BN AFTER REPORTS
OF AUSTIN VI
4/30-5/19/66

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
TERS, 2D BATTALION (AIRBORNE) 502D INFANTRY
APO SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96317

HHC FLE

AVADC-C

24 May 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation AUSTIN VI

:01

Commanding General 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div ATTN: AVAD-C APO US Forces 96347

## 1. GINURAL:

- a. Name of operation: AUSTIN VI
- b. Dates of operation: 301100H Apr 66 191030H May 66
- c. Location: QUAN DUC and PHUOC LONG Province, RVN
- e. Reporting officer: HENRY E EMERSON, Lt Col, Infantry
- f. Miscellaneous: Operation AUSTIN VI consisted of two battalion size perations which are explained in chronological order in paragraph 7 and listed in inclosures 2 3. For simplicity this report is divided into phases, each phase nitiated by a Battalion OPORD.
- 2. TASK ORGANIZATION: The task organization varied for each battalion operation and is listed on all operation orders which are included as Inclosures 2 3.

## 3. SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Army air support was requested and utilized daily. On many occasions equests for air support were made for immediate needs and changes in the tactical ituation and were honored immediately and effectively. Pilots were required to fly nextremely dangerous weather conditions and had to negotiate small difficult LZ's, all of which they accomplished with the highest degree of professional competence and skill. During operation AUSTIN VI two complete battalion moves and four separate company moves were accomplished in a timely and highly efficient manner.

Worthy of special note was the availability of a command helicopter in a direct upport role. This was instrumental in effecting maximum coordination and coopertion.

The Medevac ship with hoist was highly successful. Without it being available he companies would not have been able to send their wounded out for several hours aving to chop out a LZ in the jungle. Being able to extract their wounded quickly hey could move rapidly and pursue the enemy.

- b. Engineer support was required on 2 occasions to clear abondoned air trips of mine fields and repair them for use. They were also used to clear LZ's everal times. The engineer squads performed in a highly efficient manner and ontributed greatly to the air movement of the battalion. On several occasions t was necessary to use them in the defensive perimeter.
- c. TAC air was requested and utilized on several occasions. Their response o our immediate needs was rapid and decisive in two major encounters with the enemy on with the heavily covered terrain they were able to deliver their ordinarce ithout being able to see the troops on the ground. This close support performance as extremely effective in our engagements.
- d. Artillery support was used throughout the operation. On one occasion ver 2000 rounds were fired in direct support on one day.

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- rolwan was asked for and employed on several occasions. On one occasion a picture of a POW captured several days before was dropped. An NVA soldier capture after the drop had several of these leaflets in his possession indicating good coverage.
  - 4. INTELLIGENCE: See Inclosure I.
  - 5. MISSION: See paragraph 7 and Inclosures 2 3.
- 6. CONCEPT OR OPERATION: See paragraph 7 and Inclosures 2 3 for the concept of each battalion operation conducted. The concept of brigade operations was to conduct offensive operations to destroy Viet Cong forces astride the II and III Corps boundary in Quan Duc and Phuoc Long Province, commencing 1 May 1966.

# 7. EXECUTION:

- a. Bn OPORD 36 66: (AUSTIN VI, Phase I), See Inclosure 2.
- (1) Mission: 2/502 (-) conducted "RECONDO CHECKERBO ARD" operations in Area JACKSON to find, fix and destroy Viet Cong forces and installations to spoil possible VI/TVA abtack of PU PRANG; provide one company, minus olumn mortar section, for brigade reserve.
- (2) Concept of Operation: The operation was conducted in 3 phases.

  Phase I: "RECONDO" platoon (+) with (2) 81mm mortar squads infiltrated via (2)

  CH-47 helicopters to Bu Prang RF camp vic YU 522544 at 301900H Apr 66; effects coordination with RF company and "CHECKERBOARD" along route WHITE to secure LZ Alpha vic YU 497575.
- Phase II: 2/502 (-) conducted heliborne assault OlllooH May 66 on LZ Alpha vic YU 497575. Co A conducted "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area HANK. Co B provided security for C Btry 320th Arty and TAC CP and conducted "RECONDO CHECKER-BOARD" operations with one platoon in area TOM. "RECONDO" platoon conducted "RECONI CHECKERBOARD" operations along axes BLACK.
- Phase III: Co B Conducted "RECONDO CHECKEREDARD" operations in area LOU. "RECONDO" platoon conducted "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area JIM.
- (3) By 291430H Apr 66 2/502 had completed movement to Nhon Co by C-130 aircraft. A Bn base area was established. A and B Co prepared for future operations and C Co assumed mission of Bde reserve. C Co dispatched two "RECONDO" elements to establish ambush sites ND 790320 and ND 886247.

"RECONDO" platoon conducted a heliborne infiltration into BU PRANG 301900H Apr 66 and prodeeded to secure LZ Alpha vic YU 497757.

- A 2/502 closed into LZ Alpha at 011130H May 66 and proceeded to conduct "RECON CHECKERBOARD" operations in area HANK. At 011700H May 66 A 2/502 was located at YU 472595 with a "RECONDO" patrol at YU 468574 with negative enemy contact.
- b 2/502 closed into LZ Alpha at Olll 30H and secured the TAC CP and Artillery Battery vic YU 497575. C 2/502 remained Bde reserve at Nhon Co.
- A 2/502 completed "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area HANK with negative enemy contact and returned to the TAC CP at 021310H vic YU 497575. A 2/502 assumed TAC CP and Artillery security with "RECONDO" squads providing local security.
- B 2/302 commenced "RECONDO CHECKEREDARD" operations in area LOU at 021630H May 66. One platoon prepared for a heliborne assault on a plantation vic YU 588560.
  - C 2/502 remained Bde reserve at Nhon Co.

"RECONDO" platoon completed "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area TOM with negative enemy contact at -21500H May 66 and returned to the TAC CP. "RECONDO" platoon prepared for operations in area JIM.

On 03 May 66, A 2/502 continued security of TAC CP and had "RECONDO" squad patrolling the nearby area. 26 Montagnards approached the TAC CP and told CO of A 2/502 that they were not woving out of the area; were pro American and had observed no enemy activity in the last few days.

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B 2/502 continued "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area LOU with negative enemy contact and were located vic YU 581562 at 031100H May 66 and extablished local security.

C 2/502 remained in Site at vic YU 531524 at 031000H May 66 with negative enemy contact and rejoined Bn CP at 031520H May 66.

On Ol May 66 2/502 continued "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" in area JACKSON and prepar for movement to future area of operations. B Co continued operations in area LOU with negative contact and closed into Bn CP area by helicopter at O41310H May 66. C Co remained Bde reserve at Nhon Co.

2/502 remained in area JACKSON due to a 24 hour weather delay 05 May 66. A and B Co provided local ambush patrols at the following areas: A Co: YU 491584, YU 512 and YU 520581; B Co: YU 470575, 491547 and 473555; C Co remained Ede reserve at Nhon Co.

b. Bn OPORD 37 - 66, Bn FRAGORD 38 - 66: (AUSTIN VI, Phase II) See Inclosure 3.

- (1) Mission: 2/502 conducted "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations to find, fix and destroy hostile forces and installations in Bu Gia Map area.
- (2) Concept of Operation: "RECONDO" platoon conducts heliborne assault on LZ # 2 YU 338364 for 2/502 (-) heliborne assault on 5 May 66. Then conducted "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area ROMEO and extablishes a roadblock at South edge of TAOR. A 2/502 conducted heliborne assault on LZ #2 YU 338364 at 051400H May 66 and conducted "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area Alpha. B 2/502 conducted heliborne assault on LZ # 2 YU 338364 at 051430H May 66 and conducted "RECOND CHECKERBOARD" operations in area BRAVO. C 2/502 conducts heliborne assault on LZ #2 YU 338364 at 051600H May 66 and assumes En reserve, CP and Artillery security.
- May 66 vic IU 327325 in accordance with reacond of a conducted believe and to 0090 the lift was completed with negative enemy contact. At 1040 hours "RECONDO" platoo engaged one sniper vic YU 330348 resulting in one friendly WIA. "RECONDO" platoon secured the LZ for the Bn (-) by 1200 hours and moved to area ROMEO at 1650 hours to conduct "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations.
- A 2/502 conducted a heliborne assault vic YU 336365, O61155H with negative enemy contact, and moved immediately to area Alpha to conduct "RECONDO CHECKERBOAR" operations.
- B 2/502 conducted a heliborne assault vic YU 336635, 061215H with negative enemy contact. The lift was completed by 1232 hours and the Co moved to area LRAVO to conduct "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations. "RECONDO" patrol discovered a weaper cache vic YU 344372 at 060500H May 66 containing 57mm recoiless, 140 rds; 81mm illum69 rds; .45 cal ammo, 200-300 rds; 5156 ammo, 2000 rds; 4.2", 1rd; 60mm mixed illumand WP, 250 rds; the cache was extracted to brigade headquarters.
- 0 2/502 made a heliborne assault at 061400H May 66 vic YU 336365, completed at 1435 hours. They remained Bn reserve and responsible for 1/2 of bde perimeter defense of the Bu Gia Map airfield. At 061440H vic YU 336365 one NVA of 608 NVA Bn was captured. He had a full pack no weapon, and was in need of medical core.
- A 2/502 continued "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area Alpha. At 071430H May 1966 they engaged an estimated 15 NVA vic YU 316367 resulting in 1 US WIA with negative enemy casualties.
- B 2/502 continued "RECONDO CHECKEREDARD" operations in Area BRAVO. At 070645E May 66, B 2/502 engaged an estimated NVA squad vic YU 353367 resulting in 2 NVA KIA (BC) and 1 NVA soldier and 1 French SMG captured. At 071005H May 66, B Co discovered a 3 ton rice cache vic YU 351369, which was destroyed because of poor condition. An NVA base camp consisting of four huts was found and destroyed vic YU 375353 resulting in 1 NVA KIA (BC) and 1 French bolt action rifle captured.

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G 2/502 (-) was relieved of CP security responsibility by A 2/17 Cav at 071400H May 66 and initiated "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations North of area Alpha. They had no enemy contact.

"RECONDO" platoon continued operations in area ROMEO engaging 2 NVA at 061900H vic YW 325327 resulting in 1 NVA WIA.

- A 2/502 continued operations in the Southern sector of area Alpha. They engag an estimated 5 NVA vic YU 307354 080730H May 66 resulting in 1 NVA KIA (BC) and 1 AK47 and ammo captured. At 080955H May 66 A Co engaged 1 sniper vic YU 3133356 killing 1 NVA and capturing 1 Russian sniper rifle. Two tons of oats were found vic YU 318339 at 081425H May 66 and were destroyed.
- B 2/502 continued MRECONDO CHECKERBOARD coperations in the Southern sector carea Alpha finding an NVA base camp vic YU 381358 at 081035H. The camp had 7~8 huts but had no signs of recent use. It was destroyed.
- C Co (-) continued "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area North of Alpha with negative enemy contact.

"RECONDO" platoon continued operations in area Romeo with negative enemy contac They closed into Bn base at 081430H May 66.

- A 2/502 continued "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area Alpha, 08-09 May 66. At 081850H May 66, A co engaged estimated 10-15 VC vic YU 299338 results, 1 VC KIA (BC) who was later identified as a member of lillst Regi, NVA. One new Chicom bolt action rifle, 1 AT won and 10 individual packs were captured. "REWONDO" patrol A2 engaged 1 sniper vic YU 299338 at 081855H, resulting in 1 US Trooper WIA who subsequently died of wounds in Nhon Co. 082010H A 2/502 engaged 12 VC YU 299388. The VC fled northeast leaving 24 rounds of AT ammo and o basic 3cad of 7162 ammo which was captured. One VC, vic YU 299338 was engaged by A Co resulting 1 VC KIA (BC) and 1 AKH? captured.
- B 2/502 continued "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in the southern sector of area Alpha engaging 2 VC YU 384306 at 091140H. The results were 2 VG KIA (BC) and 1 Carbine captured.

"RECONDO" platoon prepared for movement into area Alpha departing Bn CP at '091700H May 66.

- A 2/502 continuing operations in area Alpha engaged 1 VC vic YU 277348 at 100725H resulting in 1 VC KIA (BC) and 1 Chicom carbine captured. At 100950H May 66 A Co engaged 1 VC vic YU 274348 resulting in 1 VC KIA (BC) and 2 AK47's captured. At 101020H May 66 A 2/502 killed 1 VC (BC) and captured 1 VC WIA vic YU 267250. After interregation the NVA Sergeant yielded information concerning 4 VC companies waiting 40 minutes west along the trail. A Co sent a "RECONDO" patrol west on the trail to investigate and heard noises. At 101533H A Co engaged three VC vic YU 277348 resulting in 3 VC kIA (BC) and 3 AK47's captured. Also A Co was engaged in two additional firefights with unknown number of VC with negative results. At 101800H 1 VC was engaged vic YU 273348 results: 1 VC KIA (BC). A 2/502 stopped for the night at 101900H May 66 vic YU 273348.
- B 2/502 continued "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" operations in area BRAVO. At 101255H May 66 they were ordered to move to vic YU 298338. At 101600H B Co engaged 1 VC sniper vic YU 319332, results 1 VC KIA (BC), 1 US carbine captured. B Co remained in blocking position vic YU 319332 to block possible exfiltration routes.
- C 2/502 divided into two groups, 1 platoon attached to Task Force Brown and two platoons OPCON A/17 Cav. C 2/502 (-) with A/17 Cav captured 1 VC and rocket launcher at 101730H May 66 vic YU 358405.

Task Force Brown consisting of "RECONDO" platoon and 1 platoon from C Go moved in area Alpha. At 101230H May 66 Task Force Brown was ordered to converge with A 2/502. At 101330H TF Brown found a Bn size base camp vic YU 270334 recently used by the VC. At 101430H May 66 TF Brown engaged a company sized VC force vic YU 275350. Two airstrikes, gunships and artillery pounded the area in support of TF Brown. At 101650H May 66 TF Brown reported 18 VC KIA (BC) and no weapons captured as bodies were stripped of LHE and weapons. TF Brown substained 1 US KIA, 5 US WIA including 1 US newsman WIA. At 101650H May 66 TF Brown linked up with A/17 Cav and continued to sweep in search of the enemy. At 101700H TF Brown linked up with A 2/502 and prepared for night vic YU 2173348.

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A/17 Cav attached to 2/502 was sent to reinforce A 2/502 and linked up with A 2/502 and TF Brown at 101700H.

A 2/502 continued sweep to area of engagement 10 May 66 on 11 May 66 with TF Brown and A/17 Cav under it OPCON. At 110915H May 66 A Co engaged 2 snipers vic YU 261348 resulting in 2 US WIA vic YU 261348. At 111025H A/502 engaged an estimated VC reinforced company which was well dug in. A 2/17 Cav was ordered to move around VC forces and seal off western exit. 111155H the VC forces attacked A Co. Air strikes were called in and 2000 rounds of artillery were fired at the enomy. By 1.1.60CH May 66 A Co found 25 VC KIA (BC), 3 MG's and 6 individual weapong via YU 251319. Many more VC KIAs could not be found because of the dense jungle growth and lack of time to search areas that had been devestated by artillery and a Later intelligence indicated that 3 NVA companies were destroyed in the battle. A Co remained in the area and established a perimeter with A 2/17 Cav (-) and TF Brown. RECONDO"/Ambush patrols were sent out 600 meters.

B 2/502 remained as Bn reserve vic YU 264314 with negative enemy contact on 11 May 66.

A 2/17 Cav (-) remained under OPCON of A 2/502. At 111300H May 66 They moved behind VC forces attacking A 2/502 having several engagements. Results were 2 VC KIA (BC), 2 weapons captured: 1 AKh7 and 1 bolt action Chicom. At 111700H they linked up with A 2/502.

A 2/502 "RECONNO" patrol engaged 15 VC coord YU 252353 at 111900H May 66 killi one VC (BC) and capturing 1 SKS carbine. A 2/502 swept the battlefield and discove ed 25 additional bodies from the engagement of 11 May 66. They then continued on "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" to West with negative enemy contact.

B 2/502 remained Bn reserve vi. YU 264314 on 12 May 66 with negative enemy contact.

C 2/502 remained OPCON TF Brown and A/17 Cav.

A 2/17 Cav participated in sweep of battlefield and continued "RECONDO CHECKER-BOARD to west with negative enemy contact.

TF Brown participated in sweep of the battlefield and continued "RECONDO CHECKERBOARD" to west. They engaged a VC Force of 6-8 vic YU 253349 at 121250H May 66 resulting in 1 VC WIA and one set of bloody web equipment captured.

A 2/502 discovered three additional bodies from engagement of 11 May and prepared to exploit area SAND.

B 2/502 released 17 members of 245th RF Co and was helilifted from YU 267317 LZ vic YU 254352 which was completed 131215H May 66. They moved West to exploit B-52 strike area SAND.

C 2/502 (-) was released from OPCON A 2/17 Cav effective 131200H and moved wes to assume mission of Bn reserve. They followed A and B Co by bounds.

"RECONDO" platoon with one platoon of C Co attached followed A Co in area SAL on 13 May 66.

A 2/17 Cav was extracted to Bu Gia Map at 1312230H and rewarted to Bde contro.

3rd Co 49th ARVN helilifted to Bu Dinh, YU 266316 at 131130H May 66 and secure C 2/320 Artillery plus one battery 319th Artillery.

B-52 strike in area SAND was conducted 14001H May 66.

A 2/502 discovered the first bomb crater vic YU 19362. The crater had many footprints heading west. At 141214H May 66 A Co engaged 15 VC vio YU 194362 resulting in 3 VC KIA (BC) and 2 AKA7's captured. All three VC were members of 609 Bn. At 141810H May 66 A Co found an enemy base camp, recently occupied, consisting of 60-70 huts, vic YU 192378.

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allel to Co A with negative enemy contact on 14 May 66.

C 2/502 at 141.250H May 66 captured 1 POW, WIA, vic YU 234356. At 141830H they discovered Bh size bass camp vic YU 225360.

"RECONDO" platoon (+) continued westward movement and prepared a 3 ship LZ vic YU 215355. They became En reserve and CP security at that location.

- Co A conducted "RECONDO CHECKERPOARD" generally Northeast through area SAND and parallel to A Co vic YU 195374 to vic YU 215375. No trails were found and no enemy contact was made.
- Co C 2/502 destroyed the base camp they found on 14 May 66. The camp consister of 20-30 huts including classrooms, kitchen, and rifle racks spread along stream vic YU 225%60. The camp appeared to be unoccupied for a week. Co C conducted WILLOUNDO CHECKEREOARD" generally northwest towards area SAND from vic YU 233349 to vic YU 219377 with negative enemy contact.

"RECONDO" platoon remained as Bn reserve and TAC CP security vic YU 215355.

On 16 May 66 A 2/502 moved to LZ vic YU 220375, arriving 161500H with negative enemy contact. Extraction to Bu Gia Map began 161630H and was completed at 161745H May 66.

- B 2/502 moved to LZ vic YU 220375, arriving 161515H with negative enemy contact They are to be extracted after A Co.
- C 2/502 was extracted from LZ vic YU 220325, commencing 161015H May 66 and completed 161135H. They closed into Nhon Co by 161925H.

"RECONDO" platoon was extracted from LZ vic YU 215355 after securing extraction of TAC CP. Extraction began 161040H May 66 and was completed at 161145H. They were then extracted to Nhon Co effective 161615H May 66 and completed by 161715H.

A Co completed its extraction to Nhon Co 171030H May 66. B 2/502 completed its extraction to Bu Gia Map airfield at 161845H and came under 1/327 effective 170600H.

A, C and Recon 2/502 remained at Bn base Nhon Co on 18 May 66. B Co was released from OPCON 1/327 effective 180745H and closed into Nhon Co at 181030H May 66.

The Bn prepared for future operations and movement to Cheo Reo.

8 RESULTS OF AUSTIM VI

# KIA: 7 WIA: 9 MIA: 0 Wpns/Equip: None

#### Enemy Losses

KIA (BC): 95 KIA (EST): 85 WIA (EST): 2 KBA (EST): 15 NVA (Gapt): 5 Wpns/Equip:

3 Machineguns 3 40mm Rocket Launchers

28 Individual Weapons, primarily AK47

1 Large ammo cache captured and extracted.

Several rice and oat caches destroy.

Several base camps discovered and destroyed including one which had 140-150 huts.

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and Location of Enemy Sightings and Contacts) to Inclosure 1

[Intelligence] to After Action Report, Operation AUSTIN VI

- 1. 061040H May 66 "RECONDO" platoon engaged 1 sniper vic YU 330348. 1US WIA.
- 2. 061440H May 66 1 PAVN of 608 PAVN Bn surrendered vic YU 336365 to C Co.
- 3. 061500H May 66 B4A found weapon cache vic YU 344372. 57mm recoiless-140 rounds, 81mm illum-69 rounds, .45 cal ammunition-300 rounds, 5.56mm ammunition-2000 rounds, 4.2"-1 round, 60mm mixed illum and WP-250 rounds.
  - 4. 061900H May 66 1 PAVN of 608 PAVN Bn surrondered vic YU 336365 to C Co.
- 5. 070645H May 66 B Co engaged NVA squad vic YU 353367. 2 NVA KIA (BC), 1 NVC and 1 French SMC captured.
  - 6. 071430H May 66 A Co engaged 15 NVA vic YU 316367. 1 US WIA.
- 7. 071540H May 66 B Go engaged 1 smiper vic YU 375353. 1 NVA KTA (BO) and 1 French bolt action rifle captured.
- 8. 080730H May 66 A Co engaged 5 NVA vic YU 307354. 1 NVA KIA (BC) and 1 AK-47 and ammunition captured.
- 9. 080955H May 66 A Co engaged 1 sniper vic YU 313356. 1 NVA KIA (BC) and one Russian sniper rifle captured.
- 10. 081850H May 66 A Co engaged 10-15 VC vic YU 299338, 1 VC KIA (BC), identified member of 141st Regt NVA, 1 new Chicom bolt action rifle, 1 AT weapon at 10 individual packs were captured.
  - 11. 081855H May 66 42 engaged i sniper vic YU 299338. 1 US WIA.
- 12. 082010H May 66 A Co engaged 12 VC vic YU 299388. 24 rounds AT ammunition and 1 basic load of 7.62 ammunition captured.
- 13. 082130H May 66 A Co engaged 1 VC vic YU 299338. 1 VC KIA (BC) and 1 AK-4".
- 14. 100725H May 66 A Co engaged 1VC vic YU 277348. 1 VC KIA (BC) and 1 Chicom Carbine captured.
- 15. 100950H May 66 A Co engaged 1 VC vic YU 274348. 1 VC KIA (BC) and 2 AK-47 captured.
- 16. 101020H May 66 A Co engaged 2 VC vic YU 267250. 1 VC KIA and captured 1 VC WIA. WIA captured, NVA sergeant, yielded information concerning 4 VC companie;
- 17. 091140H May 66 B Co engaged 2 VC YU 384306. 2 VC KIA (BC) and 1 Carbine captured.
- 18. 101533H May 66 A Co engaged 3VC vic YU 277348, 3 VC KIA (BC) and 3 AK-47's captured. Also two fire fights to east and west of that location, unknown number of VC, negative results.
  - 19. 110945H May 66 A Co engaged 2 snipers vic YU 261348. 2 US WIA.
  - 20. 111025H May 66 A Co engaged 2 snipers vic YU 260348. 2 US KIA.
- 21. 111150H May 66 A Co engaged estimated reinforced company vic YU 261319, 551 VC KIA (BC), 3 SMG and 6 individual weapons captured.
- 22. 111300H May 66 A 2/17 Cav engaged 2 VC vic YU 261319, 2 VC KIA (BC), 1 AK-47 and 1 bolt action Chicom captured.
  - 23. 101430H May 66 TF Brown engaged VC company vic YU 275350. 18 VC KIA (BC).
- 24. 101600H May 66 B Co engaged 1 VC sniper vic YU 319332. 1 VC KIA (BC), 1 US Carbine captured.