

FO GOES "BLIND"

Lt Jack E. Tingley, A Battery, 1/77 Artillery, is presently attached to Company C, 2/5 Cav as forward observer. He is also a staunch advocate of a Combat Artilleryman Badge for FO's. "We can't get a CIB, even though we deserve it as much as any combat-seasoned infantryman".

2/5 Cav Bn Arty Liaison Officer, Cpt John Scobie, backs Tingley up and to take his point, offers the following story on Tingley:

On New Years Eve, Charlie Company conducted a search and clear operation in thick jungle on a hillside west of the Suci Ca. Dusk was busy stealing what little light filtered through the canopy, but since the mission of finding Chuck was not yet complete, C Company continued on. An afternoon air strike had left deep craters and reduced to rubble much of the target, a large enemy bunker complex, and led by Lt Tom Nesterak's 1st platoon, the column silently snaked their way through the area to police up any survivors before the 1800 truce and total darkness gave the enemy their chance for leisurely escape.

Earlier in the day, when examining and pumping Lt Kopaczewski's shotgun, an insubordinate shell popped out and broke Tingley's glasses. All he had left were prescription sunglasses, and now, as night set in, his vision began to fail.

Now C Company's CO, Cpt Jim Estep, received the order to return to the valley floor as the truce was in effect. Tingley, with Estep, was in the center of the column moving one of the deep craters when, from the 1st platoon point came the sound of a grenade explosion followed by the chatter of M-16's. The report of possibly 3 NVA Kias was radioed back, and Tingley said to himself, "I'm in for it now."

Suddenly another NVA regular appeared above the crater, and SP4 Tal-antes and Tingley opened up on him. Down he went. But in the meantime, Tingley's rifle had jammed. Almost simultaneously heavy firing opened up near the crown in the valley. PFC Dodson, point for SSG Furedi's 3d platoon had runned down one of two bushwackers.

That did it. Fate had reduced Tingley to a jungle of jangled nerves and created a scene which no man in Charlie Company is soon to forget: Lt Tingley with an M-16 club slung on his back, a useless pair of glasses perched on his nose, waving a pistol with his right hand, gripping his RTO's

shoulder with his left hand, and shouting, "Load me off of here, I can't see."

"It's comical now," says Lt Tingley, "but not then. Now, don't I deserve the CIB?" To this, 1SG Ed Funkhouser adds, "He'd make a great infantryman, but we save the CIB for those who want to enjoy those wonderful and exciting experiences during a lifetime career. Join the Infantry".

REDLEGS ATTACKED

On 24 December, Battlin Bravo, 1st Bn, 77th Arty was probed in their position at An Khe. About 10 minutes after the probe, the vicious attack came. Bravo met the attack which only lasted a short while. The attack came from the north and was proceeded by the ringing of bells and laughter, which the enemy was obviously using to demoralize the battery. The counter attack was led by Bravo's brave leader, Cpt. Nolte. The executive officer was directing the direct fire and the lethal beehive round. Because of this direct fire the enemy was repulsed. Immediately the intrepid officers of Bravo went out to assess damage. What was found is hard to believe but here is the list: they found a modified jeep, eight animals and a fat bearded man in a red jump suit.

BODY COUNT OPERATION PERSHING

11 FEB - 18 DEC 67 9 JAN 68

KIA-----962-----1112

PW-----938-----961

INDIV WPNS-----367-----405