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down by small arms or AW fire. The two USAF A1E's which had been escorting the chopper were joined by USN A1H's. They all reported four good chutes from the chopper, beeper and voice contact, and no ground fire. They gave coordinates which corresponded to point D.

c. By TACC scrambled 2 HH-43's from Lima 36 to attempt to pick-up the CH-3 crew. (The TACC people were of the belief there were not two rescue requirements: The CH-3 crew at point D, and the A1E pilot at point E.) The correlation of the ETA of the HH-43's and the fuel remaining for high-cover and close escort was good. Just a few minutes after the scramble of the HH-43's, the 2AD CP directed the recall of all SAR forces. This was passed to and acknowledged by all the USAF aircraft.

f. The USN, however, through the USAF HU-16 in the gulf, requested assistance for a rescue attempt of the CH-3 chopper crew. The HU-16 contacted our two A1E's, still in the vicinity of the CH-3 crew. With concurrence from the 2AD CP, the A1E's proceeded to the coast to pick up the USN effort to escort them to the scene. On the way to the coast, the wingman reported ground fire, and pulled up into the clouds. No further contact was ever established with him. His last known position was at point E. The remaining A1E joined the USN chopper and its escort and led them back to the vicinity of the downed CH-3. The A1E departed the area at Bingo fuel and recovered at DaNang. Later the USN chopper recovered one of the CH-3 crew.

g. The plan for further recovery of the USAF CH-3 crew members on 7 Nov was approved by the 2AD CP. This effort was interrupted by the loss of a USN chopper hit by AW on the way for a further attempt for the USAF personnel. Our 2nd CH-3 also going after the crew of our downed CH-3, was diverted by the HC-54 to the USN chopper. This was to pick-up the two USN crew members remaining from a recovery effort cut short by fuel. Our CH-3 had to dump fuel to pick up the USN people and then was unable to proceed for our own personnel. Escort and high-cover forces had insufficient fuel to remain for any further effort at that time. Suspension was recommended and concurred with by the 2AD CP.

2. (U) Carter has told me that he believed the odds were against Oak Lead's survival. But because of the sighting of the canopy, the flight being in cloud, the thickness of the cloud deck and the dispersal and confusion in the flight itself, he believed it possible for Oak Lead to have gotten out successfully without being seen. For these reasons he decided to make the electronic search. Had he not made this decision none of the later events would have taken place.

3. (U) The route planned by the A1E pilots and search area were not known to harbor AW or AAA. It was not considered an unusual risk mission. I agree with this from the known defenses of this area at that time. Perhaps if the route had been flown as planned the unfortunate incidents might not have happened.

4. (U) Had the HC-54 reported the coordinates of point D to the TACC the last leg of the route of the following SAR effort for the first A1E

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would have been from the west rather than the southwest. The effect this variation might have produced would be conjecture. In all probability, if the TACC and the knowledge at that time of the two different positions for the downed A1E (C & D), they would have delayed the dispatch of the CH-3 until resolution of the correct position. Again the change in outcome would be only conjecture.

5. (C) The cancellation by the 2AD-CP of the HH-43's going for the CH-3 crews may have been hasty. This turned out to be the last USAF effort which could have succeeded. It would have reached the area several hours ahead of the USN (6 Nov) effort which was successful at picking up one man and evading ground fire.

6. (C) Two A1E's remained at the scene of the downed CH-3 crew after withdrawal orders were received. They did so while alternately in communication with the HH-16 and in the anticipation of further effort. Had they withdrawn one probably would not have been lost. The element leader was forced later to withdraw alone over proven defenses to recover at Da Nang. His leading of the USN SAR effort to the scene resulted in one man being rescued, however.

7. (C) In reviewing the decisions and actions there are errors and deviations from best and practiced procedures and tactics. Carter's electing to rise the initial electronic search is probably the most controversial - it proved to be the trigger to later events. The known defenses and the amount of planning and briefing for the search gave every chance for a routine mission. As for the remaining events, I cannot see that location or caliber of ground control was a contributor to any malpractice. There may have been a hasty reversal of the HH-43 rescue effort by the 2AD-CP.

8. (U) It is recommended that the SAR mission in this area of responsibility be run completely by single agency.

9. (U) It is requested that the SAR mission for this area be returned to us and without the restrictions recently imposed (incl. 5 & 6).

10. (U) This Headquarters has placed an unusual burden on the Director of Operations, he needs assistance in the manning of his office.

s/John R. Murphy, Brig. Gen., USAF
t/JOHN R. MURPHY, BRIG. GEN., USAF
Deputy Commander
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7 Inclosures (S)

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