

29th's Officers Prepare for 'Beach Assault'

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Covered with dirt, grass and pineapples, the building looks something like a hermit's cave. But once you go through the camouflaged entrance and down a long tunnel, you walk into what could be mistaken for an office building.

Green and white halls lead into meeting rooms, a mess hall and sleeping quarters. Officers and men sit at desks in the underground offices, working on maps and sipping coffee.

During World War II, this building was the Army's

North Sector Command Post when the defense of Oahu was divided into two sections with the South Sector Command Post at Ft. Ruger.

After the war, the concrete super-bunker was abandoned and it fell victim to vandals and decay. Last year, it was renovated by the 11th Brigade and has been used since for Schofield training exercises.

Today the concrete structure is called the "Mongoose Hilton" or the "Ship."

The brigade headquarters staff has been in and out of the underground building since Nov. 4 on an exercise called Lepper Lappin I.

They are pretending they are on a ship on its way to storm the beaches of Korea's Kim Po Peninsula in a landing similar to Gen. Douglas MacArthur's famed landing at Inchon during the Korean War.

In the exercise, they are among three allied divisions who must move south of



He said the Kim Po Peninsula in Korea was chosen as a site for the simulated landing because its outline is almost exactly the same as the shape of Oahu.

The beachhead of Kim Po fits right over the Dillingham Airfield at Mokuieia on their map's plastic overlay.

Farther down the hall, Lt. Col. Francis Bowers Jr., of 3134 Huelani Place, commander of the 487th Artillery, was plotting air and artillery support for the simulated attack.

There will be no maneuvering of troops in this stage of Lepper Lappin, but on Sunday, the men and officers of brigade and battalion headquarters will be "ashore" in Kahuku where they simulate the activities of brigade-sized combat landing.

On Dec. 2, all 4,600 men of the brigade will move to the Kahuku hills to play their role in the simulated attack. It is the first brigade-sized operation of the 29th since it was activated.

Seoul in a surprise attack on a large North Korean force.

The exercise in the underground "ship" is mainly to give the men practice in map-making and planning for a major combat landing on a foreign shore.

Maj. Lawrence G. Tavares of Maui, the brigade civil affairs officer, was the first person to greet us when I entered the underground "ship" yesterday.

"Welcome aboard," he said. "Did you land on the deck by helicopter?"

Upstairs in a larger room, Col. Clyde W. Woods Jr., brigade executive officer, showed us maps made up for the "landing."



U.S. Army Photo

Spec. 4 John Torres, checks I.D. of Pfc. Danny Smith at bunker.



Lt. Col. Francis Bowers checks map with Maj. Ben Acohido during exercise.