



fini pas d'onduler, la perche s'insère finalement non sans mal dans le panier. Trois : La mécanique a été jusque là d'une fiabilité déconcertante. Après une trop faible dose de carburant livrée et plusieurs essais de contact infructueux dans une masse d'air devenue par chance un peu plus calme, le POD de ravitaillement s'avoue finalement vaincu et se révèle hors service. Le point central est pour sa part toujours opérationnel. La perche est alors déployée et prête pour la connexion. Quatre : Le dernier avion se positionne derrière le panier qui a encore cette fâcheuse tendance à battre dans le vent. Ligne rouge rigoureusement suivie, vitesse affichée, le rapprochement s'effectue jusqu'au contact. Malheureusement, sous l'effet combiné des turbulences et d'un pilotage certainement affecté par les tentatives précédentes, la perche vient toucher les baleines à droite du panier. Celui-ci se tord et vient percuter le radôme du chasseur lors du désengagement. La « fausse queue » tant redoutée intervient toujours au pire moment! Sous le choc, le panier s'est fortement tordu et le doute sur son état écarte tout nouvel essai, l'hypothétique ingestion dans le moteur d'une des baleines se révélant fatale. Alors que le quatrième avion va inévitablement atteindre son niveau de carburant minimum nécessaire pour un retour sur Natal, une ultime tentative sur le circuit secours du POD est alors opérée, sans succès. Il n'existe à cet instant qu'une seule solution et la décision est rapidement prise par le directeur des vols : le dispositif fait immédiatement demi-tour pour un retour préma-

turé au Brésil. Un long silence se fait entendre sur la fréquence et c'est avec une impression d'échec que nous croisons à nouveau l'équateur avant d'atteindre la terre brésilienne sans autre encombre. Nous devons alors nous préparer à une journée d'attente avant une nouvelle tentative. L'heure est à la gestion de l'imprévu : effectuer la réparation du tanker, faire le plein et le reconditionnement des avions, et surtout trouver en dernière minute un hôtel disposé à accueillir la vingtaine de personnes que nous sommes.

C'est la même équipe qui repartira finalement le lendemain pour rejoindre Dakar avec succès et dans des conditions nominales. Poursuivi par la malchance, le dispositif se verra cependant contraint de laisser un avion sur le sol sénégalais pour cause de panne sérieuse à la mise en route lors de la toute dernière étape.

Humainement et professionnellement enrichissant, cet exercice a une fois de plus mis en exergue deux notions inhérentes à la condition de pilote : la nécessaire adaptabilité et la continuelle remise en question. Nous évoluons dans un environnement en perpétuel mouvement qui nécessite une réactivité et une adaptation permanentes. C'est en cela que notre métier se révèle à la fois complexe et exaltant.

Cne Antoine Courty (« KURT »)

G.C.1/2 «Cigognes» , Promotion EA02 « Commandant LONGY »

## Le Viêt-Nam : un traumatisme définitif

Il est des traumatismes ineffaçables. Si cela se conçoit aisément pour un individu, c'est plus étonnant pour toute une nation, infiniment diverse et dont la blessure ne s'éteint pas avec ses grands témoins. Elle se transmet de génération en génération. Si de mauvaise aventure un autre traumatisme est infligé au pays, il n'efface pas le précédent mais y ajoute sa couche de sédiment.

Pour la France, la débâcle de 1940 continue de faire saigner le cœur et écarquiller les yeux d'incrédulité révoltée. Les heures plus que difficiles des guerres d'Indochine et d'Algérie alimentent encore les queues de « doctorants » assiégeant les conservateurs de documents d'époque pour les faire déclassifier, souvent plus animés par la passion et la révolte que par un esprit de pure recherche d'historien.

Les États-Unis sont allés chercher en Indochine des dividendes parachevant leur jubilation d'en avoir chassé les Français, et en sont revenus à jamais

frappés du syndrome du Viêt-Nam, que ni le 11 septembre 2001 ni l'Afghanistan n'ont en rien rétréci. Les milliers d'images, les dizaines de films, les centaines de livres qui depuis 40 ans inondent le monde et obsèdent les américains rendent compte du calvaire des GI's dans les marigots et la jungle infernale. Les seules rares images aériennes sont celles d'épandages de défoliants, et on n'imagine pas qu'il y ait eu de réelles oppositions à l'armada de l'US Air Force, de la Navy, ou de l'US Marines Corps.

Les chasseurs français ne sont pas tout à fait ignares en la matière car la première phrase qu'ils entendent de l'officier américain machouillant son « gum » à chaque début de session « Red Flag » est que 90 % des aéronefs descendus au Viêt-Nam l'ont été avant leur dixième mission. Mais même ce public averti s'il en est, ne mesure peut-être pas l'ampleur des dégâts subis par l'aviation américaine. Ceux-ci font encore se demander à des niveaux élevés de la hié-

rarchie si, dans la conception des prochains avions de... 5ème génération, on a bien tiré toutes les leçons du... Viêt-Nam.

L'article qui suit établit un bilan des plus intéressants des pertes subies, tant du fait de la relative modeste composante aérienne (moins de 200 Mig 21) que de la redoutable artillerie anti-aérienne ou des conditions d'environnement (collisions, pannes, météo etc.). Merci à nos amis de l'APNFA de nous en avoir autorisés la reproduction.

Pierre Péron



**From: Michael M. Dunn**

**Sent: Saturday, December 18, 2010 9:46 AM**

**Subject: Note from AFA President -- USAF A/C Losses in Viet Nam**

Saturday, December 18, 2010

AFA Members, Congressional Staff members, Civic Leaders, DOCA members, Dr Richard P. Hallion, former AF historian, sent me the information below. In it, he describes – by aircraft type – US Air Force losses in Viet Nam. A few quick observations.

■ Low and slow is dangerous. We lost 150 Skyraiders, 34 C-130s, 22 A-37s, 21 C-123s, 47 OV-10s, 82 O-2s, and 122 O-1s. That's a lot of CSAR support, political risk via POWs, and general projection of vulnerability. Are we planning for this sort of attrition with our buy of C-130Js, C-27s, and even the C-17?

■ We need to plan for attrition on high-end systems. We lost 382 F-4s, 198 F-100s, 283 F-105Ds, 37 F-105Gs, 76 RF-4s, and 33 RF-101s. What sort of fleet do we have today with mostly 4th gen aircraft and other legacy systems? Are we in a position to execute effective combat ops against a near peer? Do we have the industrial base capacity to replace combat losses in a timely fashion (we lost 15 B-52s in 12 days during Linebacker II—today, that would be over 20% of the fleet)?

■ Numerous aircraft were lost for other non-combat reasons—including 2 SR-71s. While there are few guarantees in combat operations ... we do know we

will suffer unexpected accidents. We need to plan for an inventory that accounts for this basic reality. These losses will be increasingly hard to sustain as we stretch small fleets over increasingly longer service lives.

It is easy to point out that many of the losses in Vietnam were due to the ROE, etc. While that is true, I think it is also important to anticipate that war is generally muddled, and ROE is often constrained by numerous factors that are hard to predict (note the two current conflicts). This further highlights the need to plan for redundancy and a flexible range of options.

This list reminds me of a quote from General (Ret) Richard E. Hawley:

« But institutions can have short memories too. And in the early 60's we entered another Asian war, this time in Vietnam, without a capable air-to-air fighter – without pilots schooled in the fine art of air-to-air combat – and without weapons to neutralize the emerging threat of surface-to-air missiles – and we paid a terrible price against a third-rate power.

In the six months from 23 August 1967 to 5 February 1968, Vietnamese MiG-21 pilots racked up a 16 to 1 kill advantage. In all, we lost 2,448 fixed wing aircraft to a third world military whose Air Force deployed fewer than 200 aircraft.

How easily we forget. »

For your consideration.

Mike (Michael M. Dunn,

President/CEO Air Force Association)

## **USAF losses in Viet Nam**

### **■ USAF Douglas A-1 Skyraider**

**191 total, 150 in combat**

– First loss A-1E 52-132465 (1st Air Commando Squadron, 34th TG) shot down during the night of 28-29 August 1964 near Bien Hoa, SVN

– Final loss A-1H 52-139738 (1st Special Operations Squadron, 56th Special Operations Wing) which was shot down 28 September 1972 (pilot was rescued by an Air America helicopter).

### **■ A-7D Corsair II**

**6 total, 4 combat**

– First loss 71-0310 (353d Tactical Fighter Squadron, 354th TFW) on 2 December 1972 shot down on a CSAR mission in Laos (Capt Anthony Shine KIA).

– 71-0312 (353d TFS) mid-air collision with an FAC O-1 Bird Dog in Laos on 24 December 1972, (Capt Charles Riess POW)

– 71-0316 (355th TFS) operational loss (non-combat) crash in Thailand on 11 January 1973 (Pilot Rescued)





- 70-0949 (354th TFW) shot down Laos on 17 February 1973 (Maj J J Gallagher Rescued)
- 71-0305 (3rd TFS, 388th TFW) shot down in Cambodia on 4 May 1973 (1Lt T L Dickens Rescued)
- Final loss 70-0945 (354th TFW) shot down in Cambodia on 25 May 1973 (Capt Jeremiah Costello KIA)

#### ■ A-26 Invader

**22 total**

- First loss B-26B 44-35530 (Detachment 2A, 1st ACG) shot down in IV CTZ on the night of 4-5 November 1962 killing the 3 crew.
- Final loss A-26A 64-17646 (609th SOS, 56th SOW) lost over Laos on the night of 7-8 July 1969 killing both crewmen.

#### ■ A-37 Dragonfly

**22 total**

- First loss 1967; final loss 1972

#### ■ AC-47 Spooky

**19 total, 12 in combat**

- First loss 1965, final loss 1969

#### ■ AC-119 Shadow/Stinger

**6 total, 2 in combat**

- First loss AC-119G 52-5907 (Det. I, 17th SOS, 14th SOW) which crashed on take-off from Tan Son Nhut, SVN on 11 October 1969 killing 6 of the 10 crewmen.
- Final loss 1971

#### ■ AC-130 Spectre

**6 total, all combat.**

- First loss AC-130A 54-1629 (16th SOS, 8th TFW) hit by 37mm AAA over Laos and crash-landed at Ubon RTAFB, 2 crewmen died (one died of injuries before reaching Ubon) but 11 others survived.
- Final loss 1972

#### ■ B-52 Stratofortress

**31 total, 17 in combat**

- First losses were operational (non-combat) mid-

air collision 2 B-52F  
57-0047 and 57-0179  
(441st Bomb Squadron, 320th Bomb Wing), 18 June 1965, South China Sea during air refueling orbit, 8 of 12 crewmen killed

- Final loss B-52D 55-0056 (307th Bomb Wing Provisional) to SAM 4 January 1973, crew rescued from Gulf of Tonkin

#### ■ B-57 Canberra

**56 total, 38 in combat**

- First loss 1964, final loss 1970

#### ■ C-5A Galaxy

**1 total, 0 in combat**

Crashed while attempting emergency landing at Tan Son Nhut AB 4 April 1975, as part of Operation Babylift.

Five of the 8 US Military women killed during the Vietnam War, were aboard this airplane.

#### ■ C-7 Caribou

**19 total, 9 in combat**

- First lost C-7B 62-4161 (459th Tactical Airlift Squadron, 483d Tactical Airlift Wing) which was hit by a US 155mm shell on 3 August 1967 in SVN killing the 3 crewmen. Note: there were two fatal crashes during Operation Red Leaf transition training of USAF crews in Army CV-2's, on 4 and 28 October 1966[3].
- Final loss was C-7B 62-12584 (483d TAW) which crashed in SVN on 13 January 1971, all 4 crewmen survived.

#### ■ C-47 Skytrain

**21 total**

- A C-47 was very first USAF aircraft lost in the SEA conflict, C-47B 44-76330 (315th Air Division) on TDY at Vientiane, Laos which was shot down by the Pathet Lao on 23 March 1961 killing 7 of the 8 crewmen. The sole survivor, US Army Maj. Lawrence Bailey was captured and held until August 1962.
- Final loss EC-47Q 43-48636 (361st Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron, 56th SOW) shot down





in Laos on the night of 04/5 4-5 February 1973 killing all 8 crewmen.

■ **C-123 Provider**

**53 total, 21 in combat**

- First loss was C-123B 56-4370 attached to the 464th TAW which came down on an Operation Ranch Hand (defoliation) training flight between Bien Hoa and Vung Tau, SVN on 2 February 1962
- Final loss 1971

■ **C-130 Hercules**

**55 total, 34 in combat**

- First loss was C-130A 57-0475 (817th Troop Carrier Squadron, 6315th Operations Group) on 24 April 1965, a Blind Bat flareship that crashed into high ground near Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, attempting to land in bad weather with a heavy load, two engine failures, and low fuel, killing all six crewmen. This was the 14th recorded loss of a C-130 to all causes.
- Final loss C-130E 72-1297 (314th TAW) destroyed by rocket fire at Tan Son Nhut AB on 28 April 1975.

■ **C-141 Starlifter**

**2 total, 0 in combat**

- C-141A 65-9407 (62d Military Airlift Wing) destroyed in a night runway collision with a USMC A-6 at Danang, SVN on 23 March 1967 killing 5 of the 6 crewmen.
- C-141A 66-0127 (4th Military Airlift Squadron, 62d MAW) crashed soon after take-off from Cam Ranh Bay, SVN on 13 April 1967 killing 6 of the 8 man crew.

■ **E/RB-66 Destroyer**

**14 total**

- First loss was RB-66B 53-0452 (Det 1, 41st Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 6250th Combat Support Group) which crashed 22-23 October 1965 west of Pleiku, SVN killing the crew.
- Final loss EB-66B 42nd TEWS, 388th TFS lost to engine failure on Dec. 23, 1972 during Operation Linebacker II. 3 crewmen were KIA.

■ **EC-121 BatCat**

**2 total, 0 in combat**

- EC-121R 67-24193 (554th Reconnaissance Squadron, 553d RW) crashed 25 April 1969 on take-off in a thunderstorm from Korat RTAFB, killing all 18 crewmen.
- EC-121R 67-21495 (554th RS) crashed on approach to Korat RTAFB on 6 September 1969, 4 of the 16 men were killed.

■ **F-4 Phantom II**

**445 total, 382 in combat**

- First loss was operational (non-combat), F-4C 64-0674 (45TH TFS, 15th TFW) which ran out of fuel after strike in SVN on 9 June 1965; first combat loss F-4C 64-0685 (45th TFS, 15th TFW) shot down Ta Chan, NW NVN on 20 June 1965. 9 of the losses were parked aircraft struck by rockets.
- Final loss 1973

■ **F-5 Freedom Fighter**

**9 total**

- First loss 1965, final loss 1967

■ **F-100 Super Sabre**

**243 total, 198 in combat**

- First loss 1964, final loss 1971

■ **F-102 Delta Dagger**

**14 total, 7 combat**

- First loss 1964, final loss 1967. 4 of the combat losses were parked aircraft

■ **F-104 Starfighter**

**14 total, 9 combat**

- First loss 1965, final loss 1967

■ **F-105D Thunderchief**

**335 total, 283 in combat**

- First loss 62-4371 (36th TFS, 6441st TFW) written off from battle damage over Laos 14 August 1964, at Korat, Thailand
- Final loss 61-0153 (44th TFS, 355th TFW) shot down Laos 23 September 1970, pilot Capt. J. W.





Newhouse rescued F-105F/G Thunderchief: «Wild Weasel,» «Ryan's Raiders,» «Combat Martin»

47 total, 37 combat

– First loss EF-105F 63-8286 (13th TFS, 388th TFW) shot down by AAA RP-6 July 1966, Maj. Roosevelt Hestle and Capt. Charles Morgan KIA

– Last loss F-105G 63-8359 (Det.1 561st TFS, 388th TFW) shot down by SAM 16 November 1972, RP-3, crew rescued

■ **F-111A «Aardvark»**

**11 total, 6 in combat**

– First loss mission-related TFR failure, 66-0022 (428th TFS 474th TFW, Project Combat Lancer), 28 March 1968, Maj. H.E. McCann and Capt. D.L. Graham MIA

– Final loss 67-0111 (474th TFW) mid-air collision over Cambodia, 16 June 1973, both crewmen rescued

■ **HU-16 Albatross**

**4 total, 2 combat**

– 51-5287 to unk cause 19 June 1965

– 51-0058 to unk cause 3 July 1965

– 51-0071 (33d ARRS) shot down by AAA 14 March 1966, two crewmen killed

– 51-7145 (37th ARRS) disappeared 18 October 1966, 7 crewmen KIA-BNR

■ **KB-50 Superfortress tanker**

**1 total, 0 combat**

– Only loss KB-50J 48-0065 (421st Air Refueling Squadron Detachment) at Takhli RTAFB which crashed in Thailand on 14 October 1964, all 6 crewmen survived.

■ **KC-135 Stratotanker**

**3 total, 0 combat**

– Two crashes in 1968, one 1969, all operational (non-combat)

■ **O-1 Bird Dog**

**172 total, 122 in combat**

– First loss 1963, final loss 1972

■ **O-2 Skymaster**

**104 total, 82 in combat**

– First loss 1967, final loss 1972

■ **OV-10 Bronco --63 total, 47 in combat**

– First loss 1968, final loss 1973

■ **QU-22 Pave Eagle**

**8 lost, 7 in combat**

– First loss YQU-22A 68-10531 (554th RS, 553d RW) crashed due to engine failure on 11 June 1969

– Final loss QU-22B 70-1546 (554th RS) on 25 August 1972, pilot killed.

■ **RF-4C Phantom II**

**83 total, 76 in combat**

– First loss 1966, final loss 1972

■ **RF-101 Voodoo**

**39 total, 33 in combat**

– First loss 1964, final loss 1968

■ **SR-71A Blackbird**

**2 total, 0 combat**

– 64-17969 (Det OL-8, 9th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing) suffered engine failure over Thailand on 10 May 1970, both crewmen ejected safely

– 64-17978 (Det OL-KA, 9th SRW) crashed on landing at Kadena, Okinawa on 20 July 1972, both crewmen survived

■ **T-28 Trojan**

**23 total**

– First loss 1962, final loss 1968

■ **U-2C «Dragon Lady»**

**1 total, 0 combat**

– Only loss 56-6690 (349th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron 100th SRW) which crashed on 8 October 1966 near Bien Hoa, SVN, Maj. Leo J Stewart ejected and was rescued.

■ **U-3B Blue Canoe**

**1 total, 1 combat**

– Only loss 60-6058, destroyed on the ground during a VC attack on Tan Son Nhut, SVN on 14 June 1968.

■ **U-6A Beaver**

**1 total, 0 combat**

– Only loss 51-15565 (432d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing) which crashed in Thailand 28 December 1966, both crewmen survived.

