

From Russia, With Hatred

By TSgt. Gus Vinas

DA NANG AFLD, Vietnam — A sudden thunder clap in the night, terror. Men rolling under bunks or into a ditch. The sound of incoming 122mm rockets.

A Russian made 122mm rocket weighs 102 pounds, its warhead 41 pounds, 14 pounds of TNT and 27 pounds of shrapnel. Boasting a range of six miles, with a booster of 11 miles, the rockets are launched from hills surrounding Da Nang.

Da Nang was dubbed "Rocket City" because of the base's history of nocturnal visits from the "Red" rockets.

One April 24, Da Nang was hit twice, once in the early morning hours and again that night.

At 1 a.m. that morning, 13 rockets hit Da Nang. One struck within two feet of a revetment of 55-gallon sand-filled metal drums housing an officer's billets.

One young officer who was asleep related his experiences.

"I was asleep in my bed but not for long. A flash of light and a tremendous boom hurled me from my bed.

"It was a hell of a way to wake up and I set a speed record getting into my flak vest and helmet.

"My room was in shambles and I thought of fire so I got out of there. I went outside and then I

realized how lucky I was. I saw where the rocket hit and saw the beautiful barrel that saved my life and the lives of other men in the building."

At 11 p.m. that night, five more rockets slammed into Da Nang surprising a lot of people because "Charlie" usually waits until the early morning hours.

The 122mm rocket is a simple light-weight weapon. It is usually transported by two men. One man carries the motor, while another carries the fuse and warhead.

It is fired electronically. The ideal launching site is a rocket launcher, but crossed sticks or a mound of sand will serve. The rocket is aimed with an optical panoramic and mechanical open sighting device, also Russian manufactured.

During our recent attack a rocket slammed into the main office building of the 366th Supply Squadron. Nearly two-thirds of the top floor and 40 per cent of the office equipment on that floor was destroyed.

The squadron set up temporary offices immediately.

CMSgt. Everett L. Clark, management and procedures chief, said "We never really ceased operation. We were hit at about 2 a.m., and by three the processing and research sections had moved all their essential publications and documents to the chief of maintenance building and were back in business."

To the men of the 366 Civil Engineering Squadron's Bomb Damage Repair Team — the "Fast Fix Team," — an attack means time to go to work. The Fast Fix Team repairs taxiways and runways damaged by a rocket attack.



Evacuated men are safe now and can sport big grins.

Copters Evacuate 132 From Embattled City

TAN SON NHUT AB, Vietnam (7AF) — Five U.S. Air Force HH-53 helicopters performed the largest evacuation of the Southeast Asian conflict May 1 evening when they airlifted 132 Americans and Vietnamese out of Quang Tri to Da Nang.

394 Refugees

ON ONE PLANE

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rescue specialist SSgt. Robert L. LaPointe silenced them with his mini-gun.

After his helicopter landed, LaPointe jumped out and organized the persons on the ground so the operation would go smoothly. He remained on the ground and