

EDITORIAL

The Day I Knew I Belonged to the Flag  
by  
the late Dwight D. Eisenhower

My first day at West Point--June 14, 1911--had been rough. My classmates and I had been barked at and ordered by upper-classmen to do all sorts of ridiculous chores, on the double. All 285 of us were weary and resentful.

Toward evening, however, we assembled outdoors and, with the American flag floating majestically over us, were sworn in as cadets of the United States Military Academy. It was an impressive ceremony. As I looked up at our national colors and swore my allegiance, I realized humbly that now I belonged to the flag. It is a moment I shall never forget.

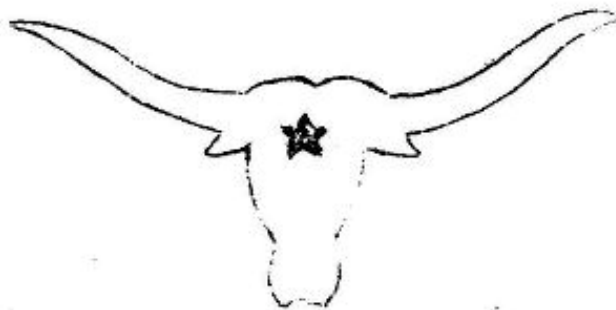
Later I became color sergeant of our class, and my final year at West Point it was my privilege to carry the American flag at all official parades and ceremonies. No honor could have meant more to me.

To tell you why I love and respect our flag so much would take a book, for it would be the long, brave story of America. Briefly, I love our flag because it is the most beautiful national banner of all, and because it stands, today as always, for the finest nation on earth.

Today we urgently need a new commitment to the basic principles that made our nation great. Our flag is the symbol of these principles, and I would hope that all of us might find some way to display it, not merely on patriotic holidays but every day in the year. Such a visible upsurge of respect for the flag and country will do much to help bring about a new national solidarity, a renewed pride and faith in America.

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FOILED AGAIN

"It only lasted a few minutes, but that was enough for me". This is how one soldier described the recent attack on LZ Goldie. "Attack" may not be the right word, for the men of Alpha Company, 39th Engineer Battalion (Combat) succeeded in discouraging the NVA in what would appear to have been an all out ground attack.

At approximately 0100 hours on the morning of June 10, PFC Salvador Chavez (El Paso, Texas) heard a noise directly in front of his guard bunker. PFC Chavez set off his Claymore mine. This was all it took for the entire bunker line, made up of personnel from Alpha and HHC, to open fire. Illumination rounds revealed additional movement and several bodies in the perimeter area. Gun ships were called in, and after strafing the area, the action was over for the night.

Search and denial operations, the next day, revealed six NVA KIA's. Captured weapons equipment included: two AK47 rifles, one RPG launcher, four NVA pistol belts, one pair of wire cutters, six AK47 magazines, one watch, three Chicom grenade carriers, 48 Chicom grenades, one U.S. pistol belt, one U.S. grenade, one flashlight, one Bangalore torpedo, and several first aid packs.

A further check of the entire perimeter area revealed additional Chicom grenades, an RPG launcher, a Viet Cong pistol belt, another pair of wire cutters, and bamboo strands used to tie back cut wire. Several holes had been cut in the perimeter wire, and markers had been left to indicate the holes. It was obvious that a full scale ground attack had been planned, but again, Alpha Company proved stronger than the enemy anticipated.

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