

this time Sergeant Ashdown, our flight engineer and the PJs (Pararescueman) and even Sergeant Wines, the photographer were using our guns to maximum effectiveness. As the survivors were brought on board, they grabbed their own weapons and helped us defend ourselves. In fact," added Captain Griffith, "if it hadn't been for one of them with an M-60, we'd have been hosed pretty well, because one of the bad guys had popped up and was just taking aim when he got him."

The rescue took about 10 minutes, but the entire crew agreed that it seemed more like 10 hours. When all the Army troops were on board, they took the injured to the 95th Evacuation Hospital in Da Nang before returning to the base. In all, 7 men were rescued. One other had been killed by ground fire.

The consensus among the crews was that it was a very well coordinated rescue. One of the PJs, who has served nearly four years in the Republic of Vietnam, commented that he had never seen a better crew, in action. "I've never worked with as professional a crew as this one," he said. "Everyone the Sandys, the Jollys and even the crew we picked up worked together to make it work as fast as possible."

Other crew members on the Super Jolly Green Giant were Capt. Leslie C. Hart, co-pilot; Sgt. James K. Ashdown, flight engineer; SSgt. James W. Wines, the combat documentation photographer.

Downed Fliers Ringed With Bombs in Rescue

SAIGON (AP)—U.S. Air Force fighter-bombers dropped bombs virtually on top of seven downed Army helicopter crewmen in order to save them, rescuers said Sunday.

"The Skyraiders were dropping their ordnance so close it even scared me," said Air Force Capt. Rodney S. Griffith. "But that's the way we like to have it. That's where it does the most good."

Two U.S. Army helicopters were shot down Friday while on an observation flight four miles southeast of Khe Sanh six miles from the Laotian border and 20 miles south of the Demilitarized Zone. Two helicopter crewmen were killed and two were wounded in the crashes.

An Air Force rescue team plucked seven men to safety from one helicopter after fighting off enemy ground forces with the help of the downed troops.

The rescue teams, operating out of Da Nang,

were on the scene within minutes after the two helicopters were shot down.

"As soon as we arrived, we began laying ordnance around the area to suppress the hostile fire," said Lt. Clifton Groves, a rescue team pilot.

The helicopter and the North Vietnamese troops were in 10-foot high elephant grass about 2 yards apart.

When the fighter-bombers roared in, the North Vietnamese stopped firing on the downed helicopter and began tossing hand grenades. As the first big rescue helicopter hovered over the downed Army men, ground fire erupted again and the aircraft was damaged.

The pilot managed to fly the helicopter back to its base at Da Nang despite the damage, which caused some control problems.

Two more A1 Skyraiders flew to the area, strafed and bombed the North Vietnamese positions, and dropped smoke grenades to conceal the second rescue attempt.