



19th Tactical Air  
Support Squadron  
1963-1971



3d Tactical Fighter  
Wing  
1965-1971



Det. 1, 377th Air Base  
Wing  
1972-1973



Pacific Air Forces  
1961-1973



Military Assistance  
Advisory Group -  
Vietnam  
1961-1962



2d Air Division  
1962-1966



7th Air Force  
1966-1973

## The Effects of the Tet Offensive at Bien Hoa Airbase

The beginning of the Tet offensive was signaled by the air base receiving small arms and mortar fire. The main gate was near the active runway of the 145th Aviation Battalion, a helicopter unit of the U.S. Army. The battalion's pilots lived off-base at the Honour-Smith Compound, a villa on Cong Ly Street in the city of Bien Hoa, some 2 kilometers away. Some were on base or made it there before the fire got too heavy and some of the gunships took off to patrol the base perimeters.

Later intelligence reported that there were three main VC units that were to attack the base; the most critical attack was to force the main gate, overwhelm the helicopter active area and prevent gunships from taking off. Other attacks were to proceed across open ground to the main Air Force bunkers and to bring mounted 50 cal machine guns to sweep the AF runway.

Since non-flying, non-police AF personnel were not issued arms, the bunkers were full of unarmed airmen guarded by only a very few security police armed with M-16s. However the unit that was to attack the main gate never appeared and helicopters got airborne and attacked many VC in the open fields approaching the AF areas.

As soon as some order was restored, the rest of the pilots were lifted from Honour-Smith Compound to the airbase by helicopter. A temporary heli-pad was made on Honour-Smith by pulling the posts out of an old French tennis court.

There was intermittent fire from the village onto the base for several days but on the third day, a squadron of tanks from the 11th Armored Cavalry arrived to provide substantial physical security.