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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH AIR FORCE (PACAF)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Apr 66 073

13 April 1966

AIR FORCE POLICE DESCRIBE
ACTIONS DURING VC ATTACK

Saigon -- "I saw this pickup coming down the street at a fast clip right in the middle of the barrage. I thought they were 'nuts' so I pulled them over and made the five sailors in the truck lay in a ditch beside the road. I got down beside them. We weren't hurt."

This is how Air Force policeman A.3.C. Michael V. Motherway, 20, of Tucson, Ariz., described his actions during a 20-minute Viet Cong mortar barrage on the Tan Son Nhut air base near Saigon. The barrage started about 12:30 a.m.

Deeds of courage and humanity were common here as the base experienced its first assault.

A.2.C. Richard W. Lindbeck, 21, another Air Force policeman on duty during the attack told how he took refuge in a large steel crate, but he picked the wrong place.

"I was on duty at the radio center," explained the youth from Iron County, Mich. "When the first rounds came in I dived into an open conex (a steel crate about eight feet long on each side).

"I no sooner got into it before a round went into the box above me and exploded. The noise and shock were terrific. Some shrapnel flew through the floor of the box above and into the top of mine. I wasn't hurt."

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"We had reports," Duncan said, "that during mortar attacks, the Viet Cong, if they penetrated the base, often changed into khaki so they would be dressed like Republic of Viet Nam soldiers."

Endicott challenged the men as they approached his station. All of them failed to stop on the challenge. "He was perfectly within his right to open fire, "but did not," the senior air police official said.

Instead, Endicott coolly approached the men, disarmed them and then identified them through Tan Son Nhut gate passes they carried.

"Endicott had an option, he chose the right way," said Endicott's supervisor, T.Sgt. Bobby J. Eisenberg, 33, of Marietta, Ga.

Air police support during the emergency was "prompt, responsible and orderly," according to Lt. Col. Roger G. Benton, 48, of Long View, Wash., commander of the 375th Air Police Squadron. The unit provides internal security for the air base.

He said no attempt was made by the Viet Cong to infiltrate the base and no sabotage was reported.



NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Apr 66-074

13 April 1966

AIR FORCE DAILY SUMMARY

- A. North Viet Nam.
- B. South Viet Nam.
- C. Supplement.
- D. Special Announcements.
- E. Civic Action.

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NOTE: This item has been cleared for release by MACV.

A. NORTH VIET NAM

Air Force pilots flying missions over North Viet Nam yesterday (April 12), continued to strike storage and staging areas and routes of travel.

Two storage areas attacked were located 60 and 85 miles south-southeast of Vinh. Pilots reported destroying two large buildings and damaging another at one of the storage areas.

Three staging areas between 49 and 68 miles southeast of Vinh were also hit by Air Force pilots. A road was cut in four places at the staging area 68 miles southeast of Vinh.

Attacking routes of travel, pilots hit four highway bridges and Route 15 near the Mgia Pass. Two of the bridges were damaged and approaches were cratered. The bridges were located from 15 to 28 miles north of the demilitarized zone (DMZ).

Pilots also reported destroying two barges about 25 miles north of the DMZ.

Missions over North Viet Nam were flown by F-105 Thunderchief pilots and F-4C Phantom crews.

Some flights encountered light to moderate flak during their strikes.

B. SOUTH VIET NAM

Flying close air support and other combat missions, U.S. strike pilots attacked the Viet Cong in South Viet Nam with 290 combat sorties yesterday (April 12).

Air Force strike pilots flew 81 sorties, Marine pilots logged 98 and the Navy launched 111 from carriers.

Targets included VC troop concentrations, camps, fortified positions, river shipping and storage areas.

Reports from forward air controllers (FACs) who directed the strikes credited the pilots with possibly killing several VC, setting off two secondary explosions and destroying or damaging a number of enemy buildings and sampans.

NORTHERN PROVINCES

In I Corps, Marine pilots flew 77 sorties in support of Marine ground operations and 41 against VC targets assigned by the Air Force Tactical Air Control Center (TACC).

Reports listed one secondary explosion and several enemy buildings destroyed or damaged.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

Possibly 10 or more VC were killed when two Air Force A-1E Skyraider pilots came to the aid of a Special Forces team from Duc Co under attack yesterday afternoon about 35 miles southwest of Pleiku (YA 80-08).

Two other A-1E pilots, four Air Force F-4C Phantom pilots and two Republic of Viet Nam Air Force (RVNAF) A-1H Skyraider pilots also provided close air support for the Special Forces team.

Throughout II Corps, strikes were flown by 34 Air Force and seven Navy pilots. Besides a number of VC possibly killed, several enemy buildings were reported destroyed or damaged.

SAIGON AREA

Strikes by 41 Air Force and 54 Navy pilots in III Corps were credited with possibly killing five or more VC, sinking two sampans and destroying or damaging several enemy buildings.

MEKONG RIVER DELTA

Two Air Force F-100 Supersabre pilots were credited with possibly killing 25 or more insurgents yesterday morning, when they struck a VC battalion near a canal in the mangrove-shrouded area about 80 miles southwest of Can Tho (WQ 25-92).

Four Navy A-4 Skyhawk pilots and three Navy F-4 Phantom pilots also struck the area. Besides a number of VC possibly killed, a secondary explosion was set off and nine enemy sampans and several buildings were destroyed or damaged during the action.

The VC battalion was located by an Army of the Republic of Viet Nam (ARVN) battalion on a search and destroy mission in the area.

Throughout IV Corps, strikes were flown by 50 Navy and six Air Force pilots. Reports listed more than 30 VC possibly killed, one secondary explosion, at least eight sampans destroyed, 13 others damaged and numerous buildings destroyed or damaged.

* * * * *

In support of night operations, Air Force crews flew 11 flare-drop sorties — seven in AC-47 Dragon-ships and four in C-123 Providers. About 330 flares were dropped.

Air Force pilots used about 110 tons of ordnance, including about 445 bombs of various sizes, 37,100 rounds of 20mm cannon shells and 15,000 rounds of 7.62mm shells.

AIR FORCE SORTIES ... strikes 81/ flares 11/ admin-liaison 47/ forward
air controller 73/ defoliation 7/ psychological warfare 38/ visual recon 150/
photo recon 10/ escort 7/ search and rescue 17/ combat troop airlift 21/ combat
cargo airlift 65/ combat logistics airlift 201.

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C. SUPPLEMENT

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D. SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

VIET CONG SHELL TAN SON NHUT AIR BASE

The Tan Son Nhut air base located about three miles from downtown Saigon underwent a Viet Cong attack beginning at 12:30 a.m. today (April 13). The attack lasted for about 20 minutes.

Air Force officials at the air base said some 75 rounds of 82mm mortar and 75mm recoilless rifle fire struck the installation -- headquarters for the Seventh Air Force and U.S. Army, Vietnam, as well as the Vietnamese Air Force.

It was the first time during the Viet Nam conflict that Tan Son Nhut has been attacked.

No contact with enemy forces was reported.

Col. George Budway of Great Falls, Mont., Air Force base commander, said casualties were light. Damage was moderate.

Part of the Viet Cong barrage landed in a fuel storage area and one tank of fuel burned. Flames soared hundreds of feet into the night sky, joining flares dropped by Air Force flare-ships in lighting the area.

Enemy positions were attacked by armed helicopters and attack planes. The positions were located west and southwest of Tan Son Nhut which is on the northwest edge of Saigon.

Air Force firemen fought to contain the blazing fuel stores and extinguished fires at other points on the base.

Individual heroism was reported. Air Force 1st Lt. Ronald G. Marlar, 25, of Knoxville, Tenn., leaped into a burning flare-ship loaded with high-intensity flares. It was parked in a crowded ramp area. Along with VNAF airmen, he removed the flares before flames from the burning plane reached them.

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Budway said revetments constructed during the past few months to protect parked aircraft prevented more extensive damage.

Budway said Air Force, Army and VNAF base commanders were on the scene within minutes after the first round of enemy fire was received.

Rapid evacuation of barracks areas probably prevented further casualties, he said. Mortar shells struck an Air Force troop compound after the men living there had dashed to bunkers.

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D. SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT II

NEW GROUP COMMANDER AT NHA TRANG

Col. Robert L. Gueydan, 49, of Jacksonville, Ark., assumed command yesterday (April 13) of the 14th Combat Support Group at the Air Force's Nha Trang air base.

He succeeds Col. Robert J. Jones, 47, of Portage, Wisc., who is being reassigned to a post in Hawaii. Jones commanded the combat support group since November 1964. Until departing, he will command the 14th Air Commando Wing.

The 14th Combat Support Group supports Air Force units assigned to Nha Trang.

D. SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT III

CONGRESSMEN TOUR CAM RANH

Five U.S. Representatives spent yesterday at the Air Force's Cam Ranh air base so they could get a first hand look at a combat unit that has campaigned against the Viet Cong.

Col. Levi R. Chase, 47, of Cortland, N.Y., described to them the operation of his 12th Tactical Fighter Wing that has been launching air attacks against VC targets. The 12th uses the 1,400 mile-per-hour F-4C Phantom jet as its tactical aircraft.

On the tour were: Sam Stratton, D-N.Y.; Robert Legett, D-Calif.; Floyd Hicks, D-Wash.; Charles Chamberlain, R-Mich.; and Robert Stafford, R-Vt.

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D. SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT IV

USAF RESCUE MAN GIVES LIFE FOR GIs

An Air Force rescue specialist who had voluntarily dropped into the Viet Nam jungle to pick up wounded U.S. Army troops 30 miles east of Saigon, was killed.

The airman, a para-rescue specialist who had previously risked his life by dropping into combat zones to help pick-up badly wounded soldiers, was left behind when his hovering helicopter was riddled by enemy groundfire. The rescue chopper pilot was forced to make an emergency landing nearby.

Army troops who survived the jungle battle said the airman "put up one hell of a fight" before being killed.

The airman's body was recovered by another Air Force rescue chopper crew. Also picked up were nine Army wounded, two of them litter cases whom the rescue specialist had helped save.

(Name of the para-rescue man is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.)

E. CIVIC ACTION

AIR FORCE DOCTORS WAGE MEDICAL CAMPAIGN AT PHAN RANG

Air Force doctors of the 366th Tactical Hospital at the Phan Rang air base are helping wage a humanitarian as well as a military campaign in the surrounding area.

In addition to the Viet Cong, the enemy is disease.

Capt. (Dr.) Harry L. Tucker, 30, of Winter Park, Fla., donates five afternoons a week to help doctors at a nearby Vietnamese hospital.

"The people who live in the hamlets scattered across the province have relied on Chinese herb doctors for centuries," said Tucker. "In the province hospital we treat the cases they have given up on."

Two other Air Force doctors, Capt. Donald Nelson, 27, of Belvidere, Ill., and Capt. Alan Graubert, 29, of Miami, Fla., also devote part of their off-duty time to improving local medical practices.

"The medical battle is just beginning at Phan Rang," said Tucker. "U.S. aid has noticeably improved the equipment and working conditions in the province hospital, however acceptance of the facility must come from the people themselves."

Patients who have been cured or helped at the hospital go back to their remote hamlets and tell their friends, explained Tucker.

"More and more are coming to rely on the province hospital and hence their local government," he said. "I even treated one of their Chinese herb doctors recently, so the word must be spreading."

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Apr 66-076

YOUNG AIR FORCE MEDICS
RUSH WOUNDED TO HOSPITALS

Saigon — Emergency medical treatment by young Air Force hospital corpsmen saved many lives here last night, according to Maj. (Dr.) Edwin H. Bradley, 34, of Laramie, Wyo., deputy commander of the Air Force medical facility at the Tan Son Nhut air base.

The base was shelled by the Viet Cong.

Dr. Bradley said "there is no doubt, without the prompt action by these corpsmen, our losses would have been more serious."

The first men to act were A1C William C. Crothers, 27, of McKeesport, Pa., and A1C Larry M. Bridges, 21, of Memphis, Tenn. The two corpsmen drove the ambulance to the helipad to reach wounded.

At the time the enemy fire being directed at the base stopped, A1C William A. Nichols, 20, of Daly City, Calif., and A1C Thomas J. Huggie, 23, of Sunnyvale, Calif., began picking up and treating wounded by the flight line.

Corpsmen helped seriously wounded by applying combat splints, stopping bleeding and treating shock.

Huggie made a second run through an area littered with Viet Cong missiles which had not exploded.

MSAF

Air Force medical photographer, A.L.C. Dennis E. Francis, 21, of 96
Medina St., Hittman, Ohio, stopped taking pictures to carry seriously wounded
men to ambulances. Francis worked for long minutes in an area where several
unexploded shells were found.

Other young medics involved include:

A.L.C. Theodore C. Kessler, 25, Solon, Ohio

A.L.C. Timothy I. McCarty, 29, Morrison, Tenn.

A.L.C. Jay C. Garrett, Jr., 21, Tulsa, Okla.

A.L.C. Gary W. Blackburn, 20, Haynesville, La.

A.L.C. Ronald H. Heck, 21, Detroit, Mich.

S.S. Henry L. Jones, 27, Greville, Calif.

A.L.C. Michael H. Brown, 20, Oakland, Calif.

S.S. Luther P. Clark, 31, Columbus, Ohio

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Apr 66 077

AIR FORCE SECURITY GUARDS AT TAN
SON NHUT SHOW STRENGTH TO VC

Saipon -- Air Force security guards showed their strength during the Viet Cong attack on this sprawling air base April 13. Air Force Lt. Col. Roger G. Benton of Longview, Wash., commander of security forces on Tan Son Nhut, praised his Air Police for their action.

When Viet Cong 82mm mortar and 75mm recoilless rifle shells were raining on the Tan Son Nhut air base just after midnight April 13, Air Force security guards immediately swung into action.

The guards, already on defensive stations throughout the base, took precautions for which they had been trained.

"My men went into their alert positions smoothly and effectively. I want to point out that the VC did not physically penetrate the base," Benton said.

Air Force M.Sgt. Clay E. Durbin of Lexington, Ky., a security flight commander, said his men reacted exactly as they had been taught.

Air Force security guards on this sprawling air base, the busiest in the world, train every night. Each sentry knows his area like the back of his hand. Their weapons-firing training takes place in the hours of darkness.

The Air Force's K-9 corps also trains at night. Had the VC attempted to penetrate the base during the attack, they would have run into a wall of sentry dogs and handlers. Backing up the dogs was another wall of sentries strategically placed with automatic weapons that could fire more than 700 rounds a minute.

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Apr 66-078

AIR FORCE FIREMEN CONTAIN
FIRES SET BY VC AT AIR BASE

Saigon -- An afternoon rain helped Air Force and other friendly forces firemen contain the blazing fuel tank at the Tan Son Nhut air base hit last night by Viet Cong mortar from spreading.

Fire Chief Thomas Brantley of Montgomery, Ala., who is the chief fire fighter for the Army in Saigon, said men were throwing up a water barrier between the blazing tank and others nearby. He expects to hold the line.

If the tank does break, the Tan Son Nhut civil engineering airmen have extended a huge dike around the tank and the burning fuel would spill into a confined area away from other tanks. Air Force fire trucks, used to put out aircraft fires, are stationed by the tank.

Air Force firemen led by T.Sgt. Thelman Ludlow, of Decatur, Ala., were at work last night even before the last of the 20-minute barrage of the 75 rounds of VC 82mm mortar and 75mm recoilless rifle fire had fallen.

Ludlow said he sent three trucks to the tank farm which had suffered a direct hit, two to burning aircraft and he personally took a third set to the rear of tanks where refueling trucks were parked.

He and his men first put out fire on two aircraft refueling trucks, then

... other works in the area to safety.

... help from unexpected quarters. Two of the men who had
... of those Air Force men who were admitted for reasons of
... condition of duty to be in the area.

... duty were Air Force men. ...
... and Frank Thomas of Kentucky, both personal friends of ...
... the military branches of the time in the Vietnam area.

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