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## ***IVY LEAF*** **FAMOUS FOURTH**

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### **3rd Brigade Kills 81 Enemy In Task Force Oregon Battle**

DUC PHO — Following artillery preparation, 18 air strikes and naval gunfire, infantrymen from the 3rd Brigade Task Force, 25th Division recently assaulted battered enemy positions and finished off what remained of an estimated North Vietnamese battalion.

After a day and a half of fierce fighting, which left the battlefield scarred by artillery and bomb craters, the "Cacti" assaulted with two companies, leaving 81 enemy dead and capturing huge amounts of weapons, equipment and documents.

The battle took place in a heavily fortified area approximately eight miles southeast of Duc Pho in lower Quang Ngai Province.

The area was believed to have been one of the primary resupply points for the NVA as the mountains run almost to the coast.

The battle, one of the largest to date for Task Force Oregon, began when Company A, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry made contact while on a sweep of the area.

The crack NVA unit was tenaciously holding ground between two hills and fighting from prepared bunkers, tunnels, caves and complex trench systems.

Receiving heavy fire from automatic weapons, Company A maneuvered to flank what was later estimated to be a NVA battalion.

Captain Lloyd Yoshina, Company A commander who was wounded by the initial burst of fire, said, "The fire was so heavy I couldn't move even three feet to get to my radio."

Although members of the company attempted to get to him, Captain Yoshina ordered them back so that they wouldn't be hit. Refusing to be evacuated, he was still commanding his company a day later when the battle ended.

Artillery, gunships and air strikes were immediately called in to pound the entrenched enemy. Major James E. Moore Jr., 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry commander who was hovering overhead in his command helicopter, coordinated the supporting fires as well as combat assaults and the units in combat.

By mid-morning Company B had been airlifted into the area of contact. Upon touching down, the company quickly maneuvered to assault the enemy positions.

However, the NVA, dug-in in caves and bunkers, continued to fight throughout the afternoon. During that time other units were moved into the area and by nightfall the enemy was surrounded by four companies and a cavalry platoon.

Before darkness engulfed the battlefield, the "Cacti" had killed 43 NVA and captured 16 weapons.

When darkness came, flare-ships turned the battlefield back to day. The battle continued throughout the night.

At daylight the "Cacti" were still receiving heavy fire from the entrenched NVA. Once again the area was saturated by air strikes and artillery.

While the supporting fires continued, Major Moore lifted his field commanders out by helicopter and conducted a detailed aerial reconnaissance of the battlefield for the final assault.

By mid-morning the air strikes and artillery were lifted. Through a screen of smoke and in 103 degree heat, two "Cacti" companies, accompanied by Colonel James G. Shanahan, 3rd Brigade commander, assaulted and overran the enemy positions.

Besides killing 81 NVA, the 3rd Brigade troops seized 151 82mm mortar rounds, thousands of rounds of small arms ammunition and large quantities of weapons, grenades and other equipment. They also detained one NVA sergeant.

The "Cacti" were still policing the battlefield when Major General William B. Rosson, Task Force Oregon commander, landed in the middle of the area to commend the infantrymen on a "tremendous victory."