

61/46PARIS LANDSLIDE TRAGEDY

Utterly without warning, disaster strikes the Paris suburb of Clamart on a summer morning; within seconds a huge hole appears in the earth, dozens of houses and blocks of flats have collapsed, at least 16 people are dead, and more than fifty injured. To add to the horror, gas and water mains burst and telephone and power lines are useless. Houses on the fringe of the area are sliced in two. In the roads which were busy a moment ago, huge cracks are torn open.

Rescuers are quickly on the scene, working frantically to reach trapped men, women and children whose cries they can hear under the tons of fallen masonry.

Some have to be treated where they lie while the ambulance men wait for the ruins to be dug away. Some children are lucky enough to escape, but not all. The exact cause of the disaster is not clear - but the French authorities are determined to find it.