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SUBJECT: After Action Report - Operation 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (M) AO,
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(l) On 15 April B/1-61 Inf (M) and C/1-77 Armor departed Khe Sanh for LZ Sharon and LZ Nancy respectively. As the companies reached Ca Lu the columns split. All inoperable vehicles were moved along Route 9 to Dong H; and then down Route 1 to their final destination while the remainder of the companies moved through the newly opened Ba Long valley road. As B/1-61 Inf (M) and C/1-77 Armor departed Khe Sanh the two (2) 8 inch howitzers that had accompanied TF 1-61 Inf (M) on its move to Khe Sanh were returned to Vandergrift Combat Base.

(m) On 19 April the 2d Troop, 7th ARVN Cav reinforced by the Recon Co, 1st ARVN Regt moved from Camp Evans to Ca Lu. The following day the ARVN moved to Khe Sanh and was placed under the operational control of TF Remagen. After arriving at Khe Sanh the ARVN conducted search and clear operations north of the airfield and then west toward the Laotian border.

(n) On 21 April A/1-77 Armor reached Highway 926. After spending the night astride the highway, A/1-77 Armor returned to LZ Saigon while A/1-61 Inf (M) moved through the tank company, turned east on Highway 926 and conducted search and clear operations near the Laotian Salient in the vicinity of XD885225.

(o) On the 23d the elements of TF Remagen that had been working along Highway 926 began their move back to Khe Sanh. The last element returned to Khe Sanh on 24 April and the Task Force performed maintenance in preparation for its scheduled move to LZ Sharon on 26 April.

(p) At 0330 hours on 25 April an estimated NVA battalion attacked the 2d Troop, 7th ARVN Cav which was located at XD812410. The attack started with a heavy mortar barrage which lasted for about one hour (One mortar round landed near the FDC track of C/1-40 Arty killing the battery executive officer and wounding every man in the FDC). Following the mortar fire the enemy attacked the ARVN position using RPG's, small arms fire, automatic weapons fire, flamethrowers and small satchel charges. At 0600 hours the enemy broke contact leaving behind 33 NVA KIA. A further search of the area resulted in the capture of 1 AK-47s, four (4) B40 launchers, one (1) B41 launcher, two (2) LMGs, one (1) bangalore torpedo, two (2) pole charges, 50 ChiCom grenades, 300 satchel charges and one (1) flamethrower. Friendly casualties were: eight (8) ARVN KIA, 40 ARVN WIA, one (1) Australian advisor KIA, two (2) US advisors WIA, two (2) US KIA, and three (3) US WIA. Three (3) ARVN personnel carriers were destroyed and one (1) tank from A/1-77 Armor was damaged.

(q) The move from Khe Sanh was postponed until 28 April to allow Task Force Remagen time to conduct a thorough search for the enemy. At 0300 hrs on the 28th the enemy attacked once again. This time the main attack was directed against Co A, 1st Bn, 61st Inf (M) which was located at XD945390. The company was alerted just prior to the start of the attack by a listening post which sprung an ambush

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on the enemy as they were moving into position. The enemy attack was supported by RPG, mortar, small arms and automatic weapons fire. Throwing satchel charges and using flame devices the enemy charged from the southwest but was unable to penetrate the perimeter. At approximately 0540 hours the enemy broke contact and disappeared into the night. While A/1-61 Inf (M) was under attack both 2/7 ARVN and the Task Force CP were probed by the enemy ground forces. 2/7 ARVN moved to A/1-61 Inf (M) location and swept the area. The day was spent attempting to regain contact and at 1100 hrs C/1-11 Inf was air assaulted into an LZ near the Khe Sanh airfield. Contact was not re-established.

1. Friendly casualties were five (5) KIA and 35 WIA. In addition, two (2) 105mm SP howitzers and one M548 cargo carrier were damaged while one (1) M113A1 personnel carrier, one (1) M48A3 tank, one (1) water trailer and one (1) M548 were destroyed (One of the M548s was loaded with 105mm ammunition which exploded causing most of the friendly casualties).

2. The enemy lost 34 NVA KIA and abandoned the following equipment: 15 AK-47s, one (1) RPG, two (2) RPG-2s, 500 satchel charges and 76 B-40 rounds.

(r) Enemy units involved in the contacts of 25 and 28 April have been identified as elements of the 57th and 9th sqds, 304th NVA DIV.

(s) At 0700 hrs on 29 April TF Remagen began its move from Khe Sanh back to its home base. Because of the enemy attacks on the 25th and 28th it was anticipated that the enemy had mined the road from Khe Sanh to Ca Lu and that he might try and attack the Task Force while it was on the road. The move to Ca Lu was slow and careful but by 1246 hours the lead element had reached Ca Lu without incident and by 2150 hours the last vehicle returned to LZ Sharon, a distance of 80 grueling kilometers.

(6) For forty-seven (47) days an armor/mech force had operated in the north-western mountains of South Vietnam along the Laotian border. Except for the early morning hours of 25 and 28 April no major battles were fought, but the 1st Dde, 5th Inf Div (M) had proved that armor can operate in difficult terrain over extended distances without a ground line of communications.

f. Montagn Mauler (22 March - 2 April): By 22 March available information indicated that elements of the 27th NVA Regt were again operating in the area in which the Battle of Cam Hung had been fought earlier in the month. During the period 15 - 22 March the Cam Lo (YD128595) area and Route 9 from Cam Lo to Vandergrift Combat Base (YD000490) experienced a significant increase in enemy activity which was characterized by minings, harassing mortar fire, G fire, small arms fire and numerous enemy sightings. The nature of the enemy activities indicated that the 27th Regt probably had the mission of interdicting Route 9. To determine the enemy situation and attempt to eliminate the enemy threat to Route 9 a reconnaissance in force operation was to be conducted by TF 3-5 Cav. TF 3-5 Cav was to move through the Khe Chua Valley searching the draws, conducting reconnaissance by fire, and attempting to gain contact with elements of the 27th NVA Regt that were believed to be operating in the area. The general trace of the reconnaissance in

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force was to be as follows: YD143616, YD040620, YD000600, XD965595, XD980570, and XD985545.

(1) Operation Montana Mauler began on 22 March when TF 3-5 Cav departed C2 and headed through the Khe Chua Valley. Initially Montana Mauler was a reconnaissance in force operation in which a cavalry squadron using two armored cavalry troops, a combat engineer platoon and two light infantry platoons searched for the enemy, located him and developed the situation for the Brigade. Once the situation had been developed the Brigade then committed two light infantry battalions (one US and one ARVN) to assault the enemy's position and destroy him in place. As the infantry closed with the enemy the cavalry withdrew from the area of immediate contact and moved around the friendly forces to the opposite side of the battle area to assume a screening mission in order to protect the infantry battalions from enemy attacks launched from within the DMZ.

(2) During the first two days of the operation enemy contact was frequent but sporadic. On the third day TF 3-5 Cav encountered the primary defensive positions of the enemy. Two (2) companies were entrenched in camouflaged bunkers at YD046624 and 041616 with a light screening force established between the two positions. 1/3-9 Marines air assaulted into the battle during the afternoon and was placed OPCON to TF 3-5 Cav. Fighting was heavy on the 24th until the late afternoon when the enemy, now estimated to be a battalion in strength, began to diminish his attacks. During the evening of 24 March it was decided that the situation had been sufficiently developed by TF 3-5 Cav to commit two (2) companies and the battalion headquarters of the 1st Bn, 11th Inf to the fight.

(3) During the afternoon of 25 March A and B Companies and the battalion headquarters of the 1st Bn, 11th Inf air assaulted into an LZ on the high ground north of the previous day's battle (YD043623). The battalion (-) landed without incident and throughout the day contact was light and sporadic for both battalions. The lack of contact in the valley on 25 March gave cause to suspect that the NVA had moved north. Accordingly plans were made for the 1st Bn, 11th Inf (-), with 1/3-9 Marines OPCON, to move north to regain contact.

(4) 26 March turned out to be the first of four (4) days of heavy fighting for the 1st Bn, 11th Inf. At 0330 hrs the battalion was attacked by small arms, automatic weapons, RPG's and mortar fire from the north, west and east. At 0800 hrs the battalion jumped off in the attack and almost immediately contact was gained. Air strikes and artillery pounded the enemy positions, but with each pass the fighter aircraft received a heavy volume of automatic weapons fire and the enemy refused to budge. After experiencing great difficulty with the enemy and the heat (the first time since October that the weather had been hot; 105°F) the 1-11 Inf returned to their positions of the previous night and prepared to resume the attack on the 27th.

(5) The 1st Bn, 11th Inf began to attack north at 0715 hrs on 27 March. A and D Co's met strong resistance but by noon the enemy had been rooted out of his bunkers on the intermediate objective and G/ 11th Inf was air assaulted into a position north of the main enemy position (HLL 208 at D043644).

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(a) As C 1-11 **Inf** air assaulted into their LZ it was immediately brought under intense enemy mortar fire from the northwest. The company commander was wounded and evacuated and the mortar attack did not stop until air strikes could be placed on the mortar positions.

(b) During the afternoon A and B **Co's** pressed on and seized their objectives, but the enemy immediately counterattacked each company. By 1717 hours the enemy attacks were repulsed but the price had been high. B Co lost all of its officers, except for its FO who commanded the company throughout the afternoon. At 1800 hrs the two platoons of D/1-11 **Inf** that had been with the 3D Sqdn, 5th Cav moved to reinforce B/1-1 **Inf**.

(c) The day had cost the 1st Bn, 11th **Inf** 13 KIA, one (1) KOS KIA and 30 WIA. Enemy casualties for the day were 120 NVA KIA.

(6) 28 March was devoted to cleaning up small pockets of enemy resistance, resupply and reorganization. Although no major engagements took place the casualties remained high. The 1st Bn, 11th **Inf** suffered one (1) KIA and 46 WIA while 68 NVA were killed.

(a) Since the 26th the 3-5 Cav had remained in the Khe Chua Valley. On the 28th the squadron was given the mission of moving to the right flank of the battle area to be in a position on the 29th to support C/1-11 **Inf** on Hill 208 (YD043644). The cavalry moved into position, and during the night A Troop received two (2) probing attacks.

(b) During the course of the battle on 28 March it became evident that the Brigade did not have the forces in the battle area to completely encircle the enemy and prevent his escape. Coordination was made with the 2nd ARVN Regt, 1st ARVN Div and it was decided to commit the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt, to the operation. Plans called for the battalion to be air assaulted on to Hill 262 (YD031664) during the morning of 29 March in an attempt to block escape routes.

(7) 29 March was the last day of heavy fighting.

(a) Action was initiated when D/1-11 **Inf**, moving to secure a position in support of an air assault by I/3-9 Marines, was engaged by an NVA force in a bunker complex. Nontoxic riot control agents, air strikes and small arms fires were all used to root the enemy out of his positions. While the air assault of I/3-9 Marines was in progress elements of A/1-11 **Inf**, which had been moving north along a ridge (YD036635), came under heavy counterattack by an estimated NVA Company. The enemy attacked from the north and attempted to cut off the lead platoon. As B/1-11 moved to reinforce A Co both companies came under heavy mortar attack. The enemy attack was beaten off, but throughout the remainder of the day the 1st Bn, 11th **Inf** continued to receive sporadic mortar fire.

(b) The planned air assault of Hill 262 by the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt was changed and the 1st and 3d Companies landed on an LZ at D063646 while the 2d and 4th Companies o an LZ at YD067655. r landing, 1-2 ARVN moved

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toward the southern boundary of the DMZ in an attempt to cut off the enemy escape routes. Only sporadic contact was made by the ARVN battalion during the day.

(c) Results for 29 March were: 19 friendly WIA, 45 enemy KIA and two (2) enemy 82mm mortars destroyed.

(8) On the 30th and 31st of March the 1st Bn, 11th Inf searched the battle area while 1-2 ARVN moved to and searched along the southern edge of the DMZ west of Con Thien from D055685 to D035675. TF 3-5 Cav, reinforced by the 3d Co, 2d Bn, 2d ARVN Regt screened the northern flank of the battle area and maintained a one troop reaction force at Con Thien. Significant ground contact was not reestablished by the 1st Bn, 11th Inf or the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav but at 1102 hrs vic YD026665 the 2d and 4th Co's 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt made contact with an estimated enemy Co (-). The enemy broke contact at 1530 hrs leaving 15 dead behind; the ARVN suffered no friendly KIA's.

(9) The last two days of Operation Montana Mauler, 1 and 2 April, were without contact. The 1st Bn, 11th Inf conducted search and clear operations back over the battle area moving east-southeast looking for bypassed enemy positions and personnel. 1-2 ARVN continued its search along the southern boundary of the DMZ and then joined TF 1-11 Inf and searched the northern half of the battle area. TF 3-5 Cav continued to screen the northern flank.

(10) During Operation Montana Mauler the 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (M) had been in contact with at least two battalions of the 27th NA Regt. Documents captured during Operation Montana Mauler identified the 3d and 4th Co's, 1st Bn and 2d and 3rd Co's 3rd Bn, 27th NVA Regt. The losses suffered by the 27th Regt have greatly reduced the combat effectiveness of the Regt and indications are that the Regt has returned to North Vietnam. Since the completion of Operation Montana Mauler enemy initiated incidents in the Cam Lo area and along 9 have significantly decreased.

(11) Results:

(a) Friendly Casualties:

	ARMY	CS)	USMC	ARVN	CUMULATIVE
KIA	21		1	0	22
IA,	150		11	10	171
DOW	2		0	0	2

(b) Enemy Casualties:

(1) Cumulative:	KIA:	274	HOI CHANH:	0
	PW:	0	IWC:	31
	CIVDEF:	0	CSWC:	17

(2) Inflicted by U Forces:

:	0	IW:	17
CIVDEF:	0	CSWC:	6

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(3) Inflicted by ARVN:

KIA:	28	HOI CHANH:	0
PW:	0	INC:	<u>14</u>
CIVDEF:	0	CSWC:	<u>11</u>

g. Ellis Ravine (8 April - 15 April): On 8 April the 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (M) began a combined search and clear, and road building operation in the Ba Long Valley west of Quang Tri City. The operation was conducted in coordination and cooperation with the 1st and 2d ARVN Regts and lasted until 15 April.

(1) Elements of the Brigade that participated in the operation were the 1st Bn, 11th Inf and the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav. The 1st Bn, 11th Inf was reinforced by the addition of one Cav Troop (A/4-12 Cav) and an engineer platoon (reinf) from the organic Brigade Engineer Company (A/7 Engr), while the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav consisted of A and B Troops 3-5 Cav, D/1-1 Inf and a reinforced engineer platoon from A/7 Engr.

(2) TF 3-5 Cav moved to Ca Lu (YD015455) on 7 April and began operations into the valley from the west. TF 1-11 Inf departed LZ Sharon on 8 April and entered the valley from the east. The task forces conducted reconnaissance in force and search and clear operations designed to destroy the enemy and his caches in the valley. As the battalions moved into the valley they built a road from Phuoc Mon (YD308469) to Ca Lu. On 11 April the engineer platoons opened the road to tracked vehicles but much work remained to be done before the road was passable to wheeled vehicles. On 13 April TF 3-5 Cav departed the valley for operations in "Leatherneck Square" and TF 1-11 Inf remained in the valley until 15 April when the road had been made passable to wheeled vehicles. The only enemy contact during the operation by elements of the Brigade was made on 13 April when 2/B/1-11 Inf spotted two (2) VC on a trail and killed one of them.

(3) While the Bde was building the road the 2d ARVN Regt landed one battalion at LZ Holcomb (YD119432) and conducted search and clear operations in the mountains north of the Ba Long Valley (See inclosure 6). South of the Valley the 1st ARVN Regt landed one battalion at LZ Davis-Hill (YD253290) and conducted search and clear operations toward the north. No major contacts were gained by either Regiment.

(4) Ellis Ravine had not resulted in the destruction of any enemy forces or caches, but an alternate supply route was opened between Quang Tri Combat Base and Vandergrift Combat Base.

h. Civic Action Operations: Civic action operations in the A0 were conducted in close coordination and cooperation with the hamlet, village, district and province officials. Because of the battles of Cam Hung and Montana Muller, and the effort involved in TF Remagen the Brigade was unable to devote very much of its time and effort to civic action. The following was accomplished:

(1) Major GVI projects supported:

(a) Security operations, supply routes, and hamlet elections

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(b) Participation in the 1969 Pacification Development Plan (PDP).

1. After an analysis of the 1969 PDP some routine, recurring civic action activities were re-oriented to align with designated pacification areas.

2. Pending the outcome of a survey being conducted in the PDP hamlets the Brigade initiated several civic action projects specifically requested by PDP hamlets.

(2) Routine Projects

(a) Road repair and construction

1. Renovation of approximately 10 kilometers of route 560.

2. Renovation of 3 kilometers of road leading from QL-1 to La Vang, making it passable to wheeled vehicle traffic.

(b) Bridge construction.

1. Two bridges constructed on Route 560.

2. Two bridges constructed in Nha Le Village.

3. One bridge at Gia Dang

4. One bridge at Vinh Lai.

(c) Support of Charitable Organizations

1. Thanh Ghia Orphanage

2. Tri Buu Orphanage

(d) Support of schools throughout the Brigade A0 in minor and major construction and supply of school commodities

(e) Medical assistance through MEDCAPS, DENTCAPS, immunizations and use of a mobile clinic.

1. 6822 Vietnamese treated at EDCAPS.

2. 222 Vietnamese treated at DENTCAPS.

3. 2820 Immunizations administered.

4. 39 more serious cases evacuated to the Quang Tri Provincial Hospital.

(f) Commodity distr

1. 10,198 pounds of

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2. 3314 pounds of soe
3. 79 pounds of clothing.

10. (0) **RESULTS:**

a. Friendly Losses:

(1) **Personnel:**

KIA: 4 Off, 45 EM
 WIA (minor): 0 Off, 45 EM
 WIA(E): 17 Off, 208 EM
 MIA: 0 Off, 0 EM
 Captured: 0 Off, 0 EM
 N H Death: 0 Off, 4 EM
 N H Injury: 2 Off, 24 EM

(2) **Materiel Losses:** The following equipment combat losses were sustained during the conduct of Operation 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div A0. Items listed include only major items of equipment.

	AMOUNT LOST
Tank, M48A3	3
Combat Engineer Vehicle	1
Personnel Carrier, M113A1	6
Carrier, Flamethrower	1
Mortar Carrier, M125A	1
Recovery Vehicle, M88	1
Xenon Searchlight	1
Radio Set, AN/VRC 53	2
Radio Set, AN/VRC 46	1
Radio Set, AN/VRC 47	2
Radio Set, AN/PRC 25	2
Radio Set, AN/GRC 125	1
Machine Gun, Cal .50	2
Machine Gun, M-60	.
Water Trailer	3
Truck, 2 Ton, M151A1	1
Truck, 3/4 Ton, M37B1	1

b. **Enemy Losses:**

NVA KIA: 475
 VC KIA: 40
 NVA DIS: 23
 VC DIS: 22
 NVA POWs: 9
 VC POWs: 11
 VC Returnees: 7 (

(AVN at Khe Sanh)

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Detainees: 26

CIV DEF: 5

(2) Enemy Materiel Losses:

Individual Weapons: 124
 Crew Served Weapons: 40
 82mm Mortar Rounds: 1459
 60mm Mortar Rounds: 482
 RPG Rounds: 262
 120mm Mortar Rounds: 19
 140mm Mortar Rounds: 1
 60mm Mortar Base Plates: 2
 AT Mines: 31
 Satchel Charges (Small) 800
 60mm Mortar Sight: 1
 ChiCom Grenades: 236
 Transister Radio: 1
 ChiCom Radio w/ Earphone and Antenna: 1
 Flamethrower: 1
 NVA Gas Masks: 304
 NVA Packst 12
 Entrenching Tools: 31

c. Due to operational requirements and weather, searches were not conducted in all areas where artillery missions were fired.

d. No significant amounts of US manufactured items were recovered.

11. (C) ADMINISTRATION and LOGISTICS:

a. Administration:

(1) The major activity in the personnel area consisted of the continuance of the Brigade Infusion Program that will be completed by 30 April 1969. The only facet incomplete or not in the final stages at the time of this report is the infusion program for senior non-commissioned officers which is controlled by HQS, USARV.

(2) On 15 January, the 1st Brigade Finance Office assumed the responsibility of the payroll for an additional 4,500 non-divisional army personnel in Northern I Corps. The 64th Finance Section was placed under the operational control of the Brigade Finance Office due to the additional work load. During January and February approximately 9,500 personnel were paid by the Brigade. On 15 March 1969 the 64th Finance Section assumed complete responsibility for paying the 4,500 non-divisional army personnel and the Brigade was relieved of this responsibility.

(3) The Brigade Civilian Personnel Section assumed administrative control of the 1st Brigade Ki Carson Scout Troop and its resources, was assigned administrative control of the scouts rather than under the more customary control of the S-3 or S-5 Personnel activities under one staff section.

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(4) The Drigade Reenlistment Program received increased emphasis during the 1st Quarter of 1969. A separate building was provided for the Career Counselor and an Assistant Career Counselor was added to the Reenlistment office.

(5) During March 1969 the Brigade published its Standard Operating Procedure updating the original draft SOP from Fort Carson and formalizing in-country procedures in all tactical and administrative areas.

(6) Post Exchange:

(a) The Drigado Post Exchange was placed in the "Main Store" category as a result of monthly sales in excess of two hundred thousand dollars.

(b) A request for customer service was approved and facilities requested.

(c) A mobile facility was established to provide exchange facilities to field units and remote bases.

(7) The Brigade underwent its first Annual General Inspection within this command during the period 23-29 March 1969 with an overall rating of excellent.

(8) During January 1969 the Brigade assumed operational control of the 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry. The squadron is an organic element of the 9th Infantry Division and was attached to the 101st Airborne Division at the time of assumption of operational control. In order to simplify the administrative pipeline for the squadron, the Drigade has recommended to XXIV Corps that the Squadron be assigned to the Drigade for all purposes.

(9) During the 1st quarter of 1969 the Brigade established a hospital pay system; once each month a Brigade Class A Agent travels to all hospitals in Viet- where 1st Brigade patients are located and provides these patients with their

(10) On 1 March 1969 the Special Services Officer opened a new limited Brigade R&I Center at Wunder Beach. Tentage was erected to house personnel. Latrine, lifeguard and trash facilities were provided but there are no messing facilities available. The facilities are capable of accommodating swimming and outdoor activities for up to one hundred and eighty personnel.

(11) The Brigade Provost Marshal's Office has initiated the first military police patrols to the remote areas of Quang Tri Province. These patrols have operated at such places as Con Thien, Gio Linh, Ca Lu and along the Street Without Joy. These patrols operate twenty-four hours a day when required.

b. Logistics:

(1) During the majority of the reporting period the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav was OPCON to the Brigade. In the case of the 3- Cav O&G:LCa parent ADCON and the Brigade, assisted by the 63rd and supply matters for the squadron.

(2) TF Remagen: D and the bridges behind TF Remagen were removed the

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operation was a test of the ability to resupply and keep an armored force operating without the use of ground lines of communications. The Brigade established a forward support element (FSE) at Vandergrift Combat Base where supplies and repair parts were assembled for shipment by helicopter to TF Remagen. Both battalions maintained combat trains with TF Remagen which consisted of tracked maintenance and resupply vehicles, the majority of the mechanics and a portion of the battalion supply section. At Vandergrift, with the FSE, the battalions maintained their PLL personnel and most of the remainder of their supply sections.

(a) All types of Class I were available at Vandergrift. Laundry packs were issued on the basis of one (1) pack per 100 men every two (2) days. The USMC Class I point issued one (1) A-ration meal per day. Because of the difficulty of distributing A-rations, C-rations were used about 90% of the time.

(b) Class I was available except for some special items such as OH-C (hydraulic fluid) and LSA (lubricating oil, semi-fluid) in large containers. By anticipating requirements, sufficient quantities of packaged POL were ordered from Brigade stocks to meet demands as they arose. Five-hundred gallon rubber drums were used to carry 75,000 gallons of fuel to the maneuver elements.

(c) There was no difficulty in drawing ammunition. The Brigade S-1 and the Marine Logistics Support Unit (LSU) Commander arranged an ammunition accountability transfer that enabled the TF Remagen S-4 to draw Class V quickly. Specialized items such as 40mm anti-aircraft (duster), M79, claymores, and hand flares were not available in large quantities but could be ordered through the LSU. Non-emergency delivery was normally made one or two days after ordering. The 105mm battery fired 8,883 rounds and the 81mm mortars fired 4,677 rounds during the operation.

(d) The USMC LSA scheduling system for helicopter logistical support caused the greatest logistical problem. Helicopters were not dedicated to the support of TF Remagen and the LSA scheduling system requires precise locations and times for delivery the afternoon before the supplies are to be delivered. With all units maneuvering, it was extremely difficult to comply with the LSA's system. A better resupply system would have been for the USMC to apply all helicopter support to its priorities until TF Remagen was in a position to be resupplied; then concentrate on TF Remagen needs until completed. With an average of 30 minutes per round trip, four (4) heavy lift helicopters could have met TF Remagen average daily resupply requirements in 1 1/2 hours. In addition a Brigade UH-1 was used daily for retail distribution of the parts, mail and meals from the combat train areas to the users.

(e) Organizational maintenance support was available from the combat trains and a contact team from D Company, 75th Support Battalion was in the field during most of the operation to provide direct support. In addition the Brigade provided repair parts and direct support maintenance for the 2d Troop, 7th ARVN Cav. While operating under combat conditions, the maintenance teams performed all required functions to include the pulling of power packs to adjust or replace them.

(f) Following is a summary of the Logistical activities required to support TF Remagen. It must be remembered that ~~to include~~ to include replacement parts

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such as power packs, was accomplished by air.

CLASS I

Meals	93 pallets (55,662 meals)
Sundry Packs	96

CLASS III

Mogas	19,550 gallons
Diesel	54,150 gallons
OE 50	865 gallons
OE 30	980 gallons
OE 10	320 gallons
Drake Fluid	45 gallons
GAL	110 gallons
LSA	56 gallons
G090	90 gallons
Hydraulic Fluid	71 gallons

CLASS V

105mm	8883 rounds
81mm	4677 rounds
	2338 rounds
90mm tank	522 rounds
150 cal	59,200 rounds
7.62mm	174,800 rounds
5.56mm	44,200 rounds
	5,760 rounds
Hand Flares	624
Frag Grenades	606
155mm	1044 rounds
40mm	400 rounds
40mm (Duster)	12,256 rounds

CLASS IX: Items listed below are items that were replaced. This does not include items that were "pulled" and adjusted or repaired in the field.

1-77 Armor (16 Mar - 11 Apr)

GRAN TOTALS

TANKS

Engine	3	3
Transmission	2	2
Starter	1	1
Track	3 sets	3 Sets
Comp Idler Arm	1	1

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Track	2 sets	2 sets
Generator	1	1
Comp Idler Arm	1	1

1-77 Armor (16 Mar - 11 Apr) 1-61 Mech (12 Apr - 28 Apr)*

N 113A1 / M577A1

M113A1 / M 577A1

Engine	3	Engine	6	9
Track	6 sets	Track	7 sets	13 sets
Transmission	0	Transmission	4	4
Final Drive	1	Final Drive	3	4

M 106A1

M 106A1

Engine	1	Engine	1	2
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M 125A1

Engine	1	1
Transmission	1	1

*Vehicles not repaired by 28 April were evacuated with the move of the task force to LZ Sharon.

12. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

a. During the reporting period the Brigade proved that a **Mechanized Brigade** is capable of operating in rough terrain without ground lines of **communications**, fighting main force **VVA** Regiments and **working** closely with the GVN forces in the **evacuation effort**.

b. The only way to successfully interdict the **enemy's** movement in and **around** the populated areas is to emphasize squad and fire team operations to include **sat-urabtn ambushing** and patrolling. **Whenever** the **Brigade** has been **concentrated** in its own AO there is evidence, in captured **documents**, that the numerous **night amb**ushes and the constant **daylight** patrolling has produced in the **enemy** a sense of frustration and a fear of movement between the base areas and the populated **low-**lands.

(1) Small unit operations can be conducted in **any** type of terrain. As long as a **reliable** means of **communications** is established between the squad or fire team and its parent unit the **Brigade** can respond to any emergency with fire support and a ready reaction force in time to prevent the unit concerned **from** getting into **serious trouble**.

(2) Ambushes are successful when the basic **fundamentals** are rigidly adhered to and practiced by the ambush force. The **Drigade** has found no secret formulas and has not developed any new ambushing **techniques**. It has proven **helpful** to have the team leaders trained in the adjustment of artillery and mortar **fire**, but it has been found by experience that if the basic principles of rifle **marksmanship** and the ambush techniques taught in the service **schools** are properly **applied**, the

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ambush will have a good chance of **success**.

c. When the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt was committed to Operation Montana Mauler both the Brigade, and 2d ARVN Regt established TAC CPs at C2 (YD135645). The two (2) CPs were collocated and were, in effect, a combined CP. The combined OP resulted in fast **timely** coordination and both the scheme of maneuver and the fire support for the Brigade and 2d ARVN were easily made to be complementary. The combined CP had the effect of producing a unity of command for the operation.

d. In moving at will in difficult terrain from LZ Alpine to Route 926 along the Laotian border Task Force Remagen has given the enemy **cause to think**. The enemy's lines of communications in Laos are **vulnerable**. An **armor/mech force**, which is totally supplied by **air**, is not subject to being destroyed by cutting off its logistical tail. Such a force could enter Laos, move to Route 926 and then turn and strike along the "Ho Chi Minh Trail."

6 Inclosures

1. Brigade Task Organization
2. Overlay: AO. 1st Inf Div (Mech)
- ✓3. Overlay: Operation Cam Hung
- ✓4. Overlay: Operation Montana Mauler
- ✓5. Overlay: TF Remagen AO
- , Overlay: Operation Ellis Ravine

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COL, Infantry
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3rd Marine Division
 Command Chronology
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Encl 5B After Action Reports From USA Elements

- Tab A Department of the Army, 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division(Mech) Combat Operation After Action Report, No Code Name, w/6 Incls:
 T b 1 Brigade Task Organization
 T b 2 Overlay: AO, 1st Bde, 5th Inf Div(Mech)
 Tab 3 Overlay: Operation Cam Hung
 T 4 Overlay: Operation Montana Mauler
 Ta 5 Overlay: TF Remagen AO
 Ta 6 Overlay: Operation Ellis Ravine
- Tab B Department of the Army, 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division(Mech) Report, Subj: Lessons Learned for Period Ending 30 Apr 1969, w/7 Incls:
 Tab 1 ~~Brigade Task Organization~~
 Tab 2 Overlay: AO, 1st bde, 5th Inf Div(Mech)
 Tab 3 Overlay: Operation Cam Hung
 Tab 4 Overlay: Operation Montana Mauler
 Tab 5 Overlay: TF Remagen AO
 Ta 6 Overlay: Operation Ellis Ravine
 Ta 7 Program of Instruction-Unit Chemical Operations Course
- Tab C Department of the Army, 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) Report, Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report (Operation Montana Mauler), W/1 Endl; & 8 Sketches,
 Incl 2A 22,23 Mar 69; Area Bounded by YD 029601, YD 029628, YD 049628, Yd 049601
 Incl 2 B 24 Mar 69; Area Bounded by YD 034610, YD 034635, YD 060635, YD 060610
 Incl 2C 25 Mar 69; Area Bounded by YD 026615, YD 026634, YD 051634, YD 051615
 Incl 2D 26 Mar 69; Area Bounded By YD 026614, YD 026636, YD 059636, YD 059614
 Incl 2E 27 Mar 69 Area Bounded by YD 022620, YD 022649, YD 049642, YD 049601
 Incl 2F 28 Mar 69; Area Bounded by YD 021630, YD 021650, YD 075650, YD 075630
 Incl 2G 29, 30, 31 Mar 69; Area Bounded by YD 020624, YD 020670, YP 070670, YD 070624
 Incl 2H Overlay of Phase III

(1 February - 30 April 1969)

ORGANIZATION	AREA OF OPERATION*
TF 1-11 Inf:	Organic light infantry battalion with four (4) rifle companies. Normally operated with three rifle companies and a tank company. AO RED
TF 1-61 Mech:	Organic mechanized infantry battalion with three (3) rifle companies. Normally operated as a pure mechanized infantry battalion with cross attachments of tank companies as needed. AO BLACK
TF 1-77 Armor:	Organic tank battalion with three (3) tank companies. Normally operated as a tank task force with one infantry company from the 1-11 Inf and one Cavalry troop (A/4-12) attached. AO GOLD
TF 3-5 Cav:	Cavalry squadron from the 9th Inf Div. Normally operated with two ground cavalry troops (One ground troop operated with the 101st Abn Div (AM) and D Troop operated with the 9th Inf Div), and one or two infantry companies attached. (The infantry companies were from the 1-11 Inf, 1-61 Mech or 3d Mar Div). AO RED
1st AMTRAC Bn: (USMC)	The 1st AMTRAC Bn was reorganized as three (3) company rifle battalion. The 1st AMTRAC Bn normally operated as a pure rifle battalion with periodic attachments of tanks, mechanized inf or cavalry. The 1st AMTRAC Bn was made non-operational on 15 Apr and was replaced by a Marine Battalion (USMC) and two Marine rifle companies. AO GRAY
5-4 Arty:	Organic 155mm sp artillery battalion with three (3) firing batteries. The 5-4 Arty normally operated with one battery at LZ Sharon (YD335445), one at Hai Lang FSB (YD412477), and one at LZ Nang (YD412477). The 5-4 Arty was reinforced by (USA) and the 1st Mar Arty (USMC) as the situation required. Brigade AO

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75th Spt Bn:	Organic Spt Bn with an Admin Co at CP Red Devil, Medical Co at Quang Tri, S and T Co at Camp Rod Devil and a DS Maint Co at LZ Sharon.	Brigade AO
A/4-12 Cav:	Organic ground cavalry troop. A/4-12 normally operated as part of TF 1-77 Armor, but from time to time the troop was attached to TF 1-11 Inf and TF 3-5 Cav.	AO GOLD
1/7th Engr:	Organic engineer company with one bridge platoon and three combat engineer plats. The company operated in a DS role for the entire Bde with attachments of plats to the various battalions for operational requirements.	Brigade AO
Other organic units operating out of Camp Red Devil were:	298th Sig Co 517th E Det 407th RFD G, C, 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (II)	Brigade AO

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 APO San Francisco 96477 1st Infantry Division (Mech)

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See ~~Distribution~~

References: USARV Reg 525-15, dtd 13 April 1968; PCV Reg 525-2, dtd 9 May 1968.

1. **SECTION 1 - Operations: Significant Activities.**

a. General:

(1) **Mission:** The primary mission of the 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) continued to be to conduct pacification, strike, counterinfiltration and counterinsurgency operations throughout the populated areas of Quang Tri Province and in Base Area 101 (See Inclosure 2).

(2) **Operations:**

(a) During the reporting period the Brigade continued to emphasize small unit search and clear operations, combined operations with ARVN, RF and PF forces and saturation ambushes and patrols at night. The emphasis continued to be on cutting the enemy's lines of communications between the old base areas in the mountains and the population in the lowlands, as well as interdicting his movement within the populated areas. During the month of February the Brigade prepared and implemented plans to protect the low land locations and in April a Rice Denial program was initiated. All three operations were planned and implemented in conjunction with VI forces. WN

(b) In addition to operations within the Brigade AO the 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) conducted a series of operations elsewhere in the 3d Marine Division AO. From 28 February through 3 March and from 22 March through 2 April the Brigade fought two major battles south of the DMZ and west of Con Thien (See Inclosure 3, Battle of Cam Hung; and Inclosure 4, Operation Montana Mauler). On 16 March the Brigade began operations on the Khe Sanh Plain. The operations on the Khe Sanh Plain were conducted by an Armor/Mech Task Force (TF Remagen) and lasted until 29 April (See Inclosure 5). From 8 April through 15 April the Brigade conducted Operation Ellis Ravine, which was a search and clear, road building operation conducted in coordination and cooperation with the 1st and 2nd ARVN Regts, 1st ARVN Division. During Ellis Ravine a road was opened between LZ Sharon (YD335445) and Ca Lu (YD015455) giving the 3d Marine Division a route from Quang Tri to Vandergrift Combat Base that could, with a little improvement, be used as a supply route for Vandergrift Combat Base should Route 9 be closed.

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(3) Task Organization: The Brigade's task organization was changed as the situation warranted to provide forces tailored for each task. During the majority of the reporting period, the Brigade was organized as set forth in Inclosure 1.

b. Operations in the Brigade A0 (See Inclosure 2):

(1) Background:

(a) Intelligence Estimate: An analysis of the enemy situation in the Brigade A0, coupled with an analysis of cordon and search operations and saturation ambushing and patrolling that had taken place during December 1968 and January 1969 revealed that:

1. IA and VC main force units had not returned to the populated areas.
2. The enemy continued to move in small groups, avoided contact and usually refused to fight mechanized forces.
3. A shortage of food and personnel continued to force the enemy to move in small groups from his base area to the populated areas to secure food and intelligence, and to recruit replacements for his depleted forces.
4. The infrastructure had been seriously crippled by the combined cordon and search operations of November 1968 through January 1969. In order to survive, the members of the infrastructure had to move continuously, conduct their operations during the hours of darkness, and attempt to recruit new members. In addition, cordons had become less profitable because a large number of the infrastructure had been killed, captured or run off by the constant combined ambushing and cordoning.
5. In order for the infrastructure to survive, the enemy would have to demonstrate the inability of allied forces to prevent enemy raids and attacks by fire during Tet, and also would have to disrupt the local elections that were to take place each Sunday in March.
6. The enemy's offensive capability was limited to the conduct of harassing attacks (attacks by fire, sniping, and the placement of mines and booby traps), or terrorist activities. Major forces would have to re-enter the area from North Vietnam before a serious threat could be posed to platoon or company sized Brigade. ARVN, RF or PF units.

(b) Operational Concepts: To take advantage of the enemy situation and continue the pacification effort it was decided:

(1) To continue the interdiction of the enemy movement from the base areas to the populated areas, and within the populated area by continuing to emphasize small unit (squad and fire team) operations. These operations were to include "Hunter-Killer" operations, saturation patrolling and saturation ambushing. Brigade forces ambushed between the population and the base area, and between population centers while territorial forces ambushed

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within the populated areas. An additional benefit of the saturation ambushing and patrolling would be the early detection of the entrance of large enemy forces into the area.

2. To continue conducting combined daylight search and clear operations with the regional and popular forces. These operations were to include integrating PF platoons and squads into the companies and platoons of the Brigade, using US tank and mechanized infantry platoons to block while RF and PF forces search an area, and conducting joint strike operations.

3. To discontinue the use of cordons for the Tet period (the month of February). It was decided that because cordons were no longer as productive as they had been it would be much better to use the available forces for ambushing and patrolling.

4. To continue maintaining continuous liaison with Trieu Phong, Hai Lang, and Mai Linh Districts; Quang Tri Province; and 1st ARVN Regt Headquarters, in order to be able to react to any enemy attack. This liaison was to include the establishment of secure voice and VHF point to point circuits between Bde. Sector and 1st ARVN and between the B and Districts. It was considered to be of particular importance to be able to react quickly to enemy attack against resettlement villages, District or Provincial Headquarters and isolated PF platoons. Joint plans were developed for the above contingencies by the Brigade, 1st ARVN Regt and the Provincial forces.

5. To insure the security of the local elections by patrolling the mortar belts with US and ARVN forces and replacing Provincial forces charged with the defense of fixed installations with US or ARVN forces. The Provincial forces were then freed to conduct security operations close to the villages and hamlets in which the elections were being held. On the days of the elections Brigade units stayed out of the populated areas completely.

(2) Tet 1969: The critical period for Tet was considered to be the entire month of February. The Brigade concentrated on ambushing and patrolling at night and combined search operations during the day. No cordons were conducted during the month.

(a) The saturation ambushing and patrolling paid off. During the Tet period no known enemy terrorist activities occurred in the AO, and captured documents stated that the enemy felt that he could no longer enter the populated portions of Trieu Phong, Hai Lang, or Mai Linh through the part of the Brig. AO west of Route 1. In addition the enemy was not able to launch an attack upon friendly forces or installations during the Tet period (in one case an enemy mortar squad was ambushed and seven (7) of the eight (8) were killed as they attempted to move to a firing position in the vicinity of LZ Sharon).

(b) The emphasis during daylight was on the combined search operations. Elements of the Brigade, Provincial forces and 1st ARVN Regt continually searched all known or suspected areas that the enemy had used as assembly areas in the past.

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(3) Local Elections (March 1969): In preparation for the local elections, careful plans were drawn up by the Vietnamese to insure that the Provincial Forces would be able to secure the voters.

(a) To provide maximum security the elections were spread over the first four Sundays in March so that there would be sufficient Provincial forces in all of the villages and hamlets in which elections were being held. In cooperation with Provincial authorities, the Brigade assumed responsibility for the defense of the critical bridges in the AO from 0600 hrs to 1800 hrs during each election day. Assuming responsibility for the bridges allowed the Provincial forces to secure the voters. The Brigade, in conjunction with the 1st RV Regt, also patrolled the mortar belts during the elections and was prepared to assist any RF or PF force that might have been attacked.

(b) During March and the first part of April the Brigade became heavily committed in the Leatherneck Square area and at Khe Sanh, thus not until 9 March was the Brigade able to place its maximum effort in support of the elections. Despite other commitments the Brigade was able to accomplish all of its missions. No incident was reported to have taken place during any of the elections.

(h) Rice Denial: After close coordination with Quang Tri Province, Rice Denial operations began on 23 April 1969.

(a) During the period of this report Rice Denial operations were concentrated on cutting the enemy's lines of communications, protecting the rice farmers while they harvest their crop, and preventing the VC from stealing the rice. The 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (M) has concentrated on cutting off the enemy's line of communications by constantly ambushing and patrolling the enemy's rice routes and likely temporary storage areas. The GV/UFrcos have directed their efforts towards protecting the people and their crops.

(b) Rice Denial operations will continue through 15 June 1969 with emphasis shifting during the middle of May to search operations to find enemy rice caches.

c. Battle of Cam Hung (28 February - 3 March): On 24 February the 3d Sqr, 5th Cav, consisting of B and C troops and the Squadron headquarters, was placed under the operational control of the 1st Bn, 5th Inf Div (M) and on 27 February the Squadron occupied Con Thien (YD136646) and 02 (YD136646). The mission of the Squadron was to secure the clearing operations northeast of 02 and conduct anti-infiltration and strike operations in AO GREEN (See Inclosure 3). During the early morning hours of 28 February Quat Xa Hamlet was mortared. Crater analysis indicated that the mortar fire may have come from Cam Hung (YD079629). Based on the crater analysis and on other intelligence provided by the Brigade indicating enemy presence at Cam Hung the 3-5 Cav dispatched the 3d platoon of A Troop into the area -

(1) At 1500 hrs on 28 February 3/B/3-5 Cav was engaged by an estimated NVA company at YD098630. The remainder of B Trp and C/ 5 Cav reinforced by

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a platoon of M/3-3 Marines moved to reinforce the platoon. The cavalry employing air and artillery on enemy positions and likely avenues of approach, closed with the enemy and swept the battle area finding 60 enemy KIA. At 1815 hrs contact was broken and the cavalry withdrew to defensive positions. Throughout the night six (6) batteries of Marine Artillery, two (2) batteries of Army Artillery, and the USS New Jersey fired into the area and on suspected enemy routes of withdrawal. Results of the day's action were one (1) US KIA, nine (9) US WIA and 60 NVA KIA.

(2) The enemy appeared to be fresh, well trained, and well equipped with new uniforms and weapons. The enemy employed small arms machine guns and RPGs and he fought hard and well to defend his positions. An assessment of the enemy actions indicated that the cavalry had probably run into a forward defensive position for a larger force (possibly a Battalion or regiment). Based on the above estimate of the enemy situation A/4-12 Cav was ordered to move from the vicinity of Quang Tri Combat Base (QTCB) to an assembly area at YD102596 to block the south and west avenues of withdrawal. The troop moved at 0010 hrs on 1 Mar and upon arriving in the assembly area 0330 hrs was placed under the operational control of 3-5 Cav.

(3) At dawn on the morning of 1 Mar A/4-12 Cav crossed the Cam Lo River and moved north to regain contact with the enemy while B and C Troops 3-5 Cav and one (1) platoon of M/3-3 Marines moved back into the area of the previous day's contact. At 1050 hrs 0/3-5 Cav regained contact via YD078639. C Troop maneuvered to dislodge the enemy from his positions while A/4-12 Cav, B/3-5 Cav and elements of M/3-3 Marines moved to seal off the battle area and prevent the enemy's escape.

(a) Shortly after contact was regained B/1-61 Mech was moved from AO BL/CK (See Inclosure 2) to C2 (YD136646) to act as Brigade reserve. At 1250 hrs C/1-11 Inf was air assaulted into the battle area and placed under operational control of TF 3-5 Cav.

(b) Throughout the day air strikes and artillery were employed in support of the assaults by the ground troops on the enemy bunker positions. The enemy was well dug in, his fortifications were extensive and he fought hard to hold his ground. By nightfall the enemy still occupied fortified positions and the Squadron withdrew to defensive positions on high ground around the enemy's locations. In an attempt to hold the enemy in position artillery was again fired on the enemy positions throughout the night and ambushes were placed between the friendly locations.

(c) Results of the day's activities were: two (2) US KIA, twenty-five (25) US WIA and 17 NVA KIA (as a result of constant contacts from 1050 hrs until 1730 hrs, ranging from sniper fire to heavy engagements between company sized units, it was impossible to check more than a small part of the battle area for enemy casualties). In addition, five (5) personnel carriers and four (4) tanks were damaged and placed out of action by the enemy.

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(d) At 012000H Mar 69 the 1st Bn, 61st Inf (M) was ordered to move at 020700H Mar 69 with a jump CP and one mech rifle company from LZ Sharon to C2. The battalion was to regain operational control of B/1-61 Inf (M) upon arrival at 02 and to be prepared to attack west to seize hill 162 (YD070635) in an attempt to prevent enemy escape to the northwest. The Brigade jump CP was also ordered to move to C2 to control the operation.

(4) At 0700 hrs on 2 Mar TF 1-61 Inf (M) moved with the Bde jump CP to C where TF 1-61 Inf (M) was reinforced by two (2) Marine platoons. By late morning there had been no significant contact so the 645 east west gridline was established as a boundary between TF 3-5 Cav and TF 1-61 Inf (M). TF 1-61 Inf (M) conducted search and clear operations north of the boundary while TF 3-5 Cav conducted search and clear operations in the southern portion of AO GREEN.

(5) Significant contact was never reestablished with the enemy although several small contacts were made on 2 and 3 March. By the evening of 3 March TF 3-5 Cav returned to Con Thien and 02 while TF 1-61 Inf (M) continued search and clear operations in the western half of AO GREEN until 060800H Mar 69 when the battalion returned to LZ Sharon.

(6) Results:

a. Enemy: During the battle of Cam Hung the enemy lost 118 NVA KIA and 3 individual and 8 crew served weapons captured. In addition, 212 mortar rounds (104 60mm, 90 82mm and 18 122mm) were captured.

b. Friendly: Personnel losses were three (3) US KIA and thirty-five (35) US WIA. Seven (7) personnel carriers and six (6) tanks were damaged (most of the damage was inflicted by anti-tank mines).

c. Documents captured during the battle indicate that two (2) battalions the 27th NVA Regt were in the Cam Hung area during the battle. After the first two days of the battle the enemy moved northwest into the DMZ and could not be pursued.

d. Task Force Remagen (16 March - 29 April): Task Force Remagen was an armor/mech infantry task force which opened Route 9 to Khe Sanh, and conducted reconnaissance in force and strike operation on the Khe Sanh Plain. From 16 March to 11 April TF Remagen was controlled by TF 1-77 Armor and from 11 April through 29 April it was controlled by TF 1-61 Inf (M).

(1) Background:

(a) Intelligence:

1. Enemy strength and disposition in the area of operations was unknown prior to starting the operation. Intelligence did indicate that highway 926, which connected north-south Route 92 in Laos with enemy base areas in Vietnam entering RVN at YD780234 and running east to YB35299 was being used by the NVA to transport men and materials into South Vietnam by wheeled vehicles. Aerial photos showed the road to be in good condition with signs

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Cover and concealment was good for ~~dismounted~~ troops throughout the area and concealment for tracked vehicles would have been good along the Xe Pon River, where the trees and surrounding vegetation exceeded 100 feet in height in most areas except that the area was so dry that the vehicles could be easily spotted by the dust that they stirred up as they moved.

4. The weather for the period 16 March to 12 April was extremely dry with no rain. Heat inversion caused the visibility to be only fair during the period of 26 Mar 69 to 30 Mar 69. The reduced visibility was an asset on the Laotian border. Temperatures ranged from the mid 90's to 105° F during the period. Throughout the operation the weather in the pass east of Khe Sanh and running east by northeast was characterized by lc clouds and fog which lasted until mid morning each day. This condition hindered any aircraft from entering the area of operations prior to 1000 hrs. During the last two weeks, the weather turned cool and several rain storms created trafficability problems in the mountainous areas.

(2) Operation Maine Crag: Based on the reports of heavy enemy vehicular traffic along Route 926, and the reports of possible tracked vehicle movement in the area, the 3d Marine Division launched Operation Maine Crag on 15 March 1969. Operation Maine Crag was designed to be a regimental size search and clear operation along the eastern portion of Route 926 and around the Laotian Salient in Quang Tri Province. The 3d Marine Regt landed on LZ Saigon (XD815275), Paris (XD808236), Hanoi (XD802310) and Sparrow (YD0505 8). The Marines moved east along Route 926 searching for possible enemy storage and assembly areas trying to find where all of the traffic along Route 926 had terminated.

(3) Mission: The mission of TF Remagen was to open Route 9 to Khe Sanh cut Route 926 in support of the 3d Marine Regiment's operation Maine Crag, protect the 3d Marine Regiment from an attack by an enemy armor thrust from Laos, conduct reconnaissance in force operations on the Khe Sanh - a in and to conduct strike operations as directed by Task Force Hotel.

(4) Concept of operation:

(a) Task Force Remagen was to stage at Ca Lu (YD015455) on 16 March and beginning on the morning of 17 March the Task Force was to move west opening Route 9 to Khe Sanh. The move to Khe Sanh was to be a deliberate move with the scouts and engineers clearing the road of mines and obstacles, the mech infantry securing the high ground along the route, and the artillery displacing as needed to cover the lead elements of the Task Force. After the lead elements opened the route the tank company and command group were to proceed through to Khe Sanh. From Ca Lu to Khe Sanh 21.9 Km of Route 9 is nothing but a turning, twisting road out out of the side of a steep ridgeline. In short, 21.9 Km of Route 9 is perfect ambush country and TF Remagen was not going to take any chances* After arriving at Khe Sanh the Task Force was to proceed south as rapidly as possible to cut Route 926 and protect the exposed flank and rear of the 3d Marine Regt from any possible enemy armor thrust from Laos. Because of the need to get astride Route 926 rapidly the Task Force would have to move along the relatively easy terrain at the base of the Go Roc. Once astride Route 926

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TF Remagen was to conduct search and clear operations south of the highway and along the Laotian border.

(b) Another objective of Task Force Remagen was to give the enemy cause to think about the vulnerability of any equipment or units that he might try and move from Laos into Quang Tri using the main avenues of approach into the province. By demonstrating the ability of a mech/armor force to operate in the difficult terrain around and to the south of Khe Sanh the enemy would not only realize the vulnerability of his infiltration routes, but also the vulnerability of his main lines of communications in Laos to an armored thrust would also become quite apparent.

(c) It was decided that TF Remagen would operate at Khe Sanh without a ground line of communications. Because of the length of the road from Ca Lu to Khe Sanh the distance that the Task Force planned to move from Khe Sanh while operating in the area, and the limited combat power available to the task force it was decided not to waste combat power on the security of resupply operations. All resupply to include all gas, and replacement parts for the vehicles was to be accomplished by air.

(5) Execution:

(a) At 0600 hrs on 17 March TF Remagen departed Ca Lu for Khe Sanh. The scout platoon of the 1st Bn, 77th Armor supported by the attached engineer platoons and AVLB's led the way. Progress was slow but steady as bypasses around destroyed bridges were constructed. AVLB's were used repeatedly to span washouts and fallen bridges and the road was swept for mines. The scouts reached D921419 at 2015 hr and established a night defensive position at that location. At 180600H March the scouts and engineers resumed their operations westward. B Company, 1st Bns 61st Inf (M) simultaneously displaced from Ca Lu and moved to secure the high ground vic XD935410. At 1530 hrs Btry 0, 1st Bn, 8th Artillery (105 SP) displaced from Ca Lu to XD921419 to provide fire support for the Task Force elements which now extended along Route 9 from XD913403 east to Ca Lu. At nightfall, the scout platoon had crossed the last barrier to traffic and spent the night on the Khe Sanh Plateau. Their arrival on the plateau marked the reopening of Route 9 for armored traffic. A prodigious amount of engineering effort had been required in the first two days. Thirteen (13) bypasses were constructed, the AVLB's had been launched and recovered six (6) times, and enemy anti-tank mines were discovered and destroyed in two locations along the route. G Company, 1st Bn, 77th Armor began moving west on Route 9 at 190800H Mar 69. The Task Force Command Group and combat trains followed C/1-77 Armor. The march went without incident, and all Task Force elements had closed on the plateau within five (5) hours. Lead elements of the Task Force reached Khe Sanh by noon, where they were visited by LTG Stillwell, IV Corps Commander.

(b) On 20 March TF Remagen moved through the abandoned Special Forces camp at Lang Vei (XD795363) and then turned south along the Laotian border toward Highway 926. At 1520 hr. on 25 March Tm C linked up with A/1-3 Marines in the vicinity of Highway 926 and established a night position at XD7772. The battalion 4.2" mortar platoon and the e _____

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079925 to support the team. Team C placed an ambush at the point where Highway 926 enters South Vietnam after crossing the Xe Pon River. This ambush engaged 3 to 5 enemy moving through the ford site and the enemy returned fire. A search of the area the following morning revealed blood trails and two 82mm mortar rounds were found at XD780242.

(c) From 26-29 March 1969, both teams conducted extensive search and destroy operations north and south of Route 926 from the Laotian border to the vicinity of the Laotian Salient. Approximately 100 square kilometers were searched with negative results. Highway 926 was found to be a good dry highway for wheeled vehicles. Observation of the Laotian side of the river revealed numerous huts, bunkers and trails. On the night of 29 Mar Team C started north back to Khe Sanh.

(d) At 300720H Mar 69, Team B and the battalion mortar platoon began moving north. They were attacked at 0836 hrs vicinity XD778239 by an unknown sized enemy force. One tank was damaged by an anti-tank mine, and another was struck by an RPG. Team B returned the fire and swept the area. Three (3) enemy bodies were found. Team B suffered three (3) wounded in action and both damaged tanks were repaired in their field locations. Team 0 had sent a tank platoon, proceeded by a mine sweep teams in reaction to Team B's firefight. Following the minesweep team, the lead tank struck what was estimated to be two Chinese Communist plastic AT mines stacked one on top of the other. The detonation blew sections of tank track 300 meters from the vehicle, and left a crater seven feet in diameter by four feet deep. While securing the damaged tank, and sweeping the area, Team 0 discovered and destroyed a large enemy cache at XD790255. The cache contained the following:

82mm mortar rounds	1120 with fuzes
60mm mortar rounds	218 with fuzes
75mm recoilless rifle rounds	86
51 cal MG rounds	3500
37mm rounds	20
7.62mm rounds	1500
RPG boosters	2
Chicom Lt MG	1
AK-47 ammunition	3400
RPG-2	2
Chicom grenades	2
Mount, 51 cal	2
Gas Mask	300
Plastic anti-tank mine	1

Team B passed through Team C and moved north to a night position at XD765292 while Team C secured the badly damaged tank. The following morning (310615H Mar 69) Team B took approximately 100 rds of 82mm mortar, resulting in one (1) friendly KIA and six (6) WIA. Counterbattery fire from G/1-40 Arty was placed on the suspected mortar position in Laos and the enemy ceased fire at 0654 hrs. At 0855 hrs Team C took three (3) rounds of 82mm from the Laotian side of the river but there were no casualties. At 1215 hrs, Team C was hit by mortar and RPG fire. A VTR from D Company, 1-77 Armor took a RPG

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direct hit, detonating six (6) LAWs stored inside resulting in one (1) KIA, four (4) WIA, and a total loss of the VTR. Team C returned fire with tank guns, suppressing the enemy fire.

(e) From 2 through 6 April 1969 the Task Force was involved in extracting the damaged vehicles and in relocating back to the vicinity of Khe Sanh where extensive maintenance was performed. It must be remembered that all of the replacement parts, to include tracks and power packs, had to be delivered by air.

(f) On 7 April the Task Force moved north to conduct a reconnaissance in force toward LZ Alpine (XD755530) with Tr. C while Tr. B conducted search and clear operations west-northwest of the Khe Sanh airfield. By being able to move from Khe Sanh to Alpine the armor/mech force demonstrated that armor is capable of getting astride all three of the main routes of infiltration into Quang Tri Province from Laos.

(g) On 9 April an accident occurred at Vandergrift Combat Base. Late in the afternoon a Marine CH-46 crashed and burned placing the Division's forward logistical support area (LSA) out of operation. The LSA at Vandergrift was the sole means of support for TF Remagen, the 3d Marine Regt and the 4th Marine Regt. The LSA remained closed on the 10th and did not reopen until 11 April. Operations by TF Remagen were able to continue unabated.

(h) On the night of 10 April 1969, after the LSA had been closed all day, C/1-40 Arty secured by the battalion headquarters, tank section and the scout platoon moved to XD811369 and conducted an artillery raid. Targets consisted of 40 to 50 vehicle light vic XD780280, vehicle lights at XD761328, XD772318, and grids XD770310 and XD770300. The battery fired 1149 HE, 95 WP, and 70 VT rounds. There were 45 secondary explosions, including 6 large flashes. One large fire was started.

(i) On 11 April the 1st Bn, 61st Inf (M) relieved the 1st Bn, 77th Armor as the control headquarters of TF Remagen. At 1345 hrs the command group, scout platoon, mortar platoon and support elements of the 1st Bn, 77th Armor departed Khe Sanh and after a 97.6 Km road march the last elements arrived at LZ Nancy at 2030 hrs. When the 1st Bn, 61st Inf (M) arrived at Khe Sanh it brought with it A/1-61 Inf (M), A/1-77 Armor, the scout and mortar platoons of the 1st Bn, 61st Inf (M), a self propelled 155mm howitzer battery (3 howitzers) and two (2) Marine 8 inch howitzers. The 8 inch howitzers broke down before they reached Ca Lu and A/1-77 Armor had to drag them to Khe Sanh after dark.

(j) After arrival at Khe Sanh A/1-61 Inf (M) moved toward LZ Alpine to conduct search and clear operations south of the LZ while D/1-61 Inf (M) and C/1-77 Armor conducted search and clear operations in the vicinity of Khe Sanh. On the 13th A/1-77 Armor began to move directly south from Khe Sanh toward LZ Saigon (XD815275) and Route 926 attempting to find a way through the mountainous terrain that would allow the Task Force to move between R. 926 and the Sanh without moving along the base of the Co Roc.

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(k) While A/1-77 Armor moved south the remainder of the Task Force made a dash for the Laotian border. Employing TAC air, artillery and advancing directly west from Khe Sanh the mech/armor force moved toward the border attempting to make the enemy believe that his lines of communications in Laos were in danger, and that he would be attacked in his sanctuary. The enemy did not react to the feint.

(l) On 15 April B/1-61 Inf (M) and O/1-77 Armor departed Khe Sanh for LZ Sharon and LZ Nancy respectively. As the companies reached Ca Lu the columns split. All inoperable vehicles were moved along Route 9 to Dong Ha and then down Route 1 to their final destination while the remainder of the companies moved through the newly opened Ba Long Valley road. As B/1-61 Inf (M) and C/1-77 Armor departed Khe Sanh the two (2) 8 inch howitzers that had accompanied TF 1-61 Inf (M) on its move to Khe Sanh were returned to Vandergrift Combat Base.

(m) On 19 April the 2d Troop, 7th ARVN Cav, reinforced by the Recon Co, 1st ARVN Regt moved from Camp Evans to Ca Lu. The following day the EVT moved to Khe Sanh and was placed under the operational control of TF Remagen. After arriving at Khe Sanh the ARVN conducted search and clear operations north of the airfield and then west toward the Laotian border.

(n) On 21 April A/1-77 Armor reached Highway 926. After spending the night astride the highway, A/1-77 Armor returned to LZ Saigon while A/1-61 Inf (M) moved through the tank company, turned east on Highway 926 and conducted search and clear operations near the Laotian salient in the vicinity of D085225.

(o) On the 23rd the elements of TF Remagen that had been working along Highway 926 began their move back to Khe Sanh. The last element returned to Khe Sanh on 24 April and the Task Force performed maintenance in preparation for its scheduled move to LZ Sharon on 26 April.

(p) At 0330 hours on 25 April an estimated NVA battalion attacked the 2d Troop, 7th ARVN Cav which was located at XD812410. The attack started with a heavy mortar barrage which lasted for about one hour (one mortar round landed near the FDC track of C/1-40 Arty killing the battery executive officer and wounding every man in the FDC). Following the mortar fire the enemy attacked the ARVN position using RPG's, small arms fire, automatic weapons fire, flamethrowers and satchel charges. At 0600 hours the enemy broke contact leaving behind 33 NVA KIA. A further search of the area resulted in the capture of 22 AK-47's, four (4) B-40 launchers, one (1) B-41 launcher, two (2) IACs, one (1) bangalore torpedos two (2) pole charges, 50 Chicom grenades, 300 satchel charges and one (1) flamethrower. Friendly casualties were: eight (8) ARVN KIA, 40 ARVN WIA, one (1) Australian advisor KIA, two (2) US advisors WIA, two (2) US KIA and three (3) US WIA. Three (3) ARVN personnel carriers were destroyed and one (1) tank from A/1-77 Armor was damaged.

(q) The move from Khe Sanh was postponed until 28 April to allow Task Force Remagen time to conduct a thorough search for the enemy. At 0300 hrs on the 28th the enemy attacked once again. This time the main attack was

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directed against Co A, 1st Bn, 61st Inf (M) which was located at XD845390. The company was alerted just prior to the start of the attack by a listening post which sprung an ambush on the enemy as they were moving into position. The enemy attack was supported by RPG, mortar, small arms and automatic weapons fire. Throwing satchel charges and using flame devices the enemy charged from the southwest but was unable to penetrate the perimeter. At approximately 0540 hrs the enemy broke contact and disappeared into the night. While A/1-61 Inf (M) was under attack both 2/7 ARVN and the Task Force OP were probed by the enemy ground forces. 2/7 ARVN moved to A/1-61 Inf's location and swept the area. The day was spent attempting to regain contact and at 1100 hrs C/1-11 Inf was air assaulted into an LZ near the Khe Sanh airfield. Contact was not re-established.

1. Friendly casualties were five (5) ... and 35 WIA. In addition, two (2) 105mm SP howitzers and one M548 cargo carrier were damaged while one (1) M113A1 personnel carrier, one (1) M48A3 tank, one (1) water trailer and one (1) M548 were destroyed. (one of the M548s was loaded with 105mm ammunition which exploded causing most of the friendly casualties).

2. The enemy lost 34 NVA KIA and abandoned the following equipment: 15 AR-47s, one (1) RPD, two (2) RPG-2s, 500 satchel charges and 76 RPG rounds.

(x) Enemy units involved in the contacts of 25 and 28 April have been identified as elements of the 57th and 9th Regts, 304th NVA Div.

(a) At 0700 hrs on 29 April TF Remagen began its move from Khe Sanh back to its home base. Because of the enemy attacks on the 25th and 28th it was anticipated that the enemy had mined the road from Khe Sanh to Ca Lu and that he might try and attack the Task Force while it was on the road. The move to Ca Lu was slow and careful but by 1246 hrs the lead element had reached Ca Lu without incident and by 2150 hrs the last vehicle returned to LZ Sharon, a distance of 80 grueling kilometers.

(6) Logistics: Because the bridges behind TF Remagen were removed the operation was a test of the ability to resupply, and keep an armored force operable without the use of ground lines of communications. The Brigade established a forward support element (FSE) at Vandergrift Combat Base where supplies and repair parts were assembled for shipment by helicopter to TF Remagen. Both battalions maintained combat trains with TF Remagen which consisted of tracked maintenance and resupply vehicles, the majority of the mechanics and a portion of the battalion supply section. At Vandergrift, with the FSE the battalions maintained their PLL personnel and most of the remainder of their supply sections.

(a) All types of Class I were available at Vandergrift. Sundry packs were issued on the basis of one (1) pack per 100 men every two (2) days. The USMC Class I point issued one (1) A-ration meal per day. Because of the difficulty of distributing A-rations, C-rations were used about 90% of the time.

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(b) Class III was available, except for some special items such as OH-C (cherry juice) and LSA (lubricating oil, semi-fluid) in large containers. By anticipating requirements, sufficient quantities of packaged POL were ordered from Brigade stocks to meet demands as they arose. Five-hundred gallon rubber drums were used to carry 75,000 gallons of fuel to the maneuver elements.

(c) There was no difficulty in rasing ammunition. The Brigade S-4 and the Marine Logistics Support Unit (LSU) Commander arranged an ammunition accountability transfer that enabled the TF Remagen S-4 to draw Class V quickly. Specialized items such as 40mm anti-aircraft (duster), M-79, claymores, and hand flares were not available in large quantities but could be ordered through the LSU. Non-emergency delivery was normally made 2 days after ordering. The 105mm battery fired over 7,000 rounds and the 60mm mortars fired approximately 4,000 rounds during the first three weeks of the operation.

(d) The USMC LSA scheduling system for helicopter logistical support caused the greatest logistical problem. Helicopters were not dedicated to the support of TF Remagen and the LSA scheduling system requires precise locations and times for delivery the afternoon before the supplies are to be delivered. With all units maneuvering, it was extremely difficult to comply with the LSA system. A better resupply system would have been for the USMC to apply all helicopter support to its priorities until TF Remagen was in a position to be resupplied; then concentrate on TF Remagen needs until completed. With an average of 30 minutes per round trip, four (4) heavy lift (OH-47) helicopters could have met TF Remagen's average daily resupply requirements in 1 hour. In addition a Brigade UH-1 was used daily for retail distribution of the parts, mail and meals from the combat trains areas to the users.

(e) Second echelon maintenance support was available from the combat trains and a contact team from D Company, 75th Support Battalion was in the field during most of the operation to provide direct support. In addition the Brigade provided repair parts and direct support maintenance for the Troop, 7th AAV Cav. While operating under combat conditions, the maintenance teams performed all required functions to include the pulling of power packs to adjust or replace them.

(f) Following is a summary of the logistical activities required to support TF Remagen. It must be remembered that all resupply, to include replacement parts such as power packs, was accomplished by air.

CLASS II

Meals	93 pallets (55,662 meals)
Sundry packs	96

CLASS III

Mogas	19,550 gallons
Diesel	56,450 gallons

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CLASS III

OE 50	865 gallons
OE 30	980 gallons
OE 10	330 gallons
Brake fluid	15 gallons
GAA	110 gallons
ISA	56 gallons
GO 90	90 gallons
Hydraulic fluid	71 gallons

CLASS V

105mm	8,883 rounds
81mm	4,677 rounds
4.2"	2,338 rounds
90mm. tank	522 rounds
.50 cal	59,200 rounds
7.62mm	174,800 rounds
40m	5760 rounds
Hand flares	624
Frag grenades	606
8"	1,04 rounds
3"	100 rounds
40m (duster)	12,256 rounds

CLASS IX: Items listed below are items that were replaced. This does not include items that were "pulled" and adjusted or repaired in the field.

1-77 Armor (16 Mar - 11 Apr)

GRAND TOTALS

<u>TANKS</u>		
Engine	3	3
Transmission	2	2
Starter	1	1
Track	3 sets	3
Comp Idler Arm	1	1
<u>M38</u>		
1/2 final drive	2	2
Track	2 sets	
Generator		1
Comp Idler Arm	1	1

1-77 Armor (16 Mar - 11 Apr)

1-61 Mech (12 Apr - 28 Apr)*

M113A1/M577A1

M113A1/M577A1

Engine	3	Engine	6	9
Track	6 sets	Track	7 sets	13
Transmission	0	Transmission	4	4
Final Drive	1	Final Drive		

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1-77 Armor (16 Mar - 11 Apr)1-61 Mech (12 Apr - 28 Apr).

M1106A1

M1106A1

Engine 1

Engine 1 2

M 125A1

Engine 1 1
Transmission 1 1

* Vehicles not repaired by 28 April were evacuated with the move of the Task Force to LZ Sharon.

(7) For forty-seven (47) days an armor/mech force had operated in the northwestern mountains of South Vietnam along the Laotian border. Except for the early morning hours of 25 and 28 April no major battles were fought, but the 1st Bde 5th Inf Div (M) had proved that armor can operate in difficult terrain over extended distances without a ground line of communications. In moving at will from Alpine to Route 926 along the Laotian border Task Force Remagen has given the enemy cause for concern. The enemy's line of communications in Laos are vulnerable. A tank infantry force, which is totally supplied by air and therefore not subject to being destroyed by cutting off its logistical tail, could enter Laos, move to Route 92 then turn south and strike along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

e. Montana Mauler (22 March - 2 April): By 22 March available information indicated that elements of the 27th NVA Regt were again operating in the area in which the battle of Cam Hung had been fought earlier in the month. During the period 15-22 March the Cam Lo (YD128595) area and Route 9 from Cam Lo to Vandergrift Combat Base (YD000490) experienced a significant increase in enemy activity which was characterized by minings, harassing mortar fire, RPG fire, small arms fire and numerous enemy sightings. The nature of the enemy activities indicated that the 27th Regt probably had no missions of interdicting Route 9. To determine the enemy situation and attempt to eliminate the enemy threat to Route 9 a reconnaissance in force operation was to be conducted by TF 3-5 Cav. TF 3-5 Cav was to move through the Khe Chua Valley searching the draws conducting reconnaissance by fire, and attempting to gain contact with elements of the 27th NVA Regt. that were believed to be operating in the area. The general trace of the reconnaissance in force was to be as follows: YD143616, YD140620, YD000600, XD965595, XD980570, and XD985545.

(1) Operation Montana Mauler began on 22 March when TF 3-5 Cav departed C2 and headed through the Khe Chua Valley. Initially Montana Mauler was a reconnaissance in force operation in which a cavalry squadron using two armored cavalry troops, a combat engineer platoon and two light infantry platoons searched for the enemy, located him and developed the situation for the Brigade. Once the situation had been developed the Brigade then committed two light infantry battalions (one US and one ARVN) to assault the enemy's position and destroy him in place. As the infantry closed with the enemy the cavalry withdrew from the area of immediate contact and moved

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around the friendly forces to the opposite side of the battle area to assume a screening mission in order to protect the infantry battalions from enemy attacks launched from within the DMZ.

(2) During the first two days of the operation enemy contact was frequent but sporadic. On the third day TF 3-5 Cav encountered the primary defensive positions of the enemy. Two (2) companies were entrenched in camouflaged bunkers at YD046624 and D041616 with a light screening force established between the two positions. I/3-9 Marines air assaulted into the battle during the afternoon and was placed OPCON to TF 3-5 Cav. Fighting was heavy on the 24th until the late afternoon when the enemy, now estimated to be a battalion in strength, began to diminish his attacks. During the evening of 24 March it was decided that the situation had been sufficiently developed by TF 3-5 Cav to commit two (2) companies and the battalion headquarters of the 1st Bn, 11th Inf to the fight.

(3) During the afternoon of 2- March A and B Companies and the battalion headquarters of the 1st Bn, 11th Inf air assaulted into an LZ on the high ground north of the previous day's battle (YD043623). The battalion (-) landed without incident and throughout the day contact was light and sporadic for both battalions. The lack of contact in the valley on 25 March gave cause to suspect that the NVA had moved north. Accordingly plans were made for the 1st Bn, 11th Inf (-), with I/3-9 Marines OPCON, to move north to reestablish contact.

(4) 26 March turned out to be the first of four (4) days of heavy fighting for the 1st Bn, 11th Inf. At 0330 hrs the battalion was attacked by small arms, automatic weapons, RPG's and mortar fire from the north, west and east. At 0800 hrs the battalion jumped off in the attack and almost immediately contact was gained. Airstrikes and artillery pounded the enemy positions but with each pass the fighter aircraft met a heavy volume of automatic weapons fire and the enemy refused to cede. After experiencing at difficult with the enemy and the heat (the first time since October that the weather had been hot; 105° F) the 11th Inf returned to their positions of the previous night and prepared to resume the attack on the 27th.

(5) The 1st Bn, 11th Inf began to attack north at 0715 hrs on 27 March. A and B Co's met strong resistance but by noon the enemy had been rooted out of his bunkers on the intermediate objective and C/1-11 Inf was air assaulted into a position north of the main enemy position (Hill 200 at YD043644).

(a) As C/1-11 Inf air assaulted into their LZ it was immediately brought under intense enemy mortar fire from the northwest. The company commander was wounded and evacuated and the mortar attack did not stop until airstrikes could be placed on the mortar positions.

(b) During the afternoon A and B Co's pressed on and seized their objectives but the enemy immediately counterattacked each company. By 1717 hrs the enemy attacks were repulsed but the price had been high. B Co lost 1 of 4 cars sent for its FO who commanded the company throughout the afternoon. At 1800 hrs the two platoons of D/1-11 Inf that had been with 2d -5th Cav moved to reinforce B/11th Inf.

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(c) The day had cost the 1st Bn, 11th Inf 13 KIA, one (1) KCS KIA and 30 WIA. Enemy casualties for the day were 120 NVA KIA.

(6) 28 March was devoted to cleaning up small pockets of enemy resistance, resupply and reorganization. Although no major engagements took place the casualties remained high. The 1st Bn, 11th Inf suffered one (1) KIA and 46 WIA while 60 NVA were killed.

(a) Since the 26th the 3-5 Cav had remained in the Khe Chua Valley. On the 28th the Squadron was given the mission of moving to the right flank of the battle area to be in a position on the 29th to support C/1-11 Inf on Hill 208 (YD043644). The cavalry moved into position, and during the night A Troop received two (2) probing attacks.

(b) During the course of the battle on 28 March it became evident that the Brigade did not have the forces in the battle area to completely encircle the enemy and prevent his escape. Coordination was made with the 2d ARVN Regt 1st ARVN Div and it was decided to commit the 1st Bns 2d VN/Regt to the operation. Plans called for the battalion to be air assaulted on to Hill 262 (YD031644) during the morning of 29 March in an attempt to block escape routes.

(7) 29 March was the last day of heavy fighting.

(a) Action was initiated when D/1-11 Inf, moving to secure a position in support of an air assault by I/3-9 Marines, was engaged by an NVA force in a bunker complex. Nontoxic riot control agents, airstrikes and small arms fires were used to root the enemy out of his positions. While the air assault of I/3-9 Marines was in progress elements of A/1-11 Inf, which had been moving north along a ridge (YD036635), came under heavy counterattack by an estimated NVA Co. The ene attacked from the north and attempted to cut off the lead platoon. As B/1-11 moved to reinforce A Co both companies came under heavy mortar attack. The enemy attack was beaten off, but throughout the remainder of the day the 1st Bn, 11th Inf continued to receive sporadic mortar fire.

(b) The planned air assault of hill 262 by the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt was changed and the 1st and 3d companies landed on an LZ at YD063646 while the 2d and 4th companies landed on an LZ at YD067655. After landing, 1-2 ARVN moved toward the southern boundary of the DMZ in an attempt to cut off the enemy escape routes. Only sporadic contact was made by the VNV Battalion during the day.

(c) Results for 29 March were: 19 friendly WIA, 45 enemy KIA and two (2) enemy 82mm mortars destroyed.

(8) On the 30th and 31st of March the 1st Bn, 11th Inf searched the battle area while 1-2 ARVN moved to and searched along the southern edge of the DMZ west of Con Thien from YD055685 to YD035675. TF 3-5 Cav, reinforced by the 3d Co, 2d Bn, 2d ARVN Regt screened the northern flank of the battle area and retained one troop reaction force at Con Thien. Significant ground contact was not reestablished by the 1st Bn, 11th Inf or the 3d Sqn.

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5th Cav but at 1102 hours via ~~13026665~~ the 2d and 11th Co's 1st Bn 3rd ARVN Regt made contact with an estimated enemy Co (-). The enemy broke contact at 1530 hrs leaving 15 dead behind; the ARVN suffered no friendly KIA's.

(9) The last two days of Operation Montana Mauler, 1 and 2 April were without contact. The 1st Bn, 11th Inf conducted search and clear operations back over the battle area moving east-southeast looking for bypassed enemy positions and personnel. 1-2 ARVN continued its search along the southern boundary of the II and then joined TF 1-11 Inf and searched the northern half of the battle area. TF 3-5 Cav continued to screen the northern flank.

(10) During Operation Montana Mauler the 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (M) had been in contact with at least two battalions of the 27th NVA Regt. Documents captured during Operation Montana Mauler identified the 3d and 11th Co's 1st Bn, and 2d and 3rd Co's 3d Bn; 27th NVA Regt. The losses suffered by the 27th Regt have greatly reduced the combat effectiveness of the Regt and indications are that the Regt has returned to North Vietnam. Since the completion of Operation Montana Mauler enemy initiated incidents in the Cam Lo area and along Hwy 9 have significantly decreased.

(11) Results:

(a) Friendly Casualties:

KIA	21	(KCS)	1	0	22
WIA	150		11	1010	171
DOW	2		0	0	2

(b) Enemy Casualties:

- (1) Cumulative: KIA: 274, PW: 0, CIVDEF: 0, HOI CHANH 0, IWC: 31, CSWC: 17
- (2) Inflicted by US Forces: KIA: 246, PW: 0, CIVDEF 0, HOI CHANH 00, IWC: 17, CS3. 6
- (3) Inflicted by ARVN: KIA: 28, PW: 0, CIVDEF: 0, HOI CHANH 0, IWC: 14, CSWC: 11

f. Ellis (8 April - 15 April): On 8 April the 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (M) began a combined search and clear, and road building operation in the Ba Long Valley west of Quang Tri City. The operation was conducted in coordination and cooperation with the 1st and 2d ARVN Regts and lasted until 15 April.

(1) Elements of the Brigade that participated in the operation were the 1st Bn, 11th Inf and the 3d Squadron, 5th Cav. The 1st Bn, 11th Inf was reinforced by the addition of one Cav Troop (A/4-12 Cav) and an engineer platoon (Reinf) from the organic Brigade Engineer Company (A/7 Engr), while the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav consisted of A and B Troops 3-5 Cav, D/1-11 Inf and a reinforced engine

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(2) TF 3-5 Cav moved to Ca Lu (YD015455) on 7 April and began operations into the valley from the west. TF 1-11 Inf departed LZ Sharon on 8 April and entered the valley from the east. The task forces conducted reconnaissance in force and search and clear operations designed to destroy the enemy and his caches in the valley. As the battalions moved into the valley they built a road from Phuoc Mon (YD308469) to Ca Lu. On 11 April the engineer platoons opened the road to tracked vehicles but much work remained to be done before the road was passable to wheeled vehicles. On 13 April TF 3-5 Cav departed the valley for operations in "Leatherneck Square" and TF 1-11 Inf remained in the valley until 15 April when the road had been made passable to wheeled vehicles. The only enemy contact during the operation by elements of the Brigade was made on 13 April when 2/B/1-11 Inf spotted two (2) VC on a trail and killed one of them.

(3) While the Bde was building the road the 2d ARVN Regt landed one battalion at IZ Holcomb (YD119432) and conducted search and clear operations in the mountains north of the Ba Long valley (See Inclosure 6)* South of the valley the 1st ARVN Regt landed one battalion at LZ Bavis-Hill (YD253290) and conducted search and clear operations toward the north. No major contacts were gained by either Regiment.

(4) Ellis Ravine had not resulted in the destruction of any enemy forces or caches, but an alternate supply route was opened between Quang Tri Combat Base and Vandergrift Combat Base.

g. Summary: During the reporting period the Brigade proved that a Mechanized Infantry Brigade is capable of operating in rough terrain without ground lines of communications, fighting main force NVA Regiments and working closely with the GVN forces in the pacification effort. Total results for the reporting period were:

Enemy KIA: 581 (426 NVA, 155 VC)

Enemy POW: 30 (12 NVA, 18 VC)

Hoi Chanh: 7 (4 at Khe Sanh)

Individual Weapons Captured: 132

Crew Served Weapons Captured: 19

Civil Defendants: 20

2. SECTION II - LESSONS LEARNED:

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending: 30 April 1969
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a. Personnel: None

b. Operations:

(1) Enemy mining:

(a) Observation: Plastic mines have taken a heavy toll in damaged vehicles and casualties. Enemy mining usually follows recent use of a road or trail.

(b) Evaluation: It is not always feasible to conduct deliberate mine sweep operations in front of an armored column due to the resultant delay. Even with mine detection equipment, it is very difficult to insure that all of the mines have been located. A strong contributor to mine damage is repassage over an area within a short time span. The enemy observes armored movement and can assure that the force will be required to retrace its steps. When this is so, he mines in the probable area of travel.

(c) Recommendation: Armor movement should be planned to avoid using the same route more than once during an operation. If the route must be used more than once, there should be ambushes or other forms of security placed along the road to prevent enemy mining incidents, or the road must be swept again. Wherever possible, armored vehicles should not double back on their old tracks.

(2) Tactical Dozers:

(a) Observation: Dozers were used in support of armor operations to construct pioneer roads concurrent with the movement of the main body of tanks, APCs and self-propelled artillery, or to construct tactical crossings where obstacles halt cross country movement. Road construction is often not established as a separate effort preceding or following tactical operations.

(b) Evaluation: In the above role, the dozers are expected to maneuver with the tanks APCs but the standard engineer dozer is not capable of traveling at the speed of a tank. The CLV and the dozer tank are capable of traveling with the tanks and personnel carriers but they have proven to be unreliable, and the blade of both is relatively unmaneuverable.

(c) Recommendation: It is recommended that an armored dozer be developed that is capable of traveling at the speed of armored vehicles over extended distances, and performing earth moving tasks similar to those of a standard bulldozer.

(3) Employment of Improved Conventional units (ICM) on Seismic Intrusion Device (SID) Detected Targets:

(a) Observation: The employment of ICM on SID detected targets has proven to be an extremely effective means of engaging the enemy.

(b) Evaluation: During this reporting period, the use of ICM on SID

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detected targets has produced seventeen (17) confirmed enemy KILAs. The key to the employment of this unit lies in the ability of the firing element to place accurate and timely fires on the target area within seconds after the enemy is detected. The computation of firing data for this type of munition is time consuming, thus timely fires can be delivered only if data is computed prior to activation of SID.

(c) Recommendation: It is recommended that data for the use of IC on SID detected targets be recomputed each time a meteorological message is received by the fire direction center. By using this method of computing firing data, fires have been placed on SID detected targets in as little as eighteen (18) seconds.

(4) Addition of a Fourth Firing Battery to the D Artillery Battalion:

(a) Observation: During the nine months this Brigade has been in Vietnam the need for additional organic artillery support has been apparent.

(b) Evaluation: During the nine months this Brigade has been in Vietnam, it has been habitually responsible for areas of operations which have been too large to be covered completely by three organic 155mm (SP) Howitzer batteries. By careful selection of firing positions it has been possible to maintain mutual fire support between adjacent firing batteries, but the massing of fires of all three DS batteries has proven unattainable. Normally this Brigade has organic, attached or operational control of from four to six battalion size maneuver elements. As a result the DS artillery battalion normally controls the fires of from four to six batteries of artillery. The additional batteries of artillery are normally provided from XXIV Corps Artillery resources. Due to the nature of this low-intensity conflict, maneuvering forces are often employed as independent platoon, squad and fire team size elements. This increases the amount of area covered, requires forward observer teams below company level and increases the requirement for DS artillery fires. In addition to the responsibilities inherent to the DS artillery mission, direct support artillery fire is provided in Vietnam on an area basis to ARVN units, RF and PF units, combined Action Groups, Long and Reconnaissance Patrols, and Teams and Special Forces Teams.

(c) Recommendation: That a fourth organic firing battery, preferably a 105mm towed battery, be added to the DS artillery battalion. This would provide the Brigade with organic, helicopter liftable artillery for support of its foot-mobile infantry battalion. The addition of a fourth firing battery would not require any significant augmentation of personnel or equipment authorized the HQ and service battery of the DS artillery battalion.

(5) Tactical Fords:

(a) Observation: When moving mechanized forces through difficult terrain, or constructing a tank-trail, a tactical ford is an excellent method of crossing streams or dry gaps.

(b) Evaluation: Bridging and culverts are both difficult to transport on tactical operations and relatively vulnerable to enemy action and rain once implaced. A simple method of overcoming this type of obstacle is to

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construct a tactical ford using locally available material. First, push large boulders or blast rock into the gap, then place smaller rock on top of the boulders. The large rock contains gaps which allows the water to flow through the ford, while the smaller rock provides a compact roadway for the vehicles. The tactical ford is less vulnerable to enemy action than a bridge or culvert, requires no transport prior to construction, and is less likely to wash out during heavy rains than either a bridge or a culvert. The tactical ford requires very little maintenance.

(c) Recommendation: When the proper materials are available, it is recommended that tactical fords, not bridges or culverts, be used in the construction of tank trails or obstacle crossings.

(6) Performance of the M40A3 Tank:

(a) Observation: The M40A3 tank, as employed by the Brigade, has performed in an outstanding manner.

(b) Evaluation: During the reporting period, 40A3 tanks were issued to replace the M40A2C tank. The improved characteristics of the 3 were immediately obvious and gave the Brigade the capability to go places and do things not formerly possible with the A2C. With the increased cruising range over the gasoline driven A2C the unit was able to maneuver in the AO for up to four (4) days without fuel resupply. The power of the engine and the reliability of the power train permitted tanks to climb steep slopes, and maneuver in mountainous jungle terrain.

c. Training: Training of Unit CBR Personnel:

(1) Observation: Turnover of personnel in Vietnam plus applications of chemical material not encountered in CONUS or Europe result in a lack of trained personnel at unit level.

(2) Evaluation: Unit CDII officers and NCOs can be trained by chemical personnel at Brigade and Division level. The 36th Chemical Detachment assisted in conducting three, 8 hour unit chemical operations courses between the period 24 February to 4 April. Significant improvement in unit chemical operations, especially maintenance of CBR equipment, has been observed as a result of this training.

(3) Recommendation: That other organizations present similar courses to train unit CDII personnel. The program of instruction presented by the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division is included as inclosure 7.

d. Intelligence: Aerial Photographs:

(1) Observation: Aerial photos were requested for upcoming operations on two different occasions. Each time they were requested seventy-two (72) hours prior to the time they were needed. On each occasion neither the readout of the photographs nor the photographs themselves were received until after the operation had begun.

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(2) Evaluation: It takes more than 72 hours for the read-out and photographs to be processed. It normally takes six days to receive any results.

(3) Recommendation: It is recommended that the Brigade be authorized to place requests for aerial photography directly to XXIV Corps, and that the resultant photography be sent directly to the Brigade MI detachment for read-out. This system would cut out several time consuming steps in the processing of aerial photographs and the read-out of the photography by the Brigade's detachment would insure that the information required by the Brigade was processed as rapidly as possible. If the above system can not be adopted then it is requested that the aerial photographic support system in northern I Corps be examined with a view toward shortening the time lapse between request and delivery of information.

e. Logistics:

(1) Fuel Transfer Pump:

(a) Observation: Due to the requirements for resupply of fuel to a company that is some distance from the forward support area, a fuel tanker, when security, must be sent to that unit thus diluting the combat power of the unit involved. A more adequate system is needed for units that are isolated, or at a great distance from the forward support area. A gravity feed system was used by C/1-77 Armor during TF Remagen, but this system requires a VTR to lift the fuel bladder.

(b) Evaluation: An electrical pump system is required for transfer of fuel from a rubber fuel pod that has been airlifted to the using element.

(c) Recommendation: An electrical pump system be made for transfer of fuel from a rubber fuel pod that has been air lifted to the using element. This pump system can be made using a M13 bilge pump. Components needed to fabricate this pump are: Valve assy for the pod; hose assy rubber FSN 720-718-6020; hose assy rubber FSN 4720-718-6013; nozzle, fuel FSN 4642; bilge pump FS 2580-697-9643; toggle switch for cutting on and off; male connection to hose assembly to be welded to the bilge pump; and female connection FSN 4940-360-0711. The power to operate the pump can come from any vehicle.

(2) Use of 500 gallon POL bladder:

(a) Observation: The 500 gallon rubber POL bladder is easily damaged by aerial movement.

(b) Evaluation: The rubber POL bladder has heavy metal reinforcements at each end for lifting straps. If the filled bladder is slung by a strap on each end, the cylinder rotates in flight, often damaging the bladder.

(c) Recommendation: The filled bladder should be slung by attaching two lifting straps to the same end. This prevents rotation in flight and minimizes damage to the tank.

(3) Operations on sandy terrain:

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(a) **Observation:** While operating on sandy terrain near Wunder Beach in the Northern I Corps Tactical Zone, maintenance of tracked vehicles became a major problem due to an increase in suspension system component failures.

(b) **Evaluation:** Sandy Terrain and beaches cause track vehicle suspension systems to wear out much faster than normal operations. Normal PII stocks are quickly depleted and suspension system repair parts become critical items. Complete replacement of road wheels and sprockets can be expected every 90-120 days (M113A1 sprockets must be replaced every 30-45 days).

(c) **Recommendation:** Units alerted to operate in sandy or beach areas should increase their ASL/PII of suspension system repair parts. Increased attention to operator and organizational maintenance is also required.

f. **Organization:** None

g. **Communications:**

(1) **FM Retransmission:**

(a) **Observation:** During TF Remagen the Brigade was required to establish a FM retransmission station at FSB Cates. FSB Cates cannot be reached by vehicle and the retransmission unit had to be airlifted into position.

(b) **Evaluation:** Such a mission requires a lightweight, portable and sturdy mount for the AN/VRC 49. The mount must include a location for antennas and a power supply. The need for this type of mount is not limited to TF Remagen. On many airmobile operations a FM retransmission station has been established on remote Fire Support Bases, and in this AO the 3rd Marine Recon Bn (A IRRP Bn) is constantly establishing isolated retransmission stations on isolated hilltops.

(c) **Recommendation:** It is recommended that a mount for the AN/VRC 49 be developed that can be used as mentioned above, as well as in a vehicle.

(2) **KAC Codes:**

(a) **Observation:** The KAC codes now issued to Army units have proved impractical for troop use in the field.

(b) **Evaluation:** The small printing and slow decryption and encryption have caused units not to use the authentication/numerical code. Disorientation with the published, approved codes has resulted in some units attempting to develop their own "shackle" codes. The use of such an insecure code is dangerous to unit security.

(c) **Recommendation:** It is recommended that an approved and simplified authentication/numerical code be developed to replace the KACs now in use.

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A fast, reliable, code suitable for use in helicopters and moving tracked vehicles, and legible under low ambient light conditions would materially improve communications security.

- 7 Incl
1. Brigade Task ~~Organization~~ ~~Commanding~~ JAMES M. GIBSON
COL, II
2. Overlay: AO, 1st Bde, 1st Inf Commanding
Div (Moch)
3. Overlay: Operation Cam Hung
- Overlay: Operation Montana Mauler
- Overlay: TF Remagen AO
- Overlay: Operation Ellis Ravine
- Program of Instruction - Unit Chemical
Operations Course

DISTRIBUTION:

- 2 - CINCUSARPAC ATTN: GPOPODT WPO 96558
- 2 - HQ, USAF ATTN: AVHGC-DST
- 3 - CG, XXIV Corps ATTN: G-3

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PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION

UNCLASSIFIED UNIT CHEMICAL OPERATIONS COURSE

1. OBJECTIVE: To qualify personnel at unit level to supervise unit CBR officers and NCOs.
2. SCOPE: Instruction is directed to train individuals in:
 - a. Operation and maintenance of chemical equipment authorized at unit level
 - b. Flame warfare.
 - c. Employment of riot control agents (RCA).
 - d. Detection of and protection against hostile employment of CB weapons.
3. DURATION: 3 hours (1 day)
4. STUDENTS PER CLASS: 15 (min 10, max 20, class size to be based on brigade requirements three weeks prior to class).
5. CLASSES PER YEAR: 6 (Note: Initially, classes will be conducted monthly from February thru April. Thereafter, classes will be conducted every other month)
6. STUDENTS PER YEAR: 100, based on requirement for additional duty CBR personnel throughout the brigade.
7. PREREQUISITES: 5-5r above. 180 days remaining in RVI upon completion of course. Security clearance, confidential.
8. FACILITIES REQUIRED: Classroom, training aids as prescribed in lesson plan.
9. CLASSES TO BE CONDUCTED:

Outline of Course Material

TITLE	LENGTH	SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	OBJECTIVE
Role of Chemical Operations in Counter Insurgency	20 Min Conference	Unclas	Introduction to course material. Brief description of use of RCA, flame and herbicides in combat operations. Enemy equipment and use of RCA and flame. Provide general knowledge of provisions in Brigade SOP.

Inclosure 7

TITLE	GDR	1 hr Conference	Unclas	Provide working knowledge of effects, protection against, and decontamination of RCA. Provide general knowledge of the effects of lethal and incapacitating CB material. Provide general knowledge of nature and effects of herbicides and flame fuels.
Protective Masks and Related Equipment		2 hr Confer- ence Pract- ical Exercise	Unclas	Provide working knowledge of functioning, use, and organizational maintenance of M11, M17, M24, M25, and M-82 protective masks. Provide working knowledge of operation and maintenance of the M3A3 filter unit, tank. Practical exercise during which students disassemble, assemble and inspect protective masks..
Flam Warfare			Unclas	Provide general knowledge of functioning, employment and effects of the M132 mechanized flamethrower and M241-7 portable flamethrower. Provide general knowledge of construction and effects of flame field expedients. Demonstration firing of flamethrowers and flame field expedients.
Employment of RCA in Combat Operations		2 hr Conference		Provide general knowledge of effects and employment techniques for all RCA munitions available for employment. Provide working knowledge of effects and employment of munitions available at unit level.
Defense Against Enemy Employment of CB Agents		1 hour Conference	Unclas	Provide working knowledge of unit action for detection of and protection against enemy employment of CB material. Review of requirements for chemical annex to unit SOPs.

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 1 June 1969

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FIRST DEBRIEFING on CO, 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry (Mech) Combat After Action Report Montana Mauler of 4 May 1969

From: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein) FMF
 To: Commanding General, U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
 Via: (1) Commanding General, XXIV Corps
 (2) Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force

Subj: Combat After Action Report

Ref: (a) MACV Dir 335-8

1. Readdressed and forwarded in accordance with reference (a).
2. Contents noted with following remarks:
 - a. Dates of operation officially 23 March 1969 - 3 April 1969.
 - b. Division official results of casualties sustained, casualties inflicted on the enemy and weapons captured were:

	USMC	USA		NVA
KIA	16	19	KIA	300
WIA	89	129	IWC	36
			CSWC	7

These results differ from the following Brigade results:

	USMC	USA	ARVN		NVA losses	
KIA	1	23(1 KCS)	0	NVA KIA	246	28
WIA	11	150	10	IWC	7	14
				CSWC	6	11

Differences in results of 15 USMC KIA, 3 USA KIA, 78 USMC WIA, 10 ARVN WIA, 21 USA WIA, 26 NVA KIA, 15 IWC and 10 CSWC were caused by: (a) the Brigade included operation results of 22 March 1969; (b) "results" of all units in backdated AO not OPCON to the Brigade were included in 3d Marine Division (Rein) "results" and not included in the Brigade's "results"; and (c) ARVN "results" are not included in 3d Marine Division (Rein) "results".

P. R. AINCE
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech)
APO San Francisco 96177

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4 May 1969

AVBL-

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report - Operation MONTANA PROLOGUE,
22 March 1969 - 2 April 1969.

THRU: Commanding General
3rd Marine Division
FPO 96602

THRU: Commanding General
IV Corps
APO 96308

THRU: Commanding General
III Marine Amphibious Force
FPO 96602

TO: Commander
United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
ATTN: MAC J343
APO US Forces 96212

1. (U) NAM & TYPE OF OPERATION:

- a. Name: Montana Miller
b. Type: Reconnaissance in force

(U) DATES OF OPERATION: 22 March 1969 - 2 April 1969.

3. (U) LOCATION: North central Quang Tri Province from the southern
of the DMZ to nine (9) kilometers south of the DMZ, Map, VIETNAM, 1:50,000
AMS Series I7011, Grid Lo sheet 6342 I. Area bounded by coordinates 11207,
10867, 10860, and 10260.

(U) CONTROL HEADQUARTERS 1st Infantry Division, (Mech) (Mechanized).

5. (U) UNIT COMMANDERS:

Commanding Officer 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (M):
COL James M. Gibson, 048730.

Commanding Officer, 1st Bn, 11th Inf:
LTC Thomas N. Britton Jr., 070169.

Commanding Officer, 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav:
LTC Thomas E. Carpenter III, 083157

Commanding Officer, 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt, 1st ARVN Division
Maj Truong Thanh Hung, 01/209-203.

6. (G) TASK ORGANIZATION:

- a. Phase I: 22 - 24 Mar 69.

TF 3-5 Cav
A/3- Cav d & 4th Plts D/1-11 Inf
B/3-5 Cav 1A/7 Engr (-Sqd + 2 dozers,
I/3-9 Mar 3rd Mar Engr Bn)

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SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report - Operation MONTANA MAULER, 22 March 1969 - 2 April 1969.

b. Phase II: 25 - 31 Mar 69

TF 1-11 Inf	TF 3-5 Cav	1-2 ARVN
A/1-11 Inf	A/3-5 Cav	1/1-2 ARVN
B/1-11 Inf	B/3-5 Cav	2/1-2 ARVN
O/1-11 Inf	2d & 4th Flats/B/1-11 Inf	3/1-2 ARVN
D/1-11 Inf (-2 plats)		1/1-2 ARVN
I/3-9 Cav		

c. Phase III: 1 - 2 Apr 69.

TF 1-11 Inf	TF 3-5 Cav	1-2 ARVN
A/1-11 Inf	A/3-5 Cav	1/1-2 ARVN
B/1-11 Inf	B/3-5 Cav	2/1-2 ARVN
C/1-11 Inf	3/2-2 ARVN	3/1-2 ARVN
V/1-11 Inf		4/1-2 ARVN
I/3-9 Mar.		

d. Throughout the course of the battle the task organization was constantly changing to meet the situation. The three task organizations above were the organizations that evolved as the battle progressed; within each phase several minor changes in the task organization took place.

e. The 1st Bn, 11th Inf used 60mm mortars (borrowed from the 2d ARVN, 1st ARVN Div) in place of the heavier, more cumbersome 81mm mortars that belong to the infantry companies.

(U) SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Army Aviation:

(1) During Phase I of Operation Montana Mauler the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav used its organic UH aircraft for command and control purposes. The 3rd Sqdn, 5th Cav has only two (2) OH-6A helicopters in the squadron. D Troop, the air cavalry troop, is in the delta with the 9th Inf Div.

(2) Throughout the operation the Brigade Commander and Deputy Brigade Commander used one OH (OH-6A) each for command and control. During the course of the operation those helicopters were often used to assist units in contact with their command and control, reconnaissance and emergency resupply missions.

(3) Throughout its participation in the operation, from 25 Mar through 2 Apr, the 1st Bn, 11th Inf used one (1) UH-1H from the Brigade Aviation Squadron. The helicopter was used for command and control, reconnaissance, resupply of water and food, and medical evacuation. The UH-1H flew a total of 57 hrs and 42 mins during the nine days that the 1st Bn, 11th Infantry participated in the operation.

(4) The air assault by the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt, 1st ARVN Div was conducted with twelve (12) UH-1D lift ships from the 101st Abn Div, escorted by four (4) UH-1E and four (4) UH-1B gunships.

b. United States Marine Corps Aviation: The bulk of the resupply missions flown in support of Montana Mauler were flown by Marine AH-1G helicopters. During the first three days of the operation, and the last day no aerial resupply was conducted but from 25 March through 1 April 10,000 short tons were resupplied by Marine aircraft for an average aerial resupply rate of 12.7 short tons per day. The vast majority of the troop lift was also provided by Marine AH-1G lifts conducted by the 1st Bn, 11th Inf were conducted with UH-1H. A total of forty-six (46) helicopter sorties were flown in support of Montana Mauler by Marine helicopters.

c. Artillery: Sixteen (16) US Army and US Marine Corps artillery batteries fired in support of Montana Mauler. The sixteen (16) batteries, composed of six (6) 105mm batteries, five (5) 155mm batteries, two (2) 175mm batteries and three (3) 8 inch howitzers, fired a total of 2,550 missions and 69,594 rounds were fired in support of the operation.

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SUBJECT: Combat #06 in Report - Operation
22 March 1969 - 2 April 1969.

4 May 1969

MONTANA MAULER,

d. Tactical Air Support:

(1) Throughout the operation a total of 140 missions were flown using 247 sorties. An accurate bomb damage assessment was not possible on all but thirty-four (34) of the missions. Inclosure 1 (Tactical Air Support) gives a mission by mission breakdown of the Tactical Air Support that was used during Montana Mauler, and the bomb damage assessment that was obtained.

(2) The type of missions flown were as follows: Nine (9) preplanned, forty-nine (49) immediate, and eighty-two (82) TPQ's (Sky Spot): Radar directed preplanned missions flown at night or in bad weather.

(3) Throughout the operation, during daylight, the Air Force Forward Air Controllers (FAC's) flew over the area of operations. The FAC's were used to direct air strikes, control artillery and perform visual reconnaissance. The support of the FAC's was outstanding. The FAC's used for the operation were those from the 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron that are regularly assigned to the 1st Bde, 5th Inf Div (M) and they were commanded by LTC Moore, USAF.

(4) From time to time the Bde FAC's were augmented by USM FAC's and aerial observers from the 108th Artillery group.

8. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

a. Enemy Activity:

(1) Information available prior to the commencement of Operation Montana Mauler indicated that elements of the 27th NVA Regt were operating in the area north and east of Can Lo (YMD8595). During the period 15-22 March the area experienced a significant increase in enemy activity which was characterized by minings, harassing mortar fire, RPG fire, small arms fire and numerous sightings. The nature of enemy initiated activities indicated that the Regt probably had the mission of interdicting R 9.

(2) Cover and concealment in the dense undergrowth forest is good and good to excellent along the steep slopes of the hills. Cover is fair in the valleys. In the low hilly areas vegetation restricts movement to existing stream beds and trails. In areas of high elevation movement is somewhat restricted to stream valleys due to the perpendicular pattern of the major ridge spurs. Numerous bomb and shell craters present some hindrance to movement throughout the area. Major avenues of approach in the area generally parallel stream valleys. Weather during the course of the operation was extremely hot for the first time this year which adversely affected activities of friendly forces.

9. (C) MISSION: TF 3-5 Cav was to conduct a reconnaissance in force through the Khe Chua Valley north of Dong Ha Mountain (XD15594) from 03 (YD143616) to Elliot Combat Base (XD985545).

10. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: Operation Montana Mauler was to be a one task force operation. TF 3-5 Cav was to conduct a reconnaissance in force through the Khe Chua Valley, searching the draws, conducting reconnaissance by fire and attempting to gain contact with the elements of the 27th NVA Regt that were believed to be operating in the area. The general trace of the reconnaissance in force was to be as follows: YD143616, YD040620, YD000600, XD965595, XD980570, and XD985545.

11. (C) EXECUTION: Operation Montana Mauler as a twelve (12) day operation that took place northwest of Can Lo and south of the DMZ. Initially Montana Mauler was a squadron reconnaissance in force operation in which a cavalry squadron using two ground troops, a combat engineer platoon and two light infantry platoons searched for the enemy, located and developed the situation for the Brigade. Once the situation had been developed the Brigade then committed two light infantry battalions (one US and one LRVN) to assault the enemy's position and destroy him in place. As the infantry closed with the enemy the cavalry withdrew from the area of immediate contact and moved around the friendly forces to the opposite side of the battle area to assume a screening mission in order.

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to protect the infantry battalions from enemy attacks launched from within the DMZ.

Phase I: During Phase I the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav gained contact with the enemy and developed the situation. By the end of Phase I the Brigade had a good idea of the size and location of the enemy force. Following is a day by day account of Phase I's

(1) 22 Mar 69: At 0800 hrs A and B Troop of 3-5 Cav, with a platoon of 1-11 Inf attached to each troop, moved westward into the Khe Gma valley. As the troops moved west they searched the draws, and reconned the ridgelines by fire, but the move was rather uneventful. At 1521 hrs an observer in a LOH spotted two (2) NVA in the valley vic YD049620 and again at 1618 hrs another NVA was observed in the same general area. Artillery missions were fired on both occasions with unknown results. At 1750 hrs, as A Troop approached a crossing site over the Khe Gma River, the troop received RPG fire from the north. Eight (8) NVA were spotted north of the river vic YD056617. The troop returned the fire killing two (2) of the enemy. Friendly losses were one (1) KIA and four (4) WIA. Following the skirmish A Troop and the command group moved north and took up a night defensive position (NDP) at YD058617 while B Troop spent the night at YD067615. See inclosure 2 for a sketch of the day's activities.

(2) 23 Mar 69: At 0216 hrs A Troop received six (6) 82mm mortar rounds with negative results. During the morning A Troop moved west into the valley. At 0945 hrs three (3) NVA, who appeared to be observing the troop, were sighted on the highground to the northwest vic YD041622. The enemy was engaged by artillery fire with unknown results. By 1200 hrs, A Troop was located at YD052020 where it was joined by B Troop in the early afternoon. During the afternoon the troop received 42mm fire from the northeast on two occasions, two rounds at 1320 hrs and two more rounds at 1650 hrs. On the second occasion a personnel carrier (APC) was hit resulting in one (1) friendly KIA and four (4) WIA. Also at 1650 hrs enemy troops were observed to the north (vic YD049630) were engaged with organic weapons resulting in one (1) enemy KIA. At 1830 hrs five (5) NVA were observed moving west on the highground to the northeast. The enemy were engaged by artillery with unknown results. The squadron remained overnight in the vic of YD052020. There were no further enemy sightings or contacts on the night of the 23rd. See inclosure 2A for a sketch of the day's activities.

(3) 24 Mar 69: At daylight on 24 March TF 3-5 Cav continued to move west into the valley. Movement was slow and difficult due to the rough terrain, heavy vegetation and the need to sweep the route for mines. At 0917 hrs vic YD040021 a bulldozer was hit by an RPG round resulting in two (2) Marine WIA. At 0945 hrs the CP Group, in the same area (YD048621), received one (1) round of explosive ordnance resulting in one (1) WIA.

(a) At 1000 hrs elements of the Cav in the vicinity of YD040021 made contact with the primary defensive positions of the enemy. Two (2) NVA Co's were entrenched in camouflaged bunkers north (YD046624) and south (YD041010) of the valley with a light screening force established between the two positions. A bunker complex occupied by an estimated NVA platoon was located to the northeast at YD059632. The NVA were employing small arms, automatic weapons and RPGs. The Cav and attached Infantry returned fire with small arms and tank gun fire. Due to restrictive maneuver space and the close proximity of the enemy the squadron, while maintaining contact, moved back to a more tenable position (YD052020) in order to employ artillery. In addition to enemy elements located in bunkers small groups of NVA were seen and engaged north and south of the squadron's location (3 NVA 053625, 2 NVA YD058612, 12 NVA YD050622, and 1 NVA YD040017). At 1400 hrs an airstrike was placed on enemy troop locations north of the valley vic YD041622 and at 1420 hrs against a suspected troop location at YD 052020. Once major contact had been established the USMC Special Landing Force (SLF) was requested. This request was denied but I/3-9 Mar was committed to the operation and placed upon to TF 3-5 Cav. I/3-9 Mar was scheduled to be air assaulted into an LZ north of the valley but because of difficulties in securing the LZ it was necessary to move the company farther south. At 1515 hrs the lead elements of I/3-9 Mar were air assaulted into an LZ on the southern side of the valley vic YD052020. The air assault was completed by 1545 hrs and I Co began an immediate search of the area.

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(b) The enemy, now estimated to be battalion strength, began to diminish his attacks by 1600 hrs as a result of the heavy volume of organic fire, artillery and airstrikes placed on his positions during the afternoon. By 1730 hrs the enemy had completely broken contact. The squadron remained overnight vic YD052620 and I/3-9 Mar established a night defensive position vic YD039610. There were no incidents or contacts during the night. The day's action had resulted in twenty-three (23) NVA KIA, at a cost of one (1) friendly KIA and six (6) friendly WIA. There were no incidents or contacts during the night.

(c) At 1730 hrs it was decided that the situation may have been sufficiently developed by TF 3-5 Cav to commit two companies and the battalion headquarters of the 1st Bn, 11th Inf to the fight. The 1st Bn, 11th Inf was ordered to be prepared, on order, to air assault into an LZ on the high ground north of the valley vic YD043632.

(d) See inclosure 2B for a sketch of operations conducted on 24 Mar. b. Phase II: During Phase II the 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (M) exploited the contact by air assaulting the 1st Bn, 11th Inf into the battle and later by committing the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt. Following is a day by day account of the battle as it unfolded during Phase II:

(1) 25 Mar 69:

(a) Throughout 25 Mar contact was light and sporadic. During the morning an estimated twenty (20) VA in small groups of two to three (2-3) were seen moving north vic D047635 and engaged with main gun tank fire, 4.2" mortars and artillery. This fire resulted in three (3) NVA KIA. During the late morning and afternoon A/3-5 Cav and I/3-9 Mar searched westward from their previous positions (YD052620 and YD039610) along the southern part of the valley to positions located vic YD035616 and YD028617. During the sweep enemy contact was limited to two (2) sniping incidents; one vic YD045617 at 1010 hrs and the second vic YD073614 at 11413 hrs. A marine was killed by the second sniper. The movement of the squadron was again slow due to terrain and the necessity to improve stream-crossing vic D039618.

(b) In an attempt to exploit the previous contact additional units were committed to the area during the afternoon of the 25th. 1-11 Inf (-), consisting of a Command Group and A and B Companies, was air assaulted into an LZ on the high ground north of the valley at YD 043623. By 1520 hrs the air lift was completed and the 1-11 Inf began sweeping in a southeasterly direction along the ridgeline to YD043623, where night defensive positions were established. While sweeping the ridgeline A/1-11 Inf discovered one (1) RPG booster and 100 meters of commo wire vic O40629. The commo wire led southwest into a bunker then north for 100 meters.

(c) I/3-9 Mar spent the night, at YD 028617 while A/3-5 Cav returned from its sweep and occupied its positions of the previous night at YD050620, where the entire squadron established its NDP.

(d) The lack of contact in the valley on 25 March gave cause to suspect that the NVA had moved northward. Accordingly plans were made for 1-11 Inf (-) with I/3-9 Mar OPCON to move north to regain contact.

(e) See inclosure 2C for a summary of activities on 25 Mar

(2) 26 Mar 69:

(a) At 0330 hrs 26 Mar 1-11 Inf positions at YD043626 were subjected to small arms, automatic weapons, RPG and mortar fire from the north, west and east. The heaviest volume of fire came from the highground to the north vic YD037632. The enemy fire was returned with organic weapons and arty. The enemy did not assault friendly positions, but three (3) NVA who approached the B Co perimeter were engaged and killed by small arms fire. The enemy attack by fire ceased by 0530 hrs after having killed one (1) and wounded eight (8) infantrymen.

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(b) At 0800 hrs as 1-11 Inf began to move, six to eight (6-8) NVA were observed to the north at YD037632. From 0910 hrs to 1015 hrs airstrikes and arty were placed on this position. With each pass the fighter aircraft received automatic weapons fire. By 1200 hrs A and B Co's had reached a position vic YD040628 from which numerous NVA troops and heavy movement could be observed to the north. Airstrikes and artillery were employed against positions at YD037632 during the afternoon. A and B Co's, after experiencing great difficulty because of 105th temperatures, returned to positions of the previous night to prepare for an attack on the 27th (A Co vic YD040628, 1/A/1-1 vic YD040630, B Co vic YD040624).

(b) At 0800 hrs 1/3-9 Mar was placed OPCON to TF 1-11 Inf. During the day the company moved northwest from YD028617 to YD022625 without incident or contact. I Co remained overnight at YD023625.

(d) 3-5 Cav spent the day searching the area around their night positions (YD050620). At 0900 hrs the search revealed three (3) NVA bodies, 1 RPG-2, 1 AK50, 1 AK47, 4 B40 rockets, and assorted gear. About 100 meters north at YD051623, a chicom first aid pouch and a bloody bandage were found. At 1934 hrs B Troop, at YD051619, received two (2) rounds of RPG and small arms fire from the northeast resulting in three (3) friendly WIA. The troop returned fire with organic Weapons and a sweep of the area early next morning resulted in finding 1 AK47, 2 RPG's, 2 B40 rockets, 1 B41 rocket, blood trails and some documents. A translation of the documents showed that they had belonged to a member of the 4th Co, 1st Bn, 27th NVA Regt. These documents verified intelligence reports which placed the 1st and 3rd Bn's, 27th NVA Regt in the area.

See inclosures 2D for a summary of the operations.

[27 Mar 69:

(a) The 1-11 Inf (-) began to attack north at 0715 hrs with B Co having been given the mission to seize the high ground vic YD037631 while A Co supported the attack. 1/3-9 Mar was given the mission of seizing the high ground on the left flank YD030631 in order to block any enemy movement into or out of the objective area.

(b) A and B Co's made contact immediately and remained in contact throughout most of the day. At 0850 hrs airstrikes were placed on enemy troops in bunkers to the northeast at YD046635. Enemy troops on the objective employed small arms, automatic weapons and mortar fire against the attack. Enemy troop positions were engaged by artillery and the organic weapons of A and B Co's. Continuing to press the attack A and B fought to a position south of the objective (YD039628) by mid-day. In order to block enemy avenues of approach and/or retreat north of the objective area C/1-11 Inf was air assaulted into a blocking position on Hill 208 (YD043644). The air assault began at 11 hrs after extensive air and artillery preparations of the LZ. Upon entering the LZ C Co was immediately brought under intense mortar fire from the northwest. This mortar fire was countered with airstrikes (1130 hrs and 1200 hrs) on the enemy's positions located at YD042643. C Co secured the LZ without further incident. In the meantime, B Co pressed on until the objective was reached (YD039623). Upon reaching the objective B Co was met by heavy mortar fire and a ground attack from the north (YD041638 to YD041635). Air strikes and arty were placed on enemy troops from 1300 hrs to 1515 hrs (YD042635, 1300 hrs; YD040635, 1330 hrs; YD041636, 1430 hrs; YD041637, 1430 hrs and YD042626, 1515 hrs). These airstrikes in conjunction with a heavy volume of fire from B Co inflicted heavy losses on the enemy and repulsed the attack.

(c) In the late afternoon the lead elements of 1/1-11 were searching the ridge which runs north from the objective (YD035636) when they were subjected to an enemy counterattack from the west (YD032633). As the enemy attempted to assault the friendly positions he was met with a heavy volume of fire. Airstrikes were employed at 1700 hrs and 1717 hrs and the enemy attack was repulsed. The attack was the NVA's last attempt to push the 1-11 Inf off the occupied objective. At 1800 hrs the 1-11 Inf (-) was reinforced by the airlift of 2 platoons of 1/1-11 from 3-5 Cav; these platoons were committed to B Co's position (YD039623).

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(d) I/3-9 Mar had seized its objective (YD032631) without contact and was in position to block enemy movement southwest to reinforce or to escape. By late afternoon all units began to strengthen their positions and prepare for the night. (A Co vic YD035636; B Co and 2 plat D Co vic YD039633; C Co vic YD042644 and I/3-9 vic YD032631). TF 3-5 Cav remained in its night position as a reaction force and performed maintenance on its vehicles.

(e) 27 Mar contacts resulted in thirteen (13) friendly KIA, one (1) KCS KIA and thirty (30) friendly WIA. Enemy casualties for the day were 120 NVA KIA (85 by air and arty), seven (7) IMR one (1) CSWC captured and one (1) mortar destroyed by air.

(f) See inclosure 2E for a sketch of the day's operations.

(4) 28 Mar 69:

(a) The first enemy contact on 28 March occurred at 0330 hrs when C/1-11 Inf on Hill 208 (vic YD042644) was touched by an unknown size enemy element employing small arms fire and grenades. C Co called for illumination and engaged the enemy element with small arms and automatic weapons resulting in three (3) NVA KIA; and driving the enemy force off.

(b) At daylight A Co, B Co and 2 platoons of D Co began conducting a search of the immediate area around their positions and received resupply by helicopter. At 0800 hrs I/3-9 Mar searching the ridge northwest of the previous night's position found eight (8) 82mm mortar rounds at YD030633. The rounds were strapped to a carrying pole. At 1000 hrs the 1-11 Inf (-) was further reinforced by the airlift of D Co (-) from LZ Sharon to a nearby LZ at YD036631.

(c) Throughout the morning resupply helicopters were receiving small arms fire and during the afternoon ground units began receiving sporadic mortar and small arms fire from enemy positions south and west of Hill 208. As the intensity of enemy fire increased, airstrikes were placed on suspected enemy locations (YD040635 at 1238 hrs; YD035636 at 1255 hrs; YD035635 at 1335 hrs and YD035644 at 1420 hrs). An airstrike at 1420 hrs produced a sizeable secondary explosion. As the afternoon progressed additional airstrikes were placed on observed enemy locations (YD025646 at 1515 hrs; YD029646 at 1617 hrs). At 1750 hrs elements of C Co saw four (4) EVA at YD049635 and engaged them with artillery with unknown results. By 1830 hrs units of 1-11 Inf (+) were planning for and preparing to defend their night positions (A Co vic YD038632, B Co vic YD037631, C Co vic YD043644, D Co vic YD039631 and I/3-9 vic YD028636).

(d) Results of the 1st Bn, 11th Inf actions on 28 March were one (1) friendly KIA, forty-six (46) friendly WIA, sixty-eight (68) NVA KIA (40 by air and arty), five (5) AK47 and one (1) SKS captured, two (2) 82mm mtr and one (1) IMR destroyed by air.

(e) 3-5 Cav, which had remained in the eastern part of the Khe Chua Valley, was given the mission of moving to the right flank of the battle area to be in position on the 29th to support C/L-1 on Hill 208. The squadron began moving southeast at midmorning crossed the Cao Lo River and moved east then north to C-2 where the two Cav Troops resupplied. The troops then moved to occupy night positions (A Troop YD062635, B Troop YD072637). In moving out of the Khe Chua Valley, the Cav experienced difficulty in moving due to mines. Four (4) mines were detonated damaging three (3) vehicles but causing no casualties. During the move from C-2 to their night positions, two (2) tanks were damaged by mines and had to be evacuated to C2.

(f) During the night A Troop, 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav received two enemy probing attacks. The first attack came at 2007 hrs with the enemy employing RPG and small arms fire. The second attack came at 2250 hrs with the NVA employing RPG fire from the north, small arms fire from the northwest and mortar and small arms fire from the south. Friendly casualties from these attacks were two (2) KIA, two (2) WIA, and two (2) APCs damaged. Enemy casualties were

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(g) During the course of the battle on 28 Mar it became evident that the Brigade did not have the forces in the battle area to completely encircle the enemy and prevent his escape. Coordination was made with the 2d ARVN Regt, 1st ARVN Div and it was decided to commit the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt to the operation. Plans called for the battalion to be air assaulted on to Hill 262 (YD031664) during the morning of 29 Mar in an attempt to block enemy escape routes.

(h) See inclosure 2F for a sketch of the day's operation.

(5) 29 Mar 69: 29 March turned out to be a day of heavy fighting with considerable losses being inflicted upon the enemy.

position at YD042632 in support of an air assault by 1/3-9 Mar on Hill 300 (YD06635), was engaged by an NVA force in a bunker complex at YD045635. D Co employing small arms fire, nontoxic riot control agents and airstrikes (0830 hrs and 0855 hrs) killed five (5) NVA within the complex. A search of the area revealed a number of mortar positions. After LZ preparations, by airstrikes, 1/3-9 Mar began air landing on Hill 300 with the mission of securing the dominant terrain at that location and searching for a possible enemy CP that was believed to be in the area.

(b) While the air assault was in progress elements of A Co, which had moved north along a ridge (YD036635), came under heavy counterattack by an estimated NVA Co. The enemy, attacking from the north, was employing heavy small arms and RPG fire in an attempt to out flank and cut off the northern most platoon of A Co. The enemy assault was met with small arms fire and armed gunships, followed by airstrikes (vic YD035635) at 1200 hrs and 1215 hrs. As elements of B Co were sent to reinforce A Co all units on the hill mass (YD037632) came under heavy mortar attack from the northwest. The enemy assault on A Co was thrown back with the NVA suffering five (5) KIA by small arms fire and fifteen (15) killed by air. At 1500 hrs A Co was again brought under mortar attack from the west (vic YD034634). Arty fired into the area, silenced the mortar and killed five (5) NVA. Throughout the rest of the afternoon the 1st Bn, 11th Inf continued to receive sporadic mortar fire from enemy positions at YD028642 and YD028639. TAG air was used in neutralizing these positions. Late afternoon airstrikes on a hill at YD025646 revealed an extensive bunker complex. By 1820 hrs units of 1-11 Inf had moved back upon high ground and were preparing to defend their night positions (A Co YD038636, B Co YD036631, C Co YD036644, D Co YD036631, and 1/3-9 Mar YD047635). Results of the 1-13 Inf contact that day were seventeen (17) friendly WIA, sixteen (16) NVA KIA by SA and twenty-five (25) 82mm mortars destroyed by air.

(c) The planned air assault of hill 262 by 1-2 ARVN on 29 March was changed and it was decided to airlift the Bn into a secured LZ on the eastern flank of the battle area. A and B Troops, 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav, who were in position on the eastern flank of the battle area, began moving north at daylight and by 1030 hrs had secured two (2) LZ's for the airlift of 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt (LZ Blue vic YD063646 was secured by A Troop, and LZ Orange vic YD067655 was secured by B Troop). From 1123 hrs until 1335 hrs helicopters airlifted 2d and 4th companies 1-2 ARVN on to LZ Orange and from 1345 hrs to 1610 hrs 1st and 3rd Companies were inserted on LZ Blue. At 1250 hrs elements of B Troop securing LZ Orange, sighted an unknown size NVA unit to the northwest vic YD059665. The enemy was engaged with tank gun fire and the gunships escorting the lift helicopters.

(d) Upon landing of the last lift the 2d and 4th Companies moved west from LZ Orange and by night had reached a position at YD057657. The 1st and 3d Companies, while moving west from LZ Blue, at 1500 hrs engaged and killed two (2) NVA and captured one (1) AK47 vic YD060645. At 1610 hrs the lead elements engaged two (2) NV in a bunker vic YD053645. A search of the bunker revealed 200 lbs of rice, one (1) HMG, and two (2) B40 rkt. 1st and 3d Companies remained overnight at vic YD058646. Results for 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt's actions were: two (2) friendly WIA, four (4) NVA KIA and one (1) AK47 and one (1) HMG captured.

(e) Total results of the day's activities were nineteen (19) friendly WIA, twenty (20) enemy KIA by SA, twenty-five (25) KIA by air and arty and two (2) 82mm mortars destroyed by air.

(f) See inclosure 2G for a sketch of the day's operations.

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6. 30-31 Mar:

(a) The 30th and 31st of March were spent by 1-11 Inf in making a detailed search of the battle area and in receiving resupply **helicopters**. On neither day was significant ground contact reestablished although the enemy did continue with sporadic mortaring and sniping (A Co at 301020H received 3 rds 82mm and at 301255H received 1 82mm round, 1/3-9 Mar at 301240H received 2 rds 82mm, A Co at 311340H received 15 rounds 82mm). **Small** enemy groups were observed and engaged by arty as were suspected mortar **positions**. The detailed search revealed extensive bunker complexes throughout the battle area and some enemy **ammunition** and equipment was found. Significant finds by 1-11 Inf (+) 30-31 March are as follows:

YD 041633 - Mortar pit and 3 bunkers?
 YD 040634 - 2 fighting bunkers.
 YD 045635 - 10 fighting bunkers, 5 small bunkers, 13 60mm mortar rounds.
 YD 043633 - 20 fighting bunkers.
 YD 040634 - 32 **Chicom** grenades, 12 shovels, 4 picks.
 YD 043633 - 20 **Chicom** grenades, 850 **AK47** rds, 1 120mm rd, 1 82mm rd, 10 shovels, 6 60mm rds, 1 **BlO** rd, 2 packs, 130 7.62 rds, 2 **Chicom** gas masks, **RPG-2**.
 YD 045636 - 6 bunkers, 1 **BlO** rd, 182mm rd, 50 **AK47** rds, 1 **Chicom** grenade.
 YD 043632 - 4 bunkers.
 YD 040635 - 2 bunkers.
 YD 035642 - 2 bunkers, 1 NVA body.
 YD 044635 - 13 bunkers, 11 **Chicom** grenades, 1200 **AK47** rds, 10 rds 82mm, 4 entrenching tools
 YD 038636 - 10 bunkers, 3 **BlO** rds, 9 grenades, 700 rds **AK47** ammo.
 YD 044636 - 33 bunkers, 8 entrenching tools, 6 **BlO** rds, 300 rds 50 cal ammo.
 25 **Chicom** grenades, 12 82mm rds, 1900 **AK47** rds, 2 NVA packs.

(b) To the north and northeast the 1-2 **ARVN** continued to move towards Obj 1 (vic YD 025662). A search of the area of the late afternoon contact on 29 March (YD 058648) found the following: 200 fighting positions, 75 - 8 man bunkers, 7 NVA bodies, 1 **AK47**, 4 **CKC** rifles, 1 pistol, 2 **LMG**'s, 1 12.7mm **EMG** on an AA-mount, 3 **RPG-2**'s, 1 ton of rice, 10 AT mines, 202 **BlO** rocket rounds, 100 **Chicom** grenades, 300 pounds of salt, 240 cans of pork and 1 case of Chinese medicine. 1st and 3rd Companies reached the southwestern part of Obj 1 early on the morning of 31 March and began moving southwest searching the area. 2nd and 4th Companies, who had spent the 30th of March searching the area vic YD 0465 arrived on the northeastern part of Obj 1 during mid-morning of 31 March. At 1102 hrs vic YD 026665 2d and 4th Companies received small arms fire from the North. As the situation developed and the companies employed gunships and arty, the size of the enemy force was estimated to be a Co (-). The enemy broke contact at 1530 hrs leaving 15 dead, 1 **RPG-2**, 3 **LPG**'s and 7 **AK47**'s, while 2nd and 4th Companies had no casualties.

(c) On 30 March the 3d Co, 2nd Bn, 2d **ARVN Regt** was placed **OPCON** to the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav. At 1306 hrs A/3-5 Cav and 3/2-2 **ARVN** moved to the north of the 1st Bn, 2nd **ARVN Regt** to screen the northern flank of the **ARVN** and prevent enemy reinforcements from striking 2-2 **ARVN** from the flank. The screen was established from YD 080681 to YD 053683 and was maintained until 2 April. While A/3-5 Cav and 3/2-2 **ARVN** maintained the screen B/3-5 Cav was held as a ready reaction force at 44 (YD 116701) and was prepared to reinforce any of the Brigade or **ARVN** units involved in the operation.

(d) Total results of operations on 30-31 March were twenty-two (22) **NVA KIA**, eight (8) **AK47**'s, four (4) **CKC**'s, one (1) pistol, five (5) **IMG**'s, one (1) 12.7mm **EMG** mounted on an AA mount and five (5) **RPG-2**s captured.

(e) See inclosure 2G for a sketch of operations on 30 and 31 March.

c. Phase III: During Phase III the 1st Bn, 11th Inf conducted search and clear operations back over the battle area moving east-southeast looking for bypassed enemy positions and personnel. 1-2 **ARVN** continued its search along the southern boundary of the DMZ and then joined TF 1-11 Inf and searched the northern half of the battle area. See inclosure 2H for an overlay of Phase III:

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(a) On 1 Apr the 1st Bn, 11th Inf began a detailed search of the battle area moving from Obj 3 to Objs A and B. No contact was made with the enemy, but numerous enemy bunkers, and fighting positions were discovered. During the afternoon 1/3-9 Mar was returned to the control of its parent battalion and departed the battle area. While moving to join its parent battalion 1/3-9 Mar discovered three (3) additional NVA bodies at YD 047623. The enemy had been killed by napalm. The 1st Bn, 11th Inf spent the night with A Co at YD 070636, B Co at YD 072627, C Co at YD 070636, and D Co at YD 072627.

(b) 1-2 ARVN spent the morning with 2d and 4th Co's searching the area vic Obj 1 while 1st and 3d Co's moved southwest along the DMZ seeking to regain contact with the enemy. After reaching objectives vic YD 998640, and YD 001653 the 1st and 3d Co's returned to Obj 1 and the battalion began its search to the east southeast. By nightfall 1-2 ARVN had crossed phase line Blue and occupied defensive positions vic YD 061643 and YD 067654.

(c) TF 3-5 Cav continued to screen the northern flank of 1-2 ARVN with A/3-5 Cav and 3/2-2 ARVN while B/3-5 Cav remained at A4 (YD 116701) as a ready reaction force.

(2) 2 Apr: On 2 Apr the 1st Bn, 11th Inf and the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN cont to sweep east southeast in zone. By late afternoon all units had cleared the battle area. 1-2 ARVN departed the area at 1630 hrs and moved to Dong Ha while TF 3-5 Cav remained at A4 and C2 and the 1st Bn, 11th Inf spent the night with A and C Co's at YD 097638 and B and D Co's at YD 089620. Earlier in the day, while moving from its night position, an element of D/1-11 Inf detonated two (2) Chicom claymores resulting in one (1) friendly KIA and six (6) friendly WIA. On 3 Apr the 1st Bn, 11th Inf was airlifted to LZ Sharon to prepare for operations in that area. There were no enemy contacts on 2 Apr and except for 1st and 3d Co's, 1st Bn, 2d ARVN finding 100 82mm mortar rounds and 60 Chicom grenades at YD 073645 there were no significant finds during the day.

(d) During Operation Montana Mauler the 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div(M) had been in contact with at least two battalions of the 27th NVA Regt. Documents captured during Operation Montana Mauler identified the 3d and 4th Co's, 1st Bn and 2d and 3d Co's 3d Bn 27th Regt. The losses suffered by the 27th Regt have greatly reduced the combat effectiveness of the Regt and indications are that the Regt has returned to North Vietnam. Since the completion of Operation Montana Mauler enemy initiated incidents in the Cam Lo area and along Hwy 9 have significantly decreased.

12 (C) RESULTS:

a. Friendly Casualties:

	ARMY	USMC	ARVN	CUMULATIVE
KIA	21 (LKCS)	1	0	22
WIA	150	11	10	171
DOW	2	0	0	2
MIA	0	0	0	0
CAPTURED	0	0	0	0
NH DEATH	0	0	0	0
NH INJURY	0	0	0	0

b. Enemy Casualties:

- (1) Cumulative: KIA: 274, PW: 0, CIVDEF 0, FO CHANH 0, IWC: 31,
- (2) -Inflicted by US Forces: KIA: 246, PW: 0, CIVDEF 0, HO CHANH 0, IWC: 7, CSWC: 11.
- (3) Inflicted by ARVN KIA 28, PW: 0, CIVDEF: 0, HOI CHANH 0, IWC: 11, CSWC: 11.

c. No significant items of US origin were captured by friendly forces.

d. Enemy material losses:

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ITEM	AMOUNT	ITEM	AMOUNT
B-40 Rkt rds	222	AK-47	24
82mm Mtr rds	173	K-50	1
Chicom grenades	263	SKS	1
AK-47 rds	5100	CKC	44
AK-47 magazines	20	Pistol .45 Cal	1
60mm Mtr rds	19	MG	7
120mm Mtr rds	1	RPG 2	6
.50 cal rds	300	RPG 7	2
7.62 rds	130	HMG (12.7mm)	2
Shotgun shells	2 boxes		
Ammo pouches	8		
RPD Ammo Drums	2		
AT mines	10		
Protective mask	4		
Breaching tools	12		
Shovels	22		
Picks	4		
Machete	1		
Packs	6		
Pith helmets	11		
Tennis shoes	2 pr		
Canteen			
Salt	300 lbs		
Cans of Pork	240 cans		
Chinese Medicine	1 asc		
Rice	2225 lbs		

13. (C) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. (U) Logistics:

(1) Aerial Resupply: During this period helicopter resupply was hampered by adverse weather conditions developing in midmorning and midafternoon hours. Even though adverse weather condition prevailed the operation received a daily average of 12.7 short tons resupplied by air for a total of 101.8 short tons. Aerial resupply was accomplished by the use of USMC CH-46 and CH-53 helicopters.

(2) Ammunition: Unit maintained two basic loads. Basic items used ranged from small arms to 90mm tank ammunition. The primary means of resupply of large caliber ammunition was by vehicle. Air resupply was used only in emergency situations.

(3) Maintenance:

(a) The twelve (12) days during which elements of the 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry and 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry conducted Operation MONTANA MAULER uncovered no problems which were new to maintenance operations.

(b) Other than mine damage sustained by one (1) M50 recovery vehicle, two (2) M113A1 Personnel Carriers, and three (3) M48A3 tanks, there were engine and final drive failures among track laying vehicles that could have been expected considering the terrain and heat. Three (3) M48A3 engines, two (2) M113A1 engines, and one (1) M58 engine incurred failure during the nine (9) days. Only one of the above could have been considered other than failure due to normal wear factors. One M48A3 engine appeared to have failed due to lack of sufficient oil. The air cleaners were found to be excessively clogged with dust, preventing air intake and causing an excessively hot engine. All final drive failures were on M48A3 tanks. Four (4) failures occurred which are suspected to have been caused by the constant gear changes, numerous neutral steer requirements, and resistance of dense undergrowth. The terrain was largely rolling, alternating to steep and hilly. Very little easily traversable terrain was encountered. Added to the terrain, the extreme heat tended to cause assemblies to run much hotter than normal. This obviously could be considered an additional factor which led to the above failures.

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C Certainly the combination of heat and terrain caused failures that would probably not have occurred under only one of these conditions.

(c) The 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry encountered no maintenance problems that could be considered abnormal. The makeup of the unit, limited prime maintenance attention to weapons. In this respect, no limiting problems persisted.

(d) Although not a maintenance problem as such, it might be noted that the terrain also caused some degree of difficulty in regard to recovery operations. The one (1) M8 engine failure can probably be attributed to extreme stress placed on the recovery vehicle while retrieving a tank. That failure caused an operational problem in that combat elements had to be positioned at the point of failure until another M88 and tank which it had been towing was evacuated which required a double haul. This one failure caused forward elements of 3/5 Cav to be without recovery capability for the better part of one day in addition to tying up those elements required for security at the recovery site.

b. (0) Administration:

(1) (U) General: Administrative plans and actions in support of the operation were fully complementary and set no obstacles to the accomplishment of the Brigade's tactical mission.

(2) (C) Maintenance of strength: The 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry incurred an unusually large number of casualties between 26 March and 29 March 1969. Of particular importance was the loss of company commanders. B Co lost two company commanders and for a critical four (4) hour period on the afternoon of 27 March the company was commanded by the artillery forward observer, 1LT Smith. C Co also lost its company commander on the 27th of March. As a result of the significant shortages in a brief period of time, an emergency fill request was telephoned to USAFV on 28 March 1969. This emergency request was honored and Company A (Repl), 75th Support Battalion, received fifty-six (56) replacements, on 29 March 1969. A rapid processing and training program was initiated. Officer casualties were replaced by using in-house resources. As a result of the long hours, quick reactions and effective program acceleration of the elements within the Brigade, a major portion of the casualties of the 1st Bn, 11th Inf were replaced in less than four (4) days.

(3) (U) Medical: Medical plans were adequate and provided full capability to handle the casualties which occurred.

(a) Battle casualties were generally given preliminary treatment by corpsmen in the field and arrangements made for helicopter evacuation.

1. Medical evacuation coverage was available to all field units through both tactical aircraft in the A0 and 237th Med Evac (Amb) located at B Company, 75th Support Battalion.

2. Evacuated casualties were treated either at battalion aid stations, D Company, 75th Support Battalion, 3rd Marine Hospital at Quang Tri, or the USS Repose depending upon the severity of the injury.

(b) During Operation Montana Mauler, 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) had a total of 117 casualties due to hostile action. Additionally, 61 Brigade members were treated for heat. Of the total 178 casualties, 77 were treated and returned to duty, giving a return to duty rate of 43%.

(c) Casualties incurred by forward medical personnel on 27 March 1969 were immediately replaced by members of other medical elements of the Brigade.

(d) Overall review of this operation showed the medical support was adequate and functioned well, according to acceptable Army standards, during the periods of high stress.

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(e) On the spot changes were made in the medical program when it was felt to be of benefit to the patient or organization. One example is the distribution of water containers from medevac helicopters when the aircraft were evacuating heat casualties.

c. (U) Communications:

(1) Signal support provided Operation Montana Mauler encompassed multi-channel radio relay, radio teletype communications, and messenger service between brigade and battalion base camps and was provided by the 298th Signal Company in continuation of its normal mission. Internal command and control communications for maneuver battalions was accomplished with organic battalion FM radio sets.

(2) Signal support provided by the 298th Signal Company effectively provided the means for the Brigade Commander to control the Brigade. Battalion radio net operation, in some cases, revealed a weakness in net discipline and proper use of established radio nets during periods of intensified enemy contact. In one case artillery was being adjusted, a FAC was controlling an airstrike, a medevac and a resupply mission were being run simultaneously on the command net. Battalion admin/log nets, Brigade air request nets, and artillery fire direction nets were not being used for their established purposes. Introduction of log. artillery, FAC air control traffic, etc. on the battalion command net will effectively destroy the commander's means of controlling his maneuver elements. Operation Montana Mauler demonstrated that battalion forward CP's and maneuver elements down to and including company size units should be required to carry secure voice equipment. Frequent requirements to transmit classified intelligence/command information make it imperative that the available cipher equipment (KY-8, CY-38) be used.

14. (C) COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

a. Operation ... Mauler was a reconnaissance in force operation. Two (2) recon troops of the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav were sent into an area in which an NVN Regt was suspected to be located. Being small enough to invite unattack by an enemy element, yet strong enough to be able to defend itself until reinforcements could arrive, the cavalry was able to draw the enemy into a fight. Once contact was gained the cavalry was able to develop the situation so that additional forces could be intelligently committed to the battle in an attempt to close with and destroy the enemy.

b. On 24 March the situation had been developed to the point that it was necessary to commit as many forces as possible, as rapidly as they could be committed, in order to gain a decisive victory. In hopes of cutting off the enemy routes of escape, the Brigade requested that the USMC Special Landing Force (SLF) be committed. The request was denied so that when the 1st Bn, 11th Infantry landed and began its attack there were no forces available to cut the enemy's routes of reinforcement and withdrawal to the north and west. The 1st Bn, 11th if was able to prevent escape to the south and east and eventually the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt was able to prevent the enemy's escape to the north and northeast, but the routes to the west and northwest were never really closed. Had the (SLF) been committed it may have been possible to prevent the escape of large portions of the 27th NVN Regt.

c. When the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt was committed a TAC CP was established by the Brigade at 02 (YDL35645). The 2d ARVN Regt also established a TAC G at C2 and the two CP's were collocated. The establishment of a TAC CP by the Brigade and the 2d ARVN Regt at the same location was a far timely coordination. Because of the joint CP arrangement the Brigade knew where the ARVN companies were at all times and knew where the elements of the 2d ARVN Regt were located. In addition, both the scheme of maneuver and the fire support for the Brigade and ARVN were easily made to be complementary.

d. The lack of organic gunships in the Brigade created problems during the operation.

(1) On 31 March, as 1-2 ARVN closed onto objective 1, strong enemy resistance was met. The ARVN had gunships available so that they did not have

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to withdraw from contact to obtain sufficient room to employ artillery or fixed wing support. Instead the ARVN were able to use gunships while remaining very close to the enemy positions. In this action the ARVN killed fifteen (15) NVA without any friendly KIA's. On many occasions during the operation the 1st Bn 11th Inf found themselves in a position where additional fire support was needed to take an objective. Gunships were not available, so the company involved had to back up and employ TAC air or artillery. The battalion suffered casualties in returning to the objective. Had gunships been available they probably could have been employed much more rapidly and effectively than TAC air, and lives may have been saved.

(2) On 27 March, after an air assault onto Hill 208, 0/1-11 Inf was attacked by the enemy. Late in the afternoon C Company was running low on water and ammunition. The only aircraft available to resupply the company were the Brigade's UH-1H helicopters which, except for the doorguns, are unarmed. One relatively unarmed helicopter had to resupply the company without any gunships to fly escort and provide suppressive fires.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS: It is recommended that

a. Joint CP's be established when US and ARVN forces are acting in coordination and cooperation with each other. The joint CP allows for instant coordination of mutual problems and insures a greater unity of effort by the two forces. In practice it has been found that the joint CP has the effect of producing unity of command.

b. The 1st Bde, 5th Inf Div (M) be authorized four (4) gunships.

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JAMES M. GIL
COL, INF
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