

Ambush in the Square

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Situation

You are the leader of 1st Squad, India Company. Your platoon is conducting a security patrol through a suburban area of Old Town as part of counterinsurgency operations. (See existing Rules of Engagement.) Usually an entire patrol will pass without incident, but on a few occasions Marines have made contact with insurgency forces of up to 20 urban guerrillas armed with automatic rifles, rifle grenades, and explosives.

It is morning; the sun is not yet above the roofline to the east. Families are starting to stir, and the air is heavy with the smell of cooking. Some of the locals greet you with a nod as you pass. Your squad is the point of the platoon patrol column, moving north along a main street. The buildings are plaster and stone. Most are one story; some are two. You come upon a square opening to your right. In the center of the square is a stone fountain. A few early vendors have already opened their stalls, but the square is generally quiet.

You and the platoon commander study the square for a few minutes. It seems clear, and he instructs you to move out. You move north across the west side of the square, staying close to the colonnaded facades in case you need cover. You have exited the north side of the square and are continuing on when you hear a loud explosion to your rear followed by gunfire. You run back to the entrance to the square to get a look. Smoke is clearing from some kind of explosive. 2d Squad and

the platoon headquarters are pinned down in the square, taking heavy automatic fire that ricochets off the fountain and the buildings. Some Marines have been hit. From your position with your 3d Fire Team, you can't locate 3d Squad or the platoon sergeant farther to the rear. You cannot tell if they are in the square or still south of it; you suspect the latter. You don't know how they are reacting to the fire. You peer quickly around the corner of a building. The fire seems to be coming from two two-story buildings on the east side of the square a couple hundred meters away. You can't tell if the fire is coming from both buildings or only one. It seems to be coming at least from the

second story, but maybe from the ground floor as well. Civilians are screaming and hiding behind the fountain and in doorways around the square. A handful lay still in the square, apparently hit. From the square you hear calls for "Corpsman up!"

What do you do?

Requirement

In a time limit of 3 minutes, explain your decision in the form of any orders you will issue. Then draw a sketch of your solution and provide a brief explanation of your decision. Submit your solution to *Marine Corps Gazette*, TDG #98-12, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 2214 or fax 703-640-0823.



For more detailed information on the structure of Marine Corps units, Marine Corps equipment, and symbols used in TDG sketches, see MCG, Oct94, pp. 53-56 and the modification reported in Jan95, p. 5.

Rules of Engagement:

1. You have the right to use lethal force promptly and effectively to defend yourself, other U.S. or U.N. forces, or persons and areas under their protection.
2. You should use the minimum force necessary under the circumstances and proportional to the threat.
3. Use force only when the military benefit of using force outweighs the risk of injury to nonmilitary persons or objects.

