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FROM: Det 7, 38th ARRS

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative Report (7-38-5 11 August 1967) (U)

TO: 3rd ARRGp

1. (U) The preflight of the alert HH-43B was just completed when the crew chief and I observed a large explosion Northwest of the base. One parachute was seen starting to open but immediately went out of sight behind the Navy hangers. The copilot and two firefighters arrived at this time and we started the aircraft, picked up the FSK and flew to the crash scene. An O-1 FAC in the area called us on guard frequency to point out a parachute caught in the trees 100 yards East of the crash. We also saw two Vietnamese civilians laying on the ground in a small field 100 yards South of the crash site. Many secondary explosions were going off in and around the wreckage. Since the aircraft was completely destroyed on impact, we dropped off the FSK near the perimeter road and landed in a small clearing 60 yards East of the wreckage which was the only available landing site near the crash. After landing, the copilot and firefighters went forward with the stokes litter looking for the pilots. They found the back seat pilot wandering near the wreckage looking for the other pilot. My copilot escorted the back seater to our helicopter for evacuation to the nearest hospital. We questioned him and learned his aircraft (F-4C) had carried CBU's and sparrow rockets which accounted for the continuous explosions near the wreckage. The aircraft had crashed near several Vietnamese houses and I felt sure there would be many civilians injured by the explosions. I was very anxious at this time to get the helicopter further back from the wreckage. I flew the pilot to the DaNang AB hospital and returned with three Air Force medics to assist with any injured personnel. During the 5 to 8 minutes I was gone to the base hospital, the copilot and firefighters located the other pilot laying in the field approximately 30 feet from the wreckage. Four times they attempted to recover him but each time were forced to retreat to the cover of a ditch due to the exploding CBU's and rockets. On the fifth attempt they quickly cut his parachute risers, placed him on the stretcher and carried him back to the cover of the ditch. The medics and crew loaded the pilot on the helicopter and one medic accompanied me back to the hospital. I picked up a flight surgeon, (Dr. John) and returned to the scene. Four Vietnamese had been treated for minor injuries by the Air Force medics. We then flew over to the FSK, picked it up and returned to the alert ramp.

2. (U) Weather was no factor in the rescue mission. Communications with the FAC and control tower were excellent. One problem area was the lack of a suitable helicopter landing pad at the DaNang AB hospital.

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3. (U) The second pilot picked up was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital. His parachute had not blossomed before he hit the ground.
4. (U) Crew coordination throughout the entire mission was outstanding. I especially want to commend Lt. Jacox, SSgt. Pike and SSgt. Taylor for leaving the cover of the ditch and moving forward in the face of exploding ordnance to recover a pilot they hoped was still alive.
5. (C) Crew members were: Captain Robert S. Michelsen, RCC; 1STLT Alfred R. Jacox, CP; SSgt. Hugh A. Pike, RS; SSgt. Vernon D. Taylor, RS; Survivor was 1STLT Robert Cox, USAF. Deceased was Major Kenneth Hughes, USAF.



ROBERT S. MICHELSEN, Captain, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander