

HEADQUARTERS, 52D AVIATION BATTALION, APO US FORCES 96295

CAMP HOLLOWAY ATTACK NARRATIVE

12 February 1965

Normal security measures were in effect at Camp Holloway on the night of 6-7 February. The US Interior Guard was posted at 1900 hours and the Military Police Interior Security Patrols were mounted at intervals throughout the early evening. The Regional Forces Security Company assigned to Camp Holloway had posted men on eleven guard posts about the perimeter of the installation. The six US Guard perimeter posts and the airfield tower were manned. During the early part of the evening no unusual events were reported, and the Military Police performed four (4) patrols of the camp interior. At about 2230 hours, a through search of the perforated steel planking (PS) aircraft parking ramp and other adjoining aircraft parking areas was initiated in response to a report from US Guard Post #3 that there was noise in the PSP parking area. The search revealed nothing out of order. Two additional searches were made between 2305 hours and 0120 hours. The report of these checks were also negative. At 0030 hours, the Vietnamese Regional Forces Security Company Commander made a telephone check with three (3) of his outposts, including post #7, which is located just Northeast of the installation, and received a report of no unusual or suspicious activity. At 0200 hours, Camp Holloway came under mortar, demolition, small arms and bazooka attack. Approximately seventy (70) rounds were fired into the cantonment area of the camp, striking primarily into the troop billet areas. Numerous satchel charges were placed on and near aircraft in parking areas by saboteurs who had infiltrated the installation. These saboteurs were seen exiting the PSP ramp by US Guard Post #4, and by Popular Force Security Post #7, which engaged the enemy with small arms fire. Upon opening fire Post #7 was in turn engaged by bazooka and small arms fire from enemy position nearby until saboteurs made good their escape.

The mortar and demolition attack was terminated by 0205 hours and all firing had ceased by 0235. II Corps Advisory Group Compound was also brought under attack by satchel charges at 0200 hours.

Numerous casualties, including some killed, were inflicted at both the MAAG Compound and at Camp Holloway. Current casualty count of 52d Aviation Battalion at Camp Holloway includes 7 killed and 98 wounded in action. In addition, five aircraft were destroyed and twenty others damaged by blast, fragmentation, and fire. No buildings were destroyed, but several received major damage and many were lightly or moderately damaged.

As the mortar attack on Camp Holloway subsided, wounded personnel were collected and plans made to commence Aero Medical Evacuation. The first Medical Evacuation Aircraft departed Holloway for Nha Trang with seriously wounded casualties at 0345 hours.

Aircraft maintaining surveillance over Camp Holloway after 0207 reported no enemy contact or unusual sightings. At 0905 hours, a reinforced Eagle Flight was launched to the Northeast of Camp Holloway. This effort to gain contact with the enemy was successful, and subsequently expanded through a series of air landed assaults, troop placement, and Eagle Flights over the next 48 hours. Contact was established with elements of two company sized units which were involved in the attack on Camp Holloway. As of 12 February, 28 enemy have been destroyed

The Viet Cong do not attack without a reason. The reason for the attack of II Corps aviation support capability becomes clear when the record is checked. Each month, the 52d Aviation Battalion inflicts approximately 150 casualties on the Viet Cong. This figure is greater than the number of casualties inflicted by the entire ARVN II Corps each month. Add to this the fact that Army Aviation is absolutely indispensable to support most of the outposts and tactical operations within II Corps Tactical Zone, and the reason for Viet Cong attacks on the 52d Aviation Battalion is clear: Army Aviation is hurting the Viet Cong. It is hurting bad enough to make them risk the loss of mortars and several companies of crack troops in an effort to reduce the effectiveness of army aviation units. The Viet Cong has failed in this attempt. The 52d Aviation Battalion remains combat effective and continues to provide II Corps with aviation support. In fact, the battalion launched a reinforced Eagle Flight from Camp Holloway only seven hours after the attack, then followed up with four additional air mobile operations within the next fortyeight hours. Then we staged a mass formation flight over at Pleiku as we returned home just to let our friends know we are still around to keep the pressure on.