

MO - FNC - 02 - En

**FN CARBINE
F.N.C.
CALIBRE 5,56 x 45 mm**

OPERATOR'S MANUAL



**FABRIQUE NATIONALE HERSTAL
B - 4400 HERSTAL, BELGIUM**

MARCH 1982

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100 INTRODUCTION

The FNC Carbine, (figs. 1 and 2), is the result of exhaustive development and numerous trials carried out under the most varied conditions.

If a comparison is made between conventional weapons and the FNC, it will quickly be realised that the latter is a weapon of unequalled quality and characteristics for the soldier, a weapon provided with the latest improvements required by modern warfare.

The purpose of the present manual is to familiarize the user with this new weapon, so that he will know it sufficiently well to use it in the most effective way.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

200 TECHNICAL DATA

201 FN Carbine (Figs. 1 and 2)

Calibre:

5,56 x 45 mm

Weight:

- carbine without magazine: 3,800 kg
- 30 round magazine, empty: 0,210 kg
- 30 round magazine, full: 0,560 kg

Lengths:

- overall length: 0,997 m
- overall length, butt folded: 0,766 m
- barrel, without extension: 0,449 m
- line of sight: 0,513 m

Rates of Fire:

- cyclic: 625 - 700 rpm
- effective, automatic fire: 120 rpm
- effective, single shot: 60 rpm

Sights:

- Rearsight: double pivoting peep-hole; one for a range of 250 metres, the other for a range of 400 metres.
- The sights are as follows:
 - rearsight adjustable laterally
 - front sight adjustable in elevation.

Operation

By gas intake from a point in the barrel acting on a piston directly linked to the slide.

Feeding system

With a magazine of 30 rounds.

The magazine is inserted into the carbine through a housing in the lower part of the trigger housing.

Ejection

Towards the right and at a forward angle of approximately 45°.

Cocking

By means of the handle situated on the right side of the receiver.

3 round burst device

This device, contained in a small assembly, is inserted inside the trigger housing.

It automatically limits each burst to three rounds when the trigger is pulled.

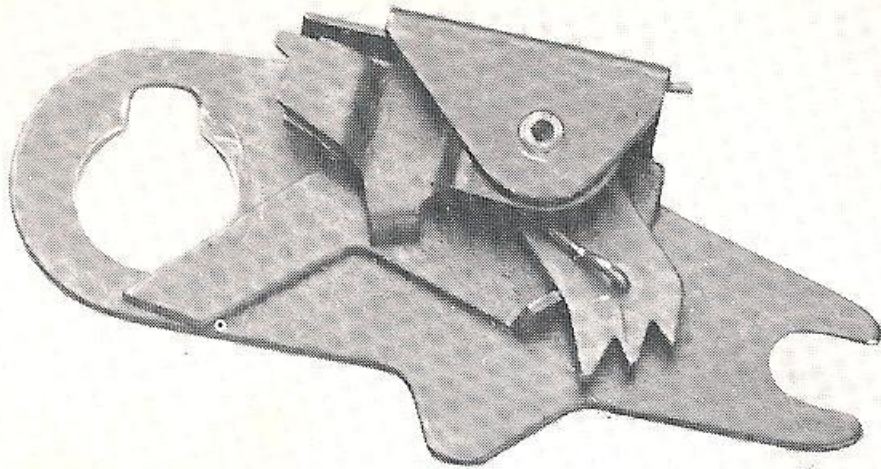


Fig. 3

Gas regulator

The gas regulator control lever is situated at the top of the carbine, immediately to the rear of the handguard.

The control lever can be set on two positions:

- 1 - To the left for firing under normal conditions.
- 2 - To the right for firing under adverse conditions (extra power) — mud, sand, snow, etc.

Fire selection and safety lever (Fig. 4)

This is situated on the left side of the trigger housing and may be set on four positions:

S - Safety

1 - Single shot firing (semi-automatic)

3 - Controlled burst firing (three shots)

A - Full automatic firing.

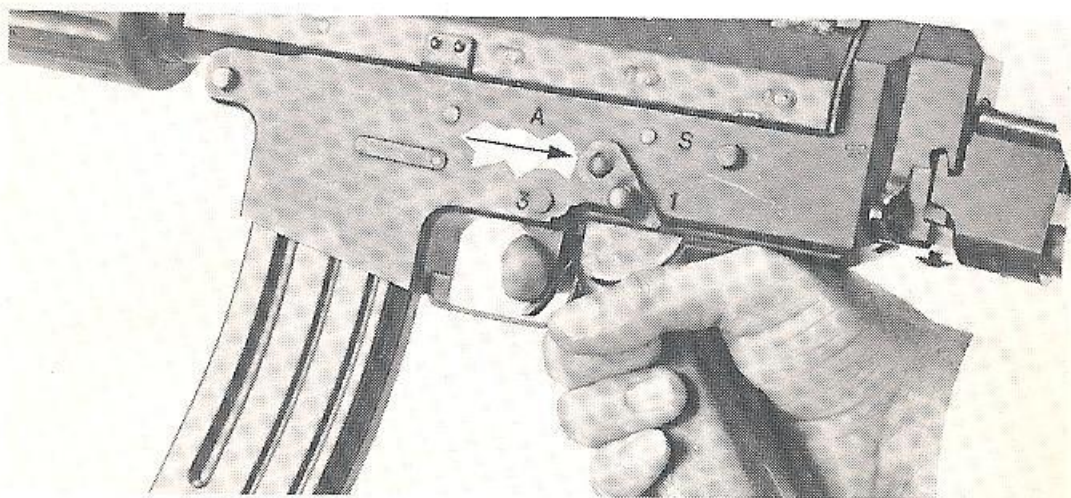


Fig. 4

Moving parts

Bolt — slide/firing pin — piston and return spring in a single assembly easy to strip without any tool.

Barrel

Breeched into the barrel extension welded on the receiver and locked by means of a lock-nut.

Locking

Positive locking by rotating the bolt into a barrel extension. The moving parts are guided by two rails welded on the receiver.

Piston

The piston is welded on the slide, the return spring being housed inside the piston.

Primary extraction

Eases extraction of the spent case.

Drop test

No accidental firing

Cocking handle

Inserted into the moving parts, the handle may be operated with either the left or the right hand because it is readily accessible at the upper right-hand side of the receiver.

Grenade sight

Aiming when launching grenades is made possible by grenade sight which, when raised, also acts as a gas port closing device.

Flash hider

Standard NATO diameter.

Butt

Paratrooper type, it may be folded (forwards to the right), reducing the length of the carbine (0,997 to 0,776 mm).

202 Ammunition

A. Ordinary ball cartridge (fig. 5)



Fig. 5

The 5,56 x 45 mm cartridge can be supplied with ball, tracer or armour piercing bullets.

— tracer: red-painted tip,

— armour piercing: black-painted tip.

} Manufactured
by F.N.

B. Blank Star cartridge (fig. 6)

The Blank Star cartridge obviously has no projectile but has a longer case than the ordinary case, star-crimped to imitate the form of a bullet. Its volume and size are almost identical to the ordinary ball cartridge.



Fig. 6

Its normal use is only possible if the blank firing device is screwed into the flash hider.

The use of Blank Star cartridges is not hazardous and firing may be carried out using standard magazines.

C. Propulsive cartridge for grenade launching (fig. 7)

The projectile-free cartridge is a case of equal length to the normal ball case, star-crimped as the Blank Star.

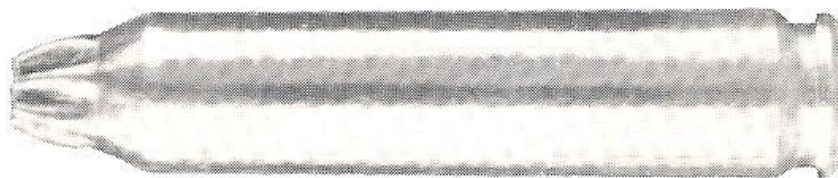


Fig. 7

It should only be used when launching grenades.

300 STRIPPING

301 The moving parts

Pivot the weapon, push the rear pin and pull it from left to right up to its stop point. (fig. 8)



Fig. 8

Pivot the weapon about its front assembly pin, «breaking» it in the same way as a shotgun.
Pull the cocking handle to the rear until it is at the rear extremity of the cocking handle notch in the receiver.
Remove the cocking handle to the right whilst holding the channel cover upwards (fig. 9).



Fig. 9

The moving parts may then be removed through the rear of the receiver (fig. 10).



Fig. 10

302 SLide - bolt - firing pin spring and return spring

Press the rear plate of the return spring and rotate it one quarter of a turn to either right or left. Remove the return assembly from its housing.

The bolt is taken down by rotation with respect to the slide so as to disengage its operating lug out of the slide recess.

Remove the bolt towards the front (fig. 11).

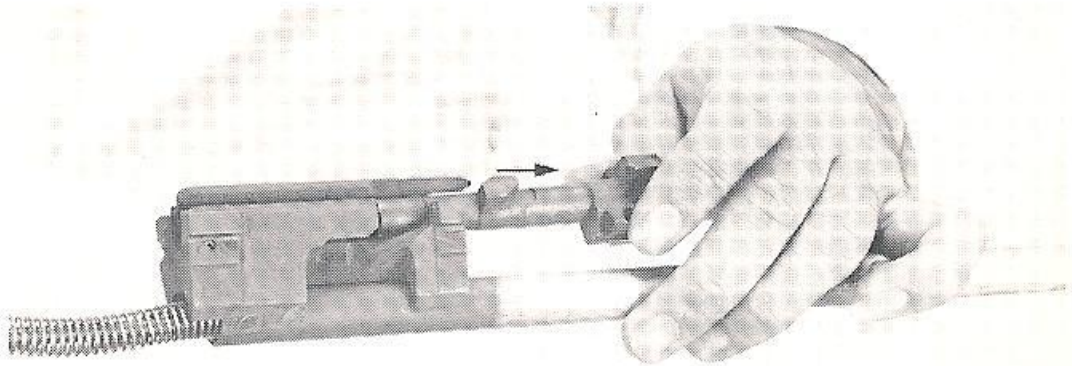


Fig. 11

Be careful! When the bolt has been removed from the slide, the firing pin spring is free. Be sure not to lose it.
N.B.: Except in special cases, the extractor should only be stripped by the unit armourer.

303 Handguard

Pivot the alidade or grenades launching sight upwards and remove the handguard.

With the thumb, force the handguard's front retaining clip out of its notch in the handguard. Repeat on the other side of the clip (fig. 12).

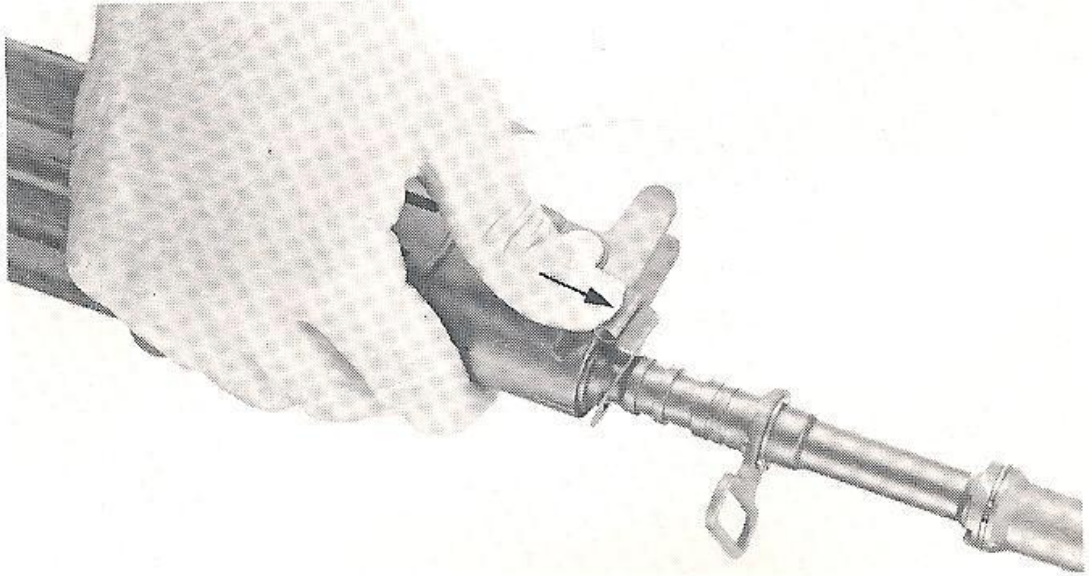


Fig. 12

304 Gas cylinder

Set the gas regulator lever to the left so as to go beyond the detent corresponding to normal firing conditions and continue until the thumb piece is perpendicular to the front block of the receiver (fig. 13).

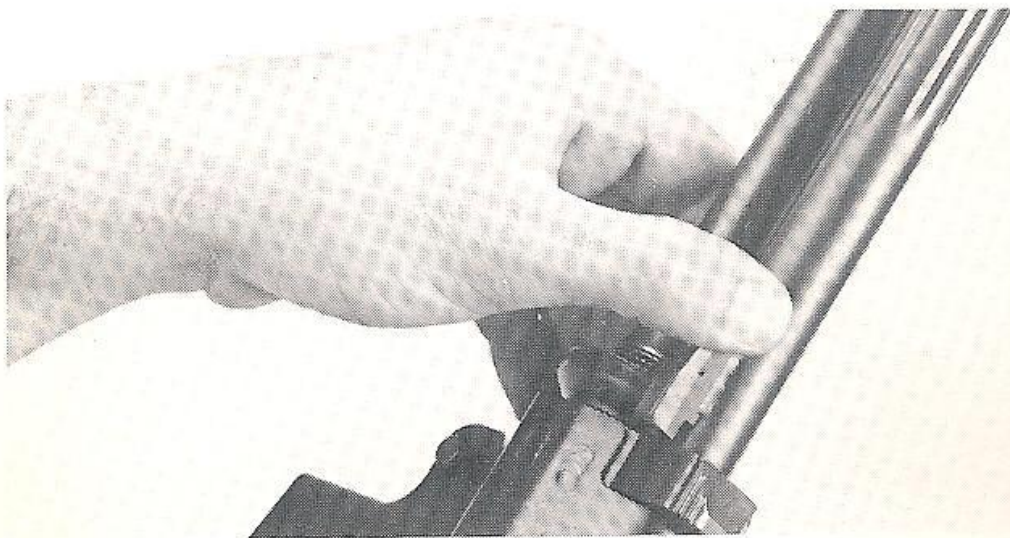


Fig. 13

Move the gas cylinder to the rear (1 - fig. 14), to press the lever plunger spring, disengage and separate the front of the gas cylinder out of the gas block (2 - fig. 14).

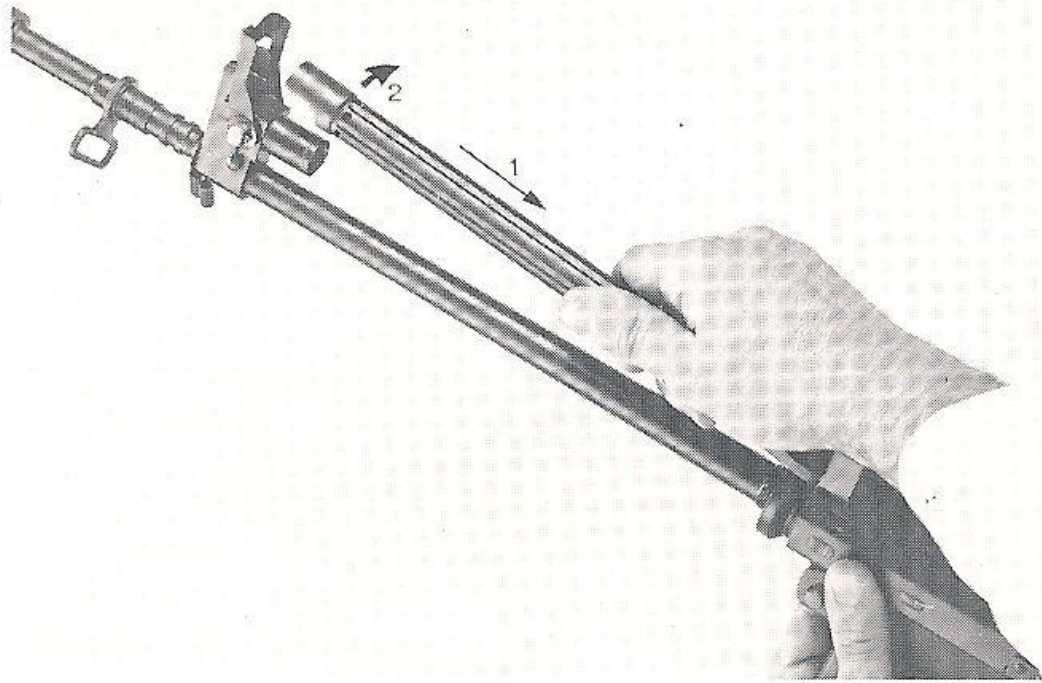


Fig. 14

400 REASSEMBLY

401 Gas cylinder and handguard

Make sure that the alidade is in the vertical position. Engage the rear end of the gas cylinder into its housing in the front block of the receiver, the gas regulator lever being directed to the left, perpendicular to the front block of the receiver (fig. 14).

Force the gas cylinder backwards until its front end can be set into the rear part of the gas block.

Replace the gas regulator lever control ring to the «normal conditions» position.

Reassemble the two split handguards and hold them in position with a view to replacing the handguard retaining clip (fig. 15).

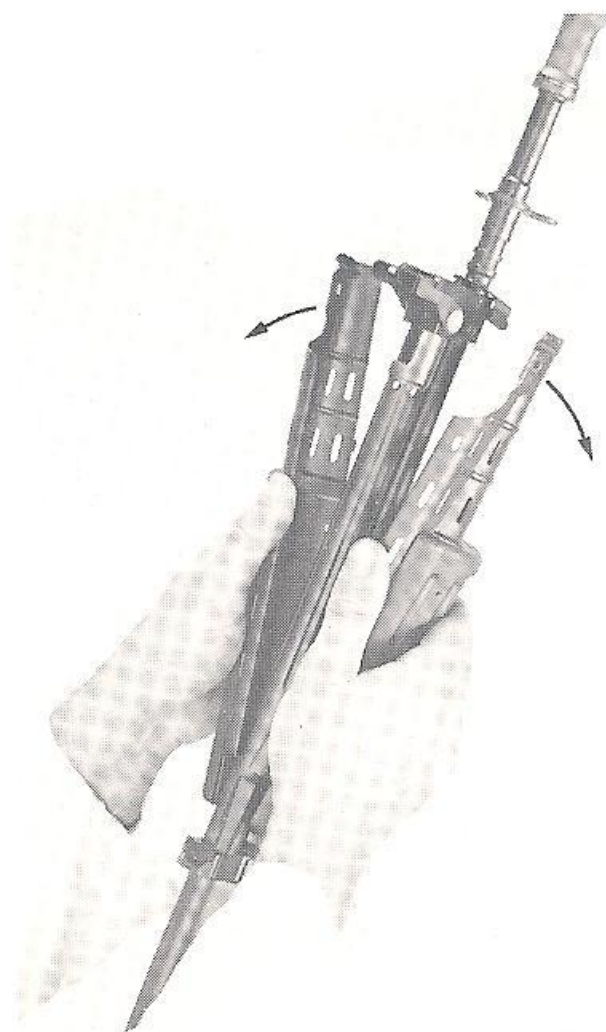


Fig. 15

Before assembly, the clip must be guided and its rounded side located.

Engage the sides of the clip into the corresponding notch in each of the half handguards (fig. 16).

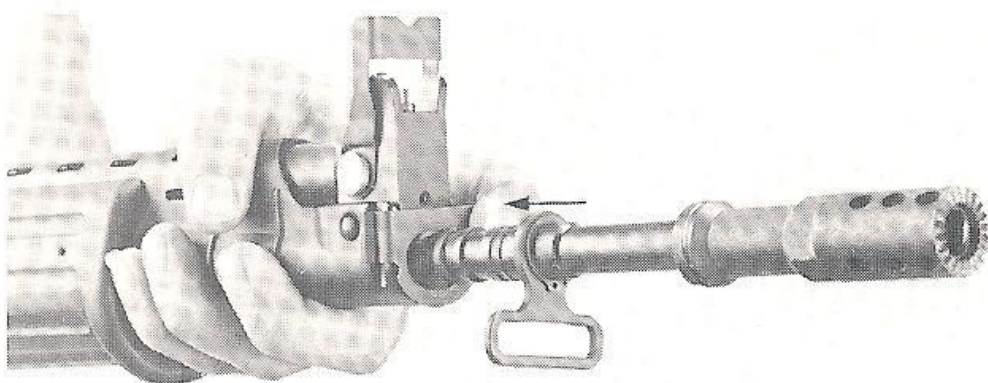


Fig. 16

402 Moving parts and return spring

Set the firing pin spring on the firing pin.

Set the bolt over the firing pin insert the bolt into its housing in the slide.

Position the bolt operating lug in such a way that it can move in the slide recess.

Insert the return spring into the piston and slide group (fig. 17).

Push (about 20 mm) and turn the return spring rear plate to the left or to the right (1/4 turn), (1 and 2 - fig. 17), so that the ends of the retaining pin are visible through the openings of the piston tube (3 - fig. 17) once the spring has been released.

The moving parts are now reassembled.

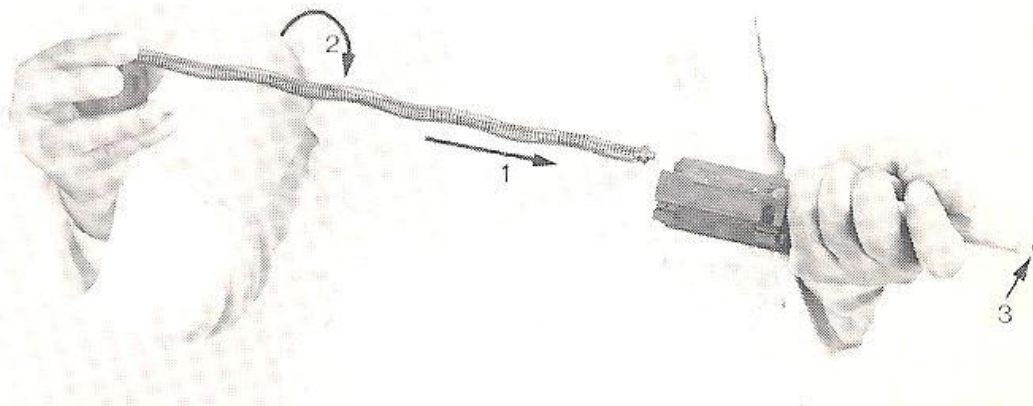


Fig. 17

403 Reassembly of the moving parts into the receiver

Insert the piston into the upper part of the receiver and slide it into the gas cylinder.

When inserting the moving parts into the receiver, be careful to properly position the locking lugs of the bolt in the guide rails inside the receiver (fig. 17A).

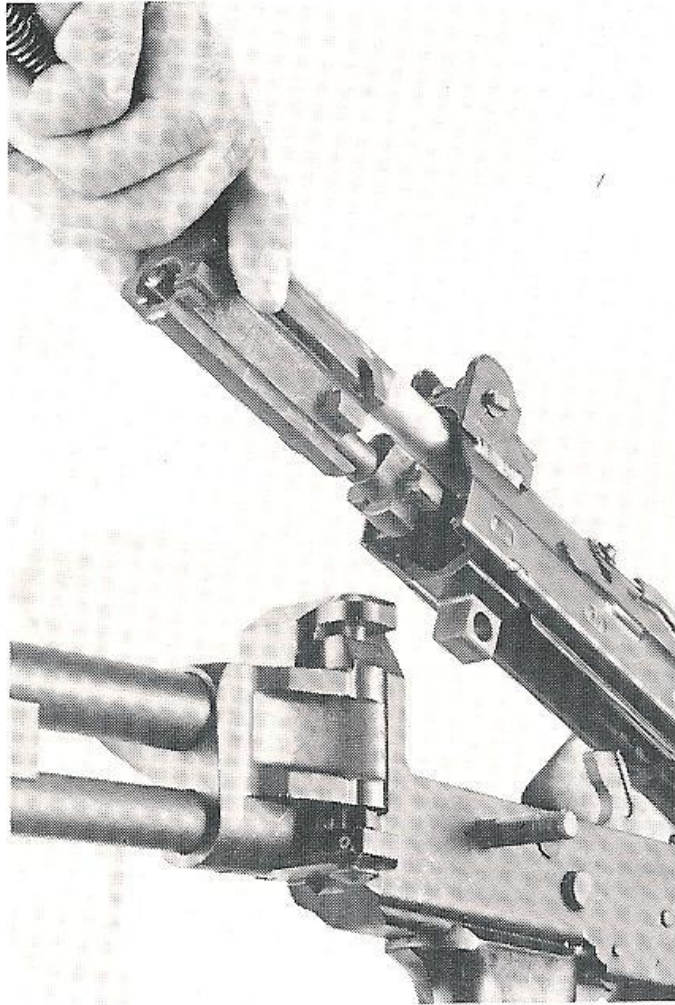


Fig. 17A

Lift the rear part of the notch cover and insert the cocking handle into its housing in the slide when the latter is opposite to the rear clearance of the handle recess in the receiver.

Release the notch cover.

Push the moving parts forward (locked position).

Make sure the rear plate of the return spring is properly set into its housing at the rear of the receiver (fig. 18A). Close the weapon. Press the trigger housing assembly pin inwards (right to left).

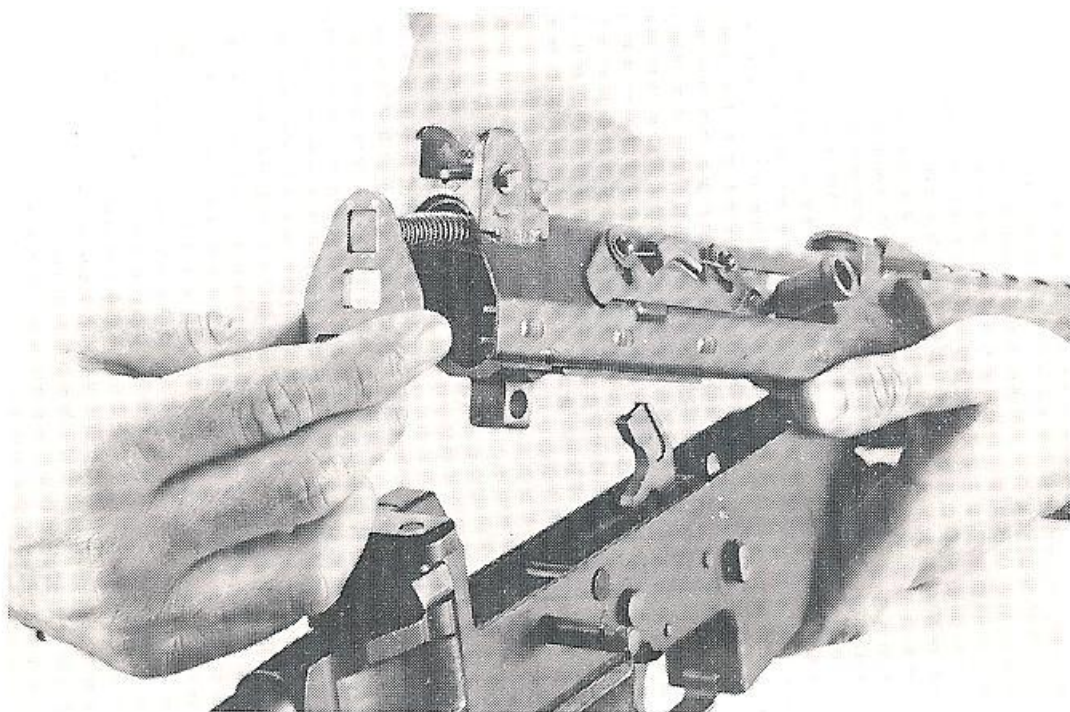


Fig. 18A

500 HANDLING

501 Filling the magazine

Push the cartridges one by one into the magazine, making sure that their bases are set to the same side as the ribs in the magazine (fig. 19 and 20).

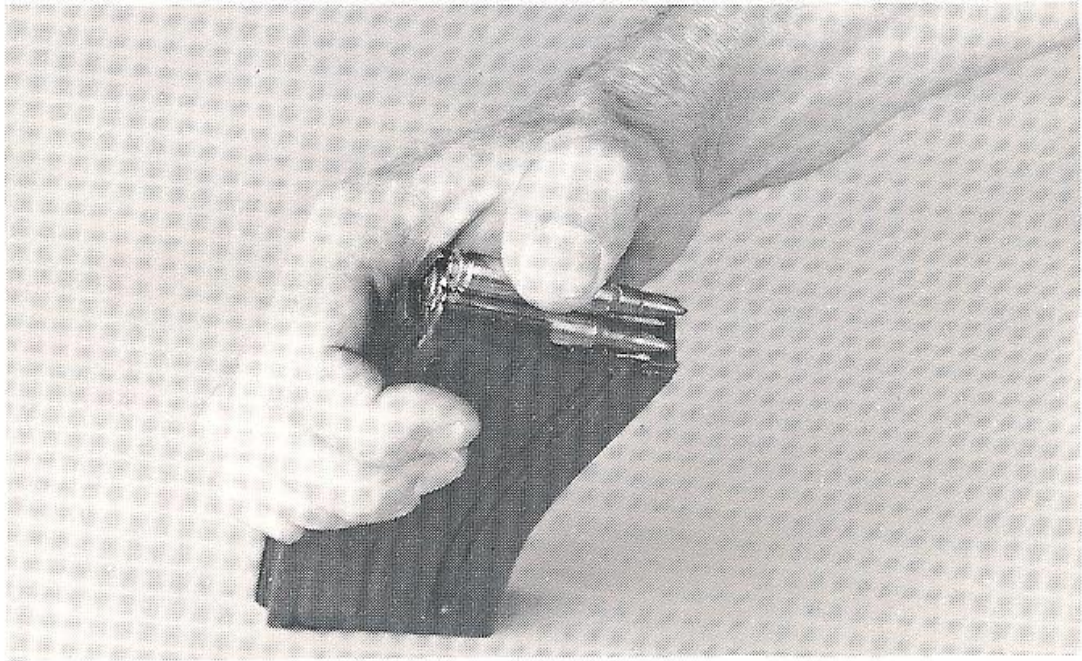


Fig. 19

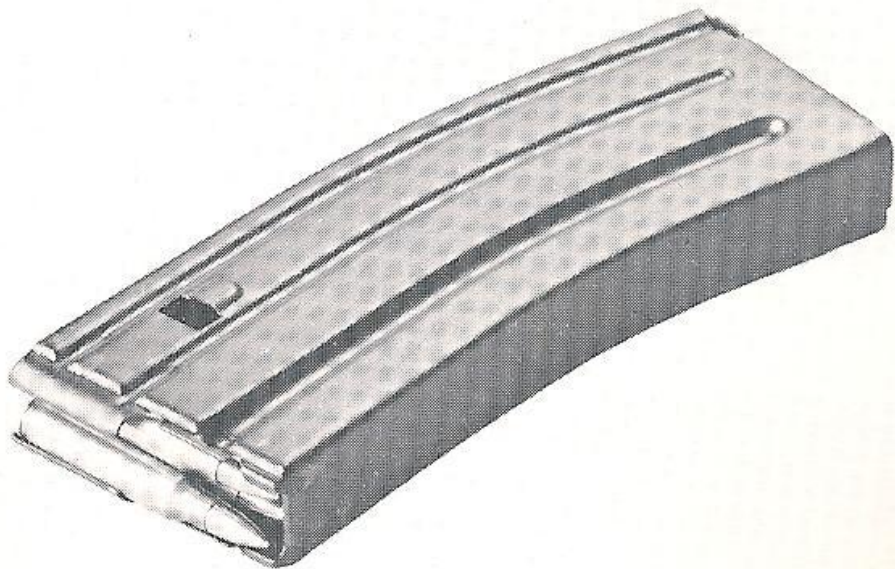


Fig. 20

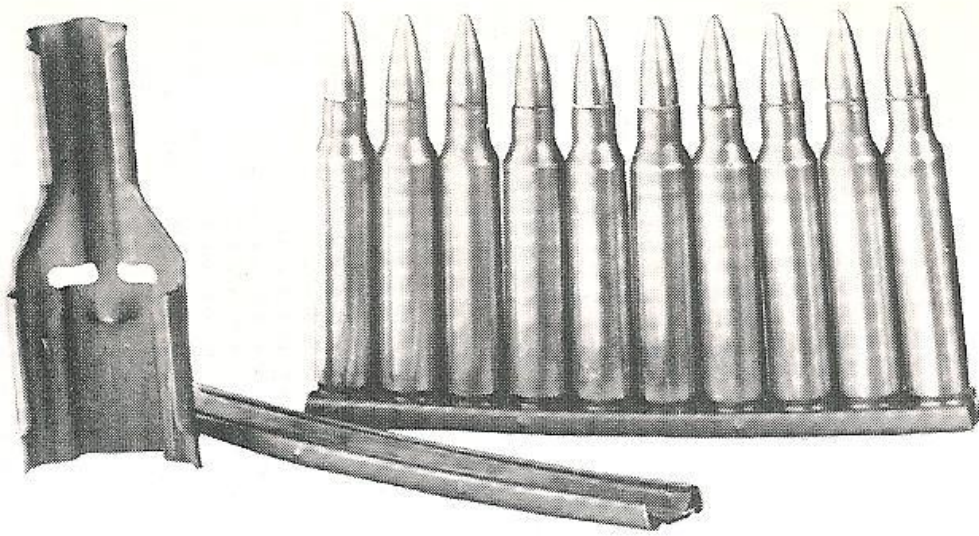


Fig. 21

When the cartridges are delivered on loading clips, it is possible to fill the magazine more quickly and easily provided a magazine clip guide is available (fig. 21). See figure 22 for the use of the magazine clip guide.

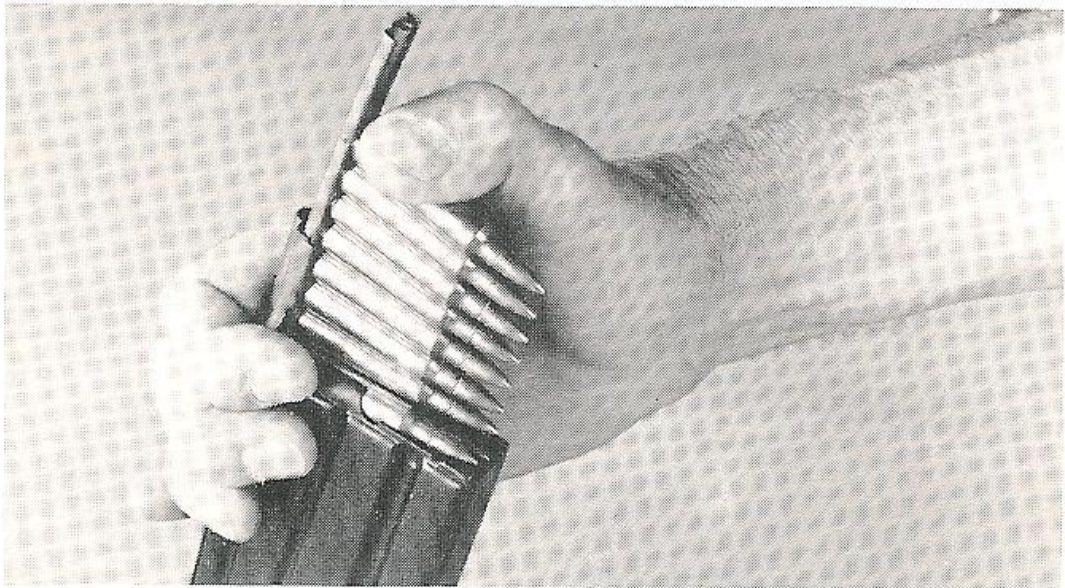


Fig. 22

502 Loading the weapon

Insert a filled magazine into the magazine housing and push it until it is held by the magazine catch. If necessary, a firm blow may be given with the palm of the hand to the bottom of the magazine to make sure that it is properly held in position (fig. 23).



Fig. 23

503 Cocking

The weapon is cocked by pulling the cocking handle fully to the rear and then releasing it without further assistance from the hand. Its forward movement is ensured by the return spring.

In its forward movement, the moving parts (via the bolt) push a cartridge out of the magazine into the chamber. Locking is automatic and the weapon is thus ready to fire. If the moving parts do not complete their forward movement (incomplete closing) due to excessive fouling (mud, sand, snow, etc.), simply push the cocking handle to the front to complete locking (fig. 24).

According to the shooter's position, cocking will be carried out by means of the right or left hand.



Fig. 24

504 Cocking with the weapon at the hip

Keep the right hand on the pistol grip and lean the weapon to the left so that the cocking handle is pointed to the top.

Pull the cocking handle fully to the rear with the left hand (palm to the rear), then release it to allow the return spring to act freely.

505 Cocking with the weapon shouldered

When cocking in the shouldered position, the left hand continues to hold the weapon at the handguard and cocking is carried out with the right hand. Once pulled to the rear, the cocking handle should be released to allow the return spring to act freely.

506 Reloading

After firing the last cartridge and the magazine being empty, press the magazine catch with the forefinger of the right hand. The magazine catch is situated on the right side of the trigger housing and it is not necessary to release the grip to reach the catch (fig. 25). If the empty magazine does not drop out, remove it with the left hand. Insert a filled magazine making sure that it is properly held by the magazine catch, and repeat the cocking procedures as described either in § 504 or § 505.



Fig. 25

507 Unloading

Set the weapon to SAFE by selecting position «S».
Remove the magazine.
Pull the cocking handle fully to the rear to extract the cartridge which could still be chambered.
Allow the moving parts to return to the forward position.
Move the firing lever to position 1 (single shot firing).
Pull the trigger to release the hammer spring.

508 Types of fire

1 - Single shot or semi-automatic firing

To fire single shots, the firing lever must be set to position 1 and the trigger pulled.

Only one shot will be fired.

Next shots will be fired in the same way until the magazine is empty.

In accuracy firing, the trigger has two pressures to make control easier.

2 - 3 round burst device

Set the firing lever to position 3.

Pull the trigger fully to the rear.

It is necessary to **pull the trigger fully to the rear** and to keep it in this position until the third shot of the burst has

been fired. If the trigger is released too soon, it is possible that only 2 shots (even one) will be fired.

In every case, the next burst will be of 3 shots provided, the trigger is held completely backwards.

The burst control device will be reset whenever the trigger is released.

3 - Automatic fire

Set the firing lever to position A.

Pull the trigger **fully to the rear**.

In the case of automatic fire, trigger travel is longer. It is important to hold the trigger at the end of its travel as long as you want the burst to last.

To stop the burst, simply release the trigger.

4 - Blank firing

The F.N.C. can be fitted with a special device (fig. 26) for firing blank cartridges (Blank Star), allowing the users to become familiar with the handling of the weapon.

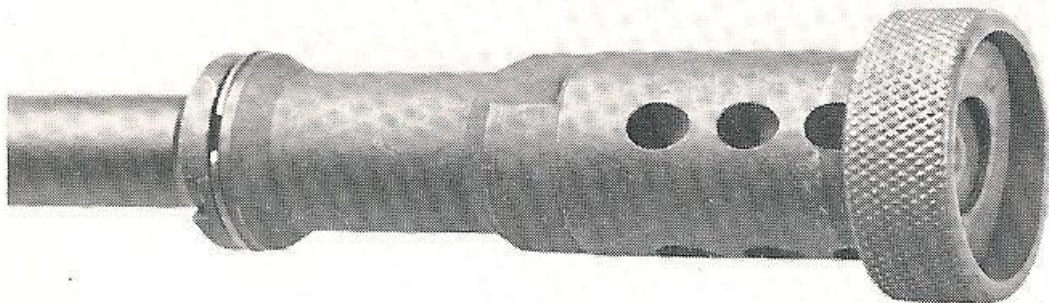


Fig. 26

This accessory is simply screwed into the muzzle of the flash hider by hand. It is important that the device is screwed fully home.

IMPORTANT

The recoil booster is usually painted in a bright colour (red, for instance). This enables the user to realise that, **under no circumstances whatsoever**, he must use his weapon so fitted for firing live ammunition.

509 Foldable butt

The weapon may be used with its butt folded either in or out.

To fold the butt in (fig. 27), hold the weapon by the handguard with the left hand, with the pistol grip upwards.

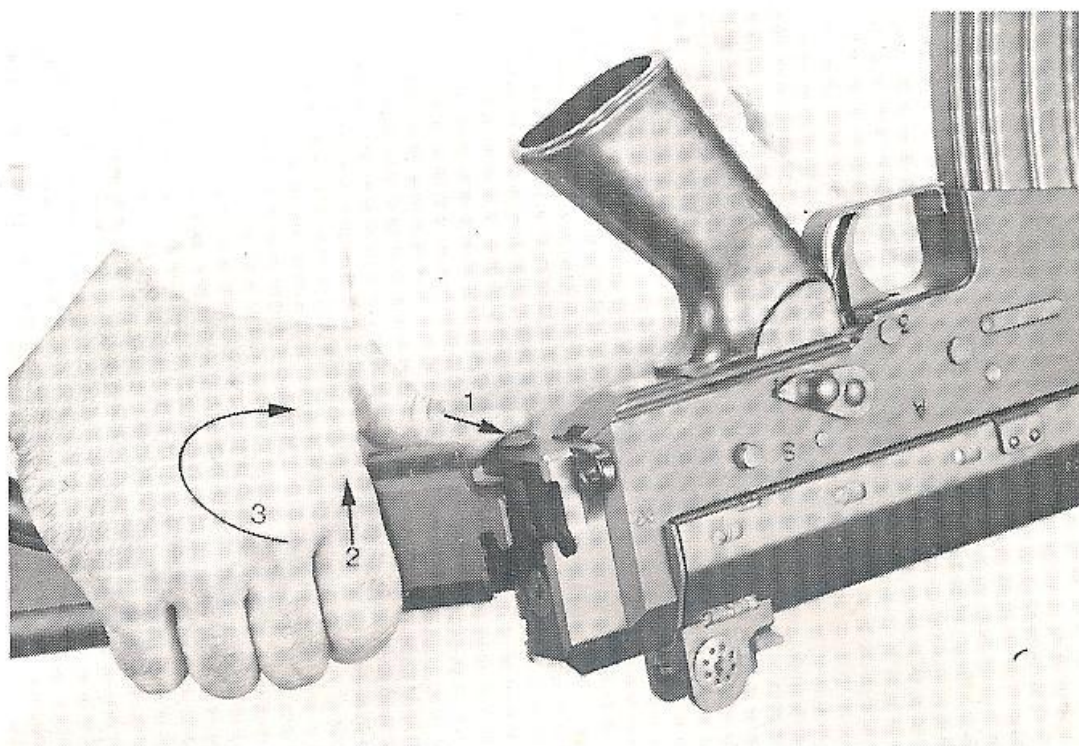


Fig. 27

With the right hand as close as possible (- fig. 27) to the butt hinge, use the thumb to move the butt locking stud as shown at 1 - fig. 27.

Once the butt is unlocked, lift it upwards (2 - fig. 27) against the pressure of the butt spring and then fold it in (3 - fig. 27) until it locks into position along the right hand side of the weapon.

To fold the butt out, carry out the same operations in the opposite direction.

510 Grenade launching

The F.N.C. is fitted with a grenade launcher (flash hider) which enables rifle grenades (possibly tear gas or smoke) to be launched with precision.

By holding the pistol grip firmly, the shooter can keep his finger on the trigger when firing grenades. When the

recoil occurs, the hand holding the grip very firmly will move backwards with the weapon without danger. This safety feature constitutes an appreciable advantage which enables the shooter to be more accurate when launching grenades.

511 Propulsive cartridge

A special propulsive cartridge, is provided for grenades launching (See page 8). It is not as long as the ordinary round, having no projectile, and its end is star-crimped (fig. 7) § 202.

512 Sight for grenade launching (fig. 28)

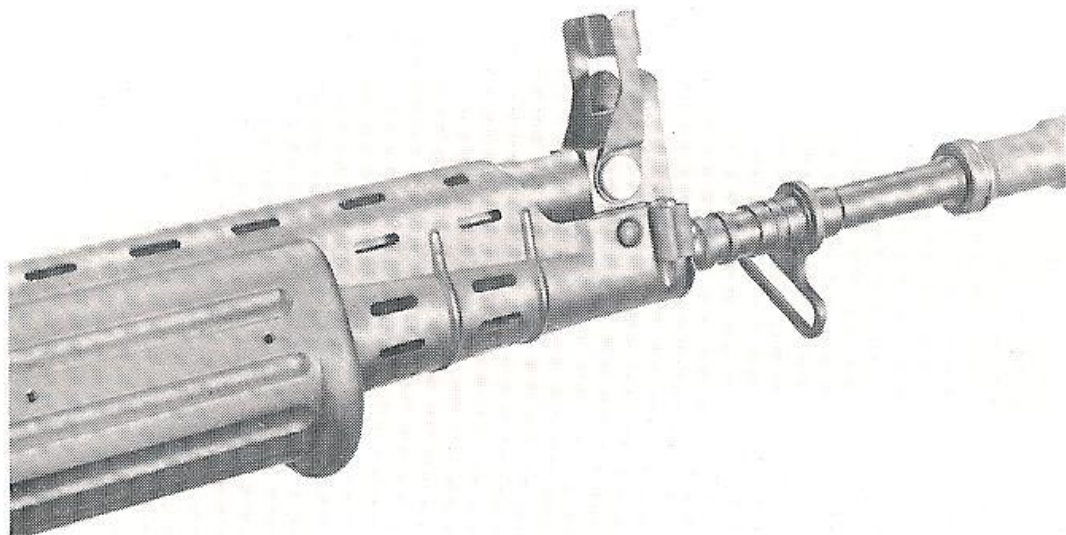


Fig. 28

The gas block is fitted with an grenade sight which has a double function when launching grenades:

When raised, it will:

- 1 - close the gas port off,
- 2 - allow aiming for grenades launching.

513 Preparation of the carbine for grenades launching

Set the weapon to SAFE (Firing lever to «S»).

Remove the magazine.

Unload the weapon (see paragraph 507).

Set the grenade sight in the vertical position (fig. 28).

Pull the cocking handle to the rear and hold it there.

Point the muzzle of the gun downwards and insert a propulsive cartridge directly into the chamber (fig. 29).



Fig. 29

Release the cocking handle. The moving parts will return to the forward position and the weapon will be locked. Remove the adhesive tape which carries with it the safety pin out of the grenade (fig. 30).



Fig. 30

Push the grenade fully home on the flash hider.
Take up a suitable firing position (see farther) and set the firing lever to position 1 (single shot).
The weapon is ready for launching a grenade.

514 Grenade launching positions (figs. 31, 32, 33 and 34)

1 - Direct firing (standing) (Same position as fig. 31)

- with the left hand, hold the handguard firmly at its centre;
- with the right hand, hold the pistol grip firmly and pass the forefinger well through the trigger guard in front of the trigger.

Set the butt under the arm-pit or, if the shooter's build allows that against the shoulder.

Aim and fire.

N.B.: Because the gas port is closed off due to the vertical position of the grenade sight, the weapon operates no longer automatically and the spent case is not ejected. It is therefore necessary to pull the cocking handle strongly to the rear.



Fig. 31

For direct firing in the kneeling position, the operations are the same (fig. 32).

For direct firing in the prone position (fig. 33), it would be advisable to dig a hole in the ground. The wall of the hole will receive the butt of the weapon. In this position, eventual painful recoil against the shoulder are avoided.



Fig. 32



Fig. 33

2 - Indirect fire

Indirect fire is normally practised in the sitting or kneeling position only (fig. 34).



Fig. 34

Press the heel of the butt plate into the ground if possible, otherwise on concrete or stone, depending on circumstances.

Hold the carbine with the magazine port towards you and facing upwards.

Set your foot on the toe of the butt plate to hold the carbine (see position fig. 34).

Press the trigger with the thumb (see position, fig. 34).

Of course, the preparation and loading of the weapon is carried out in the same way as for direct firing.

515 Aiming when launching grenades

Direct firing

The line of sight must go through four points. The carbine normal sights should be completely disregarded.

The four points are:

- 1 - the shooter's eye
- 2 - the aiming notch of the sight (see fig. 31)
- 3 - the highest point on the nose cone of the grenade
- 4 - the target

Indirect firing

Maximum range with indirect firing is obtained if the barrel is trained at an angle of 45° .

Launching direction is obtained by a line of sight joining three points:

- 1 - the shooter's eye
- 2 - the barrel (the carbine axis)
- 3 - the target (fig. 34)

It will be understood that indirect firing has nothing to do with accuracy and is only used to spray a zone (mortar system).

600 FIELD MAINTENANCE BY THE SOLDIER

Generalities

It must be particularly stressed that all automatic weapons must be given constant attention and that the firing incidents mentioned in paragraph 701 (page 35) can be the result of the user's negligence of his weapon or his knowledge lack of it.

Every automatic or repeating weapon must always be cleaned after the day's shooting and particularly after firing blank cartridges (Blank Star).

Care of the carbine

Proceed with field stripping (see section 300).

Pass the brush, lightly oiled with a suitable oil, several times through the barrel.

Pass the cleaning cloths through the barrel until the last one comes out clean and dry.

Clean the chamber.

Clean the barrel extension and the inside of the receiver.

If the weapon is badly fouled, the operation will be easier by using benzene and a brush (paint brush).

Strip and separate the moving parts and clean them one by one.

Without stripping the extractor, clean the bolt face and beneath the extractor claw with a rag and a wood scraper.

Clean the gas cylinder as follows:

— strip the handguard (section 303)

— Strip the gas cylinder (section 304).

Once the cylinder is stripped, clean it correctly with cleaning oil and a brush, then dry it properly.

Recommendations

The cleaning of the barrel is made with the cleaning brush supplied with the carbine.

This cleaning brush can be used with the cord which is part of the cleaning tools or with a cleaning rod.

Drying the barrel will be carried out in the same way but with the brush replaced by a rag or a cleaning cloth.

The ideal dimensions of a cleaning cloth for the 5,56 mm barrel is 120 x 25 mm.

All these operations must be carried out by inserting the brush or cleaning cloth through the chamber and not through the muzzle.

Warning: The use of emery, sand or other abrasive is absolutely forbidden for any cleaning whatsoever.

When the weapon has been cleaned, the bore and chamber of the barrel should be lightly oiled, as well as the inside of the gas cylinder.

In theory, it is desirable for all internal and external parts of the weapon to have a permanent light coating of oil. When using the carbine, the following parts are to be properly lubricated:

- all the moving parts
- the inside of the receiver
- the inside of the barrel extension (locking)
- the complete trigger assembly
- the magazine catch.

On the other hand, certain parts must be dry when the weapon is about to be used:

- the barrel (bore and chamber)
- the gas cylinder (bore)
- the piston
- the bolt face
- the magazine and its follower (platform)
- the rearsight.

601 Cleaning tools

The carbine is supplied with a small cleaning kit which is housed inside the pistol grip.

This cleaning kit is subdivided as follows:

- 1 - oil can
- 2 - housing for a cord having a cleaning brush at one end and an eye rod at the other end, for holding the drying cleaning cloths (figs. 35 and 36)

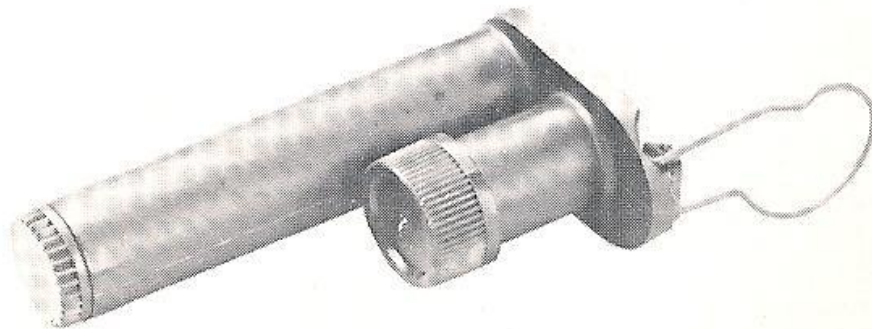


Fig. 35

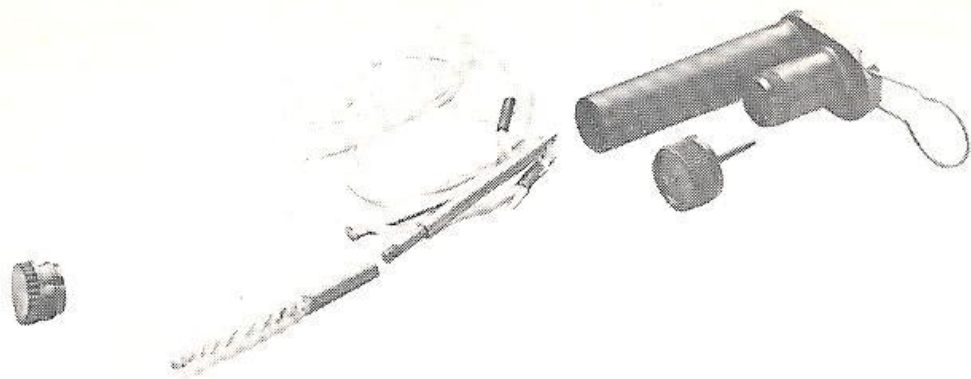


Fig. 36

Use of the multi purpose cleaning toll (optional)

- 1 - Cleaning the rear part of the gas block:
As indicated in fig. 38, insert the flat part of the tool and rotate it inside the gas block to scrape off the carbon deposits.
Continue until the edge of the tool is stopped by the bottom of the gas block.
- 2 - Cleaning the gas vent within the gas block.

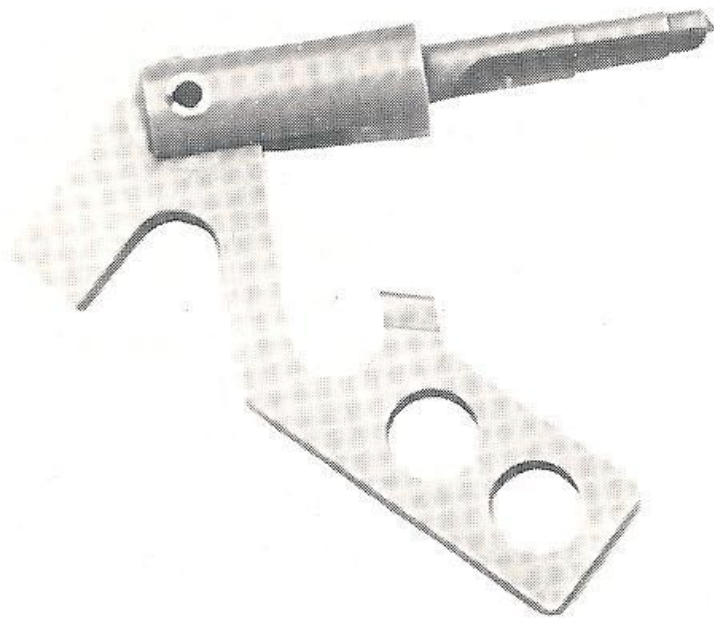


Fig. 37

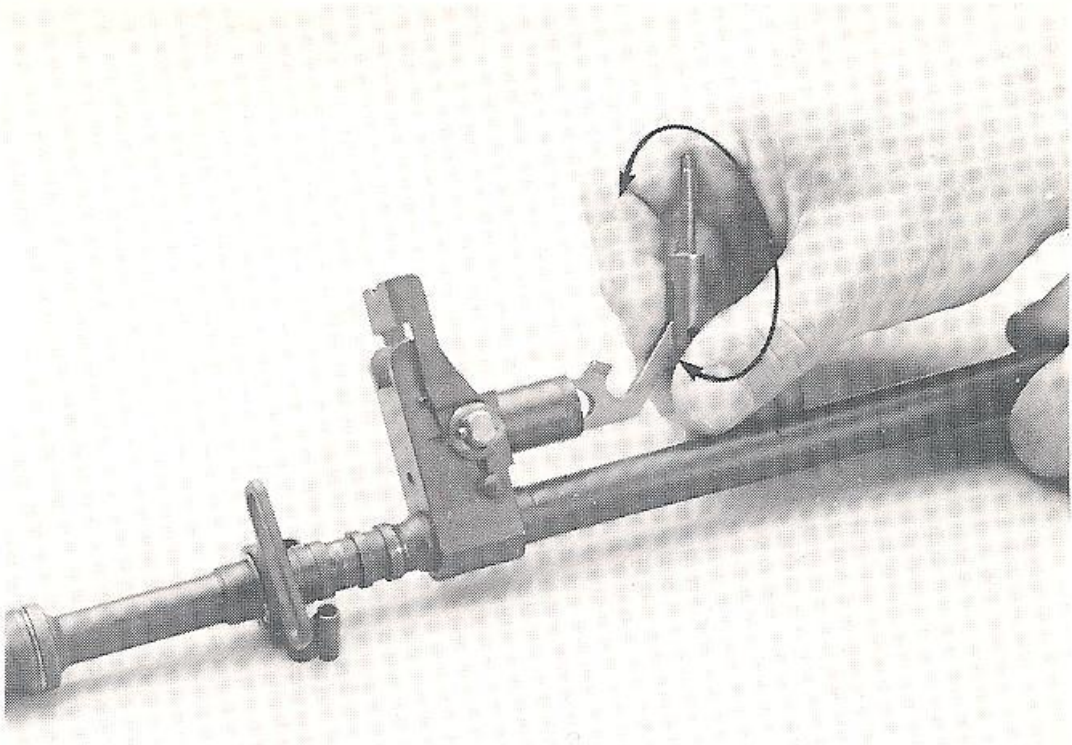


Fig. 38

As indicated in fig. 39, insert the cylindrical scraper (of variable diameter) into the bottom of the gas block and rotate the tool as before, until it is stopped by the bottom of the vent.

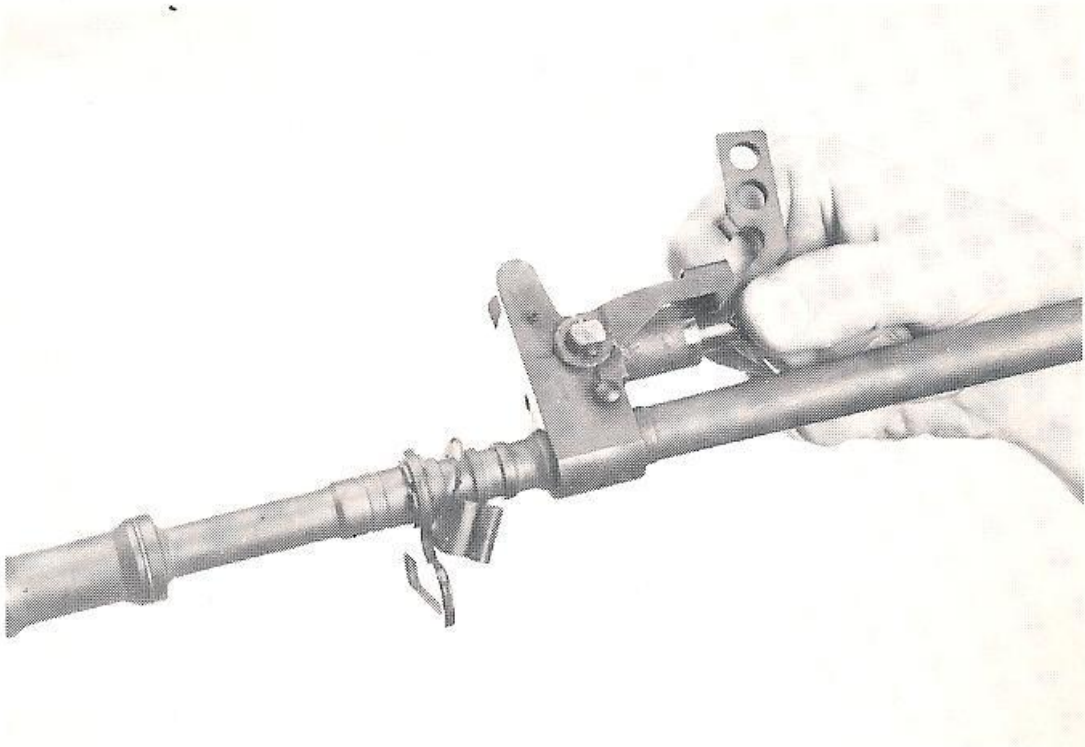


Fig. 39

3 - Cleaning the piston head:

- Scrape the front face of the piston head by means of the flat part of the tool.
- Clean the groove in the piston head by using the tool as shown in figure 40.

As with the previous operations, rotate either the tool or the piston. The claw of the tool will scrape the groove clean.

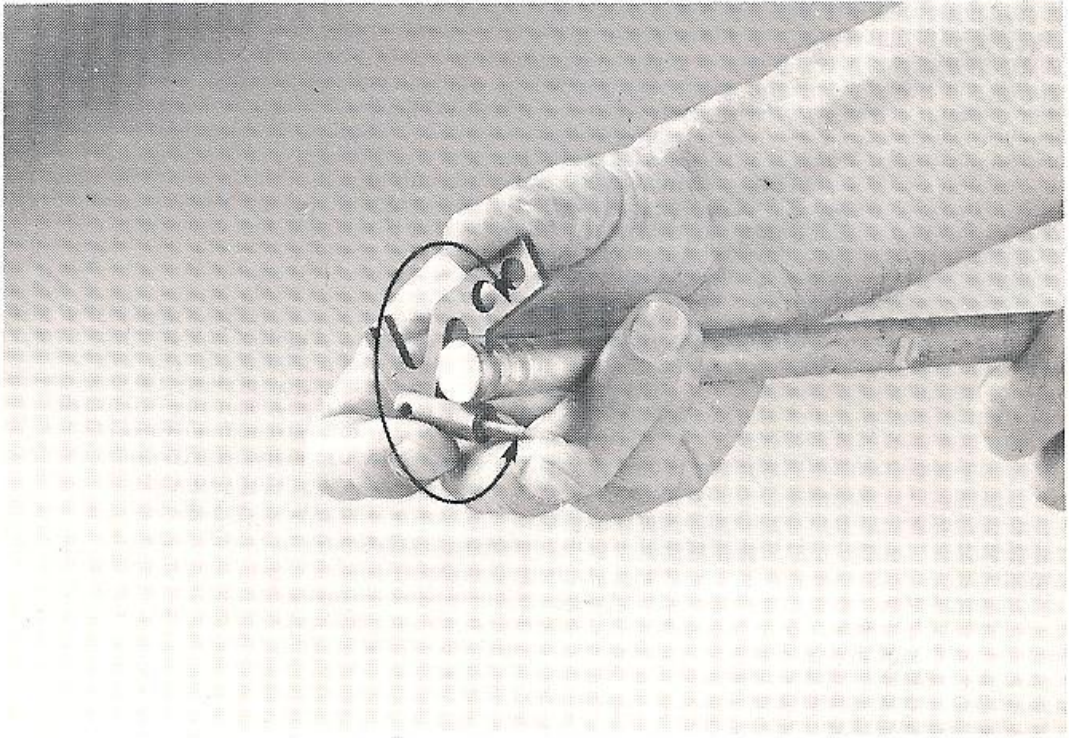


Fig. 40

700 IMMEDIATE ACTION

The F.N.C. is not much sensitive to variations of normal ammunition. However, we recommend the use of good quality ammunition, because the bad quality will inevitably cause incidents — whatever the type of weapon used. The possible firing incidents or stoppages generally relate to the following three categories:

- 1 - Incidents caused by excessive fouling of the carbine due to the user's negligence or to his knowledge lack of the weapon.
Ineffective degreasing of the weapon can also be the reason for incidents.
- 2 - Incidents due to the mechanical failure of the weapon.
- 3 - Incidents due to the use of the weapon under adverse conditions (snow - sand - mud - dust, etc.).

Jamming or a stoppage, unless due to the fact that the magazine has been emptied, can generally be eliminated by a fast «immediate action» without looking for the cause of the incident.

701 Application of immediate action

Immediate action remedies almost all incidents or jamming which are not caused by the breakage of a part or by insufficient gas pressure.

If the weapon will not completely close (incomplete closing no locking), press the cocking handle forward so that closing will be complete (fig. 24).

If another firing incident should occur:

- Keep the weapon in the firing position.
- Remove the magazine.
- Cock twice
- Extract the case which may possibly have remained inside the weapon.
- Load the carbine by fitting a filled magazine.
- Chamber a cartridge by pulling the cocking handle fully to the rear and release it.
- Resume firing.

If the incident should occur once more, remove the magazine and replace it by another one and then resume shooting.

If the incident occurs again, push the gas regulator to the right (adverse conditions).

If the carbine is to be constantly used under adverse conditions (snow, sand, etc.), the user should set the gas regulator lever to the right. This corresponds to maximum operating power.

Manual slide catch

In certain cases (trapped case failure to feed, etc.), clearing the fault will be made easier by an individual feature of the F.N.C.

This is a retain system of the cocking handle which holds the moving parts in the rear position.

To make use of this feature, pull the cocking handle to the rear and then pull it to the right as if it were to be stripped. Keep the handle firmly and allow the moving parts to return slowly towards the front. After a few millimetres run, the handle will house in a disengagement made in the receiver and the moving parts will be stopped in the rear position. Both hands will then be free to deal with the fault more easily.

To return the weapon to a firing condition, that is, to release the moving parts, simply give the cocking handle a sharp blow with the palm of the hand (fig. 41).

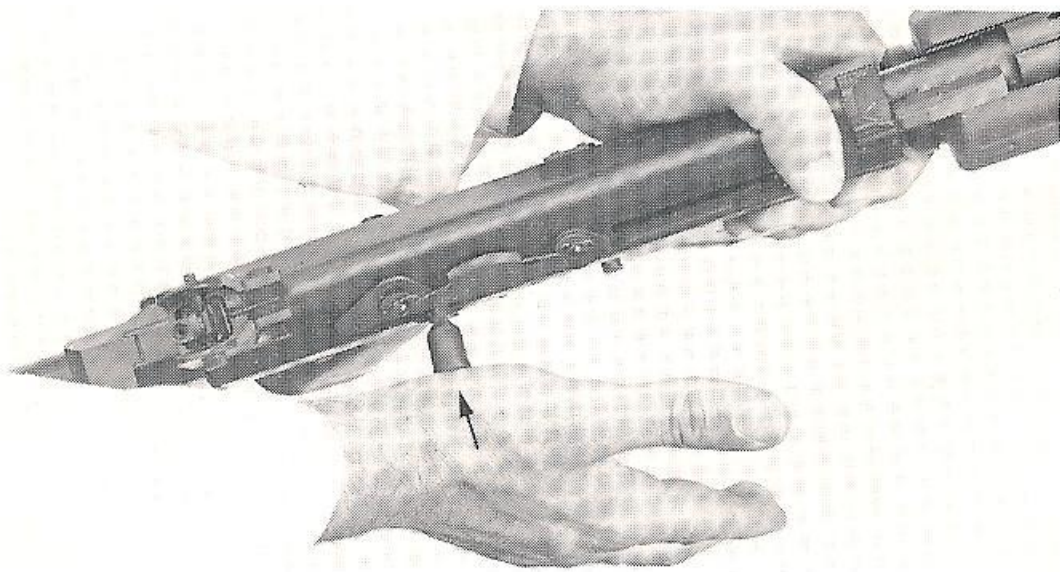


Fig. 41

800 ACCESSORIES

801 Sling

The F.N.C. can be fitted with a web sling. One end will be fixed to the front sling swivel and the other, fitted with a spring clip, will be fastened to the butt plate when the carbine is used with butt extended or to the rear sling swivel (rear block of the trigger housing) when the weapon is used with the butt folded in.

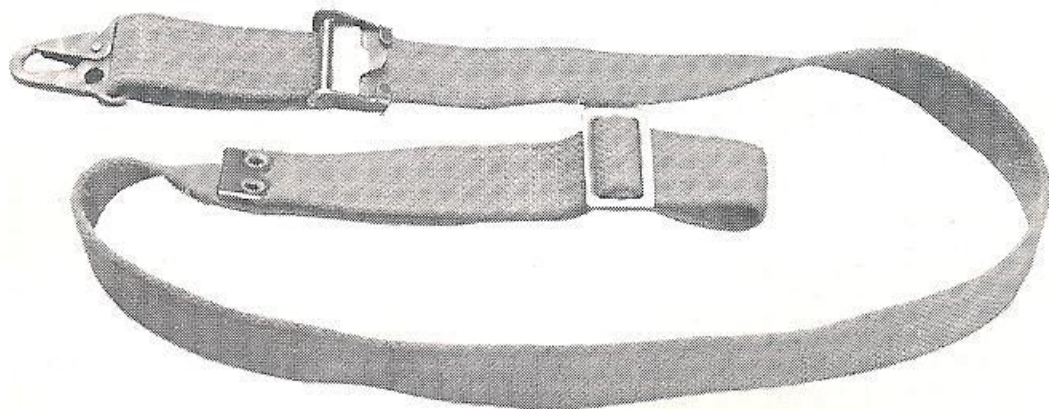


Fig. 42

802 Bayonet and scabbard

The F.N.C. can be fitted with a tubular bayonet (fig. 43 and 44).

The bayonet will neither prevent firing, nor modify bullet trajectories (fig. 44).

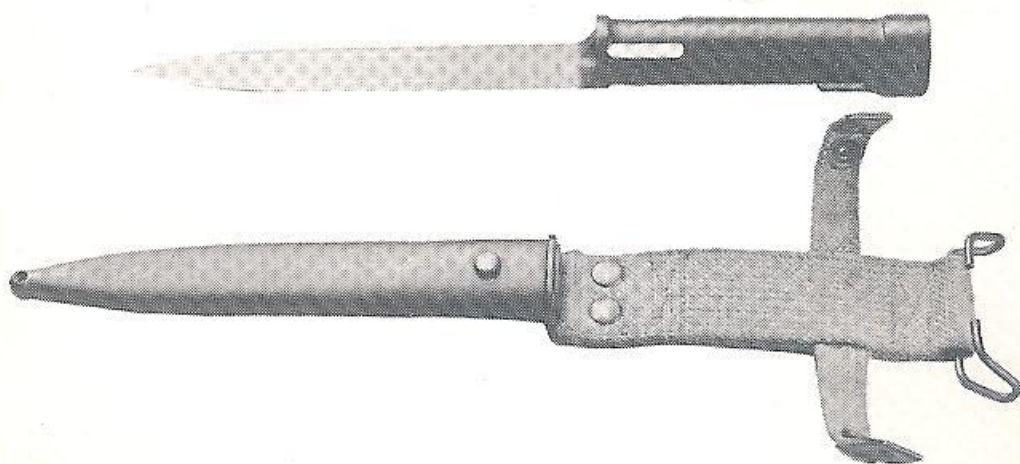


Fig. 43

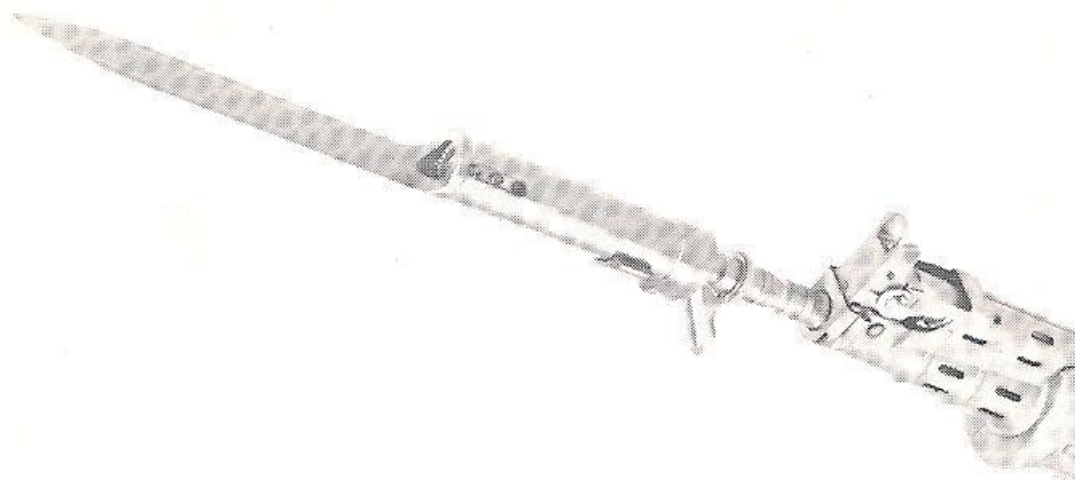


Fig. 44

The bayonet is fixed over the flash hider and locked to it in a specific position.

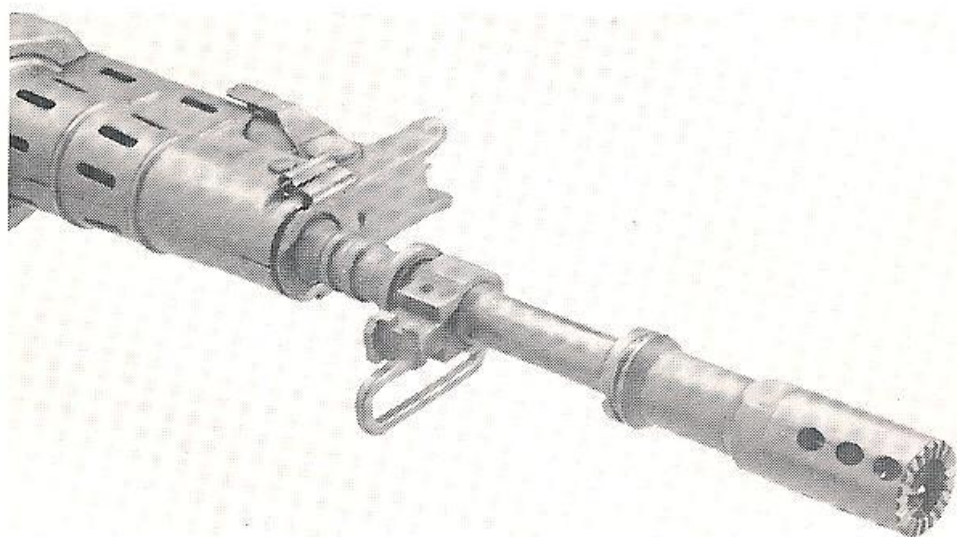


Fig. 45

M16 type bayonet can be adapted to the F.N.C. on request. (figs. 46 and 47).
In this case, the F.N.C. must be fitted with a special (optional) shoulder (fig. 45) to take the M16 bayonet.

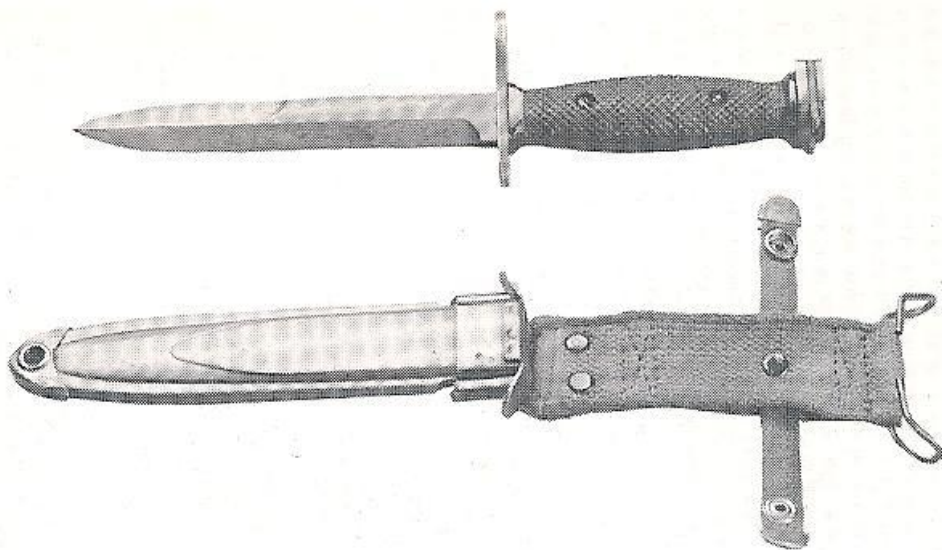


Fig. 46

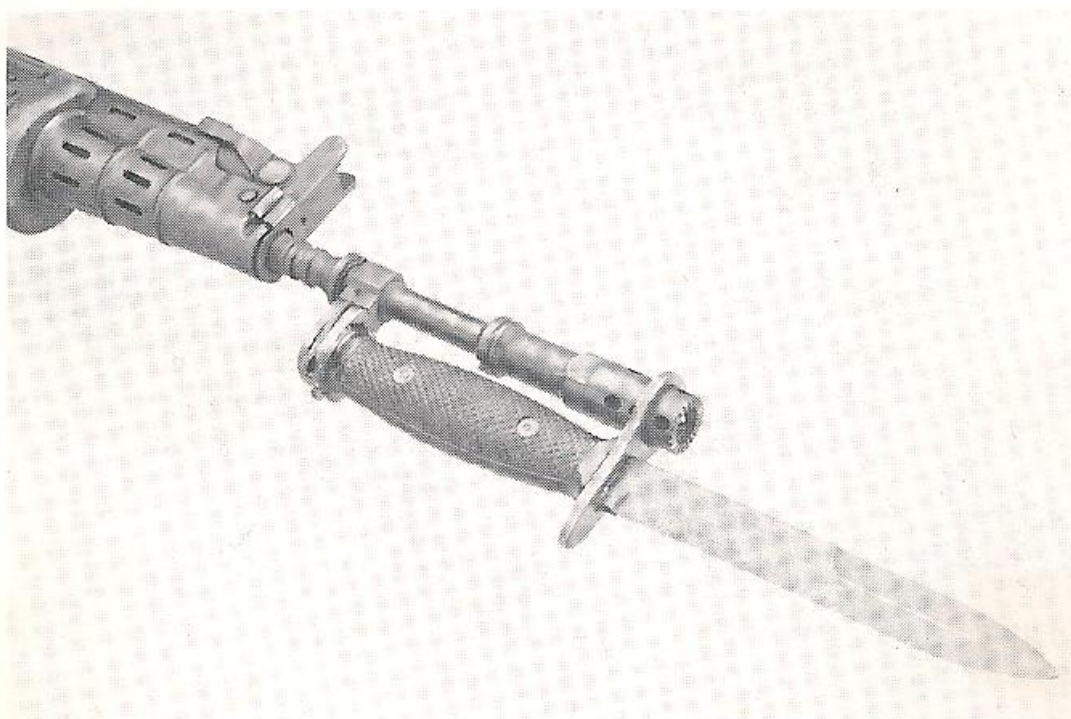


Fig. 47

803 Bipod

The F.N.C. can be fitted with a claw clamp type bipod (figs. 48 and 49).

The bipod can be set on the carbine or removed by hand.



Fig. 48



Fig. 49

The bipod is clamped around a groove of the barrel situated in front of the gas block (fig. 50).



Fig. 50

When the soldier does not want to use the bipod, this will be carried in the folded position, either in a pocket or in a webbing holster.

804 Telescopic sight

A telescopic sight can be fitted to the F.N.C. In theory telescopic sight is delivered together with its bracket (fig. 51).

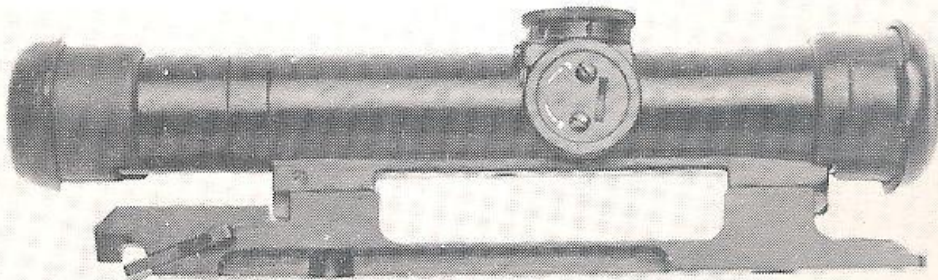


Fig. 51

Fitting the scope and its bracket on the F.N.C.:

- Engage the front toe of the support (fig. 52) into its housing on the upper part of the receiver.



Fig. 52

- Press the support locking catch (1 - fig. 53) and pull the support locking bar forwards and to the side (2 - fig. 53)
- Fit the rear part of the bracket into the front part of the rearsight.
- Release the catch. The sight is now in position.
- To remove the sight, proceed in the opposite direction.

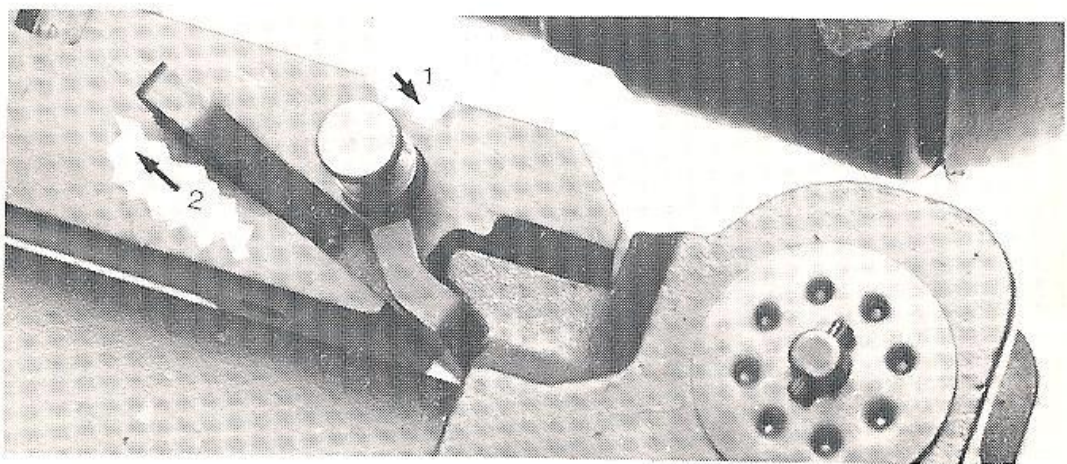


Fig. 53

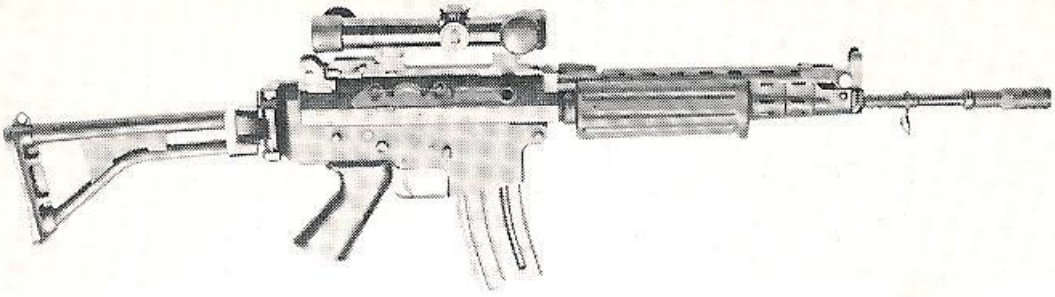


Fig. 54

805 **Blank cartridge firing device** (fig. 55)

The blank cartridge firing device enables practice firing to be carried out with the F.N.C., using the Blank Star, that is projectile-free cartridges.

To do this and ensure the automatic operation of the carbine, it is necessary to use the blank cartridge firing device (recoil booster).

This is hand-screwed as far as it will go into the flash hider.

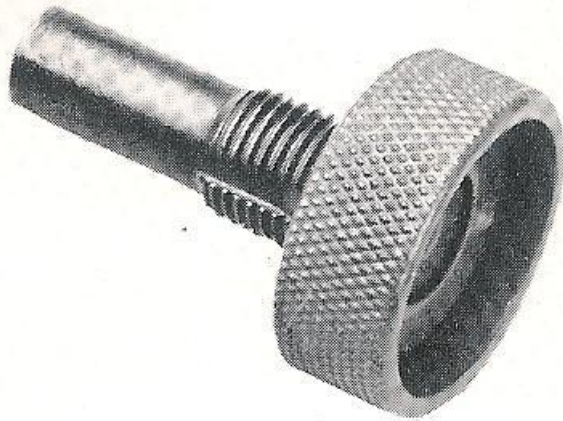


Fig. 55

Warning: The blank cartridge firing device is red-painted so as to be readily visible and attract the user's attention. It **MUST** be removed when shooting with ball ammunition.