Battle For Dak To Rages On

IVY LEAF
FAMOUS FOURTH

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704 Enemy Bodies After First 9 Days

CAMP ENARI—As the Battle For Dak To raged into its tenth day, 4th Infantry Division units and 173rd Airborne Brigade elements, working with the Ivy Division in Operation MacArthur, had accounted for 704 dead North Vietnamese soldiers by body count.

The fighting which began Nov. 4 has been the heaviest fighting in the Central Highlands in three months and showed no signs of slowing down.

The paratroopers and infantrymen are operating in a rugged, mountainous jungle terrain. The area has been described as some of the Central Highlands' thickest jungle.

The Ivymen were facing an estimated NVA division equipped with "just about every weapon imaginable," according to a division spokesman. The Battle For Dak To centered around a strategic hill, Hill 724, just four miles from the Cambodian border, where Ivymen faced several enemy charges described as "almost human-wave proportion."

General William C. Westmoreland, commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, stated the Communists suffered a "servere setback" after a visit to the area.

General Creighton W. Abrams, deputy to General Westmoreland, visited the battlefield and said the Battle For

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The ordeal of one Ivy Division company and one platoon leader who took command of that company twice is described on page 1.

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An early clash of a platoon who could have repeated history, "The Dirty Dozen," is on page 3.

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How the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry dealt a severe blow to the NVA during an associated battle south of Pleiku is on page 6.

Two Commanders Fall In Battle

Dragoon 2LT Commands Co A

CAMP ENARI — One of the worst ordeals of the week during the Battle For Dak To came for a single 4th Infantry Division company and one of its men, Second Lieutenant Charles W. Perkins (McGehee, Ark.), who took command on two occasions after his company commander had fallen in action and brought his men through two nights in a jungle hell.

Lieutenant Perkins first took over Company A, 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry on Nov. 4, when the company commander was fatally wounded in a skirmish.

A first lieutenant was later sent in to take command of the company and give them the assignment of leading it with another company up a ridgeline to Hill 724.

On the first afternoon, moving out of a draw, the Dragoon company was pinned down by heavy machine gun fire. 2LT Perkins moved up to the side of the commander just in time to see him critically wounded.

He took over once again and maneuvered a platoon around the machine gun's flank so it could be knocked out by a grenade.

The lieutenant then supervised the nightmarish operation of lifting out wounded by sling in the dark because there was no place for helicopters to land.

Evacuation of dead and wounded took well into the next afternoon, hampered by NVA probes and mortar attacks.

The Dragoon company dug in that night just in time to throw back a full-scale charge by the NVA.

At the height of the fight, 2LT Perkins had to call in an air strike within 25 yards of his line, then fight off the NVA with his own M-16 when direct mortar hits knocked out the three bunkers in front of his position.

The wounded again went out in the dark.

Company A, with some 60 men left out of the 142 who started the week's fighting, was pulled out of the jungle by Nov. 7. In their final effort before they left, the Dragoon company counted 110 NVA bodies.

Red Warriors Get Five More Infantry Units

BAN BLECH — The "Red Warriors Regiment" is what some of the men of the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry are jokingly calling their battalion.

The reason is that recently while operating in the 2nd Brigade's "Rubber Tree" area of operations they were swollen to almost three times its normal size with attached units.

The Red Warriors usual four rifle companies, were joined by Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry and Company A, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry. In addition, two Civilian Irregular Defense Group companys and a Regional Force company were attached. Three batteries of artillery were firing in support of the operation.

"We've been anxious to participate with the local forces, both to take advantage of their knowlege of terrain and to teach them some of our methods of operation," commented Lieutenant Colonel Harold Birch (Leavenworth, Kan.), Red Warriors' commander.

"In this we've noticed a tremendous willingness to cooperate, learn and to teach our soldiers," LTC Birch continued.

"We've been fortunate to have two fine 4th Division companies working with us; Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry and Company A, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry. Both of them are fine companies and both have fine commanding officers. They made the job of commanding nine companies easier."

Regulars Capture Launcher

CAMP ENARI — Infantrymen of the Ivy Division got their hands on a much sought-after piece of enemy equipment thanks to a North Vietnamese Army master sergeant who turned himself in and then led the Ivymen to his hidden 122-mm rocket launcher.

The launcher for the 122mm rocket was the first captured in the Republic of Vietnam. Other elements of the free forces captured a second launcher the same day, however.

"Acquisition of the launcher was more a giveaway than a capture," according to an Ivy Division spokesman.

Infantrymen from the division's 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry, were pressing after the fleeing NVA who had launched rockets at installations near Pleiku a few hours earlier.

The NVA sergeant approached the Regulars and gave himself up as a Chieu Hoi—an RVN program whereby enemy troops can lay down their arms and ask for assimilation in the South Vietnamese population. After surrendering he took the Ivymen to the launcher.

CALLING IN —An Ivyman from the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry calls his headquarters with a situation report. The Dragoons have been involved in the Battle For Dak To in the Operation MacArthur area. (USA Photo by SP4 John Olmstead)

Chaplain Baptizes Lieutenant He Married In Hawaii On R&R

DAK TO — The early morning fog prevented the sunlight from shining through as the jeep moved slowly down a small, narrow, winding road in Dak To.

The morning was to be a memorable one for First Lieutenant James P. Wheeler (Memphis, Tenn.), reconnaissance platoon leader, 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 8th Infantry.

The air was crisp and biting as 1LT Wheeler and Chaplain (Captain) Thomas Deal (Luray, Va.) maneuvered over the road to a nearby stream.

Chaplain Deal had already played an important part in 1LT Wheeler's life and this morning he was to play another major role. Chaplain Deal was going to baptize the reconnaissance leader.

The young officer had approached Chaplain Deal three months earlier prior and had told him of his desire to become a member of the Lucy Baptist Church in Millington, Tenn. He asked if it would be possible for the chaplain to perform the necessary services.

Upon learning of 1LT Wheeler's desire to become baptized, Chaplain Deal set out to work. He wrote the Lucy Baptist Church and told them of 1LT Wheelers wish to join their church and asked if he might serve as an agent of the church in baptizing the officer.

Reverend Cecil E. Smith, pastor of the church replied that he was glad to hear of 1LT Wheeler's request.

"Upon notification from you that he has been baptized, James Wheeler's name will be entered in our books as a full-fledged member of the Lucy Baptist Church," wrote the pastor.

Due to the many missions that had to be carried out by the Reconnaissance Platoon, Chaplain Deal had to postpone the baptism for three months during which time 1LT Wheeler and Chaplain Deal went on R&R to Hawaii. While on R&R the recon leader was married. Chaplain Deal performed the ceremony at the Makiki Church in Honolulu.

The fog still persisted as 1LT Wheeler walked—fully clothed—into the small stream. Scriptures and prayers were spoken as soft organ music filled the air from a small tape recorder on the bank of the stream. The sun peeped out under the fog as 1LT Wheeler made his declaration of faith.

One hour later the officer and his platoon climbed on helicopters which took them on a combat assault in a suspected enemy area. 1LT Wheeler seemed to walk a little prouder with a new feeling of security.

Who Will Be Next?

Division Leads In Accidents

There is an insidious enemy lurking in the shadows of Ivy Division units. He is indifferent to rank, shows no favoritism for race or color, and lives with us 24 hours a day. His name is carelessness.

He and his companion, negligence, have combined to infect this division with accidents which have caused unnecessary death and injury to soldiers like you.

The topic of weapons' safety has received a great deal of emphasis recently, and for good cause. The 4th Division has suffered 186 separate instances of accidental gun shootings during the period Jan. 1-Oct. 31, 1967. The appalling fact is that almost every one of these incidents occurred because soldiers were careless or negligent.

In many instances clearly defined procedures had been set forth explaining how to handle, clear and inspect weapons. Individuals, however, paid no heed and the result is casualties.

Serious Concern

These incidents are a matter of serious concern for every member of the command. Major General William R. Peers, division commander, has said, "In number of accidental gunshot wounds, this division nearly doubles that of any other U.S. division in South Vietnam. Although I am sure that each of them could have been explained by one set of reasons, or another, and I have heard just about every one in the book, the fact remains that somewhere in the chain of command and control there have been failures in Commander's Notes, and discussions addressing this topic, because nothing has produced the desired effect."

The most common response heard is "accidents will happen in the field." The fact is, however, that 48 of the accidental shootings occurred in base camps. Of these accidents, too many occurred as the result of improper clearing procedures. The most common circumstance is failure to clear a weapon properly, or in some instances, not at all, before cleaning.

In addition, there are many instances of an individual receiving a weapon from a second party or picking up an untended weapon without checking to see is the weapon is loaded or on safe. All too often the result is disaster.

Clear Your Weapon

CLEAR EVERY WEAPON YOU HANDLE. There are no recorded accidents within the division caused by a properly cleared weapon shooting someone. There have been, however, many weapons which have wounded or killed Ivy soldiers because the handler presumed it was cleared.

In essence the following actions must be accomplished in order to properly clear a weapon: remove the ammunition; open the chamber and lock it; engage the safety; and look and feel to insure there is no ammunition in the chamber.

The purpose of the present safety program is to make each soldier aware of the necessity for careful weapon handling. Each person must cooperate or the program will be ineffective.

In many cases the victim of an accidental discharge has been a conscientious, safety-minded soldier who just happened to be standing in the line of fire of a careless individual who was paying attention to everything except the loaded weapon in his hand.

Simple Steps

Here are a few simple steps to follow concerning weapons safety:

1. Know how to properly clear your weapon.

2. Clear every weapon after use and before entering a building.

3. Be well acquainted with the provisions of your unit firearms safety SOP dictating when a round should be chambered.

4. Unless using your weapon, clear it, and place the magazine or loose ammunition aside, away from the weapon.

5. TREAT EVERY WEAPON AS IF IT WERE LOADED.

Weapons safety is an overwhelming responsibility because failure can mean senseless casualties. Use common sense. Only you can overcome carelessness, the enemy of every American soldier.

Penang— An R&R Paradise

SAIGON (MACV) — Some 550 air miles from Saigon, a jewel of an island lies in the Straits of Malacca off the west coast of the Malay Peninsula inviting U.S. servicemen to a memorable R&R leave.

It is Penang, not exactly on the beaten path but its 340,000 people are said to live in a quiet way that beckons everyone who would like to get away from it all for awhile.

The chief city on Penang is Georgetown. Here the R&R visitor will find accommodations in excellent hotels to ease him into five days of care free living with the expectation of spending each day in a different manner.

What is there to do?

Deep sea fishing, water skiing and swimming are readily available for the active.

The staff of the R&R detachment, which operates a processing center 24-hours daily in the lobby of the Hotel International, provides information on tours, restaurants, entertainment and many other things that will make the visit enjoyable.

Shopping for souvenirs or gifts is another of the attractions of Penang, a free port and consequently one of the least expensive areas in the Far East for military shoppers. Cameras, jewelry and pewterware are among the top buys.

The annual calendar of events on the island includes many unusual observances and holidays as well as periodic scheduling of horse racing, the "Sport of Kings."

The rate of exchange is $2.90 Malay for one U.S. dollar. It goes a long way towards making an R&R trip to Penang the choice of those who want the most for their dollar.

A cold busy world can quickly forget a basic part of life — we creatures crave and need love and affection.

Sentiment today is looked upon as a weakness, a disease. A person who elicits emotion is thought to be weak. I have heard a bereaved wife being counseled "Don't cry. You must be strong."

A young man is laughed at by his friends as being a sissy because he cries over the death of his dog. It is a part of the mores of today that men do not cry. A young man away from home for the first time is embarrassed to admit he is homesick.

God has made us creatures of love and affection. While it is true that we should never let our emotions influence our manner of acting against the dictates of our intelligence, never the less, emotions play a vital role in our physical and mental well-being. Ulcers and nervous conditions are frequently found in people who do not laugh or even cry sufficiently.

To display emotion within reason is not sentimentality. It is using a God-given faculty to enhance the lives and strengthen the spirits of all of us.

God grant a fervent display of love and affection in all our lives.

Promotion Policy Changes Time Required For Captain

WASHINGTON (AFPS) — A new Army promotion policy will make it possible by May 1968 for non-regular junior officers to make captain after two years of extended active duty, six months less than was previously required.

DA Message 837567 establishes a new policy regarding promotion of first lieutenant which will gradually reduce the time-in-grade (TIG) requirement for temporary boosts to captain. Effective May 2, 1968, first lieutenants will be eligible for hikes to O-3 upon completion of 12 months TIG, computed from their date of rank (DOR).

The message also concerned a new one-year service "lock in" which will apply to non-regular officers (AUS) promoted to captain after May 1.

First lieutenants will find their new promotion eligibility dates as indicated by their DORs on the following schedule:

DOR Aug. 2-Sept. 1, 1966; eligible Nov. 1, 1967.

DOR Sept. 2-30, 1966; eligible on day in December 1967 following completion of 15 months TIG.

DOR Oct. 1-31, 1966; eligible on day in January 1968 following completion of 15 months TIG.

DOR Nov. 1-30, 1966; eligible on day in February 1968 following completion of 15 months TIG.

DOR Dec. 1-31, 1966; eligible March 1, 1968.

DOR Jan. 1-31, 1967; eligible on day in March 1968 following completion of 14 months TIG.

DOR Feb. 1-28, 1967; eligible April 1, 1968.

DOR March 1-31, 1967; eligible on day in April 1968 following completion of 13 months TIG.

DOR April 1-May 1, 1967; eligible May 1, 1968.

All AUS first lieutenants who are promoted to captain will be continued on active duty to complete their service obligation as follows, whichever occurs first:

a) 24 months continuous service from date of entry on active duty as a second lieutenant.

b) 12 months active service after promotion to the grade of captain.

Individuals may decline promotion to captain by expressing their desire for release from active duty upon completion of 24 months active service. A copy of this written declination will be filed in the individual's personnel file and will act as a bar to promotion prior to release from active duty.

As an exception to AR 135-215, promoting authorities, such as the 4th Infantry Division, may approve short term extensions for any period necessary to adjust service obligations to enable officers to complete the required service after promotion.

DA Encourages Service In ROK

WASHINGTON (AFPS) — The Army is encouraging men with Vietnam experience to volunteer for duty in Korea to provide highly trained and qualified personnel for service there.

Recent DA Message 834157 said a Vietnam returnee may volunteer for ROK assignment provided he is not a drill sergeant or if the move would constitute a second permanent change of station within the same fiscal year.

Personnel in Vietnam may apply directly for inter-theater transfer to Korea, but officials at the Pentagon cautioned the application rules out "spaced-required" transportation to CONUS for leave.

The Army is also encouraging other personnel to volunteer for Korea however they must meet the full criteria.

DOD Urges Cash Policy Payments

WASHINGTON (AFPS) — Department of Defense officials are urging military personnel who purchase commercial insurance to make adequate cash payments to insure the policy is in force while the insurance company is awaiting the first allotment payment.

Pointing out that the policy is not in force until the first payment has been made to the insurance company, DOD officials said that occasionally servicemen have discovered they are not covered because of a time lag in the arrival of the allotment check.

The DOD officials said that in many cases it may take months to process allotments for commercial insurance coverage, and that like most contracts a first payment is required to make the policy binding upon the insurance company.

In addition, commanding officers are urged to check insurance allotment records to be certain they are in order, eliminating the possibility that one of this men will find himself without coverage because of incorrectly made out papers, neglect or a slow down in processing, and to be certain the serviceman fully understands his allotment situations.

Mail Order Will Eliminate Duty Problem

SAIGON — Worried about payment of duties on gifts sent to the United States from Vietnam?

A spokesman for the Vietnam Regional Exchange recently said the best way to eliminate this worry is to purchase American-made merchandise at exchange facilities or use one of a variety of mail order services offered for direct delivery in the States.

New Mail-A-Gift catalogs have been circulated throughout Vietnam and representatives of a large mail order company are in-country to assure maximum distribution is made of special Christmas catalogs.

A check with your local PX will provide information on what is available in the mail order line for Christmas shopping this year, a service which removes the worry about customs collections on the other end.

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Intelligence Readied Ivymen For Dak To

GENERAL HAINES—General Ralph E. Haines, Army Vice Chief of Staff, and Major General W. R. Peers, Ivy Division commander, depart from the Camp Enari VIP pad during the general's initial visit to the Republic of Vietnam. (USA Photo by SP4 Ron Urack)

CAMP ENARI — Intelligence channels and the Ivy Division's five-man long range reconnaissance patrols, which operate deep inside communist held territory, were given major credit as an early warning device for the Battle For Dak To by the commanders concerned.

The Communists suffered a "severe setback" in the Battle For Dak To according to General William C. Westmoreland, commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, who visited the area of battle.

"I believe the Communist forces have suffered a severe setback in their plans for operating in the Dak To area. The recent contact is an attempt to recoup valuable propaganda lost during the recent Republic of Vietnam elections and National Day."

Major General William R. Peers, 4th Infantry Division commander, described how long range reconnaissance patrols spotted the North Vietnamese Army buildup allowing the Ivy Division to reinforce its units with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in the Operation MacArthur area.

Major Attack

The battle raging since Nov. 4, was described as a "major attack" involving a division-sized force — four NVA infantry regiments and an artillery unit armed with 122mm rockets.

The major attack seemed to be aimed at Dak To, the site of a Special Forces camp, air strip, South Vietnam military installation and a government controlled village.

According to General Peers, a rocket attack on Pleiku, 60 miles south of Dak To, two weeks ago, and increased military activity in the area and in Darlac Province, further south, was designed to siphon off the six Ivy Division battalions in the area and pin them down.

The NVA plan was to move in from the south, southwest and northwest, launch a rocket attack and follow it up with an infantry assault aimed at overrunning Dak To.

NVA Confirms Reports

Intelligence reports on the Communists' plan was substantiated by a North Vietnamese soldier who surrendered at the beginning of the battle.

On Nov. 2, Sergeant Vu Hung, a NVA squad leader, 66th Regiment, came out of the hills and turned himself in as a Chieu Hoi, under the Republic of Vietnam's open arms policy. The sergeant was part of a 50-man reconnaissance unit which was scouting the area for the planned mortar and rocket attack.

SGT Hung explained that the NVA had killed his father and that his mother remarried. He had been considering the Chieu Hoi Program for sometime. With his AK-47 slung over his shoulder, he turned himself into the government authorities in Dak Bi Peng, less than 3 miles west of Dak To.

The NVA sergeant was brought to 1st Brigade headquarters where he was questioned by Major Michael Umhoffer (Rochester, N.Y.) and Sergeant Nguyen Van Cong, a Vietnamese interpreter.

NVA Had Trouble

"He gave us information on weapons, positioning of the NVA troops and makeup of the troops," recalled MAJ Umhoffer.

SGT Hung said the 32nd, 24th, 174th and 66th Infantry Regiments and the 40th Artillery Regiment were moving in, their locations and weapons, and that they had planned the attack for sometime between Oct. 28-29, but had had difficulty in getting their rockets in place.

Thus, the NVA's information not only confirmed but expanded earlier intelligence reports received by the division and Ivy Division troops were primed for battle.

Heavy fighting, described by General Peers as "brutal," started Nov. 4, the second day after Ivy troops airlifted into Dak To.

Charlie Doesn't Have A Heart

Fire Fight Delays SGT's R&R

DAK TO — Charlie doesn't have a heart. At least that's what Sergeant Dennis Knight (Sherwood, Ore.) thinks now.

For SGT Knight, a squad leader with Company C, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry, it was a special day. He was due to return to base camp after seven months in the field and his long-awaited R&R began as soon as he got back.

"I guess fate and the enemy had different plans though," SGT Knight mused. "Our company was moving towards a new position where we were going to set up for the night. I felt pretty good looking forward to my R&R and my time out of the sticks."

As the company approached its location, the point squad broke through the dense jungle into an enemy base camp. Several surprised Ivymen spotted fleeing enemy soldiers and the ensuing fire quickly brought the rest of the company into the area.

"As soon as I heard the shots I forgot all about R&R," the squad leader said. "I'd heard of guys making contact on their last day in the field but I didn't think it would happen to me."

The brief fire fight netted the company one captured guerrilla. A search of the sprawling, underground base camp uncovered caches of ammunition grenades, supplies, rice and other equipment.

"We hacked out a landing zone and when the choppers came in to evacuate a wounded man and the captured equipment, I hopped on," SGT Knight recalled. "I was a day late for my R&R but still made it down to Penang and had a great time."

'Dirty Dozen' Prevents Repetition Of Disaster

CAMP ENARI—One of the first clashes of the Battle For Dak To came when a 26-man platoon from Company B, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry, was climbing a ridge within sight of Dak To and had to fight its way out of a battalion-size North Vietnamese Army trap. The 12 men who survived uninjured named themselves "The Dirty Dozen."

Four months earlier, almost in the same spot, more than 80 paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade had died in a similar trap.

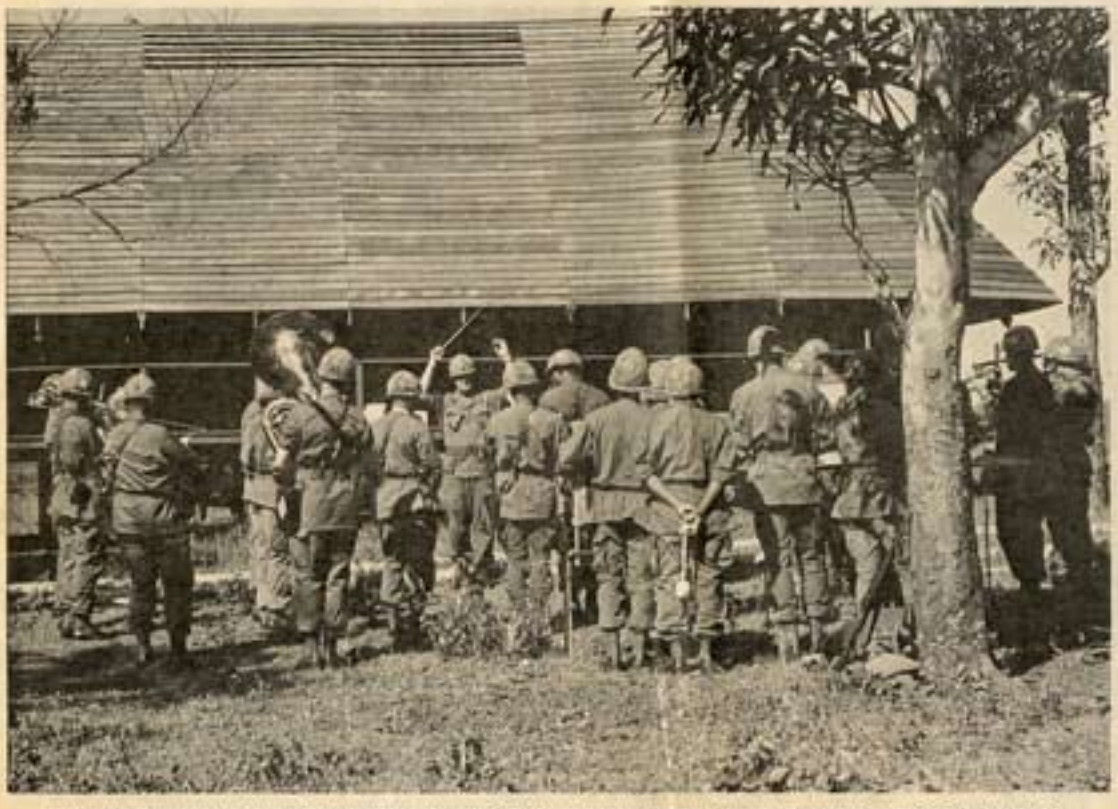
Captain Robert Morton (Northampton, Mass.), Company B commander, was familiar with the NVA tactics used in the earlier ambush. He sent his lead platoon up the hill in a wedge formation instead of a column.

It paid off.

When the NVA sprung their trap from concealed trenches and preempted the rest of the company from coming to the platoon's aid by heavy mortar fire, "The Dirty Dozen" were able to support each other by fire and pull back in an orderly retreat.

NIGHT FIRE—An M-60 machine gun leaves a bright impression in the darkness of night surrounding the perimeter of the Fighting First Brigade's firebase. Elements of the Ivy unit played a major role in the Battle For Dak To against an estimated NVA division in the Operation MacArthur area.
(USA Photo by SP4 Jim Kasten, 15th Sig Bn)

Band Mollifies Sound Of War W



THE IVY DIVISION BAND CONTRIBUTES TO THE CIVIC ACTION PROGRAM BY PLAYING AT LOCAL VILLAGES.

THE IVY BAND PROVIDES MUS

THE IVY DIVISION BAND PLAYS AT ALL KINDS OF MILITARY FORMATIONS, INCLUDING CHANGE OF COMMAND AND AWARD CEREMONIES.

...ith Sound Of Music

...IC TO MAINTAIN TROOP MORALE AND ESPRIT DE CORPS.

By SP4 Wayne Nicholas

CAMP ENARI — The 4th Infantry Division's Headquarters and Headquarters Company Band keeps busy mollifying the sound of war with the sound of music in the Central Highlands.

The 46-member band plays just about everywhere.

Chief Warrant Officer Lyman S. Hall (Kailua, Hawaii), the bandmaster, explained that his band plays at all kinds of military formations, including change of command and award ceremonies.

It provides troop entertainment both at the division base camp and at forward firebases.

It has contributed to the division's civic action program by performing at nearby Montagnard villages and large Vietnamese cities such as Pleiku.

The purpose of the band "is to provide music to maintain troop morale and esprit de corps and to improve relationships with the local community," explained CWO Hall, a graduate of both the Army and Air Force's bandmaster schools.

CWO LYMAN S. HALL DIRECTS THE IVY BAND.

THE BAND STRIKES UP AS THE IVY DIVISION'S AMBASSADOR OF SOUND DURING A PLEIKU CEREMONY.

Anatomy Of An Assault

No Contact Made This Time

By PFC William Gruber

CAMP ENARI — From the air the small Montagnard hamlet appeared to be quiet, peaceful and serene.

The ant-like villagers could be seen carrying packs of food and firewood preparing for nightfall. Others were returning from the rice fields where they had been working since dawn.

Surrounding the village were vast wooded areas, rolling hills of tall green grass, rice filled valleys, and a maze of meandering streams.

It was also surrounded by 5S U.S. Army and Republic of Vietnam Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) soldiers about to execute a combat assault.

Reconnaissance Reports

The operation was initiated after a long range reconnaissance patrol reported seeing a North Vietnamese Army company in the area five days earlier.

Company D, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry, was alerted to initiate the combat assault. Warming up to execute the airlift and assist in the operation were three slicks (UH1H) from the 119th Assault Helicopter Company, 52nd Aviation Battalion, and three slicks from Company A, 4th Aviation Battalion. Added firepower was provided by three gunships from Company B, 4th Aviation Battalion.

At the edge of the airfield, the men of Company D utilized the final moments to make adjustments on their gear, take a quick smoke or finish a can of soda.

This was the 12th combat assault for Specialist 4 Jim Demetroulis (Alexandria, Va.), headquarters radio operator, who stood by arranging his pack and bulky radio equipment.

Short Notice

"We were alerted just 20 minutes ago for this mission," he said. "But if the enemy is out there, and they have mortars, we want to get them before they get us."

Out on the airstrip the choppers were fueling up and making final preparations before lift-off. Inside the command and control (C&C) chopper, Major Harvey F. Miller (Houston, Texas) and Warrant Officer Richard White (Modesto, Calif.), started the huge rotor blades churning—a thick cloud of red dust rose, and the bird was airborne.

Inside the C&C ship, Lieutenant Colonel William W. Taylor (Alexandria, Va.), 2nd Brigade executive officer, was seated behind a large map of the area and a radio console. From here he would command the ground troops.

At the rear of the ship, Specialist 5 Jerry Rijnders (Arcadia, Calif.), crew chief, and Specialist Mike Collins (San Diego), door-gunner, were manning the 60-caliber machine guns.

The infantrymen were given the signal and began hustling aboard the slicks. Arriving at the area of operations ahead of the troop-carrying choppers, the C&C craft made several sweeps over the area. They then popped smoke on the landing zone about 600 meters from the suspected NVA-infested village.

No NVA Found

Three slicks dropped in and troops began scrambling in all directions, setting up an instant perimeter. The process was repeated until all of the troops were on the ground.

While the ground troops closed in on the village and surrounded it, the choppers lifted and scanned the area to insure that no NVA tried to escape. A cordon and search was conducted, but no enemy were found in the village.

While no contact was made the mission was never the less successful and necessary, as are hundreds of other combat assaults which don't make contact.

"We go out to make contact with NVA or VC, but we're also interested in obtaining information," said MAJ Miller. "Today we've gained that information."

From the villagers, the friendly forces learned that five days before a company of NVA had indeed been there. They've been known to use such villages for hiding, storing equipment, and acquiring food supplies. In addition, three elephants were spotted not far from the hamlet —often used by the enemy to carry ammunition and equipment.

"Not getting into contact is sometimes more important than getting contact," added MAJ Miller. "We sometimes obtain information which is more important."

READY TO HIT—Hitting in a crouch as he nears the enemy, an infantryman from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry assaults an NVA hideout. (USA Photo by PFC Paul D. Halverson)

Patrol Warns Of Attack

BAN BLECH — An ambush patrol from Company D, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry prevented a North Vietnamese Army attack on their company.

The patrol was sent out from the company perimeter at dusk to set up an ambush site, however, they began receiving enemy fire and withdrew under heavy fire to the company's perimeter.

Artillery fire and air strikes were called in around the beleaguered company throughout the night. A sweep the following morning turned up three enemy dead and a large amount of enemy equipment.

"They found 38 packs left behind by the NVA," said Captain James M. Duvoli (Buffalo, N.Y.), Red Warrior intelligence officer. "The artillery hit them so hard they had to leave everything."

Also found on the sweep were a mortar mount for an 82mm mortar, 22 mortar rounds, several grenades and nine cans of 50-caliber ammunition with 85 rounds to each can.

Numerous blood pools and trails indicated that the total of enemy dead may have been much higher.

The ambush patrol had not accomplished its original goal but their encounter with the enemy undoubtedly saved the company from a tough fight with the NVA.

"They were obviously getting ready to attack Company D," stated Lieutenant Colonel Harold Birch (Leavenworth, Kan.), 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry commander.

LOOK MOM, NO HANDS—Though it looks like this 4th Infantry Division soldier is dangling, he really isn't. Sitting on a limb, he is stringing comms wire high above the 1st Brigade's firebase. (USA Photo by SP4 Wayne Nicholas)

Regulars Deal Defeat To Attacking NVA Unit

By SP4 James Doyle

BAN BLECH — Company C, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry dealt a severe blow to the ranks of an attacking North Vietnamese Army company in a fierce battle 72 miles south of Pleiku.

Under the cover of an intense mortar barrage, the attacking NVA force began its attack on the eastern edge of the fire support base.

Private First Class Wilber King, (Springlake, N.C.) was out of the perimeter at a listening post. He was on watch and thought he saw two shadows move near his position.

"I didn't think much of it until they moved again, not more than six feet away and about two feet from my buddy who was sleeping. I opened up and saw the two of them drop."

Attacking Force

As the Regulars quickly scampered back inside the perimeter, the woods became alive with Vietnamese voices and a few scattered shots.

"As the attacking force broke out of the woodline," remarked Specialist 4 Domingo Rivera (San Juan, P.R.), "they were right in front of my bunker. So I opened up with my M-60 and let them have it."

The attack on the eastern edge of the firebase was stopped dead in its tracks. The intensive fire from the Regulars' weapons backed by the powerful punch of two twin "Dusters," cut the enemy ranks to pieces.

After the initial mortar attack, the Regulars' 81mm mortar section quickly unleashed a deadly counter mortar barrage that silenced the enemy mortars for the rest of the action.

Second Attack

As soon as the NVA attack was repulsed on the eastern edge, a second attack began on the western edge of the firebase.

Firing direct fire, were the 155mm and 8-inch howitzers of Battery D, 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery which stopped the enemy cold.

Throughout the attack, gunships from Company B, 4th Aviation Battalion raked the enemy positions with a constant stream of tracers and rockets.

Captain Lee Kleese (Little Rock, Ark.), Company C commander, remarked, "It was real hell for a few hours. But those bunkers we built held even on direct mortar hits, saving many lives."

As the following morning sun broke through the cold and fog, the NVA had been beaten off, leaving 25 dead and one wounded.

Several machine guns, 19 AK-47s and other weapons were left behind. Grenades and several B-40 rockets and launchers were also recovered.

"They meant business," said Second Lieutenant Knobby Thomas (Pittsburgh). "They attacked with packs on their backs. To them, it was all or nothing. We gave them nothing."

Orders Mix-Up Gives FO Swift Round Trip

DAK TO — A mix-up in orders sent Second Lieutenant Joe Knowlton (Western, Mass.) to the 2nd Brigade for two days but he's glad to be back with the Fighting First now.

Lieutenant Knowlton, an artillery forward observer with Company C, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry, received orders to pack up and move to Company C, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, a 2nd Brigade unit.

"It was part of the 4th Division's infusion plan," 2LT Knowlton said. "They were rotating some men home, so I joined up with the company out in the field as their forward observer."

The first night out with the company, 2LT Knowlton, who speaks fluent French, was given an added assignment as company interpreter. During the day, the company had received two Viet Cong who had surrendered.

"I was talking to the two men, explaining the company defense perimeter and how they would be safe there for the night when automatic weapons fire started coming," the lieutenant explained.

The contact was broken after several minutes of artillery fire and there was no reoccurrence the rest of the night.

"In the morning, I was told that, due to a mistake in orders, I was reassigned to my old 1st Brigade outfit," 2LT Knowlton said. "I was happy to return to all my friends but can't help wondering about those two Viet Cong.

"I told them how safe they'd be and they had second thoughts when the firing started," he laughed.

Ivymen Modernize Montagnard Livestock

VUNG DAT AM — For centuries the Montagnards have let their livestock fend for itself. At the resettlement project of Edap Enang, this may soon change.

The project, representing the efforts of both the South Vietnamese and American governments, brought 48 Montagnard villages into a single area, 15 miles west of Cambodia along Highway 19W, in an effort to protect their citizens from enemy terrorism.

Now the 4th Division's Civic Action Team 9, along with the Vietnamese Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Service (CORDS), are working together to bring needed livestock to Edap Enang and to teach the Montagnards how to care for their animals.

"We are putting our ideas (on livestock) right next to the Montagnards' to let them determine in their own minds which are best," said Specialist 6 Glen L. Mizer (Cumming, Ga.), an interpreter for the civic action team.

Model Pig Pen

One such idea is a model pig pen. The pen, which comes complete with three sows and a boar, measures 40- by 56-meters, has a feeding trough and a sheltered area.

The pen is already being expanded, with the help of Montagnard workers, another 45- by 200-meters. CORDS is scheduled to increase the swine population from four to 200.

As the Montagnards in Edap Enang build their own pens, the pigs, a crossbreed between Yorkshire and native animals, will be distributed among the resettlement's residents. About 35 sows will be kept in the government pens for breeding and reproduction.

Traditionally, Montagnards have let their pigs run loose in their villages, eating whatever they could scrounge. They have killed off their boars as soon as they've bred once. The results have been staggering sanitation problems and a poor grade of swine.

More Livestock

By setting an example, the civic action team hopes to bring about an important change.

Recently, the Montagnards in Edap Enang lost most of their piglets to disease.

"If our piglets live, the Montagnards will see our way of raising them is the better way," SP6 Mizer predicted.

CORDS is also scheduled to introduce several head of cattle to Edap Enang, 400 chickens and ducks. Along with the livestock will come lessons in modern animal husbandry.

"The big problem, however, will be to teach these people the principle of crop rotation," SP4 Mizer said.

Crop Rotation

The reason the Montagnards have been a semi-nomadic people through the centuries is that they have burned out their land every 10 or 12 years by planting a single crop—rice.

The civic action team now hopes to teach the Montagnards to plant rice on a single plot one year, corn the following year and cow peas (a legume) the third year. Each field around Edap Enang will be divided into three plots of 10 hectares. The three crops will be alternated on the different plots simultaneously.

"What the people of Edap Enang need most right now is food," said First Lieutenant Ivars Bemboris (Hicksville, N.Y.), an Army supply construction specialist working at the resettlement center.

Right now CORDS is supplying the Montagnards with the food they'll need until they can begin harvesting their first crops. But the future will depend on how well the people of Edap Enang take to the lessons of modern farming.

If they learn well, the abundant land that surrounds this city of 48 villages will give growth to a healthier and happier people for many years to come.

RIGHT HERE—LTC Harold Birch (Leavenworth, Kans.), 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry commander, looks on as 2LT James Liljefelt (San Francisco), platoon leader, 2nd Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry, points out the spot where his platoon discovered a NVA arms cache. The Bullets' company was attached to the Red Warriors for action in Operation MacArthur.
(USA Photo by SP4 Mick Harsell)

New Pleiku Catholic Orphanage Opens

CAMP ENARI — The St. Paul Catholic Orphanage for Montagnard children in Pleiku Province was recently dedicated. Attending the dedication ceremony were personnel of the U.S. Air Force and the Army in the Pleiku area.

Following the ribbon cutting by Colonel Nay Lo, Pelku Province Chief, the building was blessed by Chaplains (Major) Francis Bartos (Bethlehem, Pa.), USAF, and (Captain) Raymond Deehan (Queens, N.Y.), 4th Infantry Division.

Completed in two months, the building will house 28 orphans. In addition to the newly decorated building, a much larger one on the grounds houses an additional 45 children.

The orphanage is on the grounds of the St. Paul School and convent. The school has an enrollment of 1,000 children. Rector of the little community is Sister Estelle Paillat (Van Dee, France). In Vietnam for the past 28 years, she is assisted by 11 Vietnamese sisters and five postulants.

A flag raising ceremony opened the program. The sister spoke, thanking the Americans for what they had done to make the dedication possible.

A plaque of appreciation was presented to Colonel Robert Hueller (Brooklyn, N.Y.) and the men of his command of the 633rd Combat Support Group, USAF. The plaque was accepted for the colonel by Lieutenant Colonel W.M. Soha (Crystal Fall, Mich.), vice commander.

The Catholic chaplains of the Ivy Division have been assisting the school and orphanage by donating building materials, foodstuffs, and bedding, as well as financial contributions.

Division Has Only One Aero-Rifle Unit

VUNG DAT AM — Although a small unit, the 1st Brigade's Aero-Rifle Platoon has proven invaluable whenever a quick reaction force is needed for any task.

A part of Troop D, 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry, the platoon is primarily called into action when a small concentration of enemy troops is spotted and a flexible and quickly mobile unit is needed to make contact or act as a blocking force to hem the enemy in.

"We also are inserted into an area that needs detailed examination or reconnaissance," said Sergeant First Class Clyde Dellinger (Burnsville, N.C.), platoon sergeant. "Because Troop D has quite a few OH-23 scout helicopters, we work closely with them, on call at all times should they find something that requires on-the-spot investigation."

The Aero-Rifle Platoon is the only such unit in the 4th Division.

"Security is another one of our frequent jobs," explained Staff Sergeant Archie Warchesiak (Houston, Tex.). "If a helicopter should go down out in the jungle, we're sent in to secure the area."

SGT Dellinger began rounding up his platoon as helicopters came gliding into the airstrip to pick them up for another mission.

"We're going back to base camp," SGT Dellinger explained, as he began walking towards the waiting choppers. "They have some sandbagging to do there and they called us in to help."

Bisons Battle With An Army Of Bees

VUNG DAT AM — It was a battle between an army of bees and an army of people. For a few stinging moments, it looked as though the bees had the upper wing.

The people involved were chiefly eight men from the 1st Brigade's Troop A, 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry (Bisons) who were riding atop an armored personnel carrier through a thick wooded area southwest of the brigade's camp.

The bees belonged to a swarm, headquartered in a 12-foot high tree, which the APC almost ran into.

Specialist 4 William Travis (Lexington, Miss.), driver of the carrier, said he didn't see the several-foot-thick swarm until the carrier was almost atop the bee tree.

Bellicose Bees

He tried to conciliate by bringing the carrier to a lunging stop a foot short of the tree and throwing it into reverse.

The bees, however, were too bellicose. One stung SP4 Travis on the back of the head.

Another tried to sting Staff Sergeant Charles W. Bynum (Okolona, Miss.), tank commander, on his moustache.

"But I was too quick for him," SSG Bynum said. "I slapped him off as fast as he landed."

While the carrier was securing repellent inside, but as the sergeant put it, "We were too busy battening down the hatches."

Air Support

While the carrier was securing its defenses, the crew of First Lieutenant Roy R.B. Attride (Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y.), 2nd Platoon leader, Battery D, 4th Battalion, 60th Artillery, called for air support.

The lieutenant's crew was riding about 15 feet behind the carrier in a "Duster," a tank-like vehicle equipped with twin 40-mm cannons.

A Huey helicopter crew dropped a green, smoke grenade into the swarm, and hovered low enough that the wind from the helicopter's powerful rotar blades swept it aside.

The carrier then made a rumbling getaway.

But the Battle of the Bees wasn't over yet. An hour and a half later, the carrier ran over another bee-laden tree.

This time, however, a 10th Cavalry helicopter came down quickly enough to sweep the bees aside before they had a chance to organize an assault.

Officer Monkeyshined Just A Little Too Much

JUNK'S YARD—Have you ever washed an item, then turned right around and spilled something on it?

That's almost the way it happened to First Lieutenant Don Kievit (Canyon, Tex.), Reconnaissance Platoon, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry.

Having just washed his poncho liner, 1LT Kievit was looking forward to wrapping himself in a clean liner that chilly night.

As the Regulars were setting up for the night, several small monkeys decided to pay a visit.

Lieutenant Kievit thought he could catch one and make it a pet, after all it was only a little monkey.

Opening a can of C-rations, he held it towards the monkey while in his other hand he grasped a flashlight to attract its attention.

The monkey reached for the C-ration and as 1LT Kievit reached for the monkey, the little animal managed to grab the can and dump it all over the clean poncho liner.

A very peeved lieutenant watched as the little monkey skipped back into the jungle and left him holding a wet, sticky poncho liner.

SNIP, SNIP—SP4 Jim Rock (Allentown, Pa.) has his own barber shop complete with traditional pole in the boonies at the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry's firebase. (USA Photo)

Battle For Dak To Summary

First Eight Days

CAMP ENARI — Since Nov. 4, the Ivy Division and elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade attached to the division for Operation MacArthur have been engaged in the Battle For Dak To. A day by day summary of the battle which raged for more than 9 days leaving over 704 enemy bodies on the battlefield follows.

Nov. 4 — The 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry took 40 82mm mortar rounds and probing attacks from three sides of their night position between 10 p.m. and early morning. 25 NVA dead.

Further north, the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry made two contacts with small NVA forces. 8 NVA dead.

A Dragoon platoon attacking the ridgeline on Hill 724 was beaten back by an estimated NVA battalion.

Nov. 5 — Scattered fighting resumed in the morning southwest of Dak To.

Two companies from the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry took the Hill 724 ridgeline but the NVA had disappeared. More bodies ran the toll to 37 NVA dead.

Enemy mortar and small arms fire poured on positions of the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry and 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry, about 10 miles apart.

The Braves were in contact for 3½-hours.

Nov. 6 — Paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade reported killing 84 NVA. One company battled the NVA for nearly 4-hours before it was reinforced by a second company.

Nov. 7 — Ivymen clashed four times with NVA including a stiff battle for a bunker complex 6 miles from Dak To. NVA toll for Nov. 6-7 ran to 96.

By the end of the day, Ivymen were in firm control of Hill 724's 3,500 to 4,000 foot ridgeline.

Nov. 8 — Two 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry companies ran into heavy machine gun fire from entrenched NVA along Hill 724.

NVA losses were reported as up to 148.

Two enemy backpacked flame throwers were among the weapons captured.

Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry were engaged in a 3-hour fire fight.

Nov. 9 — Ivymen again tangled with NVA while sweeping the Dak To battlefield and found bodies bringing the NVA toll to 236.

Nov. 10 — Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry were engaged in a fire fight with an unknown size enemy force while moving up Hill 724.

The 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry reported enemy contact during the night.

Enemy losses were now 405 by body count.

Nov. 11 — Elements of the 173rd came under heavy mortar and small arms fire. Four hours after the clash broke out, U.S. reinforcements arrived. Four hours later, the gunfire died down. 103 NVA bodies were reported.

A few miles away from the paratroopers' battle, the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry was again locked in battle on Hill 724. Fire broke out at 3:10 p.m. Small arms stopped after dark while mortars continued on and off all night as did several close-in charges by the NVA.

Dak To . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

Dak To was the third Communist attempt in recent weeks to grab control of South Vietnamese provinces along the Cambodian border.

He said U.S. intelligence had learned of the plan and foiled it.

By IVY LEAF press time, the Battle of Dak To was raging into its tenth day with only skimpy reports being available.

Why He Did It

Chieu Hoi Gives 122mm Gift

CAMP ENARI — What motivates a man to participate in the Chieu Hoi Program? Hunger, thirst, disillusionment with the war, or is there something more far reaching?

The 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry's Reconnaissance and Civil Affairs team recently collected a Chieu Hoi during a village search.

One reason this NVA squad leader decided to become a Chieu Hoi was greatly influenced by the dedicated work of Isch, civil affairs team's Army of the Republic of Vietnam interpreter.

In talking to the NVA, Isch formed an immediate friendship with the prisoner. He was hungry and Isch fed him his own C-ration lunch. The man was thirsty and he gave him his canteen to drink from.

"I could see that he was terribly frightened, so I told him that he was safe, that he was now among friends," commented Isch.

The NVA was wary at first, and asked that he not be beaten, as his communist leaders had informed would be his fate.

Explaining the Chieu Hoi Program to the NVA, Isch told him what the advantages were, a chance to start over again and a chance to be free.

Isch in the pursuing line of conversation, learned that the man had a weapon. He asked him if he would lead him to it.

The NVA soldier asked Isch one more time to explain the Chieu Hoi Program. This done, the NVA got up and proceeded to lead the Regulars to one of the most important finds of the war, a 122mm rocket launcher, the first one to be captured in the 4th Division.

Isch commented, "When we got near the small clump of trees, I asked him what kind of weapon he had. He said it was a mortar, and I told him that was very good. But I couldn't believe it when he pointed to this rocket launcher and said 'There it is.' I just hugged him to show him how happy we were."

Through the effort of one very hard working interpreter, combined with other influencing factors, this man chose to take the path of a Chieu Hoi and a new start on life.

SGT Thought He Was Ready For This Sniper

CHEO REO—Sergeant Dennis Thunader (Detroit) is a grizzled fighter who has spent countless days and nights listening and watching for the enemy. He is a team leader for a small but highly professional team of men, members of a Long Range Reconnaissance Platoon. This is his second tour of Vietnam.

Sometimes, even highly skilled and specially trained jungle fighters are fooled by the jungle itself.

His team had been on the move all day, looking for the enemy or signs that he was in the area.

Suddenly the entire team heard movement and took up a ready position, waiting.

"It sounded like a platoon out there. They would move, then be quiet, and the brush would cackle again," remarked the sergeant.

What seemed like an eternity, but was only a few nervous minutes, was suddenly broken by the sight of a man in black pants and a grey shirt climbing a tree.

The radio operator whispered, "A sniper!"

As SGT Thunader trained his weapon on the tree, he suddenly burst into a wide grin. The sniper was a large hairy orangutan and the platoon was comprised of some of the ape's more friendly companions.

"They sure as hell fooled me," quipped the seasoned Ivyman.

NOT LONG NOW—Ivymen of the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry wait to be airlifted into an enemy area. 4th Aviation Battalion choppers recently lifted a Regulars' company into an area near Ban Blech. (USA Photo by PFC William Gruber)

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