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Oh, I'll try to fill in some details but I can remember -

About a week before the evac, everyone moved from their homes to the USAir building close to the airport. Last apartment had four bedrooms surrounding a kitchen and living area. Two beds to a room. All of my home baggage was picked up about the 15<sup>th</sup> of April and stored down on the docks. Air America was to insure it (no one else foolish enough) and was given a list of contents. That was the last we saw of it as the docks were raided by the public and it looked like a tornado had gone thru.

About the 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup>, I went with a bus to town to pick up our VN pilots and families. Only the wife and kids - no fathers or mothers. It broke my heart to watch the old folks having to say goodbye. I had to cry right along with them. Evacuated them back to the airport and thru the Embassy mess, and sent them on the way. The Embassy still trying to do busy as usual, visa's etc etc even some against our people. Finally, someone remarked "Who do you think is going to take you out?" From then on, it was no red tape and I had free sailing. There was a lot of money being made by some for sponsoring. Saw one <sup>(ex AAM)</sup> woman with a list, page full, sponsoring. A guard asked her, "Where is your husband?" She answered he was in Bangkok. Then I saw him about two or three people behind me (with another page full of names). Some more too, but they have to live with it, not once I like of back too, but that went against my nature.

People

I left Saigon early in April to take 2 Airfalcs back to the States. Some were surprised to see me return on the 10<sup>th</sup> & I had sent my present wife "Hai" to Bangkok before I left. I called her to return to Saigon on the 11<sup>th</sup> and shipped her out on a C 141 the 12<sup>th</sup> to Manila. From there to San Francisco and then back to her sister in Hawaii.

The rest of her family moved into our vacant villa until I got tickets on AAM. Of course that only got them thru the gate past the OC's. For the next 36 hrs, they stayed in the AAM terminal which still had food and water. Then about 2 AM I picked up the women and children in an old Datam and took them to the Gym for processing. I had to pass 2 OC guards and the 2 US Marines. Was no trouble with the women, but when coming back out I stopped at the Marines and asked not to be stopped next time as I had men with me. He agreed, so next trip with the men I didn't stop for the OC and they hollered alot but didn't shoot. The Marine just smiled and waved me on. One of the men <sup>with me</sup> was an active Major and I had kept him with for over 3 days in the Baird Bldg.

I didn't get all the family as one man was a full col. and figured on a boat or helicopter. His wife and kids got out, but he spent 7-8 yrs of hard labor before rejoining them in Calif. He headed up the VN community <sup>in California</sup> until he died last year. Another sister-in-law of mine worked for the Embassy there and then here in the States. She is also now retired.

I can't go into detail about all the families, but my wife, Hai is the 5<sup>th</sup> of 15 children. "All" of my nieces and nephews on Hai's side have degrees. I've never seen anything like it. Three of the Colonel's daughters are Doctors and a Dentist etc etc etc.

Back to the war -

The morning of the 29<sup>th</sup>, most of us were up on the roof of the Osaid bldg along with Two Hanj. A C-119 was circling town for sometime but finally got hit and dove in. We were waiting and waiting and waiting for the GO signal. Rumor was the Ambassador was walking his dog. I wouldn't be surprised, but it could be. We were all given a small map with all the pick-up points numbered. Finally the word came to move. We all left in the 2 Hanj's to the AM ops bldg. Hardly got there, when we heard that the AVN pilots were stealing our 1005 aircraft. There were 2 locked gates between us, so we jumped in the Hanj's and went to 1005 ramp. A couple were missing but we all grabbed one A5AP and took off. I was alone and remained that way the rest of the day's out. Went back to the roof of Osaid bldg and shut down for another half hr or so before finally getting the word to move. We were being directed by Carl Winston and I believe Filippini was there also. I know I asked for help, but none available.

On the first trip out to the fleet for fuel, I was following Wayne Lanning. He called the Blue Ridge for landing and immediately told "them" "Would toss him overboard if he landed". Luckily, when ships were accommodating. When we landed with a load at MAFV, we were told the next pick-up point. Usually you made 4-6 trips in town before heading out to the

fleet for fuel.

On one trip to MAEV, a general Brown met me and asked me to delay while he went for passengers. He came back leading the VA Air Force Staff members. I think I took them to the Blue Ridge and dropped them off along with my door windows which they got out. Because they pulled emergency handles instead of turning down knobs.

Most of the day was pretty routine 4-6 trips to MAEV the 50-60 miles to re-fuel. Some ships were seen the horizon. Anyway, that 2 hrs 20 min of fuel didn't account for much accomplished. We had two semi fuel trucks loaded on our ramp along with at least 50 drums. The US Maines blew it when they didn't show up to guard it. Leaving the MAEV, we flew over it all day.

My closest call that day was when I got a call to land West of the Catholic Church down town, on top of a roof surrounded by trees. Being alone, it took awhile to cover my <sup>left</sup> side and tail rotor from those trees and wall around the roof, as I slowly descended. As I finally set down, four Americans came running from a stairway and jumped on board. They were scared and hollering about men with guns below. Three of them jumped in back, but the fourth man wanted to ride up front, and tried to get into the seat which had been moved full forward, so nobody could sit in it. This 300 lb S.O.F. was in "full panic" Aussie hat and all. Eyes were WIDE open open and he was white white. Of course he couldn't get that big gut, but, and leg over the armored sides, that he did. He was knocking the controls so badly that I couldn't

let go to shoot him. All I could do was holler to which he was beyond hearing or reasoning. Finally, I tried to reach <sup>them</sup> under the seat and release the slide so I could move the controls and fly this thing. Next thing I know, I'm at least 300 ft up and listening to my blades unwinding. wop, wop, wop, wop, wop, etc etc etc. I was standing or trying to get the collective back down, cause he had under his arm pit and still pancey. I don't recall even a second of going up thru those trees that were <sup>such</sup> a problem getting down thru.

They only wanted to go to the Embassy roof about two blocks away. Of course, I had to fight that S.O.B. all over again as he tried to get out of the seat. I didn't miss my brief case under Hitchman called and asked if I was missing one that he picked up at the Embassy. Of course, that S.O.B. unloaded my brief case to top off the trip.

Another trip, I was returning to the fleet for fuel and passed a tall bldg down by the river. As I was passing, I saw two men waving like mad at me. They looked American so I turned back and set one skid on an Air Cond while they climbed aboard. Said they were stuck and really needed the ride out. Dropped them on a destroyer and they made O.K.

More trips but nothing new until it was time to leave. A Mr. Williams and crew had been loading passengers off the USS 10 bldg all day. I told him "I'll make one more trip and then be back to get

and his crew as it was getting dark and time to secure. I made the trip, but when I got back, he started to load me again. I told him I'm not coming back and got on board now. He put his crew on and himself and we started out. By now it was dark and I called the Blue Ridge for Pigeons. They answered that their Radar was not painting or in op. However, the Cruiser Salt Lake City came on saying they were and gave me direction to them. My red warning fuel had been on before we left the coast. I asked the Salt L. if her deck was green and they said "Yes". By the time I could see them, I saw the choppers tied down. I informed them I was on fumes and to scramble fast. They asked if I could circle? I told maybe once. I did, but did "S" turns on final till they got air born.

Williams & company stayed aboard, so while I took off solo for the Midway, and joined VF-151 for a cruise.

After a few days aboard, the Captain called us all up to the bridge for a meeting. Asked how we were etc etc and welcome aboard. Hitchman did make a complaint. He told the Captain that he was missing two cases of Champagne but his two cases of Jack Daniels was OK. The Captain turned red to Blue etc, and asked if it was true that booze was on his ship. His aide called the Master at Arms shack and in about 3 mins two men appeared each with a case of JD and walked across the slant deck and tossed them over. I often wondered if those cases were full.

Herman Goering, who was flying with Hitch that day managed to save some ID for him and I, so we didn't go dry. We left ship on a CH 46 as we passed Subic Bay. Then on to Hong Kong for about a week. One more for the road.

On the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup>, NGUYEN CAO KY landed on the Midway early in the morning. Even tho he's Vice Pres of VN etc etc, they still went thru his baggage. Found loads of money and a bag of about a kilo of white powder, which the Navy kept.

About 4 or 5 months later, I left Los Angeles for Singapore. As I went to sit down on the plane, I recognized a Lieut from VF-151 and he knew me too. We talked before he mentioned Cos Ky. Seems the navy sent that powder to Wash for analysis. The report came back it was "POWDERED MILK". Guess Ky figured his "milk" was better than ours.

I haven't written this much in years, so spelling is off

Hope this fills the questions you might ask

HAVE FOR CAUNCEY

Al. Everyone has a viewpoint that is bound to differ in details, but overall agree on the basics