

AVIC-WC

SUBJECT:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
AIR CAVALRY TROOP, 11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96257

1 December 1971

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SUBJECT: Incident at Tay Ninh West on 30 November 1971, resulting in one damaged UH-1H Helicopter

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Normal takeoff from Phu Loi was at 0730 hours and had the following aircraft of the Air Cavalry Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment headed for Tay Ninh for the daily operation:

UH-1H	283	Command & Control
UH-1H	584	Maintenance
UH-1H	561	Lift
UH-1H	659	Lift

AH-1G	169	Pink Teams
AH-1G	716	
OH-6A	307	
OH-6A	622	

The crews of the aircraft are contained in enclosure I.

2. The two lift aircraft flew to Katum and picked up 22 members of the "Browns", which are ARVN's from the 6th Ranger Group out of Katum. The "Browns" are picked up every day and carried with us to our area of operations to be used as a reaction force and to secure downed aircraft and crews. After the lift aircraft picked up the "Browns" they flew to Tay Ninh West to join the remainder of the aircraft in the "Old Blackhorse" parking area which is located on the southeast end of the runway. Pink teams (one OH-6A and one AH-1G) worked out of "Old Blackhorse" during the entire day with the remaining aircraft and "Browns" on stand-by.

3. Shortly after lunch, the crews noticed some horseplay going on among a group of six or eight "Browns" in the vicinity of the abandoned revetments. One or two smoke grenades were thrown, but there were no problems encountered. The aircraft and unloaded the gun.

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4. At approximately 1400 hours, one of the "Browns" came to the crew of aircraft 561 with a burn on the inside of his left wrist. After the crew had applied an ointment and a gauze bandage to his burn, he became engaged in loud conversation with other "Browns" sleeping in and around 561. He appeared to have been drinking. He indicated to the crewchief of 561 that he wanted the crewchief's pistol for something. When the crewchief refused, he said nothing and left the area.

5. At 1455, several of the "Browns" came running to the two lift aircraft (561 and 659) for their packs and weapons. They then headed in the direction of the Quan Chan hut located at the main gate. They began shouting and firing sporadically into the sky and into the ground in front of them. At this time, two or three of the older "Browns" tried to stop the shooting by taking weapons away from those involved. They were able to recover two M-16's but were then overcome. As the amount of firing increased, it was noticed that some of the "Browns" were now placing aimed fire in the direction of the Quan Chan hut. One of the "Browns" appeared with an M-79, however, he was tackled by still another "Brown" who took his weapon away from him. Then, one "Brown" located at the northern end of "Old Blackhorse" began firing his M-79 in the direction of the Quan Chan hut.

6. One Pink Team just returning from a mission and still running, departed the area. The other crewmen were taking cover in two old revetments and a large ditch (See Inclosure II). After the "Browns" had been firing for about five minutes, the QC's spread out along the berm and began returning both M-16 and M-79 fire. The crew of 584 (the maintenance aircraft) observed one "Brown" removing the right M-60 door gun and ammunition from the aircraft. The crew ran for the aircraft and while the pilot and co-pilot were starting the aircraft the crewchief took the M-60 and ammunition away from the "Brown" and climbed on the aircraft. As they were preparing to take off, two or three "Browns" attempted to board the aircraft but were not allowed to do so. By now all the aircraft crewmen were either in the revetments or in the ditch trying to restrain the "Browns" from firing. They also applied first aid to one of the Browns who had been hit in the right arm and one with cuts and scratches.

7. The crewchief of 561 pointed out to CPT Farrenkopf that one "Brown" was loading the right door gun on the aircraft. CPT Farrenkopf entered the aircraft through the left side, ran the "Brown" away from the aircraft and then unloaded the door gun. He then went to his aircraft and called the TOC and informed them of what was happening. Meanwhile, a second "Brown" approached 561 and again loaded the right door gun. This time WO1 Mateer made the "Brown" leave the aircraft and unloaded the gun.

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AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBER


CIRCUIT

8. The command and control aircraft landed at the northern part of "Old Blackhorse" and instructed that the other OH-6A and AH-1G be repositioned to re-arm. He then had the three wounded "Browns" plus six others loaded into his aircraft. He carried all nine to MEDEVAC PAD at Tay Ninh East and dropped them off. He contacted the 18th ARVN Division and instructed them to dispatch some troops to the main gate to help stop the fighting. He then returned to Tay Ninh West to extract the remaining "Browns" but found that things were relatively quiet.

9. After ten or fifteen minutes had passed with no shooting, normal traffic resumed at the main gate. The crews then went back to the aircraft to assess the damage. There were no injuries to American personnel and the only damage to American equipment was eight (8) shrapnel holes in aircraft 659, one of which was in the fuel cell rendering it not flyable. Shortly after the shooting ceased, LTC Jimenez and MAJ Matthews came to "Old Blackhorse" asking questions of the crewmen and saying that they were initiating an investigation.

10. We were given a mission release from the 25th ARVN Division and all flyable aircraft returned to Phu Loi. "Pipesmoke" rigged the damaged aircraft and stated that it would be returned to Phu Loi that night. The "Browns" were left at Tay Ninh by instructions from Katum.

11. There was no involvement of United States personnel in the fire fight either from the Air Cavalry Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment or any other United States Army unit.


BILLY R. JOHNSON
CPT, ARMOR
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Incl

- I List of Personnel
- II Map of Area

DISTRIBUTION:

- 1 CO, 2/11th ACR
- 1 CO, 3/17th Cav
- 1 CO, ACT, 11th ACR

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INCLOSURE I

AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERCREWMEN

283

AC CPT JOHNSON
 P CPT SLAUGHTER
 CE SP/4 DRAKE
 G SP/4 SIMENSON

584

AC CW2 KING
 P 1 LT WEINSTEIN
 CE SP/5 ZUBARIK
 G SP/5 BRUNMER

561

AC 1 LT PETERSON
 P WO1 MATEER
 CE SP/4 ROSSETTI
 G SP/4 MITCHELL

659

AC 1 LT CANTEY
 P WO1 MILLER
 CE SP/4 CHRISTENSEN
 G SP/4 PENROSE

169

AC CPT FARHINKOPF
 P CPT BLEAN

716

AC CPT GARRETT
 P WO1 RHOADES

307

P WO1 GRAVES
 CP WO1 FARNSWORTH

622

P CPT VIEHWEG
 CE SP/4 SANDERS

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