

STATEMENT

30 May 1971

At approximately 171830H May 1971, a UH-1H helicopter of C/158, 101st Airborne Division piloted by WO David S. Soyland and WO Dale A. Pearce was attempting to extract a deployed element of Task Force One Advisory Element which had been in contact with an unknown size enemy force. A previous attempt at extraction had been unsuccessful due to the large volume of enemy ground fire. After an air strike had been employed against the enemy position, WO Soyland and WO Pearce flew their ship into the landing zone area at approximately 171845H May. Suddenly, their ship veered off, crashed, and rolled into a deep draw. At 171930H May a rescue force was inserted to link up with the ground element and to extract the downed aircraft crew members. Due to darkness and enemy movement, the rescue force was unable to move to either the ground element or the downed aircraft during the night.

At 180700H May the rescue force was attempting to link up when it was struck by suspected enemy B-40 rockets resulting in one friendly KIA and several serious WIA. Shortly thereafter, the original ground force that been in contact was overrun by enemy forces. Mobile Launch Team 2 (the TF1AE element controlling the operation) extracted the survivors of the ground force and the rescue force.

At 181245H May, after three air strikes, MLT-2 inserted a second rescue force which swept through the area of the contact and crash. Although receiving sporadic enemy fire, the second rescue force succeeded in extracting two survivors of the aircraft crew (SP/5 Garry E. Allgorn and SP/4 Harold E. Parker) and the bodies of three members of the ground forces. The leader of the second rescue force later informed CO, MLT-2 that there ^{was} another body near the downed aircraft but that he was unable to recover it.

A FAC aircraft continued to fly over the area of contact and crash until darkness without seeing any signs of life. On 19 May numerous search aircraft flew over the area but reported no signs of life. On 20 May the area of operations was turned over to the 101st Airborne Division as per request from the 101st so that the division resources could be utilized to search for missing personnel. OK

Larry C. Kenner
 Larry C. Kenner
 CPT, INF
 Commanding Officer
 Mobile Launch Team 2

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