

THE BATTLE OF AP CHO

26 Jan. - 10 Mar, 68

During Operation Saratoga,

Large concentrations of Viet Cong soldiers had massed around Cu Chi and had extensively dug into the village of Ap Cho building numerous concrete bunkers, connected by trenches and tunnel complexes. "Regulars" of the *Tropic Lightning* ~~was~~ The 3rd Battalion 22nd Infantry was called upon to aid the 2nd Brigade forces of the 25th Infantry Division in locating the enemy forces and routing them from the locations.

The resulting operations amounted to 37 different enemy engagements accounting for ^{SMU} 253 enemy dead. The greatest part of the engagements were made in the village of Ap Cho where the battalion had to move upon daily until all of the enemy were killed.

For a period of 13 days the REGULARS supported by several units moved against the enemy and started hacking away at the concrete bunkers. It was obvious that the enemy would not give up. They were determined to fight until they died or won, and they did exactly that ~~that is~~, they all died before the infantry and its supporting fire.

The battle was long and the battle was fierce. The REGULARS worked beside the 4th Battalion (Mech) 23rd Infantry. Each morning both units would get "on line" and start another days assault on the reinforced enemy bunkers. When the day came to an end the troops would pull back only to assault again the next morning.

After a tremendous amount of fighting coupled with incense quantities of artillery and air support the battle was won. Although not very climactic, the victory marked a major upset to enemy troops who tried to remain in good defensive posture and failed.

The players Supporting Units

Artillery Support;

A Battery 1st Battalion 8th Artillery - 105 Howitzers

C Battery 1st Battalion 5th Artillery - 105 Howitzers

C Battery 2nd Battalion 77th Artillery - 105 Howitzers

B Battery 3rd Battalion 13th Artillery - 155 Howitzers

Army Aviation Support;

6 B Company 3rd Battalion 17th Cavalry

7 C Company 3rd Battalion 17th Cavalry

8 D Company 3rd Battalion 4th Cavalry

2116th Assault Helicopter Company

1 25th AVIATION BATTALION

6 205th Assault Helicopter Company

3 187th Assault Helicopter Company

4 188th Assault Helicopter Company

5 242nd Assault Support Helicopter Company

Malesherennes

Enemy Losses:

253 KIA

31 KIA (possible)

6 POW

6 Detainees

US Losses:

44 KIA

6 KNHA

134 WIA

1 WNHA

PERTINANT Ordnance: Captured:

2 AK-50 assault rifles

28 AK-47 assault rifles

8 RPG-2 launchers

5 RPG-7 launchers

8 M-16 rifles

2 81mm mortar tubes

1 51 cal. M.G.

4 Chi. Com. Light M.G.

2 U.S. 50 cal. M.G.

44 Pounds of documents

1 Chi. Com. radio

SOURCE: CHUCK BOYLE CO 312 Infantry "Regulars"