

Vietnam

Air Police Police *12th Security Police Squadron* *Cam Ranh Bay AB*

Riot: Airmen's Club!

by **Ken Boyer**

1968

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Cam Ranh Bay AB, Airmen's Club Riot - One night in 1968 as part of the Phantom flight Security Police at Cam Ranh Bay AB, I was assigned to a strike team. We were riding around in a vehicle with a mounted 50-caliber machine gun. I had my helmet and flak vest on and was carrying my M16 and .38 caliber revolver. At approximately 10: 00 p.m., we were dispatched to the Airmen's Club because a riot was taking place. We parked the vehicle on the Westside of the club where a set of double doors were located. The doors were open and we could see the m'l'e that was taking place.

Inside the Airmen's Club, the place was packed with people. A lot of fighting was going on near the bandstand. Chairs and beer bottles were flying through the air and it was a dangerous place to be. The club bouncers were unable to do anything because everyone was packed so close together--they didn't have room to kick or punch anyone. I saw that one of the bouncers had a guy fighting on his back. I had heard from someone that the bouncers were base karate instructors working on their time-off.

Because I was carrying my M16, I had only one arm to grab hold of anyone. I remember hearing, "You cant hit me... I'm an Air Policeman!" Eventually people were being forced outside through the double-doors from which I had entered. In some cases, people had to be literally thrown out. As I made my way to the back of the club, I noticed a single Airman sitting at a table. He had his beer in front of him and his glass was filled. He was sipping on his beer and watching the commotion. It was a dangerous place to be because of all the things that were being thrown around. I immediately went over to him and told him to, "Get the hell out of here!" He calmly stood up, grabbed his beer and his glass, and headed for the double doors. I continued to assist by pushing and shoving other people out of the club with my one arm. Eventually the building started to clear out.

After a while, I made my way out the double-doors. As I stepped outside, I noticed the guy I had earlier sent outside with his beer and glass was standing by the side of the doorway watching the flying bodies being thrown out of the club and onto the grass. He still was holding his beer bottle and glass in his hand and sipping on it as he watched the Air Police literally throw people out of the club. I again instructed him to, "Get the hell out of here!" He eventually wandered off. A short time late the police dogs arrived with their handlers and forced the crowd to disperse. Eventually things quieted down.

I have to laugh at this guy and the wonderful beer he must have been enjoying. He was right in the middle of the storm and was unconcerned about his safety.

Later,
Ken Boyer



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