

'Green Giants' Effect Another Daring Rescue

20 Apr 66 Capt Furman + Hardy

SAIGON, South Viet Nam (AP) — The "Jolly Green Giants" went to the rescue again today and daringly plucked a U.S. Air Force pilot out of North Viet Nam's jungles under the muzzles of Communist guns.

Rescued was Capt. John B. Abernathy, 29, of Wichita, Kan., leader of a flight of F105 thunderchiefs on an armed reconnaissance mission in the southern panhandle area of North Viet Nam.

His plane was hit by ground fire and he ejected from the burning fighter-bomber about 65 miles south of Vinh.

After dropping into the mountainous jungle Abernathy managed to establish radio contact with the rest of his flight.

Then the "Jolly Green Giants," an H3C helicopter crew from the 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, were called in. The rescue crews have earned their nickname because of the size of their craft and their green camouflage colors.

While the husky chopper worked its way in, four Air Force Skyraiders joined the other jets in Abernathy's flight in laying down a blanket of fire on the North Vietnamese gun positions.

"We were drawing moderate

57mm fire when we went in to drop the rescue hoist," said Capt. Robert D. Furman, 33, of Great Falls, Mont., the pilot of the Air Force helicopter. "Although the fire was pretty accurate and we had to hover for a few minutes, we didn't take any hits."

Abernathy was reported in good condition, suffering only minor burns and bruises.

Other members of the rescue crew were Capt. Dale V. Hardy, 27, of Enfield, N. H.; Airman 1/C Robert E. Crites, 23, of Little Rock, Ark., and Airman 2/C John J. Dagneau 3rd, 19, of Detroit, Mich.



Capt John B. Abernathy F105 pilot
After rescue with Capt Robert (Bob)
Furman