

STATEMENT OF LANCE CORPORAL GARY L. BAILEY 2019388 USMC
Concerning Accident involving CH-46A Bureau Numbers 151930
& 151936 on 15 July 1966

The mission was a troop lift north of DONG HA. We picked up 14 troops at DONG HA and lifted out for the zone. We approached the zone with a flight of four with YT-15 as lead plane. Approaching the zone we heard that another plane had crashed into the zone. I started looking for the plane to see if he would be in the way of our landing. He was on the far right of the zone and well clear of us. We flared out at the forward end of the zone to make room for planes behind us. We drifted forward over the end of the zone. I saw a ridge directly beneath the plane with troops lying on top of the ridge. I told Major REAP to move the plane forward of the ridge. He pulled power and it took an extreme amount of power to pull out of our flare and move forward. At this time I told Major REAP to set it down as we were clear aft. I heard the engine drooping extremely low. I have never heard engines droop this low before. I don't know how much power or torque we pulled but it was certainly a lot. We didn't have any power left to set down gently and we dropped about 8-10 feet to the ground. We hit hard, the hard landing lights came on. We bounced around a little and settled down. We dropped the ramp and started unloading troops. About 2-3 troops left the plane when the plane went into a wild convulsive fit. Vibrating and shaking violently. My gunner and I were thrown to the floor of the plane. I saw the aft pylon collapse and I told the pilots to shut down and get out of the plane. I started hollering at the troops to get out of the plane. At this time I was worried that some of them would be trapped under the pylon. One man had his foot caught but he jerked it free and got out. Another man had a broken leg and didn't want to be moved without a stretcher. Major REAP came aft and told us to get the guns and ammo out of the plane. We started unloading everything that we could at that time and started carrying it to the plane that was waiting to take us out. When I went around the aft end to the left of the plane I noticed two bodies lying aft and to the left of the plane. They were hit by one of the rotor blades as the pylon dropped. During the brief time that I had, I looked at both planes and the damage to both planes was almost identical. We got all of the gear loaded that we had grabbed and got aboard the rescue planes and took off for DONG HA. None of the crew on YT-15 was hurt. I had a skinned and bruised leg. My gunner had a bruised hip where he landed on the floor. We arrived at DONG HA. We unloaded our gear and went to the Command Post.

GARY L. BAILEY

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