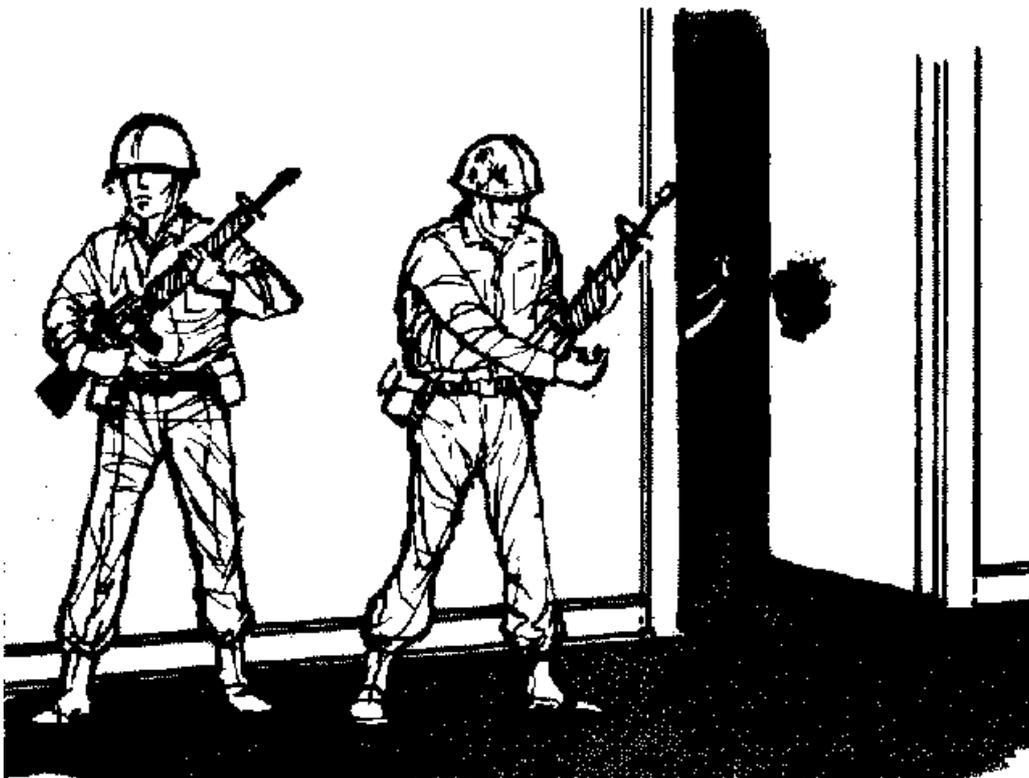
Avoid clearing each room in a repetitive manner. For example, as shown, rooms 1 and 5 were cleared as previously described. Rooms 2 and 3 were cleared by blasting a hole through the wall, throwing in a grenade, entering the room, and conducting a search, as previously described.

1. Shoot Door Open.



[Figure G-8a](#) Shoot Door Open

2. Toss Grenade.

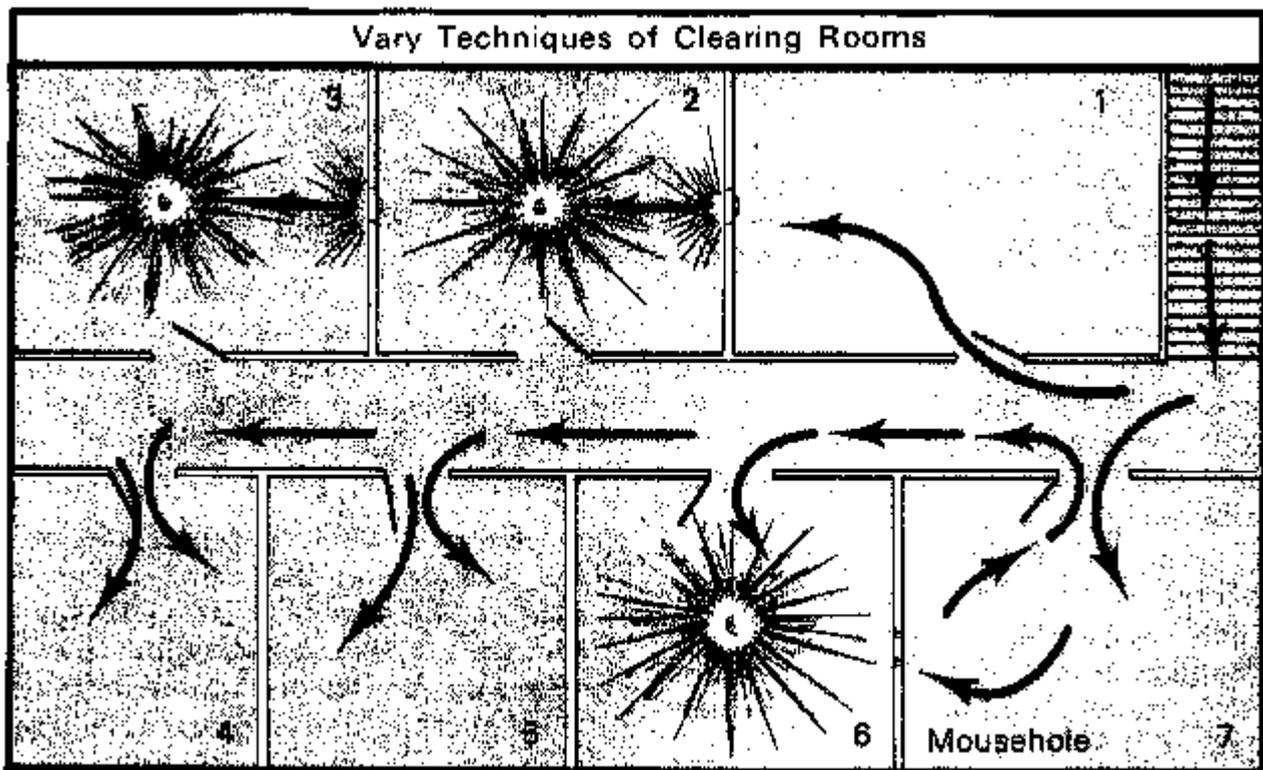


[Figure G-8b](#) Toss Grenade

3. Enter Firing and Search Room.



[Figure G-8c](#) Enter Firing and Search Room



[Figure G-9a](#) Vary Techniques of Clearing Room

In room 7, an enemy "mousehole" between rooms 6 and 7 was discovered behind a sofa. A grenade was thrown in the mousehole; room 6 was then entered through the door and searched. Room 4 was entered by firing through the door, throwing grenade, and then searching. As rooms are cleared, doors are left open, and a predetermined mark (chalk, tape, aerosol spray) is placed on the door jamb or over the door.

Basement

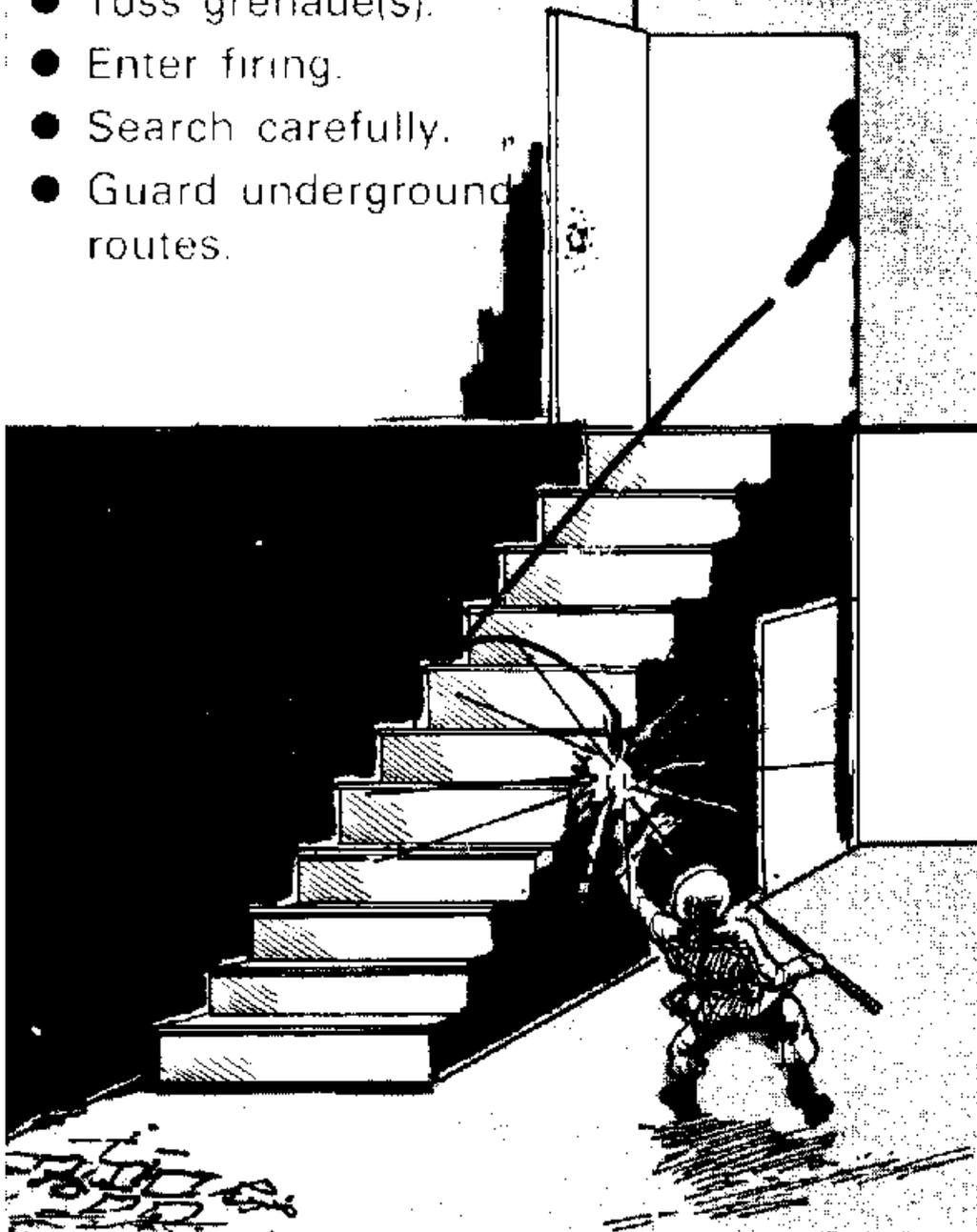
If there is a basement, it should be cleared as soon as possible, preferably concurrent with clearance of the ground floor.

Securing Upper Floors

Frequently, stairways will be blocked with barbed wire and boobytrapped. Stairs are usually covered by enemy fires, and entry into the stairwell can easily be denied by defenders throwing grenades into the stairwell. Avoid stairways whenever possible. Select room(s) that have ceilings intact and place an explosive charge against the ceiling. The resultant explosion should kill or stun defenders and provide uncontested access to the next floor. After securing an initial foothold, the remainder of the floor is cleared.

Clear Basement

- Fire through door.
- Toss grenade(s).
- Enter firing.
- Search carefully.
- Guard underground routes.



[Figure G-9b](#) Clear Basement

Occasionally, buildings can be cleared from top to bottom. In block type construction (Area B), assault forces may outflank an enemy position by seizing an adjoining structure, breaching through the walls in upper stories, and clearing downward, floor by floor. Stairs are guarded by friendly security elements, but not used. Entrance to lower floors is gained by breaching the floor/ceiling with explosives and/or using lowering rope to enter the lower floor. Enemy mouseholes to lower floors are used only after a grenade has been dropped into the lower room. After detonation, a search team enters and clears the room.

In situations where assault forces are masked from enemy fires, access to the top floor or middle floor may be gained by using fire escapes, downspouts, grappling ropes, or ladders. If a middle floor is reached, assault teams clear that floor first, then upper floors, and finally lower floors.

Where to enter a specific building is one of the critical decisions for platoon and squad leaders. The normal rule of thumb is to enter at the highest level possible to minimize the amount of upstairs fighting and to avoid enemy heavy-weapons positions, which will usually be located on lower levels.

Other considerations which will affect the decision on the point of entry are the availability of access means to upper stories and the cover and concealment in the area. Often a squad or platoon leader will have to evaluate the relative risks of scaling the side of a building or clearing upward from the ground floor. Clearing from the bottom up may be the most frequent method in isolated, detached construction.

REORGANIZATION

In a captured building, reorganization of the assault force to repel enemy counterattacks must be rapid. After securing a floor (bottom, middle, or top floor), selected members of the assault force will be assigned to cover potential enemy counterattack routes to the building. These sentinels alert the remainder of the assault force to approaching enemy forces and place a heavy volume of fire on the enemy. These riflemen cover/guard:

- Enemy mouseholes connecting adjacent buildings.
- Covered routes to the building.
- Underground routes into the basement.
- Approaches over adjoining roofs.

As the other members of the assault force complete search requirements, they are assigned defensive positions. After the building has been completely cleared, the following actions are taken during reorganization:

- Replenish and/or redistribute ammunition.
- Mark building to indicate to friendly forces that the building has been cleared.
- Cover advance of overwatch force or assume overwatch mission and support assault on another building.
- Treat and evacuate wounded.
- If the building is to be occupied for any period of time, start development of a defensive position ([appendix C](#)).

Assault Fundamentals

The following fundamentals are to be considered when assaulting buildings:

- Each soldier must know his responsibilities and his role in the overwatch or assault force.
- Close and continuous coordination is required between the overwatching and assaulting forces.
- Each assault member must know his entrance point into the objective building.
- When conducting the initial entrance into a building, avoid using doors and windows. Use explosives or shell holes to gain entry.
- Make intelligent use of cover.

Avoid windows, door, and hallways. Streets and open space between buildings are killing zones--use suppressive fires, cover, and smoke when moving through these areas.

Use buildings adjacent to the objective to mask enemy fires in the final assault.

- Grenades.

Avoid, unless absolutely necessary, throwing grenades at upper windows or upstairs; they may bounce back.

Use grenades before entering the building, basement, and all rooms.

Vigorously throw grenades into rooms so they carom about, denying the enemy an opportunity to throw them back.

- Use automatic fire when entering and clearing a room.
- Do not open doors by hand or attempt to kick them open. Shoot the door open by firing several rounds through the lock or blow the door in with explosives.
- In buildings with lightly constructed interior walls/floors use M16 and M60 fires to clear rooms by firing through walls, ceilings, and floors. M60 machineguns with their heavier bullet are very effective in this role.
- Avoid set patterns of clearing; vary entry methods from room to room and floor to floor.
- Boobytraps.

Be constantly alert for them in doors, windows, halls, stairs, and concealed in furniture.

Do not attempt to deactivate them; mark for later disarming by trained engineers.

Use previously cleared routes where possible.

If the boobytrap must be removed by untrained personnel, evacuate building; destroy in place with explosives, re-clear the building.

- Assault and room-clearing teams should consist of at least two soldiers.
 - Avoid initial entry of building through middle floors; clear up or down; keep the procedure simple.
 - Reorganize assault teams for defense of captured buildings immediately.
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