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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (Unclassified upon removal from basic correspondence) 081569

THIRD ENDORSEMENT on CO, 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry (Mech) ltr AVBL-C of
4 May 1969

From: Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
To: Commanding General, United States Military Assistance Command,
Vietnam

Subj: Combat After Action Report (MONTANA MAULER)

Ref: (a) MACV Dir 355-8

1. Forwarded in accordance with reference (a).
2. Contents noted.

R.R. Peebles

R. R. PEEBLES
BY DIRECTION

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AVII-GCT (4 May 69) 2d Ind

MAJ Markl/jpg/2506

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report, Operation Montana Mauler, 22 March
1969 - 2 April 1969

DA, Headquarters, XXIV Corps, APO San Francisco 96308 29 JUN 1969

Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force, FPO San Francisco 96602

1. The 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) After Action Report for Montana Mauler has been reviewed at HQ, XXIV Corps and is forwarded in accordance with MACV Directive 335-8.

2. Concur with the report as corrected by 1st Indorsement of 3d Marine Division.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

2 Incl
nc

H.R. Taylor
H.R. TAYLOR
CPT, AGC
ASST AG

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ENCLOSURES

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Ser:
1 June 1969

[REDACTED] (Unclassified upon removal of basic correspondence)

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

From: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein) LMF
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 by:		
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".

F. R. Kraince
F. R. KRAINCE
By direction

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HQ, 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech)
APO San Francisco 96477

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4 May 1969

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

THRU: Commanding General
3rd Marine Division
FPO 96602

THRU: Commanding General
XXIV 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 96222

1. (U) NAME & TYPE OF OPERATION:

- a. Name: Montana Mauler
- b. Type: Reconnaissance in Force

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

3. (U) LOCATION: North central Quang Tri Province from the southern boundary of the DMZ to nine (9) kilometers south of the DMZ, Map, VIETNAM, 1:50,000 AMS Series L7014, Cam Lo sheet 6342 I. Area bounded by coordinates YD0267, YD0867, YD0860, and YD0260.

4. (U) CONTROL HEADQUARTERS: 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (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, 01/209-503.

6. (C) TASK ORGANIZATION:

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

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

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b. Phase II: 25 - 31 Mar 69

TF 1-11 Inf

A/1-11 Inf

B/1-11 Inf

C/1-11 Inf

D/1-11 Inf (-2 plats)

I/3-9 Mar

TF 3-5 Cav

A/3-5 Cav

B/3-5 Cav

2d & 4th Plats/D/1-11 Inf :

1-2 ARVN

1/1-2 ARVN

2/1-2 ARVN

3/1-2 ARVN

4/1-2 ARVN

c. Phase III: 1 - 2 Apr 69.

TF 1-11 Inf

A/1-11 Inf

B/1-11 Inf

C/1-11 Inf

D/1-11 Inf

I/3-9 Mar

TF 3-5 Cav

A/3-5 Cav

B/3-5 Cav

3/2-2 ARVN

1-2 ARVN

1/1-2 ARVN

2/1-2 ARVN

3/1-2 ARVN

4/1-2 ARVN

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 Regt, 1st ARVN Div) in place of the heavier, more cumbersome 81mm mortars that belong to the infantry companies.

7. (U) SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Army Aviation:

(1) During Phase I of Operation Montana Mauler the 3d Sqn, 5th Cav used its organic LOH aircraft for command and control purposes. The 3rd Sqn, 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 LOH (OH-6A) each for command and control. During the course of the operation these 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 Section. 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 CH-46 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 10.8 short tons were hauled 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 CH-46's. All lifts conducted by the 1st Bn, 11th Inf were conducted with CH-46's. 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, consisted of six (6) 105mm batteries, five (5) 155mm batteries, two (2) 175mm batteries and three (3) 8 inch batteries. A total of 2,550 missions and 69,594 rounds were fired in support of the operation.

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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 USMC 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 West of Cam Lo (YD128595). 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 enemy sightings. The nature of enemy initiated activities indicated that the 27th Regt probably had the mission of interdicting Hwy 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 (YD015594) from C3 (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 was a twelve (12) day operation that took place northwest of Cam 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 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

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

a. 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:

(1) 22 Mar 69: At 0800 hrs A and B Troop of 3-5 Cav, with a platoon of D/1-11 Inf attached to each troop, moved westward into the Khe Chua 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 Chua 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 2A 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 0954 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 with unknown results. By 1200 hrs, A Troop was located at YD052620 where it was joined by B Troop in the early afternoon. During the afternoon the CP received art 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 YD052622. 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 YD048621 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 YD044623 made contact with the primary defensive positions of the enemy. Two (2) NVA Co's were entrenched in camouflaged bunkers north (YD046624) and south (YD041616) of the valley with a light screening force established between the two positions. Another 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 (YD052620) 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 YD053625, 2 NVA YD058612, 12 NVA YD050622, and 1 NVA YD046617). At 1400 hrs an airstrike was placed on enemy troop locations north of the valley vic YD054623 and at 1420 hrs against a suspected troop location at YD052635. 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 OPCON 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 decided to commit 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 YD039610. 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) NVA in small groups of two to three (2-3) were seen moving north vic YD047635 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 1113 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 a stream crossing vic YD039618.

(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 YD040629. 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 sketch 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 wounding 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 105° temperatures, returned to positions of the previous night to prepare for an attack on the 27th (A Co vic YD040628, 1/A/1-11 vic YD040630, B Co vic YD044624).

(c) At 0800 hrs I/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, 1 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.

(e) See inclosures 2D for a sketch of the day's operations.

(31) 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. I/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 1115 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 A/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. This 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 D/1-11 from 3-5 Cav; these platoons were committed to B Co's position (YD039633).

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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) IWC, 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 probed 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; YD035645 at 1255 hrs; YD035635 at 1335 hrs and YD035645 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) NVA 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) IMG 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/1-11 on Hill 208. The squadron began moving southeast at midmorning, crossed the Can 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 unknown.

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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.

(a) Action was initiated when D/1-11 Inf, moving east to secure a position at YD042632 in support of an air assault by I/3-9 Mar on Hill 300 (YD466635), 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, I/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. TAC 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 YD043644, D Co YD036631, and I/3-9 Mar YD047635). Results of the 1-11 Inf contact that day were seventeen (17) friendly WIA, sixteen (16) NVA KIA by SAF and twenty-five (25) KBA and two (2) 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 by 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 vic YD047657. The 1st and 3d Companies, while moving west from LZ Blue, at 1505 hrs engaged and killed two (2) NVA and captured one (1) AK47 vic YD060645 and at 1615 hrs the lead elements engaged two (2) NVA in a bunker vic YD053646. A search of the bunker revealed 200 lbs of rice, one (1) HMG, and two (2) B40 rcts. 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 SAF, twenty-five (25) KIA by air and arty, and two (2) 82mm mortars destroyed by air.

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

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

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, I/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 B40 rd, 2 packs, 130 7.62 rds, 2 Chicom gas masks, 1 RPG-2.
- YD 045636 - 6 bunkers, 1 B40 rd, 182mm rd, 50 AK47 rds, 1 Chicom grenade.
- YD 043632 - 4 bunkers.
- YD 034645 - 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 B40 rds, 9 grenades, 700 rds AK47 ammo.
- YD 044636 - 33 bunkers, 8 entrenching tools, 6 B40 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 HMG on an AA-mount, 3 RPG-2's, 1 ton of rice, 10 AT mines, 202 B40 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 A4 (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) CKCs, one (1) pistol, five (5) LMGs, one (1) 12.7mm HMG mounted on an AA mount and five (5) RPG-2s 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:

(1) 1 Apr:

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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 A1 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 (1KCS)	1	0	22
MIA	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, HOI CHANH: 0, IWC: 31, CSWC: 77.

(2) Inflicted by US Forces: KIA: 246, PW: 0, CIVDEF: 0, HOI CHANH: 0, IWC: 7, CSWC: 6.

(3) Inflicted by ARVN: KIA 28, PW: 0, CIVDEF: 0, HOI CHANH: 0, IWC: 14, 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	IMG	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 masks	4		
Entrenching tools	12		
Shovels	22		
Picks	4		
Machete	1		
Packs	6		
Pith helmets	11		
Tennis shoes	2 pr		
Canteen	1		
Salt	300 lbs		
Cans of Pork	240 cans		
Chinese Medicine	1 case		
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 conditions 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) M88 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) M88 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 air. 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 difficulties, 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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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) M88 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. (C) 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 USARV on 28 March 1969. This emergency request was honored and Company A (Repl), 75th Support Battalion, received fifty-six (56) replacements, MOS 11B, 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 AO and 237th Med Evac (Amb) located at B Company, 75th Support Battalion.

2. Evacuated casualties were treated either at battalion aid stations, B 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 prostration. 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, TAC 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, KY-38) be used.

14. (C) COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

a. Operation Montana Mauler was a reconnaissance in force operation. Two (2) ground troops of the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav were sent into an area in which an NVA Regt was suspected to be located. Being small enough to invite an attack by an enemy regiment, 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's 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 Inf 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 NVA Regt.

c. When the 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt was committed a TAC CP was established by the Brigade at C2 (YD135645). The 2d ARVN Regt also established a TAC CP at C2 and the two CP's were collocated. The establishment of a TAC CP by the Brigade and the 2nd ARVN Regt at the same location resulted in fast, timely coordination. Because of the joint CP arrangement the Brigade knew where the ARVN companies were at all times and ARVN knew where the elements of the Brigade 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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DATE	PP	IMM TPQ	COORDINATES	AFCT	ORDINANCE	RESULTS
27 Mar 69 (Cont.)	X		YD040635	2F100	4/500/#Bomb 4/500/#Nap	6 KBA; 1 secondary explosion
	X		YD041636	2A4	8/500/#Bomb 4/500/#Nap	6 KBA
	X		YD041637	2F4	12/250/#Bomb 6/500/#Nap	6 KBA
	X		YD042636	2A6	1/2000/#Bomb 10/1000/#Bomb	6 KBA; 1 mtr psns.
	X		YD037633	2A7	20/250/# Bomb 4/Gun POD	5 KBA
	X		YD037633	2F4	12/250/#Bomb 6/500/#Nap.	5 KBA
28 Mar 69	X		YD034650	2F4		
			YD043635			
	X		YD040635	2F4	6/500/#Bomb 6/500/#Nap	5 KBA
					6/POD 5"Zuni FFAR	
	X		YD035645	2A4	4/500/#Bomb 4/POD 5"Zuni FFAR	5 KBA
					2/500/#Nap	
	X		YD035635	2A7A	20/500/#Bomb 600/20mm	5 KBA
	X		YD025645	2F4	8/500/#Nap	1 secondary exp.
			YD042633		6/500/#Bomb 20mm	5 KBA; 1 mortar psn.
	X		YD025646	2A4	8/500/#Bomb 4/500/#Nap	5 KBA
	X		YD032665	2F4	6/500/#Nap 4/7D POD 2.75"FFAR	5 KBA
					6/500/#Nap	
	X		YD032665	2F100	4/500/#Nap 4/500/#Bomb	1 secondary Exp. 5 KBA; 1 mortar pen
	X		YD029646	2A4	8/500/#Bomb 4/500/#Nap	5 KBA
	X		YD032665	2F4	2400 rds; 20mm 4/500/#Nap	
					6/500/#Bomb	
	X		YD032665	2A4	8/500/#Bomb 4/500/#Nap	
	X		YD275475	2F4	12/250/#Bomb 6/500/#Nap	
29 Mar 69	X		YD03 63	20V-10	14/2.75HE 7.62	
	X		YD046635	2A4	16/250/#Bomb 4/500/#Nap	1 secondary exp.
					8/500/#Bomb	
	X		YD046635	2F4	6/500/#Nap 2/7D POD 2.75" FFAR	
	X		YD046635	2A4	12/500/#Bomb 20mm	
	X		YD046635	2F4	12/250/#Bomb 6/500/#Nap	
	X		YD046633	2F4	6/500/#Bomb 4/500/#Nap	
					4/7D POD 2.75"FFAR	
	X		YD046633	2F4	4/500/#Nap 6/500/#Bomb	
					2 pistol	
	X		YD035635	2F4	12/250/#Bomb 6/500/#Nap	
	X		YD035635	2A4	8/500/#Bombs 4/500/#Nap 20mm	2 secondary exp

MONTANA MAULER Tactical Air Support (22 Mar 69 - 2 Apr 69) (Cont)

DATE	PP	TPQ	COORDINATES	AFCT	ORDNANCE	RESULTS
29 Mar 69 (Cont)	X		YD041634	2F4	4/500/#Nap 12/500/#Bomb 20mm	2 bunkers destroyed
	X		YD041634	2F4	8/500/#Bomb 6/500/#Nap 20mm	5 bunkers destroyed
	X		YD041634	2A4	16/250/#Bomb	12 bunkers destroyed
	X		YD038635	2F4	12/250/#Bomb 6/500/#Nap	
	X		YD025645	2F4	4/7D POD 2.75"FFAR 9/500/#Nap 6/250/#Bomb	
	X		YD025645	2F4	12/250/#Bomb 6/500/#Nap	9 bunkers destroyed
2 Apr 69	X		YD896627	2F4	12 MK2 3SUU7	
	X		YD078642	2F4	12 MK2 3 SUU7	
TOTAL	9	49		114		

2. Following is a day by day account of the TPQs (Radar directed preplanned missions flown at night or in bad weather) flown in support of MONTANA MAULER.

DATE	COORDINATES	ACFT	ORDNANCE	TARGET	TIME
22 Mar 69			None		
23 Mar 69	YD038635	2-F100	8-500/#Bombs	Bunkers	1630
24 Mar 69	YD045623	2-A4	8-500/#Bombs 4-500/#Nap	Troops in contact	1416
	YD052635	2-F100	4-500/#Nap 8-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	1430
	YD037683	4-A7	20-500/#Bombs	L.Z.Preps	1630
	YD024634	1-A6	6-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	2000
	YD028640	2-F4	16-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	2110
	YD030642	1-A4	6-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	2150
	YD034641	1-F4	10-250/#Bombs	Troops in contact	2200
	YD034639	1-F4	10-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	2237
	YD037643	3-A7	20-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	2330
	YD040647	2-A4	20-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	0058
	YD040633	1-A6	3-2000/#Bombs	Troops in contact	0110
	YD037652	2-A4	8-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	0115
	YD036633	2-A4	12-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	0205
	YD024634	1-A6	22-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	0325
	YD028640	2-A4	8-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	0330
	YD024634	2-A4	8-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	0518
25 Mar 69	YD095707	1-A4	10-250/#Bombs	Bunkers-Troops	1925
	YD056662	1-F4	10-500/#Bombs	Enemy positions	2105
	YD056662	1-F4	10-500/#Bombs	Enemy positions	2110
	YD056662	2-F4	16-500/#Bombs	Enemy positions	2120
	YD056662	1-A6	5-2000/#Bombs	Enemy positions	2130
	YD053661	1-A4	6-500/#Bombs	Enemy positions	2200
	YD054668	1-F4	10-500/#Bombs	Enemy positions	2220
	YD097705	1-A4	6-500/#Bombs	Known enemy psns	2030
	YD055664	2-A4	8-500/#Bombs	Known enemy psns	0010
	YD056668	1-F4	10-500/#Bombs	Known enemy psns	0045
	YD054673	2-F4	20-500/#Bombs	Known enemy psns	0050
	YD053661	1-A6	10-500/#Bombs	Known enemy psns	0235
	YD040647	2-F4	12-500/#Bombs 4-500/#Nap	Troops in contact	0500
	YD050652	1-F4	16-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	0520
	YD043649	2-A4	12-500/#Bombs	Troops in contact	0520

AVBL-C

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 4 May 1969
SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Operation MONTANA MAULER
22 March 1969 - 2 April 1969.

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.

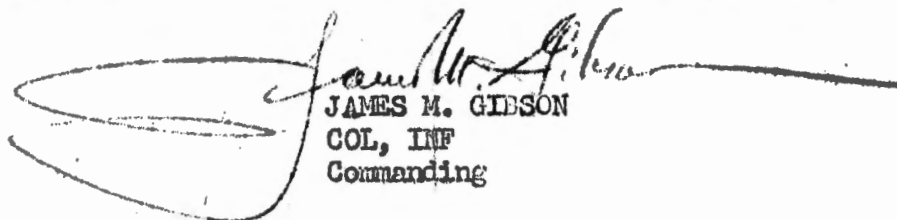
(2) On 27 March, after an air assault onto Hill 208, C/1-11 Inf was attacked by the enemy. Late in the afternoon C Company was running low on water and ammunition. The only aircraft available to resupply the company were the Brigade's UH-1H helicopters which, except for the doorguns, are unarmed. One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

150 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.

2 Incl
as


JAMES M. GIBSON
COL, INF
Commanding

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Montana Mauler Tactical Air Support

(22 March 1969 - 2 April 1969)

1. Following is a day by day account of the TAC Air used in support of MONTANA MAULER.

DATE	PP	IMM TPQ COORDINATES	AFCT	ORDNANCE	RESULTS
22 Mar 69			None		
23 Mar 69			None		
24 Mar 69	X	YD039612 YD042614 YD045623 YD046623 YD055632	2A4	8/500#Bomb 4/500#NAP	
	X	YD052635	2F100	2/500#Bomb	
	X	YD047630	2A7	600/20mm 10/500#LD Bomb	
25 Mar 69	X	YD045628	2A4	16/250#Bomb 4/500#NAP	
	X	YD045628	2A4	8/500#Bomb 4/500#NAP	
	X	YD045628	2F4	12/250#Bomb 6/500#NAP	
26 Mar 69	X	YD038632	2A4	8/500#Bomb 4/500#Nap	
	X	YD038632	2A4	4/POD5"Zuni FFAR	4 bunkers destroyed
	X	YD038632	2A4	10/250#Bomb	
	X	YD038632	2A4	8/500#Bomb 4/500#Nap	
	X	YD038632	2F4	12/500#Bomb 6/500#Nap	4 bunkers destroyed
	X	YD038632	2A6	35/500#Bomb 1/POD 2.75"FFAR	3 bunkers destroyed
	X	YD030631	2F4	12/500#Bomb 3/500#Nap	4 bunkers destroyed
	X	YD030631	2F4	4/Gun POD 7/500#NAP 6/500#Bomb 4/Gun POD	2 bunkers destroyed
27 Mar 69	X	YD043614		Not run	
	X	YD046635	2F4	6/500#Bomb 120mm 4/500#Nap	6 KBA
	X	YD046635	2A4	4/500#Nap 8/500#Bomb	6 KBA
	X	YD042643	2F4	6/500#Bomb 7/500#Nap	5 KBA
	X	YD042643	2F4	12/500#Bomb 6/500#Nap	5 KBA
	X	YD042642	2F100	6/500#Bomb 4/500#Nap	5 KBA
	X	YD042643	2A4	8/500#Bomb 4/500#Nap	6 KBA
	X	YD042643	2F4	6/500#Bomb 4/500#Nap	6 KBA
	X	YD040635	2A4	6/500#Bomb 6/500#Nap	6 KBA
	X	YD04264	2A4	8/500#bomb 4/500#Nap	6 KBA

Incl 1

MONTANA MAULER Tactical Air Support (22 Mar 69 - 2 Apr 69) (Cont)

DATE	COORDINATES	ACFT	ORDNANCE	TARGET	TIME
26 Mar 69	YD030665	1-A6	5-2000/Bombs	Bunkers-troops	1448
	YD026656	1-A6	5-2000/Bombs	Bunkers-troops	1448
	YD008660	1-A4	6-500/Bombs	NVA. Unit	2135
	YD041684	2-F4	12-500/Bombs	NVA. Unit	2155
	YD138727	1-F4	10-500/Bombs	NVA. Unit	2240
	YD095715	1-F4	10-500/Bombs	NVA. Unit	2340
	YD095715	2-A4	12-500/Bombs	NVA. Unit	2359
	YD095715	2-A4	8-500/Bombs	NVA. Unit	0259
	YD041684	2-A4	8-500/Bombs	NVA. Unit	0305
	YD078651	2-A4	12-500/Bombs	NVA. Unit	0513
27 Mar 69	YD040675	2-F4	10-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	1245
	YD024634	1-A4	6-250/Bombs	Troops in contact	1832
	YD029644	1-A4	10-250/Bombs	Troops in contact	1841
	YD032660				
	YD040658	1-A6	28-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	1925
	YD044655				
	YD054656	1-A4	5-2000/Bombs	Troops in contact	1935
	YD022644	1-A4	10-250/Bombs	Troops in contact	1943
	YD035657	1-A4	10-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	1955
	YD026640	1-A6	22-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	2005
	YD027644	1-A6	22-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	2010
	YD030647	2-F4	12-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	2025
	YD037655	1-F4	10-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	2115
	YD035657	1-A7	8-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	2145
	YD051659	1-F4	10-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	2155
	YD057658	1-F4	6-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	2205
	YD050663	1-A6	12-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	2230
	YD044666	1-F4	5-2000/Bombs	Troops in contact	2235
	YD056668	2-F4	8-5000/Bombs	Troops in contact	2315
	YD050667	2-F4	8-5000/Bombs	Troops in contact	2320
	YD070646	1-F4	10-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	2335
	YD050656	3-A7	40-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	0010
	YD027655	2-A4	12-500/Bombs	Bunkers	0100
	YD224659				
	YD044655	2-A4	12-500/Bombs	Troops	0115
	YD044660	2-A4	12-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	0340
	YD059655	2-A4	12-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	0355
	YD024652	2-A4	12-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	0408
	YD024660	2-A4	12-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	0520
	YD066654	4-A4	20-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	0540
	YD044660	1-F4	10-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	0555
28 Mar 69	YD031653	1-A6	5-2000/Bombs	Enemy movement	2236
	YD035653	1-A6	28-500/Bombs	Enemy movement	2300
	YD039656	1-A6	15-500/Bombs	Enemy trails	2330
	YD067618	1-A6	22-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	0115
	YD061618	1-A6	3-2000/Bombs	Troops in contact	0405
	YD062655	1-A6	2-2000/Bombs	Troops in contact	0415
	YD081617	1-A6	22-500/Bombs	Troops in contact	0425
	YD039656	2-A4	2-250/Bomb	Troops in contact	0650
			8-500/Bombs		
	YD027644	1-A6	12-500/Bombs	Suspected Mortars	0420
	YD021643	1-A6	10-500/Bombs	Suspected Mortars	0432
	YD025662	2-A4	8-500/Bombs	Suspected Mortars	0510
	YD016657	1-A6	28-500/Bombs	Suspected Mortars	0555
30 Mar 69			None		
31 Mar 69			None		
1 Apr 69			None		
2 Apr 69			None		
TOTAL MISSIONS:	82				
TOTAL SORTIES:	123				

MONTANA MAULER
OPERATIONS SKETCHES

Attached are sketches of Operation Montana Mauler. The sketches are for the days, and cover the areas listed below.

- Incl 2A: 22, 23 Mar 69; Area bounded by YD 029601, YD 029628, YD 049628, YD 049601
- Incl 2B: 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 049649, YD 049620
- 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, YD 070670, YD 070624
- Incl 2H: Overlay of Phase III