

Battle of Koolaus Looks Like

MacArthur's Inchon Landing

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When the heavy rains over Oahu let up last week, the battle of the Koolau Range began Wednesday for the 4,600 men of Hawaii's 29th Brigade.

They hiked through the muddy mountains above Kahuku in operation Lepper Lappin I, the first major brigade-sized foray in their training.

Although the Koolau setting was like the rugged Central Highlands of Vietnam, the operation was similar to Gen. Douglas MacArthur's Inchon Landing during the Korean War.

The enemy as a motley battalion of men from the 29th's 1st Battalion, commanded by Maj. Ellsworth M. Bush. They wore pastel tee-shirts, wool ski caps, khaki fatigue jackets and other rag-tag modifications of regulation combat dress.

Their mission was to block the 29th battalions moving south of a simulated Seoul to liberate imaginary South Koreans.

On the day we watched, the enemy forces were wiping out the friendly troops. Alpha Company of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry, commanded by 2nd Lt. Dave Martin, suffered more than 30 casualties as they were pushed back from Puu Kapu plateau by the enemy.

But — 2nd Lt. Gregory Pontti — one of 300 men from U.S. Army Hawaii controlling the operation — said that the friendly troops were scheduled to give the



Sgt. I.C. Alfredo Ramento awaits an enemy attack.



Spec. 4. Billy E. Best is treated by squad leader Richard Tiqui.



A simulated head wound on Pfc. John Gill is bandaged by Pfc. Martin Choy.

enemy a battering the next day.

War games are that way. They also are probably the only kind of battle where you'll hear a wounded man laugh in glee.

When Spec. 4 Billy S. Best received a simulated foot wound he smiled with delight because it meant his buddies would have to carry him up a steep hill to the aid station.

Realism was heightened in the operation by three Phantom jets which flew in support of the friendly troops. They made low dives over the mountains in simulated bombing runs. Enemy troops were supported by T-33 jets.

Also hovering above the troops were H-23 bubble helicopters which performed simulated medical evacuations and C-ration supply runs.



Advertiser Photos by Al Chang
Phantom jet "strafes" the enemy.



"Enemy forces" in the 29th Brigade's war games move in to attack the 100th Battalion, 442nd Inf.