

## **AI Handy Questions re: 1 July 1965:**

AI Handy:

Thank you for your report accounting for the action of 1 July 1965.

Having reviewed several accountings for the action of that date, it is my opinion the Air Force failed to conduct an adequate initial investigation regarding the actions of 23rd ABG (MAAG)/AP personnel on 1 Jul 1965, when Da Nang Air Base was attacked by mortars and a sapper squad. That base attack resulted in the death of SSgt Terance K. Jensen (Silver Star), the wounding on one (1) USAF and (2) USMC, destruction of (6) aircraft, damage to (3) aircraft; (1) NVA/VC POW, and (1) NVA/VC KIA.

Statements reviewed as reported by witnesses and direct participants of the 1 July 1965 action underscore the resulting OSI investigation was flawed with an agenda to prove misconduct rather than discover the facts of the base attack, and the actions of the defenders of the fort.

It is said that a fanatic when proven wrong redoubles his efforts. It appears the OSI (investigating authority) when proven wrong – did nothing – thus setting in motion a great disservice to the historical record of Air Police Squadrons, by: 1) Failing to recognize the heroic combat actions you performed on that date (as witnessed and reported to OSI by a flightline officer, and later confirmed by a POW), and to this date have, 2) Permitted misinformation to circulate amongst USAF personnel that at best downplay your actions, and at worst question your actions in a disparaging and belittling manner.

AI, there are those who recognized your actions of valor on 1 July 1965, but never had a platform to tell what they saw. Some are members of this association today, participated in that action, and now have a voice that will be heard. It is my intention to tell the facts of the story and set the record straight, if not officially, at least to those who matter most: family, and the VSPA brotherhood of this association. Upon completion, I will publish a factual, detailed and informative report, including information such as the POW's statement that the sapper attack broke off as a direct result of your aggressive M16 firing upon them, whereas they believed they were engaged by an unknown machinegun nest.

Don Poss,  
Webmaster:

· Vietnam Security Police Assn, Inc. (USAF): <http://www.vspa.com> (Life Member #37

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Thank you,

**Don Poss**

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**From:** DPoss [mailto:dposs@dposs.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 15, 2008 11:11 PM  
**To:** 'Al and Elaine Handy'  
**Subject:** VSPA: 1 Jul 1965 story

**Al: Please review the below pending account for the events of 1 July 1965. I know there are inconsistencies in relation to some statements. But I think it necessary to relate those in order to set it straight. All the statements are paraphrased. If you want to correct any attributed to you, please do so. I will email to you soon, regarding some back ground info.**

**PS: The <http://www>. Type links you will notice are reminders of photos for me to add to the story line later.**

**Don Poss,  
Da Nang, 1965-66. K-9**

**PREFACE:**

What is certain is that on the night of 1 July 1965, enemy sappers attacked Da Nang Air Base resulting in SSgt Terance K. Jensen being Killed In Action. SSgt Jensen, the first of one-hundred-eleven Air/Security Police to lose their lives in Vietnam and Thailand, gave directions to A1C Al Handy, who carried out his orders, and together their actions caused the Viet Cong to break off their attack, and are credited with saving the lives of 25 aircraft mechanics.

For his action that night, SSgt Jensen was award the Silver Star (posthumous).

For his action that night, A1C Albert L. Handy was the next day returned to the AFB he was TDY from, without any recognition whatsoever.

Here is the story of that night, for which readers should draw their own conclusions as to the valor and bravery of both men.

**1 July 1965, 0130:**

Da Nang AB, Stand off Attack (Mortars and Sappers), 06 rounds.

Casualties: 1 KIA (USAF) 3 WIA (1 USAF, 2 USMC).

Losses: 6 Destroyed USAF A/C, 3 Damaged USAF A/C.

VC/NVA Losses: 1 POW. Possibly 2 KIA.

For continuity of the story-line, statements are paraphrased. Please read the full text of each account as referenced at the end of this summary account of events.

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It is important to first read the following Citation to Accompany the Award of the Silver Star (posthumous) for SSgt Terance K. Jensen (USAF), 23<sup>rd</sup> ABG/Air Police:

*Staff Sergeant Terance K. Jensen distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force at Da Nang Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, on 1 July 1965. On that date, at approximately 0130 hours, Sergeant Jensen was on routine security patrol when he observed approximately 15 men of a hostile force infiltrating the area. He directed a subordinate air policeman who was on duty in the area to take cover in a nearby bunker and alert Central Security Control of the situation. He dismounted from his vehicle and was immediately wounded by small arms fire. He crawled to the rear of the vehicle, drew his weapon and returned fire. The prompt action of Sergeant Jensen was a dominant factor in causing the enemy to withdraw from the immediate area where approximately 25 unarmed fellow airmen had taken cover. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Jensen has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.*

**A1C Al Handy was TDY from the 831st APS, George AFB., CA. (Victorville), arriving at Da Nang Airbase, South Vietnam, Monday, June 28<sup>th</sup> 1965. Within one week, his TDY tour would suddenly end, and he would be unceremoniously returned to George AFB.**

**USMC, Enrique B. del Rosario** (USMC Medium Helicopter Squadron 365): This attack against Da Nang Airbase on 1 July 1965, was conducted by a local VC sapper squad accompanied by personnel from the Third Battalion, 18th Regiment, 325th People's Army of Vietnam Division (PAVN). A VC sapper who had participated in the attack was captured and told interrogators his unit had planned the attack for 30 days prior.

**Al Handy:** "This event actually started three days prior to that awful night. I was posted at Post-1 three days earlier and during my shift trip-flares went off. I called that in to H.Q. and the S.A.T. vehicle came out and made some passes using head lights to see by and said it was nothing. The next night the same thing occurred, and they reminded me that the Marines had security under control on the other side of the fence. All three nights were this way.

In the meantime, I continued walking my post each night and sniper fire would come in and bounce off the ramp I was walking. I finally got on the other side of the taxiway lights and the rounds stopped. I knew someone or something was there and SAT's using the head lights of a vehicle to search was not good enough.

On 1 July 1965, at the beginning of the shift and while being posted, we passed a group of 4-5 Marines huddled in a circle just before you get to the Liquid Oxygen Plant. Never saw one [of them] during the battle [and don't know what they were doing during the attack].

**SSgt Michael K. Bush (MSgt (Ret)):** I served in Viet Nam at Da Nang Air Base From August 1964 to August 1965. I fought in the action against the NVA and elements of the Viet Cong on 1 July 1965, during which SSgt Terry K. Jenson was killed in action. I was part of the Strike Team Reaction Force that counter-attacked to sweep through to the south end of the base during that action. Terry was my friend, and he died fighting valiantly in the best tradition of the Security Police (then known as "Air Police"). I was a young SSgt assigned to the armory during the day shift, and was also assigned to the teams that provided security in the field during classified reconnaissance drone recovery operations. I was there, and those memories are as fresh in my dreams now as the night they occurred. [<http://www.vspa.com/images/ap-posting.jpg>]

**1<sup>st</sup> LT. Fred Reiling (LTC, Ret. USAF):** Some details of the Da Nang memory of the night of Sgt Jensen's death: At the time, we had three areas on the base that we were guarding. First, was the north end of the ramp where the aircraft scheduled for sorties either in-country or up north were parked. As I recall, they were mostly F-104's, A-1's and B-57's. Secondly, was the bomb dump which was across the runway about midfield. Finally, was the south end where F-102's and C-130's were parked. The 102's were TDY from Clark and were for air defense of the base. The crews were on "Alert" and lived in tents between the taxiway and runway. The C-130's were **Ranch Hand** aircraft and were used in the **Agent Orange** program. They were parked on the east side of the taxi way in the newly completed revetments. [Replaced sandbag revetments] [<http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-c130-taxi.jpg>]

On the night in question we had a guard adjacent to the tents the F-102 aircraft people were in. We also had a SAT team responsible for all other transit a/c parked all over the ramp. The actual perimeter of the base was the responsibility of the 3rd Marines, and we had the pockets of our resources that we guarded. We also had people spread out in the base proper to protect the people, especially in the "compound" where most of us lived. [[http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-f102\\_e.jpg](http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-f102_e.jpg)]

That night, I don't recall the exact time but it was late enough that most of us were in bed, SSgt Jensen was performing duty as coffee patrol and hence he had the truck (I thought it was a ton and a half but not sure) and was on the south end at the time of the attack. He was delivering coffee to the guard on the F-102 tents when we started receiving incoming mortar rounds. [[http://www.vspa.com/images/t\\_jensen-dn-truck.jpg](http://www.vspa.com/images/t_jensen-dn-truck.jpg)]

**SSgt. Ed Case:** SSgt Jensen drank coffee with us in the AMMO Area, just about an hour before the attack.

**A1C Handy:** At around 12:50 A.M., July 1, 1965, Sgt. Jensen drove the coffee truck up to where I was. I opened the passenger-door and he said the pot was on the floor on the passenger side. It was an 8-cup pot that Terry brought out to me while the large pot was still brewing. He knew I liked coffee -- what a guy.

**Tom Winn:** As was customary, the shift supervisor was taking coffee from post to post and was near the end of the taxi-way where alert aircraft were positioned.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** Many times, off duty troops could not sleep for one reason or another, and would go over to Command Security Control (CSC), check out the ton-and-a-half truck, and run coffee around to the troops on post. Sometimes, the Flight on-duty would assign someone to do this, but usually someone off-duty would just "volunteer." I had performed that duty just two nights before the attack [Terry "volunteered" that night].

[[http://www.vspa.com/images/t\\_jensen-dn-truck.jpg](http://www.vspa.com/images/t_jensen-dn-truck.jpg) : Photo of A1C Don Jones (VSPA LM 426) in a truck like SSgt Jensen drove that night. Patched Ak-47 holes are over the cab]

On the fateful night, SSgt Jensen was running coffee. He was armed only with a .38 caliber revolver, and basic load of ammunition. Up to that point, we were still state-siding it as far as weapons and ammunition were concerned. In those days, the Air Police were thought of as little more than internal point-security guards for critical resources. We were neither trained, nor equipped to fight an actual ground engagement against a determined enemy. Only a few troops wore steel helmets -- flack jackets were not an issued item. We were authorized only basic load of ammunition for the M-16 rifles (three 20 rd. magazines). We were neither issued nor authorized grenades, or M-60 machine guns. We carried nothing that wasn't carried at a CONUS base.

Only two posts were located at the south end of the base. One was a checkpoint, (not an access control point) located on the west edge of the taxiway across from, and approximately 50 yards North of the first C-130 revetment. The second was a position located at the juncture of the taxiway, and the active runway, near the runway over-run area.

**USMC, Enrique B. del Rosario** (USMC Medium Helicopter Squadron 365): July 1, 1965: At 0130 hours the Viet Cong attacked the airfield. All [USMC] hands got to the trenches with no losses. Good discipline. No rounds fired. Mortar attack on GVs (C-130) and F-105s. Two GVs destroyed and one damaged. One F-105 destroyed, two damaged. Two Marines injured. Lasted only about 5 minutes. Captured VC said that the helos were a target but ran out of time. U.S. Air Force Staff Sergeant Terance Kay Jensen was killed by the Viet Cong during their sapper attack on the Air Force flight line. Two U.S. Marines were wounded.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** I "hit the sack" around 2300 hours, 30 June, 1965. At approximately 0132 hours, 1 July, 1965, the first incoming mortar rounds hit the base on the South end of the runway and aircraft parking area, where the alert F-102 interceptor aircraft, and two C-130 flare ships were parked. Later, Monkey Mountain Radar reported the NVA had six mortar rounds in the air before the first round impacted -- they were very good!

**1<sup>st</sup> LT. Fred Reiling (LTC, Ret. USAF):** The mortars woke me up and I was to the desk down by the gate of the compound in minutes. As I recall, we took about a dozen

incoming rounds of mortar, all hitting in the area of the south overrun and doing virtually no damage. At the same time the sappers came under the concertina fence behind the C-130 revetments. Best estimates were there were between four and six of them.

**USMC, Enrique B. del Rosario:** Private Sica and I were on interior guard along the flight line when, at approximately 0130 hours, we heard what sounded like a mortar. We saw flames near the Air Force C-130s and F-102s across the runway from us. After three mortars came in we hit the deck and ran into a bunker on the flight line. There seemed like around 20 rounds coming in. We could see the aircraft on fire and hear the fuel tanks exploding. [winkel]

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** At approximately 0129 hrs, SSgt Jensen had pulled up in the truck to the check-point at the F-102 Alert Area. The check-point was manned by a young "two-striper," [rank was actually A1C] last name of Handy, first name unknown. Handy was TDY to Da Nang from George AFB, and had been in-country about a week. SSgt Jensen told Airman Handy that the "coffee jug was in the back of the truck" if he wanted some.

**Tom Winn:** The C-130s were used as flare aircraft to light up remote posts throughout the northern provinces. They were not there for any super secret, James Bond type operation. SSgt Jensen was driving a Dodge ton and a half, commonly referred to as a six pack. At the time, the Air Force's security mission was being run like a SAC base operation in the states only with relaxed protocol. The Air Police brass was not running the show for jungle warfare, namely, hit and strike and depart as rapidly as possible like the VC did so well.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** The "Sapper" attack on the south end of the base occurred as follows:

The NVA (guided by local VC) had infiltrated the southeast perimeter through five holes cut in the perimeter fence. After successfully infiltrating the base perimeter undetected, the enemy force grouped behind two large concrete revetments, in which two C-130 flare ships were parked. [insert photo of revetment] There, they waited for the mortars to open up. That would be their signal to begin their attack.

At approximately 0132 hours, 1 July, 1965, the first incoming mortar rounds hit the base on the south end of the runway and aircraft parking area, where the alert F-102 interceptor aircraft, and two C-130 flare ships were parked.

Later, Monkey Mountain Radar reported that the NVA had six mortar rounds in the air before the first round impacted -- they were very good! [insert F-102 parking photo]

When the mortar fire began, the NVA force advanced in assault under their own fire across the taxiway. As they moved past the revetments, the NVA ripped open the fuel cells in the C-130's with automatic weapons fire, threw grenades into the fuel and fired the aircraft, destroying them. A team of NVA worked their way around behind the alert

F-102's, and fired either RPG's or 57mm recoilless rifle rounds up the engine exhaust pipes of three of the aircraft, destroying them. [[http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-c130\\_b57.jpg](http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-c130_b57.jpg)]

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** At that moment, the first mortar rounds impacted at the end of the runway -- approximately 200 yards from where SSgt Jensen and Airman Handy were located.

**A1C Handy:** Before I could pour the first cup a mortar round went off about 30 yards in front of the truck. I dropped the [coffee] pot [;], [Terry] *he* said to contact H.Q so I tried to use the radio. I think all I got out was "Post-1 to Desk" and I could see around 15 NVA shoulder-to-shoulder firing rifles and throwing hand grenades.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** Over the noise of the enemy's fire and explosions, SSgt Jensen yelled at Airman Handy to "Get the radio in the bunker," as the truck that SSgt Jensen was driving was not radio equipped. At the same time, the NVA force moved from behind the C-130 revetments, and across the taxiway, firing as they advanced, into the small tent/trailer area, located between the taxiway and the active runway where the alert crews, and maintenance troops were billeted.

**USMC, Enrique B. del Rosario:** The whole area was lit up from the fire. Then we heard small arms fire and saw some flares all around the base. Meanwhile our compound, and probably the whole base, was up and men came running to the flight line to get some M-60 machineguns and ammo. PFC Sica is the armorer so he gave it to them. We also took an M-60, ammo, flares, and hand grenades to our bunker. [wink]

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** The mortar fire then shifted (they reportedly had three mortar tubes working us over) and started "walking" fire up the flightline, and splattering random rounds up through the containment area of the base. At the same time, an *attack in strength* hit in the area of the main gate. That force reportedly consisted of NVA wearing the uniform of an ARVIN Ranger unit, and had arrived in three ARVIN "six-by" trucks. The "VNAF" gate was also hit at the same time. Both gates were manned by USAF AP's, a few Marines from the 9th Marine Expeditionary Force, a few VNAF "Pun Viets", and ARVIN "QC's."

**A1C Handy:** I dropped the radio, and took my M16 off my shoulder and took the safety off. I had a round in the chamber and was on fully automatic. All the while SSgt Terry Jensen was getting out of the truck on the driver's side. By the time I was ready to fire Terry had already been hit -- and parts of Terry were on the front of my uniform. I saw him drop out of the corner of my eye and that's when I spent my first magazine of 20 rounds, it took about 1 ½ seconds. I saw a few of them go down, but the rest were still coming.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** Meanwhile, Airman Handy had been attempting to contact CSC with the radio located in the bunker (a large "portable" non-tactical Motorola radio,

not a small hand-held radio which he could have worn in a belt carrier case), with negative results.

**Tom Winn:** When the attack first took place and it was known the VC had penetrated the base perimeter, SSgt Jensen tried unsuccessfully to open the driver's door to the vehicle, but it wouldn't open. He spent several precious seconds stuck in the vehicle trying to open the driver's door. He may have already taken one round shot through the truck door before he finally actually exited the vehicle. If the door of the vehicle SSgt Jensen was driving hadn't jammed, he might have had time to exit and take cover in the culvert next to the sentry post. There was a small culvert or ditch between the taxi-way and the runway.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** All of the F-102's were parked "cocked" with the canopies open. The NVA destroyed or disabled the remaining aircraft with automatic weapons fire, and by throwing grenades and satchel charges into the open cockpits. Air-to-air rockets on-board the burning F-102's burned, exploded, or "cooked off," and launched north towards the contonement area and other aircraft parked on the rest of the flightline. [[http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-f102\\_e.jpg](http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-f102_e.jpg)] [[http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-f102\\_b.jpg](http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-f102_b.jpg)] [<http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-poss-f102-1965.jpg>] [[http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-f102\\_d.jpg](http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-f102_d.jpg)]

**1<sup>st</sup> LT. Fred Reiling (LTC, Ret. USAF):** They opened up with small arms fire and Sgt Jensen returned fire with his side arm, a .38 revolver. He had left his M-16 at the desk when he got the coffee jug.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** SSgt Jensen dismounted the vehicle on the driver's side (preparing to engage the sapper team), and was immediately struck once in the lower abdomen by a 7.62 X 39 mm. AK-47 round. SSgt Jensen went to his knees, and though painfully wounded, drew his .38 caliber revolver, and returned fire at three NVA soldiers at a range of approximately 30 yards. Seeking better cover, SSgt Jensen managed to crawl around to the rear of the vehicle, where he took up a position behind the right-rear tandem wheels, and prepared to re-engage the enemy.

**Tom Winn:** SSgt Jensen ... [at] the rear of the vehicle crawled under it....

**1<sup>st</sup> LT. Fred Reiling (LTC, Ret. USAF):** He ... then ... took up a defensive position and continued firing.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** SSgt Jensen fired three rounds, and witnesses later recounted that two of the NVA soldiers went down -- no enemy bodies were found as the NVA always removed the bodies of their dead upon withdrawal. An NVA soldier approached SSgt Jensen's truck from the front, and threw a grenade into the cab. When the grenade detonated, the vehicle SSgt Jensen was behind burst into flames. In the ensuing confusion, the NVA soldier managed to circle around the rear of the burning ton-and-a-half truck, and approach SSgt Jensen undetected.

**Tom Winn:** ... A VC came from behind [the truck] several seconds later ...

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** The NVA soldier stood over the gravely wounded SSgt Jensen ...

**Tom Winn:** ... and sprayed him with automatic gun fire.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** ... firing four rounds into his upper and middle back, killing him instantly.

**1<sup>st</sup> LT. Fred Reiling (LTC, Ret. USAF):** He was killed in the gunfight and the sappers continued on with their bandoleer grenades, placing them under aircraft and attempting to get to the tents where the people were sleeping. Sgt Jensen, by standing his ground, kept the sappers out of the tents and consequently saved many lives, but gave his own by his action.

**Tom Winn:** The sentry SSgt Jensen had stopped to give coffee to, had left the immediate area where SSgt Jensen was killed. I really don't know what happened to him or how he responded or reacted during the attack ....

**A1C Handy:** I put the second clip in and switched to semi-automatic. I kept firing at them and by the time I reached the fox hole, which was full of trash from day shift, I spent my second magazine. I changed clips and took careful aim with each shot, knowing I would run out of ammo.

**1<sup>st</sup> LT. Fred Reiling (LTC, Ret. USAF):** The guard in the area [Handy] had taken cover in his foxhole and was not injured.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** Handy reportedly looked up from inside the bunker which was nothing more than a ring of single sandbags approximately three and one-half feet high, and with no overhead cover, and saw the NVA that had just killed SSgt Jensen.

**A1C Handy:** I saw Terry at the back of the truck with an NVA standing over him, and I shot the NVA. I didn't know Terry had already been shot in the back by the NVA.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** Handy brought his M-16 rifle to bear, and killed the NVA soldier. Airman Handy then remained at his post, and delivered flanking fire on the advancing NVA line, and broke their assault. Airman Handy continued to engage the enemy until his ammunition was exhausted.

A captured NVA officer later revealed that the initial objective of the attack was to eliminate the Marine Aviation Battalion Helicopters, which were hurting NVA operational efforts in the local Da Nang area. The NVA officer further related that when Airman Handy had opened fire on their advance, they were convinced they had run into a "dug-in heavy machine gun" -- broke off their attack and began to withdraw by the same route by which they had entered the flightline area.

**USMC, Enrique B. del Rosario:** Glen Newton and I were on guard between the flight line and the squadron tent area when the first explosion racked a C-130 at the Air Force flightline. Running to place ourselves between what we thought was the point of attack and the tent area, we got to the trenches forming our interior defensive perimeter. I was right behind Newton when he dove into one of the trenches. He let out a loud groan when he landed so I decided to just plop down on the ground above the trench works.

**A1C Handy:** While in that foxhole, rockets from the burning aircraft were cooking off and bouncing along the ground. One went right over the top of my foxhole and hit the outhouse behind me. In the darkness I thought it was an NVA running towards me and I almost stood up to shoot him. Thank goodness the rocket was faster than I was.

I then shot another NVA trying to go pass on my blind-side at the end of the large bunker SSgt Jensen had sent me to. I saw the leaves on his helmet and shot through a tent in front of him. I don't know if I killed him or not -- he didn't get by is all I know. I wasn't counting my rounds but I knew I was nearly empty.

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** In the light of the burning aircraft, the NVA could be seen dragging dead and wounded toward the fence line. The NVA were also engaged by the F-102 crew members and maintenance personnel in the tent area, who were lightly armed with a few unauthorized M-16's and hand weapons.

The Marines, from the aviation battalion, also contributed effective fire from their positions across the active runway to the west. [In 1965, there was only a single runway, with one under construction.]

**USMC, Enrique B. del Rosario:** More explosions racked the C-130s, illuminating the area. Two snapping sounds above my head caused me to try to move into the trench where Newton had gone but suddenly fire came from my right. I knew that that was the area where a grunt company was billeted and also a couple of Ontos anti-tank tracked vehicles were situated so I figured that it was friendly-fire that we were receiving. Still it made me mad to have fire directed at me.

Newton and I were looking for targets and we saw two silhouetted figures running through the enflamed C-130s but at that distance we couldn't tell whether they were friend or foe. I told Newton to stay in the trench and I was going to run back to the tent to alert everyone of the attack, but before I could move more than a few steps tracers swept past me -- coming from the Marines of the grunt company. I hit the deck fast. The whole company, it seemed, suddenly had opened fire into the night, firing into the flames, into the darkness, at Newton and me.

Finally, I had enough. I had to get back to the squadron to give the warning, so I jumped up on my feet and yelled as loud as I could, "Hold your fire! Hold your fire, goddammit! We're Marines over here!" Now I'm not sure that those trigger happy shooters actually

heard me and complied with my cease fire order but it seemed to me that there was a pause in the shooting long enough to allow me to race back to the tent area.

I ran through the tent area yelling, "Attack! Attack! We're under attack!" I reached the officers' tents first and some came stumbling out wearing nothing but their skivvies and armed with their .38 revolvers. As more men came out of their tents I pointed to the direction of the fire that Newton and I had received. Most of the men had their M-14 rifles and were placing themselves in the trenches. Bert Goodfellow came stumbling out of his tent, pulling on his trousers while trying to hold on to his rifle, and complaining that I was too loud and over reacting.

First Sergeant Howard Force was all over the tent area organizing the ground defense, placing machinegun crews in their firing positions, dispersing the men and officers in a 360-degree defensive perimeter. After a while we could hear the NCOs of the grunt company yelling for their troops to hold their fire. For the first five minutes of the attack fire discipline among the grunts was bad.

Captain Frain slept through the entire attack. [delrosario]

I had originally thought it was Private Hughey who was with me on the night of the attack, but at the HMM-365 reunion in San Diego, August 2000, Glen Newton told me it was him instead. Also he told me that I yelled "Hold your fire! We're Americans over here!"

**A1C Handy:** During the whole battle the S.A.T. vehicle tried to reach us, and SSgt. Bush was part of that team. The first time they caught-fire and turned around and left, the second time the same thing happened, but the third time they made it all the way. I rolled out the back of the fox hole and ran down a drainage ditch (culvert) between the taxiway and runway yelling my last name hoping they wouldn't shoot me. When I got to the vehicle all I could think of was I needed more ammo -- I didn't get any.

**A1C Steve Ray:** Airman Al Handy was TDY from George AFB, and had been in country about a week. A then friend of mine, an **A1C Joseph** (can't remember the first name) who was part of the Response Force and some distance from where I was posted, later related the following to me:

As we swept down the taxiway, Handy came running and stumbling toward our group shouting his name. When he reached us, he said that he was out of ammunition, and wanted to get more! According to A1C Joseph, Handy was really a mess, and could barely talk coherently. At some point, Handy was transported back to the compound, and OSI grabbed him to debrief him about the death of SSgt Jensen.

**A1C Handy:** The next thing I knew I was being taken to the dispensary. While I was there someone came in and wanted to know *why I shot Terry*. I was angered and confused by such a question. Couldn't they see the burning aircraft and hear the

explosions? I wondered. No one questioning me had identified themselves to me. I had no idea who they were – and still don't. I said that I didn't shoot SSgt Jensen! They handed me a note pad and told me to write everything down. Later I heard they were OSI.

While I was there writing, a Capt. came in loving-on-me -- a full arm wrapping hug. That caught me off guard and I had to push him away and asked him just what he was doing. He said he and 25 other crew members were in that large bunker Terry had sent me to, and the Capt. said he saw the whole thing. He thanked me profusely, pumping my hand until I thought it would fall off, for saving their lives, and then he left. Wish I would have gotten his name for verification now. I had no idea that anyone was out there in the tents -- maybe Terry knew they were inside and that's why he sent me there.

**A1C Steve Ray:** Now here is the part that nobody talks about -- In traditional fashion, the OSI tried to play "HANG THE COP"!! The first "theory" that the OSI came up with was that Handy had "panicked" and shot SSgt Jensen by mistake! I am proud to say that I "shot holes" in that theory!!

A couple of days later, an OSI puke, contacted me in the armory and showed me four pieces of 7.62 X39 brass, and asked me to I.D. them. I immediately I.D.ed the brass, as the type used with the AK-47 assault rifle. The OSI person then told me that was the brass they had picked up near SSgt Jensen's body, and then he related: "Well, I guess that gets Handy off the hook."

The OSI agent then coldly tossed SSgt Jensen's .38 cal. revolver on the armory work bench, and said: "Here -- you might want to clean that up!" It was completely caked with SSgt Jensen's blood.

After the OSI agent left, I picked up Terry's .38, and opened the cylinder to check it. It was still loaded -- three rounds had been fired. I detailed stripped the weapon, and cleaned it thoroughly then I put it aside in the armory. Later that same day, I asked the Operations Sergeant, TSgt Herbert Steer, if there was any way that we could send Terry's weapon to his family as a keep-sake. I was told to "forget it." The weapon was returned to the inventory, and reissued as far as I know.

**1<sup>st</sup> LT. Fred Reiling (LTC, Ret. USAF):** When the sappers had expended their grenades they left the base the same way they had entered. The picture of the young Lt and the full Colonel is yours truly and the base commander, a Colonel Eisenbrown. [[http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-lt-reiling\\_col-eisenbrown.jpg](http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-lt-reiling_col-eisenbrown.jpg)]

Due to the heavy smoke, fires and exploding ammunition we set up a perimeter around the area and waited for daylight. Sometime during the night, SSgt Jensen's body was brought out of the area. Best I can remember an SSgt Oates (SAT team leader) and an Army officer had found him and brought him out. He apparently had been killed where he was found, at the back of the truck. [<http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-c130-c.jpg>]

The attached pictures are of the area the morning after the raid. The one of the tents with the water tower visible in the background and the two lockers is the approximate area where Sgt Jensen was killed. The aircraft were all in the immediate area.

**[<http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-jensen-1020-kia.jpg>]**

**SSgt Calcutt [Ret. CMSgt]:** I will never forget the sight of an Air Force Major, dressed in a flight suit and hatless, sitting on the hood of a jeep with an M-16 rifle in his right hand, barrel pointed upward, with the butt anchored against his right hip --tear filled eyes staring unwaveringly straight ahead. SSgt Jensen's body was draped across the Major's lap, and his head gently cradled and supported by the Major's left arm as the jeep moved slowly down the taxiway toward the Air Force compound. No fallen warrior could have had a more solemn, profound, and appropriate escort.

You said that you sent a picture of a Major receiving a medal ... that was probably our "commander" at the time, and Major Howard, I believe his name was. I don't know if it was him that brought Terry's body in. I know that it was a Major in a flying suit, and Major Howard was a pilot that wound up being our commander -- and I never saw him wear anything but a flying suit! It was dark that night, and nobody was about to turn on a light of any kind ... there was still plenty of action going on, and a whole bunch of very trigger-happy GI's. **[<http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-poss-memorial-major-bs-01.jpg>]**

**A1C Steve Ray:** As to what happened to Airman Handy -- well, when he was brought in for interrogation by the OSI, he reportedly looked down at some point, and saw blood and brain tissue all over the front of his fatigues, and upon seeing the gore, his eyes rolled back in his head, and he went "catatonic." He was air-evaced out the next day (don't know where to).

I heard a few days later that they had put him in for the Bronze Star w/V, but I don't know if he ever got it. Many of us were put in for decorations, but most of the paperwork ended up in the trash can. I remember pulling mine out of the trash and reading it! I was so numb about the whole event that I didn't even care! I guess that even then, it was not "politically expedient" for lower ranking Cops to get medals. As we used to say: "That's okay - It don't mean Nuthin - Never did - Never Will!"

**Tom Winn:** ... I do know [Al Handy] *he* never returned to duty and was immediately returned to his regular PCS duty station stateside. I believe the Airman was TDY from George AFB, CA.

**A1C Steve Ray:** Like SSgt Jensen, many of us were very upset about the way that the war was being fought, and especially how we (the Air Police) were being used. They used to send teams of us out to secure the sites where those Firebee reconnaissance drones would crash after they got the hell shot out of them while flying up North, and over Laos and Cambodia. The Air Force did not equip us properly, did not provide us with communications gear that would even reach the Base ... what a mess! Those of us who went out on those Ops. regularly, scrounged enough field gear, extra ammo,

grenades, and tactical communications equipment so as to be able to survive out there, and hopefully get back on our own, or by the good graces of the Army chopper pilots! (God Bless those guys!) [\[images/usaf-firebee-drone-2.jpg\]](#)

**USMC, Enrique B. del Rosario:** We were out there until 0430 hours. When things finally quieted down we got relieved off of post. [winkel]

**Tom Winn:** The very day after Sgt. Jensen's death, all AP vehicles with doors had the doors removed and seat belts installed from side-to-side across the doorway to prevent the occupants from falling out of the vehicle. The occupants could easily flip the latch of the seat belt and jump from the vehicle if he had to do so. Also, there were approximately a dozen VC infiltrators who attacked the base that evening. None were known to have been killed or injured. One was captured the following morning by ARVN forces.

**A1C Handy:** I know Sgt. Bush gave the best report he could, but he was not there the whole time. And I was a A1C 3-stripper, not an A2C 2-stripper, TDY from George AFB, CA (Victorville).

**USMC, Enrique B. del Rosario: JULY 2, 1965:** Doubled the guards and got set for a second attack. Flares out all night and firefight at the end of the runway for a couple of hours. Nothing serious. [mckee]

**1<sup>st</sup> LT. Fred Reiling (LTC, Ret. USAF):** The photo of the flag flying at Base Headquarters was taken on the Fourth of July 1965, three days after SSgt Jensen was killed in action -- the only day of the year that we were allowed to fly the American Flag, and hence it got a lot attention.

[\[http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-july4-us-flag-1965.jpg\]](http://www.vspa.com/images/dn-july4-us-flag-1965.jpg)

**USMC, Enrique B. del Rosario: JULY 8, 1965:** Two Viet Cong in ARVN uniforms were caught selling cokes on our base, with acid in the cokes and broken glass fragments in the ice. [winkel]

#### References:

The below references may be read in full from [http://www.vspa.com/t\\_dn-jensen-toc-1965.htm](http://www.vspa.com/t_dn-jensen-toc-1965.htm).

**48th Security Police Squadron to honor SSgt Terance K. Jensen.**

**Airman Magazine, May 1966.**

**Citation To Accompany The Award Of The Silver Star (Posthumous).**

**Ed Case, SSgt., After Action Account.**

**Fred Reiling, LTC (Ret), After Action Account.**

**Mike Bush, July 1965, USAF MSgt (Ret), After Action Account.**

**Official Information - SSgt Terance K. Jensen.**

**SSgt. Terance K. Jensen, 35th Air Police Memorial Ceremony, 1966.**

**Stars & Stripes / Bangkok Post, July 1965, by: Robert Potter.  
Steve Ray, USAF (Ret), After Action Account.  
Tom Winn, July 1965, After Action Account.  
USMC Account, Courtesy of the Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 365.**

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**Date Posted:** *Fri, Mar 14 2008, 18:54:30 PDT*

**Author:** [Jackie R. Kays](#)

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**Subject:** Re: Da Nang AB attack, 1 Jul 1965: Righting A Wrong

**In reply to:** Don Poss 's message, "[Da Nang AB attack, 1 Jul 1965: Righting A Wrong](#)" on *Wed, Mar 12 2008, 21:49:15 PDT*

Hi Don,

Note: In regards to Al Handy, I was not at DaNang when that incident occurred involving Handy(arrived a few months later) but, I was the NCOIC of AP Investigations at George AFB, CL. in 65.

Handy was a young airman on flight there at that time.

I had several occasions to speak with him. Handy did not work for me therefore I was not privy to his ER's, but I remember him as a qualified Air Policeman, who followed instructions well and performed his duties in a professional manner. Knowing the young airman as I did, I always questioned the OSI version of that incident.

In my opinion, under the traumatic condition of that incident, I thought Handy responded heroically! (He was TDY to DaNang from George and had only been there a short time when the incident occurred.)

Jackie

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Thank you,

**Don Poss**

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