



01/28/1969 - The latest 2nd Brigade Statistics are posted on the welcome sign at the VIP landing pad at LZ Sally. **1LT Peter R. Engelhardt** worked in Operations in the HQ of the 2nd Brigade at Sally from October 1968 through August 1969. Peter served under the Brigade Commander **COL John A. Hoefling**.

Referring directly to the sign Peter recalled in his 02/21/01 e-mail to platoon member **Bert Hubble** his service with and memories of COL Hoefling:

"The (attached) photo of the 2/101 "Welcome" sign, taken on January 28, 1969, says it all. Operation Nevada Eagle had run about 10 months, as of that date. As you can see, we only sustained 30 troopers KIA and had a kill ratio of 49:1. Why was that? The answer is that Col. Hoefling (now Major General, retired) gave the following standing order to his line officers:

Find them. Pull back. Put the shit on them.

Col. Hoefling was finishing his one year tour as the 2/101 commander when the 3d Brigade ran into the NVA Regiment at Hamburger Hill. Col. Hoefling would have never required his men to perform John Wayne tactics. While I have never discussed this subject with him, I feel certain that we would have cordoned the hill off, tightened the perimeter and held on for possibly weeks and reinforced, while the air force, marines, artillery and off-shore naval guns from the USS New Jersey would have "degraded" the enemy into obliteration. That hill had no strategic importance.

Please understand that, while I was physically closer to the top decision makers, I was no different than any other trooper. I just did what I was told, when I was told and executed the directives to best of my ability. I was not privy to top secret intelligence emanating from the Army Security Agency platoon stationed at LZ Sally. I was not privy to long range plans. I worked for the S-3, Major Dickerson. He spent 18 hours a day with the Col. in C&C choppers. I was the "night duty officer" from 16:00 to 8:30 and gave the morning briefing to the top officers and NCO's, as to results, troop disposition and enemy activity.

Col. Hoefling did not waste any of his people. The loss of life and maiming of troopers is unavoidable in any combat scenario. But I feel that Col. Hoefling's objective was to inflict the maximum casualties on the enemy possible, with the smallest losses on our side and secure our AO (area of operation) from any repeat of the TET Offensive debacle. But again, I have never, ever discussed any of this with him. These are my views, captured from my perspective as a 1st Lt., who was privileged to serve with the 2/101 and under Col. Hoefling's command. I would have followed that man anywhere, at any time and done anything that he commanded. That is the level of loyalty and respect I have for that man.

In closing, I can only say this:

On the evening of his departure from the 2/101 to his new assignment in the Pentagon, Col. Hoefling told me this:

"Pete - you will never enjoy, in civilian life, the comraderie that we have enjoyed at the 2d Bridge."

And, he was absolutely right. That 2/101 was the finest organization I ever served under or was associated with. We were one of the best line units in the field. I do not think that we could have been more effective.

Regards,

Peter R. Engelhardt"