

Attack on Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base **14th Viet Cong Battalion** **4 December 1966**

by Olbert H. Hiatt
1967-1968

"I immediately lost 11 of my 15-man Quick Reaction Team (QRT). Two killed, and nine wounded."

4 December 1966, Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, was attacked by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion.

Det- by MSgt First Sergeant Olbert H. Hiatt, (Ret) 633rd APS, Pleiku Air Base
Vietnam Duty tours: 1966-1967, 1968 1969, and 1970-1971:

(TDY to)

377th Air Police Sq, Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base, RVN.

822nd Combat Security Police Sq, Phan Rang Air Base: RVN,

(Attached)

35th Tactical Fighter Wing, Phan Rang Air Base: RVN;

366th Security Police Sq, Đà Nẵng Air Base, RVN.

483rd Security Police Sq, Nha Trang, Detachment, Nha Trang Air Base, RVN.

On 4 December 1966 I was on temporary duty (TDY) to the 377th APS, Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base, Republic of Vietnam. I was attending classes conducted by specialist from the Rock Island Research Laboratory on the Colt .223 caliber (5.56mm) M16 Rifle. I was NCOIC, of Air Police Training at Pleiku Air Base, RVN. At that time I was training 263 Air Police and 133 Air Police Augmentees in the M16 Rifle, .38 caliber revolver

(Model 15, S&W), M60 machine gun (7.62mm), M-79 grenade launcher (40mm), 50 caliber machine gun, and M-26 fragmentation hand-grenade. This training entailed, writing lesson plans, scheduling, teaching, coaching, and training assistant instructors.

I was sleeping in the Air Police barracks at 1:00 a.m. when the base came under attack by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion. I immediately grabbed my M16 rifle and 360 rounds of ammo, revolver and 50 rounds, and reported to Central Security Control (CSC) for duty.

At CSC I was assigned as leader of a Quick Reaction Team (15 Air Police QRT). We were assigned a truck and dispatched to a location on the Air Base's south perimeter, south of the hangers, flight line, revetments, and runways, which were under attack by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion.

We reached our assigned location at 1:15 a.m. I looked at my watch. We stopped the truck on the road; unloaded, lined up on the southside of the road where there was some cover. The road was higher than the level ground and was slanted on the south side towards a slight ditch with a little bank on the eastside, and on the west-side. I

believe there were two ~~Attacks on Tan Son Nhut Air Base~~ opportunity to get the names of my team members. We could hear shots and explosions in the flight line area. Every team member was armed with an M16 rifle, and we had no other weapons, except my revolver.

**14th Viet Cong Battalion
4 December 1966**

by Olbert H. Hiett

The perimeter fence was approximately 100 yards south of the road and our position. Elephant grass on the south side was about waist high, and on the north side it was about ankle high to waist high, and there was a ditch across the north side. I was immediately lost 11 of my 15-man Quick Reaction Team (QRT). Two killed, and five wounded." wearing green fatigues and my five stripes (TSgt) were very visible so, as I sat on the back of the south side of the road and west of our truck. I took off my fatigue jacket and turned the sleeves inside out, was sitting with my back to the South and wearing a white T-shirt. As I was putting my jacket back on, one of the Air Police asked me, "Det. by MSgt Ernest Sergeant Olbert H. Hiett, (Ret) 163rd AFSG Pleiku Air Base. These stripes are of sights: 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, and (27.0.1971) exploded approximately 100 yards on the northside of the road. I thought for just a second, and yelled, "Take cover!" Simultaneously the Viet Cong started dropping mortar shells on the road west to east. They fired an F4U Rocket that hit our truck. It exploded like a napalm bomb.

822nd Combat Security Police Sq, Phan Rang Air Base: RVN,
(Attached)
36th Tactical Fighter Wing, Phan Rang Air Base: RVN,
366th Security Police Sq, Đà Nẵng Air Base, RVN.
483rd Security Police Sq, Nha Trang, Detachment, Nha Trang Air Base, RVN.

I immediately lost 11 of my 15-man Quick Reaction Team (QRT) —two were killed, and 4 December 1966 was a rote composed of (TD) of the 377th APS, 220 Sohn M. Oblet Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, was attend just the day conducted by killed beside from the Redk 220 Research Riddle of a copy of the, 220 220 caliber (5 yards) My left. This two Air Police (on) Air Police (air) helicopter Air Base, 220 that that time I was directing 220 Air Police post 33 Killin Police Augmentees in the My 6 Rifle 32 tail 50 yards away. Hand grenades were landing on the road. There were rifle and automatic weapons (5.56, S&W), M16 (7.62 mm); M16 (7.62 mm) (40 mm) 50 weapons and mine gun and M16 (7.62 mm) 50 weapons and mine gun. This site training entailed, writing lesson plans, scheduling, teaching, coaching, and training assistant instructors. Viet Cong poured their fire on our position; bullets cracked by both sides of my head, like as sleeping in the Air Police bullets at 1100 grass with the base and that under contact by the Viet Cong Battalion Police immediately grabbed by M16 rifle and 360 night dark, and by would watch 50 left. Bullets and grenades to Central Security Control (CSC) for duty behind the knoll. At one point I thought they were going to over-run our position--I flipped on my back with my M16 in my left-hand and my revolver in my right hand. I was assigned as leader of a Quick Reaction Team (15 Air Police QRT). We were assigned a truck and dispatched to a location on the Air Base's south perimeter, south of the hangers, flight line, revetments, and runways, which were under attack by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion. ~~They did not come.~~

The firing stopped and two ambulances arrived from the east side and picked up our wounded. We reached our assigned location at 1:15 a.m. I looked at my watch. We stopped the truck on the road, unloaded, lined up on the south side of the road where there was some cover. I believe was Major Fox, the 377th APS Commander, asked me if I was all right before they left, and I told him that I was okay. The road was higher than the level ground and was started by the south side towards a slight ditch with a little bank on the eastside, and on the west-side. I

They left with the wounded and the VC shooting started again. Some of the wounded threw their ammunition as they were being loaded in the ambulances. We had no communications with CSC and during a lull in the fighting, two MSgts drove up in a jeep with windshield down and combat gear. They stopped within 6 to 10 feet of me and ask, "Where is the enemy?" I responded in a low voice, right there in front of us. They asked again, "Where?" I yelled— there! — 15 yards in front of you!" The driver immediately rolled out of the jeep on the left side, and the other Sergeant rolled out on the right side just before the Viet Cong opened fire on their jeep. The VC shot out the tires, lights, windshield (on the hood), and just about everything on the jeep. Bullets sounded like hail hitting on a tin roof. The two MSgts crawled away on the road westward, the way they had approached our position. attacked by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion.

Shortly after two C-47 aircraft with mini-guns made passes strafing the area between our position and the perimeter fence. This action drove the Viet Cong almost on top of us, and again the firing was heavy. I thought the C-47's were going to get on top of our position too. Next, 25 to 30 Air Police arrived. We formed a line and advanced through the tall grass towards the outer fence, numerous dead VC and weapons were on the ground. In about 10 or 15 minutes the other Air Police left, and the original four of us remained to hold the position. It was though they thought the area was secure.

The VC returned. We didn't know until investigation revealed that we had unloaded at the VC battalions entry/exit point: they had cut two holes in the perimeter fence, and set up their rear guard near the road to cover the attacking force's withdrawal. They had set up in the tall grass at the side of the road where we unloaded directly in front of their reinforced 90 to 100-man platoon. I discovered after the battle was over that day, they had claymore mines set up that covered our area where we unloaded. The wiring of the mines had not been completed. They had not connected the wires to the detonators on the mines; the wires were laying in the grass.

I was NCOIC, of Air Police Training at Pleiku Air Base, RVN. At that time I was training 263 Air Police and 133 Air Police Augmentees in the M16 Rifle, 38 caliber revolver, and M60 machine gun (7.62mm) M-79 grenade launcher (40mm), 50 caliber machine gun, and M-26 fragmentation hand-grenade. This training entailed writing lesson plans, scheduling, teaching, coaching, and training assistant instructors.

On 4 December 1966 I was on temporary duty (TDY) to the 377th APS, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Republic of Vietnam. I was attending classes conducted by specialist from the Rock Island Research Laboratory on the Colt .223 caliber (5.56mm) M16 Rifle. I was NCOIC, of Air Police Training at Pleiku Air Base, RVN. At that time I was training 263 Air Police and 133 Air Police Augmentees in the M16 Rifle, 38 caliber revolver, and M60 machine gun (7.62mm) M-79 grenade launcher (40mm), 50 caliber machine gun, and M-26 fragmentation hand-grenade. This training entailed writing lesson plans, scheduling, teaching, coaching, and training assistant instructors.

As we were sleeping in the A-4s, the VC trucks (a 2-ton truck with a 20mm gun mounted on a steel bed with a gunner, driver and a third man, pulled up beside me and stopped. The VC opened fire, all three of the VC soldiers jumped off and ran. The VC riddled the truck with bullets, and hand grenades bounced off the truck and exploded in the road beside me and the others.

As we were sleeping in the A-4s, the VC trucks (a 2-ton truck with a 20mm gun mounted on a steel bed with a gunner, driver and a third man, pulled up beside me and stopped. The VC opened fire, all three of the VC soldiers jumped off and ran. The VC riddled the truck with bullets, and hand grenades bounced off the truck and exploded in the road beside me and the others. I was exposed at very close range. We were assigned a truck and dispatched to a location on the Air Base's south perimeter. During the firefight, the RVN soldiers retreated, and across the road (on the side) attack by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion. He then told me that they had a .30 cal. O cal. A-4 machine gun with plenty of ammunition under the 20mm guns. I had a lot of experience with the A-4. We crawled around the rear wheels of the truck, and got over the wheels to the bed of the truck. There must have been more than 1,000 rounds of ammo for the A-4. I loaded the gun side towards a slight ditch with a little bank on the east side, and on the west side. I and opened fire on the VC position, firing from right to left and left to right. I shot

everything that moved. **Attack on Tan Son Nhut Air Base**
14th Viet Cong Battalion
4 December 1966
by Olbert H. Hielt
1967-1968
The RVN soldier was shouting and pointing out targets; I shot everything he pointed at. It appeared the VC were trying to make it to the holes in the wire; their entry/exit point. The A-4 jammed several times from rounds in the belt that had been hit. I pulled the action back, ejecting the fouled round, and the gun continued to fire. We don't know how many dead and wounded the VC took with them through the holes in the fence. It appears they were safe when they got outside the wire; but they kept coming back to cover the withdrawal of their assault force on base. It was almost daylight now and we were getting no resistance from the south side of the road. "I immediately lost 11 of my 15-man Quick Reaction Team (QRT). Two killed, and nine wounded."

At daylight we got off the truck and were fired on from the north side of the road; we were also being reinforced by other Air Police when another Air Policeman was wounded beside me, and the shot came from very close. The two Air Police on my QRT, and on my east side, and I opened fire on the area the shot came from. Three VC emerged, two crouched with their hands up, one crawling with one hand up, he had a foot that was almost shot off at the ankle—only skin held his foot on. I told everyone to hold their fire; that we needed the prisoners. They came on in; an RVN soldier ran up and killed one of the VC. I jumped in and told other Air Police to take the other two prisoners. I saw a VC immediately and protect them. These were the attached prisoners taken in the action. The attacking forces on base were trying to make their way through the main exit point.

366th Security Police Sq, Đà Nẵng Air Base, RVN.
AB 3rd Security Police Sq, Nha Trang Detachment, Nha Trang Air Base, RVN.
Approximately 9:30 a.m., hostilities had ceased and many of the original three members of my QRT, that were not wounded, were being relieved along with all other Air Police that had been placed on temporary duty (TFD) to the 377th APS, Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base, Republic of Vietnam and was attending classes conducted by an instructor from the Rock Island Research Laboratory in the G-102 ordnance (5.56mm) M16 Rifle. I was NCOIC of Air Police Training at Pleiku Air Base, RVN. At that time I was training 263 Air Police and 133 Air Police Augmentees in the M16 Rifle, .38 caliber revolver

What I am about to write about may seem ghastly, and it truly is, but it was my job as a weapons training NCOIC in a horrible and hostile environment, checked the VC bodies; cut equipment off them, checked the weapons, each of them was armed with writing lesson plans, scheduling, teaching, coaching, and training assistant instructors. checked the wear on their clothing. Some of the stocks on their weapons were worn

thin on the sides from being dragged on the ground while crawling. Their feet and hands were very callused. These were very experienced Viet Cong. I noticed they didn't carry any rations. Their base was probably in the Saigon area. Some were young, while others appeared to be in their late 30's. Those killed at very close range (12 to 15 yards) and hit in the head by M16 rounds (5.56mm), their heads exploded, and skulls were scattered. Quick Reaction Team (QRT). We were assigned Airman Rick and gave everything and they had—the Air Base's south perimeter, south of the hangers, flight line, revetments, and runways, which were

In October 1997 the Pensacola Flight Battalion while attending the Vietnam Security Police Association reunion, I met Mr. Ted. We know now that a lot of the 14th Viet Cong Battalion's assigned location was trapped in a base and during the attack. We stopped the truck at the entry point. I didn't know at that time how vulnerable there was some cover. The road was higher than the level ground and was slanted on the south side towards a slight ditch with a little bank on the east side and on the west side. I

approached a slight ditch with a little bank on the east side and on the west side. I

briefing.

Attack on Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base

14th Viet Cong Battalion

4 December 1966

One of the things that I stressed was we were outgunned. Another was we were in a perfect position to use fragmentation hand grenades. We could have bombarded the VC reinforced platoon; ended our situation quickly, and inflicted greater casualties on the enemy. We also needed an M60 (7.62mm) machine gun; and we had no communications.

1967-1968

On the evening of 4 December 1966, at just about dark, the 377th Air Police was made contact with the Viet Cong that were trapped on base, and in the entry/exit area. ~~4 December 1966 Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, hand-grenades, attacked by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion~~ Police, and Air Police K-9 dog handlers already engaging the Viet Cong. I would rush from one area to another where contact was made with the VC for back up, and the fight would already be over with all Viet Cong killed. One dog was lost, he had jumped in a bunch of bushes on two Viet Cong and they killed him with a knife before they were shot dead by Air Police.

(TDY to) 277th Air Police Sg, Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base, RVN. On 5 December 1966, I returned to the 633rd APS, Pleiku Air Base, RVN and immediately went to our church on the hill. I have to be 200 years old, I don't believe I will ever again come as close to death as I did from 1:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on 4 December 1966, at Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base, Vietnam. No event in my life remains so vividly. I went through several stages, from being frightened and concerned about disappearing my wife and four children—even if I didn't survive, to being very angry and determined to prevail.

On 4 December 1966 I was on temporary duty (TDY) to the 377th APS, Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, as I was attending Air Police conducted by Specialist Reaction Team that was based at the 6223rd Education Squadron (550) of the 1st Air Force at the Air Force Training Center at Pleiku Air Base, RVN. I was training 263 Air Police and 13 Air Police from the 1st Air Force. We were shot pathrunously.

(Model 15, S&W), M60 machine gun (7.62mm), M-79 grenade launcher (40mm), 50 caliber machine gun, and M-26 fragmentation hand-grenade. I immediately grabbed my M16 rifle and 360 rounds of ammo, revolver and 50 rounds, and reported to Central Security Control (CSC) for duty.

1st Sergeant Security Police. I was sleeping in the Air Police barracks at 1:00 a.m. when the base came under attack by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion. I immediately grabbed my M16 rifle and 360 rounds of ammo, revolver and 50 rounds, and reported to Central Security Control (CSC) for duty.

PS: If you read this synopsis and you are one of the other 11 QRT members At CSC I was assigned as leader of a Quick Reaction Team (15 Air Police QRT). We were assigned a truck and dispatched to a location on the Air Base's south perimeter, south of the hangers, flight line, revetments, and runways, which were under attack by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion.

We reached our assigned location at 1:15 a.m. I looked at my watch. We stopped the truck on the road; unloaded, lined up on the southside of the road where there was some cover. The road was higher than the level ground and was slanted on the south side towards a slight ditch with a little bank on the eastside, and on the west-side. I