

integrating indirect mortar fires. To succeed, the mortar section sergeant must be present during all planning, orders, and rehearsals. The company commander must use the expertise of the mortar section sergeant, who in return must understand the tactical employment of the mortar to best support the company's mission. The mortar section sergeant can advise the commander on the one-half to two-thirds range criteria, mortar location, and decide whether hand-held or conventional

mode will best suit the mission. The mortar section sergeant will also recommend the amount and type of ammunition the company and platoons should carry, based on METT-T (mission, enemy, terrain, troops and time). All of this information should help the company commander develop courses of action and wargaming to integrate the mortars to their fullest capability.

In summary, ammunition management, resupply techniques and integration must be exercised routinely during

all field training exercises. Through careful planning and a thorough knowledge of the 60mm mortar, it will remain the most effective, efficient, and flexible weapon provided to the light infantry, air assault, airborne, and ranger battalions on the battlefield.

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Tactical Decision Game #2-01

SUBMITTED BY MAJOR FRANK W. BREWSTER II

The passage of a river by a main force, against an enterprising and active enemy on the opposite shore, is always an operation of the greatest difficulty, and not infrequently accompanied with the most bloody results.

Lieutenant Henry W. Halleck, 1846

Situation—You are the commander of B/2-8 IN (M) consisting of two mechanized rifle platoons, an armor platoon, a headquarters element, and an attached engineer platoon. You are an M2A2/M1A2 equipped company/team and are 100% on personnel and equipment. You have had 24 hours to prepare your positions.

The 241st motorized rifle regiment (MRR) has been attacking as a part of the 4th motorized rifle division (MRD). They have had good success, but are now under pressure to conduct a deliberate river crossing and continue their attack in support of 5th MRD, the Corps' main effort. The 241st attacked in advanced guard formation, with the 54th motorized rifle battalion (MRB) acting as a supporting effort in the North vic Buttertown to fix elements west of the town to facilitate the cross-

ing of 56th MRB south of Jackson Lake. The 54th is a BMP-2/T-72 equipped unit, and is currently estimated at 85% strength on personnel and equipment.

Your battalion had hastily moved forward to deny enemy crossing of the Barksdale River. You are a supporting effort with a task of blocking enemy movement westward along the mobility corridors exiting Buttertown in order to prevent Team C, the TF main effort, from being enveloped from the north. Alpha Company is arrayed to the south of Team C, to prevent the main effort's envelopment from the south. The brigade commander intends to destroy breaching assets, retain key terrain, and disrupt crossing attempts.

It is early December, and the temperature inversions have created a good deal of fog along the river and low-lying areas. This early morning fog hampered your target acquisition and enabled the 54th MRB to push some combat power across the river and establish far side security. Your 2nd platoon sustained casualties in the process of defending forward in Buttertown. They report one M2 destroyed, one M2 mobility down, and nine assorted WIAs.

They reported destroying three BMP-2s and one T-72. They are currently enroute to their prepared positions on Lookout Hill.

Your commander now believes that the enemy intends to use the 54th to secure a bridgehead over the Barksdale River vic Buttertown in order to pass the 56th westward. The TF commander tells you he is sending you the reserve platoon for employment (3/A/2-8 IN (M)). He also lets you know you now have priority of fires (FA) within the TF. They have near 100% of their basic load of HE but are capable of effecting only 30 minutes of smoke. The TF commander has authorized you to nominate a FASCAM target to be fired by a GS Arty BN as well. His intent is to disrupt enemy breaching operations, retain key terrain, and block enemy penetrations. The reserve platoon will be at your location in 11 minutes.

REQUIREMENT—Take 15 minutes to develop the orders you would pass to your subordinates. Make sure you include guidance for supporting arms and a sketch of your plan. Then provide a brief explanation.

