

THAILAND

UBON RTAFB

8th SPS (PACAF)

Ubon RTAFB, 8th SPS

Apocalypse

... Not Now!

1973-1974

by Peter Williams

8th SPS, 1973-1974

It was a typical night for this K-9 cop, my first stop was at the armory to draw my weapon and ammo, then over to "Big John", the K-9 deuce and a half for the ride out to "delta sector", otherwise known as the off-base bomb dump and the home of the 8th SPS K-9 section. On arrival at the kennel that summer night of 1973, I was late for Guardmount, my dog "Hunce", was out of commission. A visit by the vet earlier in the day, for a runny nose afforded "Hunce" the night off with pay. I was left to "make friends" with another handler's dog for duty this night. I made it to Guardmount, but missed all of the updates and Intel reports for the night. I was assigned to a "delta" post and headed out to the perimeter road en route to the assignment.



At about 0200 hours, while sitting on top of one of the earthen mounds, separating the road from the bomb storage area, I began hearing and then seeing, muzzle flashes from small arms fire in the vicinity of a village. Previously having worked "delta", it was not unusual to have sporadic small arms fire come from the villages. There was never any evidence that it was directed toward us or the base, but it always caught your attention! I paid no particular attention to it this evening as I could see that it was way off in the distance---someone else's war. But I always hated it, because you never *really* knew where those rounds would land.

Less than a minute after I took notice of the small arms fire, my world changed suddenly and dramatically. A hundred feet outside the fence-line, directly in front of me illumination flares popped, lighting the night sky, automatic weapons fire opened up and the sounds of tracked vehicles could be heard. My new dog went *nuts*, as I crapped my pants. I commanded "cover" to the dog and rapidly donned my flak vest and steel pot. I laid out my mags for easy reach, and screamed into my radio to CSC that the end of the world had come for "delta sector", and Hồ Chí Minh himself was on the wire!

CSC calmly asked me, *Airman ... describe your situation*, which I did in a not-so-calm voice: *HELP HELP HELP HELP HELPPPPPP!!!* CSC responded, calmly, arrogantly, condescendingly, and worst of all naming me for the whole world to know: *Airman WILLIAMS, if you had been at Guardmount when you were suppose to be, Airman WILLIAMS, you would know that tonight at 0200 hours---that's right now, Airman WILLIAMS,---the Thai Army will be conducting exercises in "delta sector" and all operations will cease at 0500 hours... Airman WILLIAMS. Do you copy?*

Ahh...

... 10-4.

Needless to say, I was completely mortified, embarrassed, and in need of a clean pair of undies, all at the same time! Back then I didn't see any humor in it at the time, but now I can look back and laugh at that fearless 18 year old that I was.

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